

# ARTFORUM

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## PROJECT: WICKERHAM & LOMAX



Wickerham & Lomax, *The Migration 7.25/8.11 Bag*, 2021, digital rendering.

*If it is a human thing to do to put something you want, because it's useful, edible, or beautiful, into a bag, or a basket, or a bit of rolled bark or leaf, or a net woven of your own hair, or what have you, and then take it home with you, home being another, larger kind of pouch or bag, a container for people . . . then I am a human being after all.*

—Ursula K. Le Guin, “The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction,” 1986

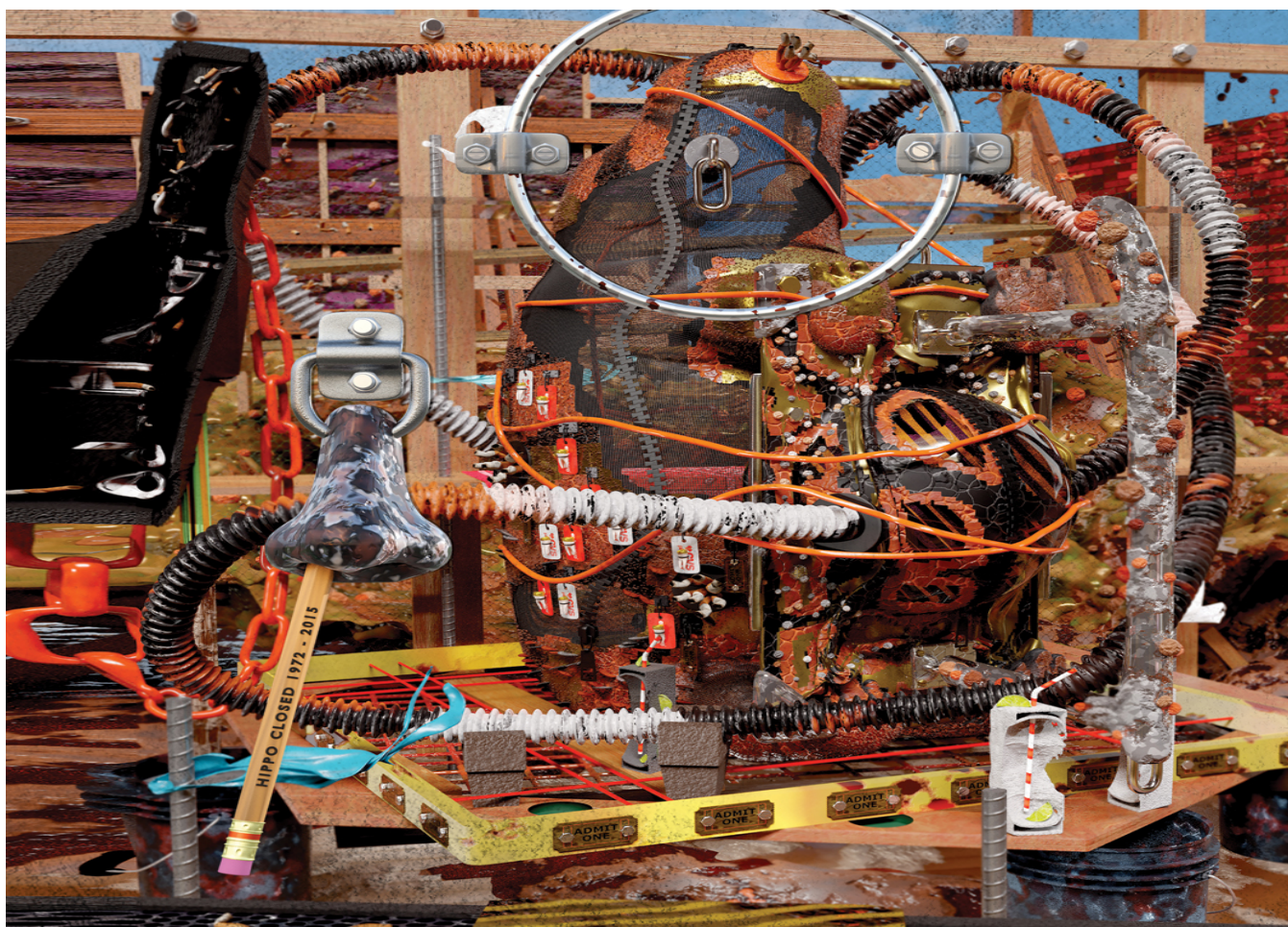
**THE DENSELY PACKED COMPOSITIONS** of collaborative duo Daniel Wickerham and Malcolm Lomax pulsate with a formal and referential dynamism that binds the work’s mess of elements into something far greater than the sum of its myriad parts. Though initially dizzying to behold, a harmonizing consonance quells the apparent chaos, allowing networks of sensory and cognitive associations to coalesce and cohere. To further assist navigation through their built-up material and pictorial environments, the artists often provide textual road maps. For their recent show at Von Ammon Co. in Washington, DC, titled “Domestic QT and the Spatial Anomalies,” the pair supplied an alphabetically organized glossary of ideas informing the exhibition’s development. Dilating skeptically on no fewer than fifty concepts and phenomena pertaining mostly to home quarantine, popular culture, and sociality, the document served to clarify and enrich the viewer’s apprehension of the works’ corralling of swarming signifiers, while preserving sufficient ambiguity to facilitate poetic communion. Broad-ranging, idiosyncratic, and incisive, these texts demonstrate an active intelligence that dissects and analyzes everything in its path.

For this project, Wickerham & Lomax have taken their thematic cues, for the most part, from Ursula K. Le Guin’s “The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction,” a short essay critiquing the thrust and parry of heroic narrativity, touting the tote, as opposed to weaponry, as the most significant human—and, metaphorically, literary—invention. Picking up where the DC show left off, each of the following pages explores different aspects of domestic containment, though in this instance conflated, per Le Guin, with visual musings on that most intimate and thereby self-defining of receptacles, the handbag. And because too much is never enough when it comes to maximal aggregation, these images also allude to a variety of household appliances—the vacuum cleaner, the washing machine, the freezer, the stove—while additionally calling attention to a series of gay-bar closures and generational renovations (name-checked by the titles) in Baltimore, where the artists reside. To say these



pictures are loaded is a grand understatement; meaning and affect churn and proliferate within them. Created via the aptly named 3D-modeling software Blender, Wickerham & Lomax's flawless synthetic concoctions shred, queer, and reconstitute heteronormativity as critically charged fields of multivalent intensity.

—Jeff Gibson



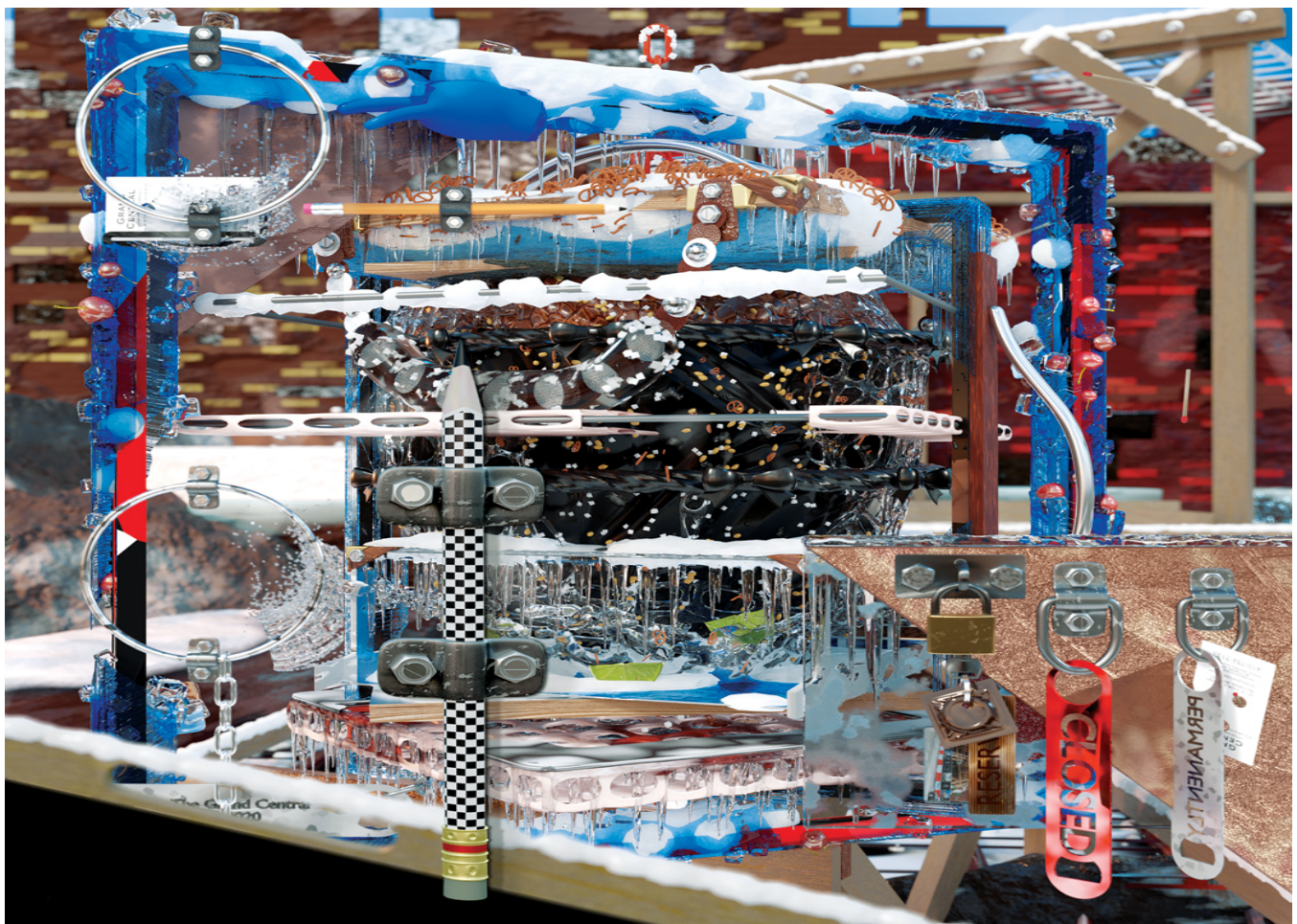
Wickerham & Lomax, *The Hippo 10.8 Vacuum Bag*, 2021, digital rendering.





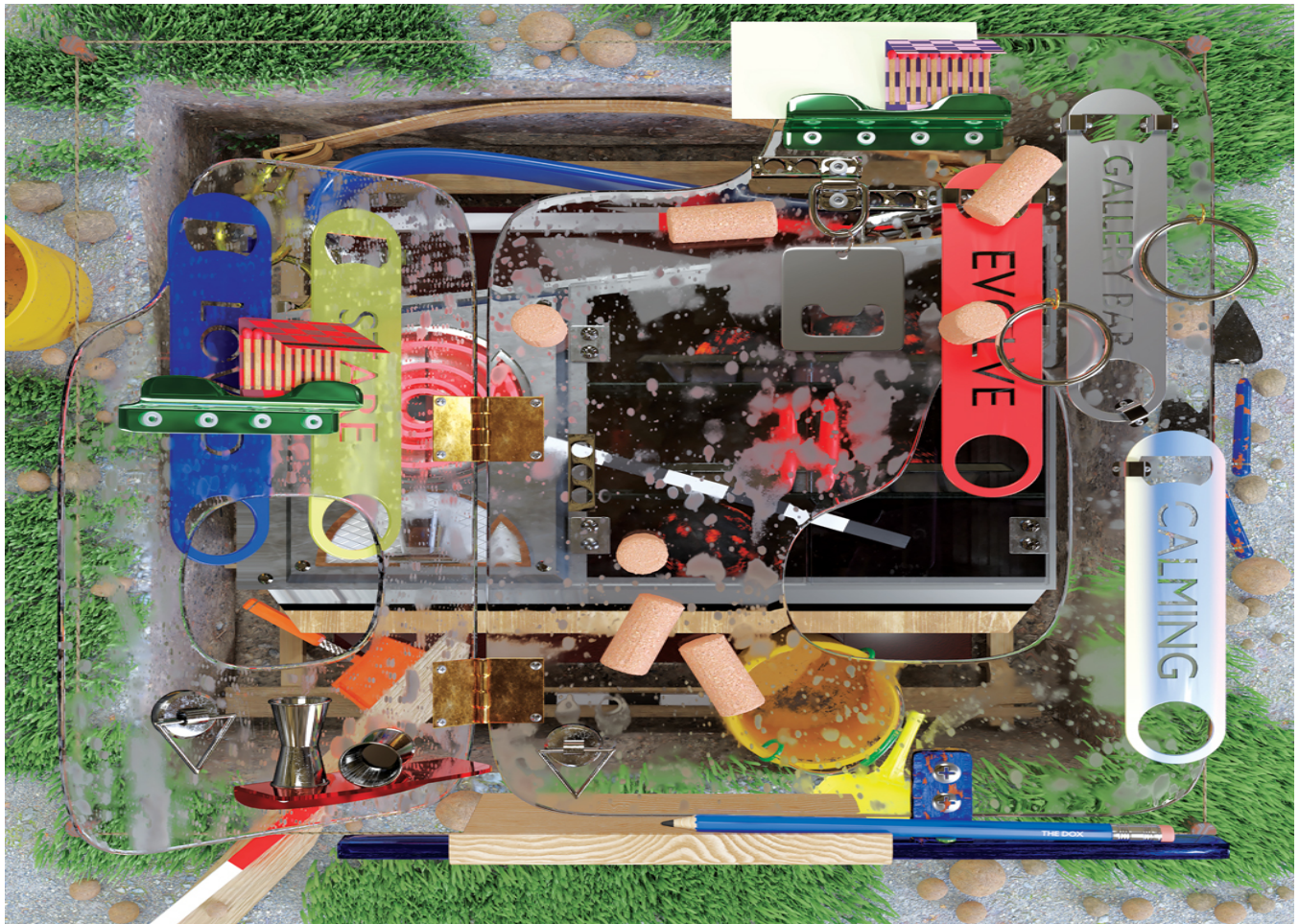
Wickerham & Lomax, *The Club Bunns 6.1 Laundry Bag*, 2021, digital rendering.





Wickerham & Lomax, *The G. Central 7.30 Freezer Bag*, 2021, digital rendering.





**Wickerham & Lomax, *The Gallery Bar 6.6 Stove Bag*, 2021, digital rendering.**

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