

Carlos Reyes
saltwaterfarm

Waldo
Searsport Storage
7 Barn Rd
Searsport ME 04974

Open Mon-Sun
24hrs during
exhibition period.
Guided tours available.

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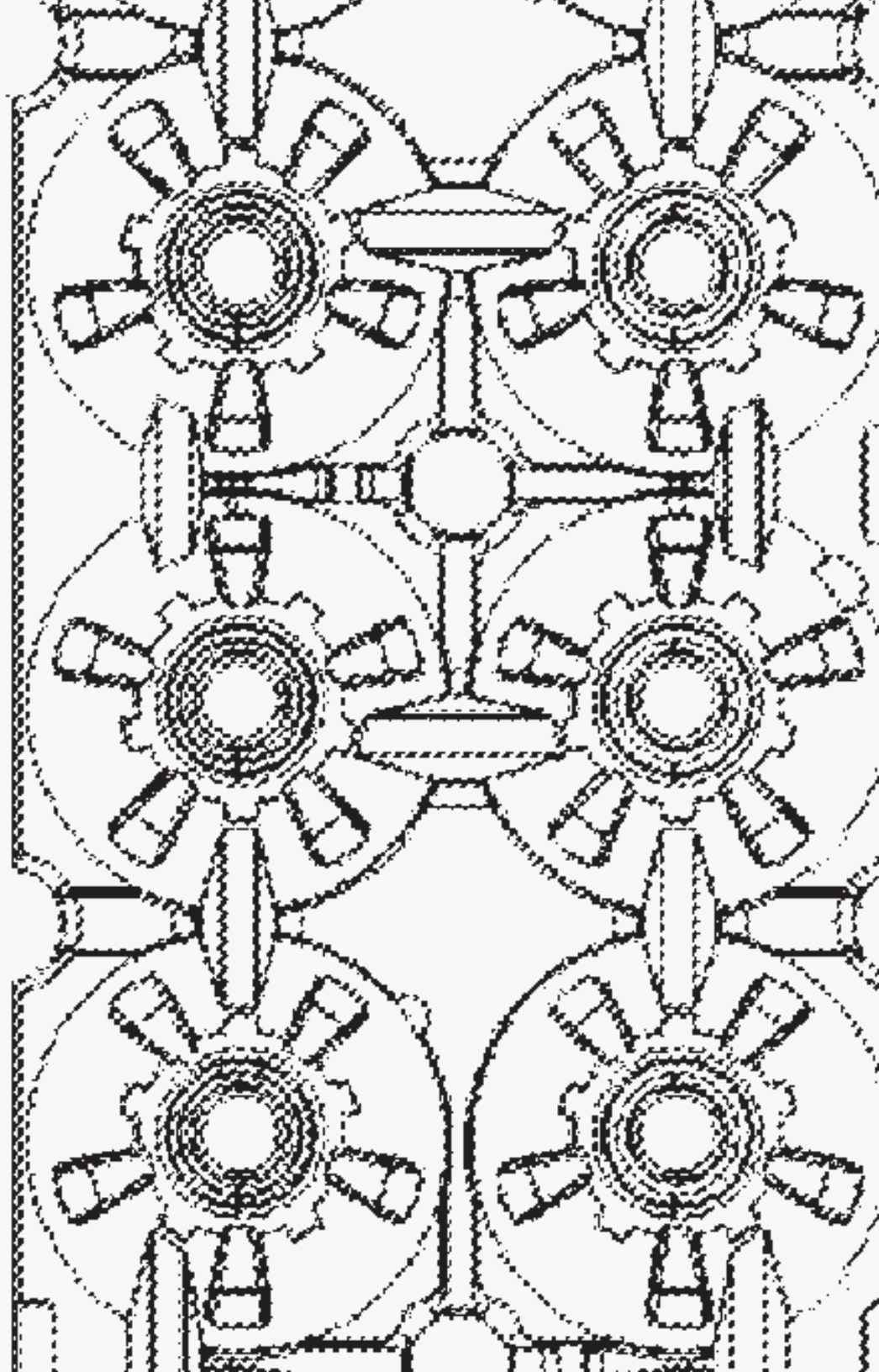
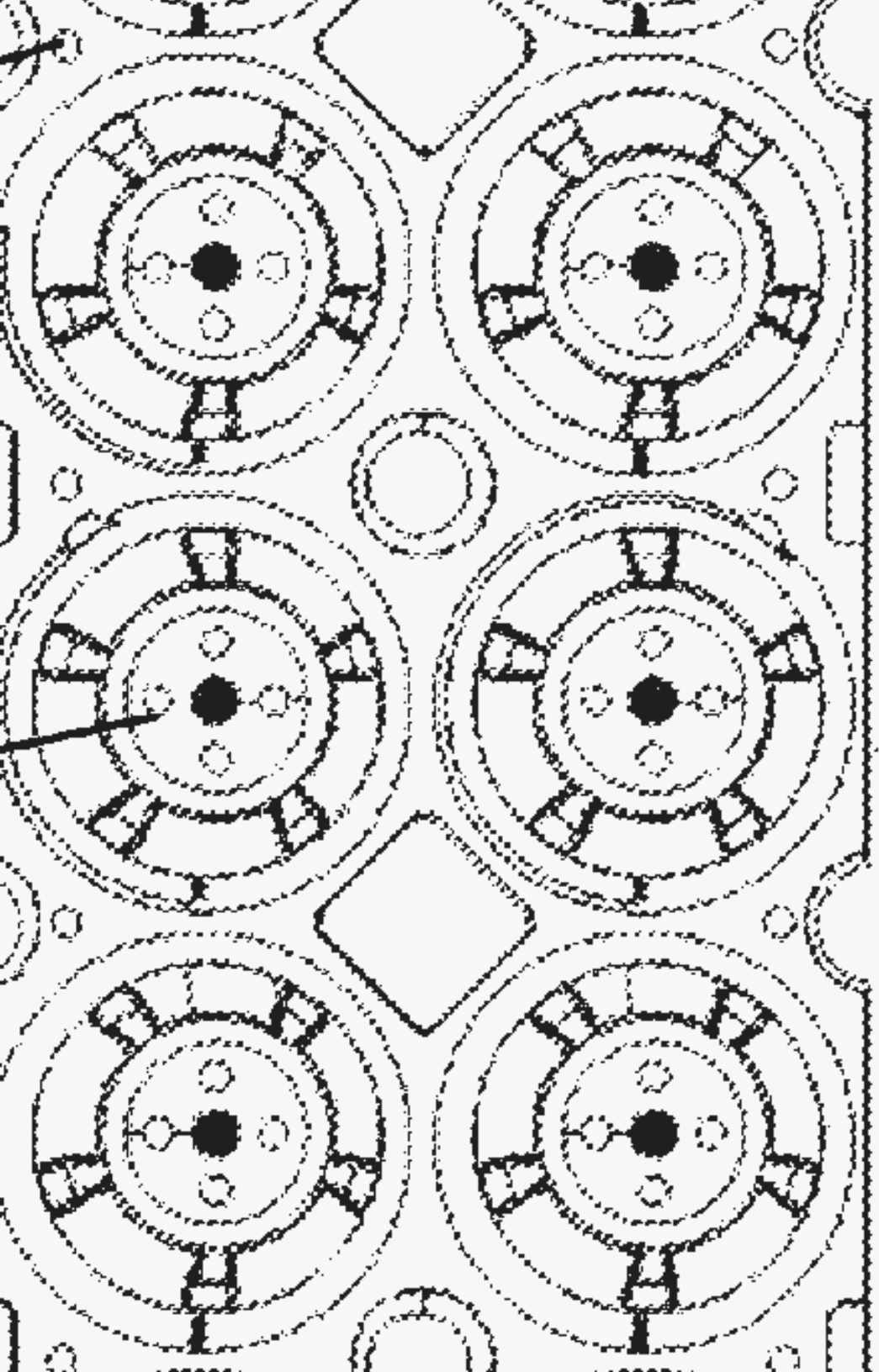
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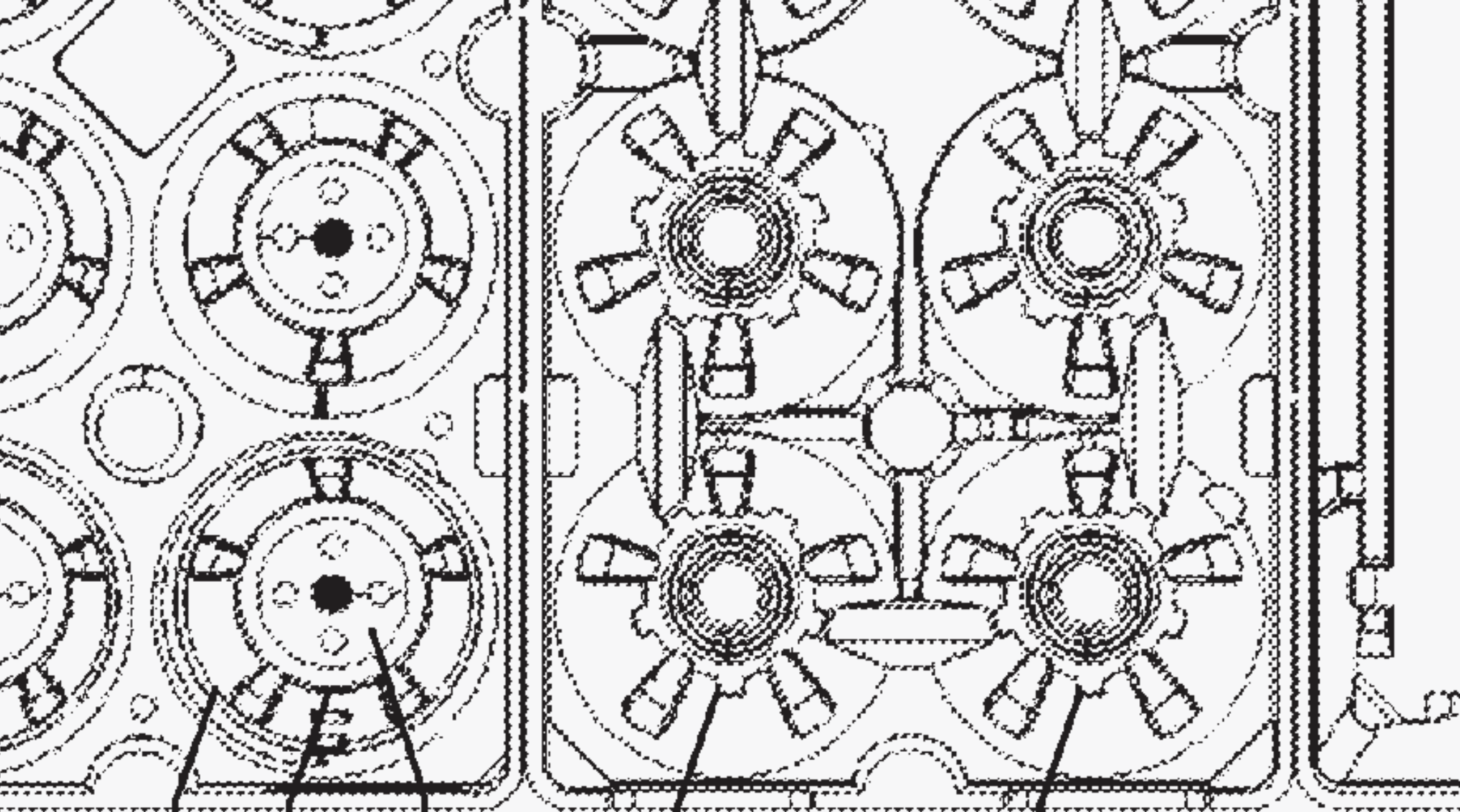
At a storage facility just off the highway in mid-coast Maine, a translucent monolith constructed from 5264 plastic egg cartons stands inside a Quonset hut—an industrial enclosure normally used to stockpile mounds of gravel, salt, or sand. But here, Carlos Reyes investigates a different kind of resource.

Inside the towering translucent structure, chicken eggs that have been hollowed, painted and chromed are suspended at regular intervals. Reyes has taken the residues of everyday American life—repetition, accumulation, constraint—and exposed them to fresh ocean air. Patent not pending, this flimsy architecture shimmers and sways, each cell reflecting and projecting light.

The installation continues in a row of self-storage units nearby. Exhausted treadmill belts, having reached the 30,000 mile mark, are now stretched into hollow cylinders, their interiors striated with past motion. Once on perpetual loop in New York City gyms, one is now suspended from the ceiling of a unit with a roll-up door; around the corner, two others, their rubber worn smooth from years of sweat and circulation. A fourth stands draped with a membrane of red lace inside the Quonset hut.

Eggs are form of stored energy that embody the potential for life. Treadmills, by contrast, are designed to absorb excess energy in the most contained way possible. At this remote storage facility, Reyes brings together exhausted energy and dormant potential. Suspended in fragile homeostasis, these stacks and loops seem like they could go on forever. On the other hand, a strong breeze might knock them over at any second.





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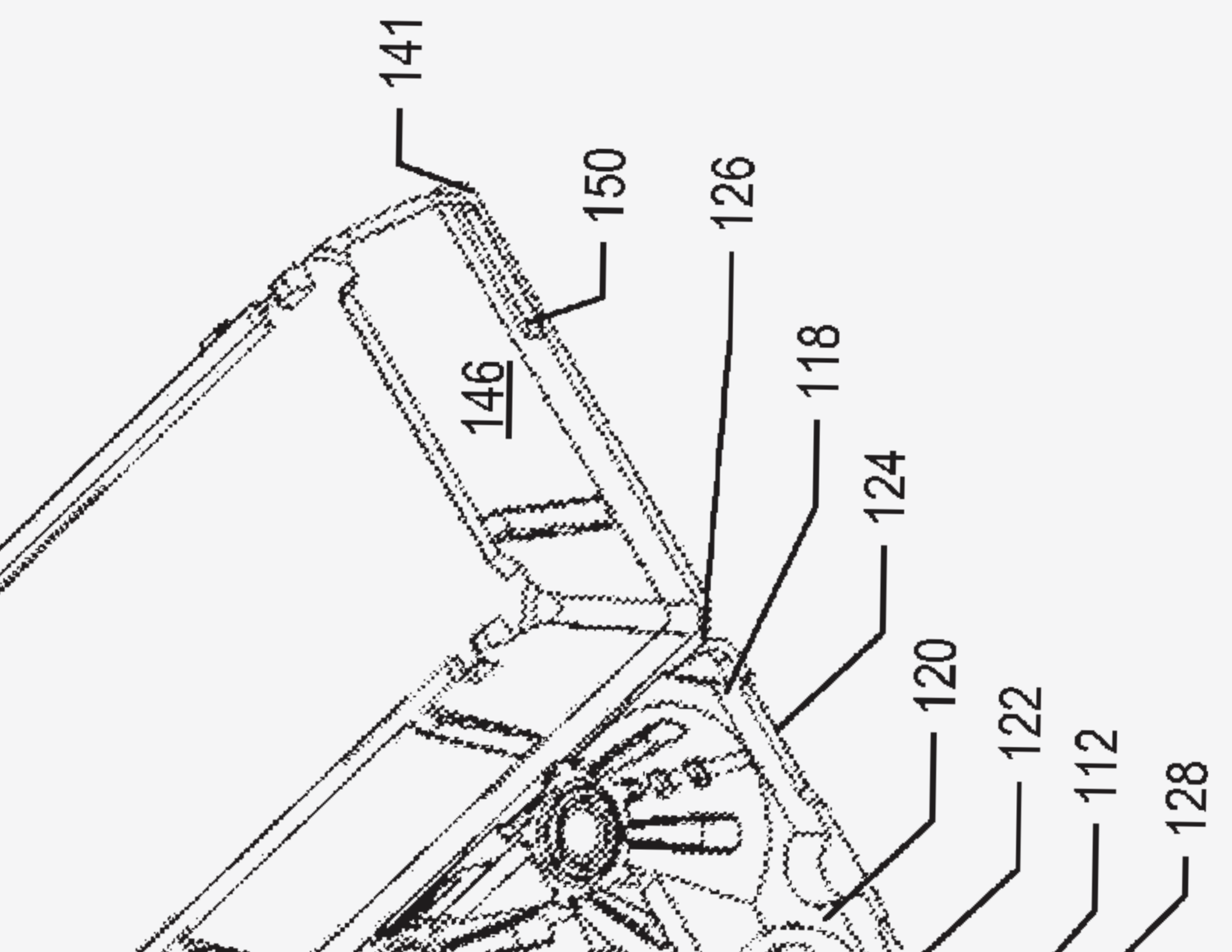
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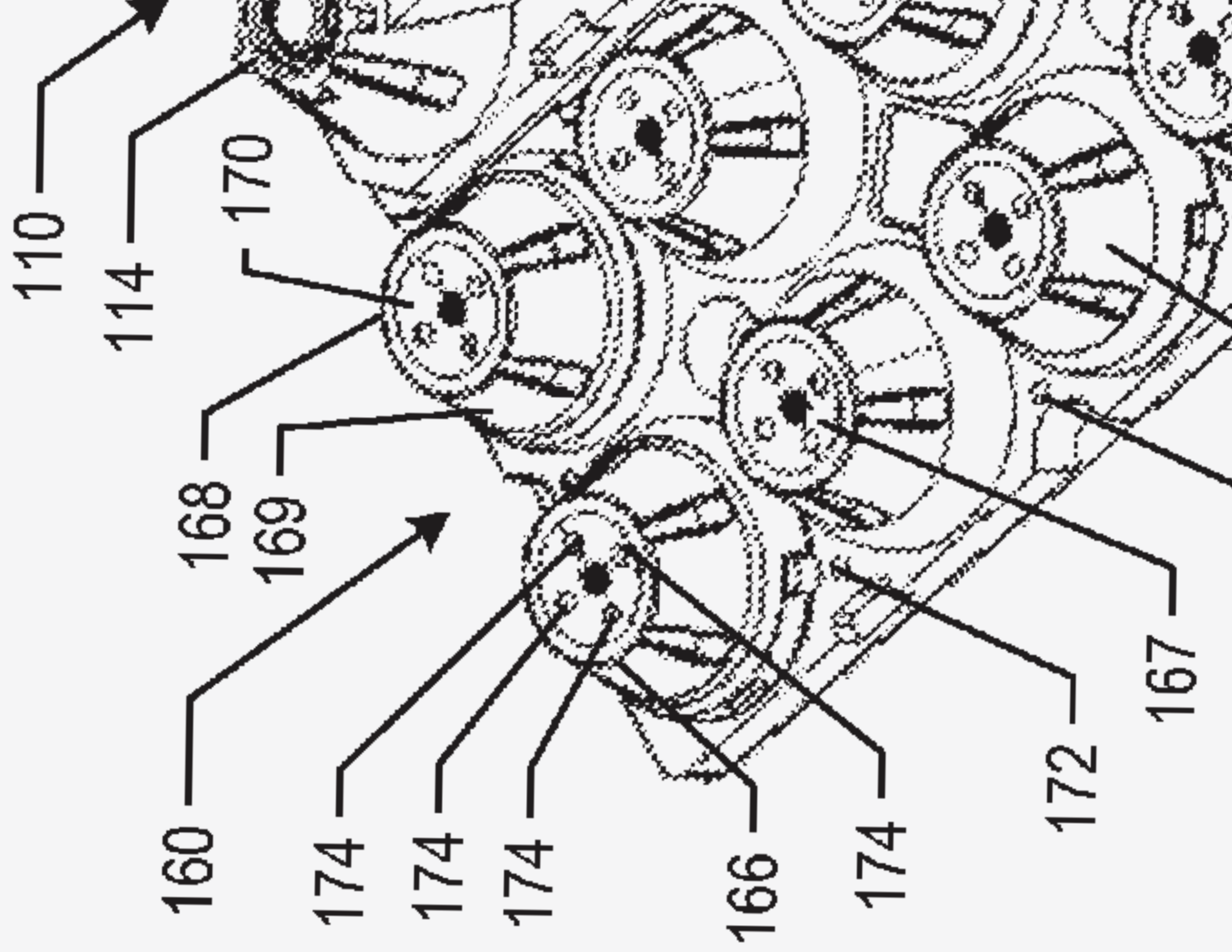
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The vented intermediate separator facilitates the passive venting of the gas agent released from the label into the receiving cavities, which eliminates a separate disinfecting food processing step. This reduces overall food processing time and costs. Side vents in the container allow for passive exhaust venting of the gas agent into the atmosphere, and are sized such that the time required for the passive venting is sufficient to ensure the efficacy of the gas agent. This further reduces processing costs by eliminating the need for an active venting process step, e.g., such as by subjecting the containers to an air blower to facilitate active venting within the container.

The details of one or more embodiments of the subject matter described in this specification are set forth in the accompanying drawings and the description below. Other features, aspects, and advantages of the subject matter will become apparent from the description, the drawings, and the claims.

Carlos Reyes
with Alex Bacon
via Zoom.

AB How did this project come about?

CR Tobias and I met a few years ago, out and about. He mentioned his itinerant project space called Waldo up in Maine and I'd seen some of the shows that he did online. In January he formalized our conversations with an invitation. It was supposed to be in the summer of 2021 but the pandemic in March happened and boom, all of a sudden I was in Chicago with my family, hunkered down for the foreseeable future. Toby and I kept talking and this project was a little bit of a lifeline during those months. I used the lockdown time to sit and think and organize my thoughts. Some of them are related to this show.

AB In Chicago I imagine you didn't really have a studio setup. So how did those ideas manifest? In notebooks? In your head? On the computer?

CR All of the above. It was in my head. It was some in notebooks. It was working on our kitchen table.

AB What were you doing at the kitchen table?

CR My family accumulates seemingly random things, like all of us. My mother for example collects ceramic Native American angel figurines, Betty Boop dolls, old calendars, old catalogs, Tupperware, containers, lots of containers, these guys here [gestures to clear egg cartons]... There

comes a point where you ask, "why do you have five empty plastic egg cartons?" And she responds, "they might come in useful," and points out her ways of using them. I'm learning to recognize the way she organizes emotion through the accumulation of material. In the beginning, I was really stressed out about it because I thought she was hoarding things. I had hours to stare at the things around me and consider the accumulation of objects as functions of memories, aspirations, emotions, necessity, safety.

AB What is the colored element?

CR This is a color test. These are eggs that I've been blowing out. There's a lot of breath work involved. It's hard.

AB Is it like the glass blowing in your previous work?

CR Yes, the breath work is similar, but it enters very different apertures. When blowing glass the breath creates the form, while with the eggs the same breath empties a vessel. My breath moves through my body but enters the material differently. Breathing through the eggs is intense. After a session I'm dizzy and even maybe a little stoned. This is a simple one, a red color test.

AB Then you paint them?

CR It's about a simple gesture of changing an expectation, something that we expect to see as white is now red. In that respect the expectation can be used as leverage in the experience of the work. That's how these started. The more I thought about them, the more I thought, "wow. it

has a readymade quality but I can still subtly manipulate the material."

AB Is the plastic egg carton a new technology?

CR Yes, these plastic egg cartons are trademarked and the trademark really goes into detail about how these individual cells are formed and how this trifold is great for stacking and protecting the eggs. The holes and spaces in the carton allow for the transference of microbial gases and disinfecting agents.

AB So they were developed for practical and economical reasons?

CR Yes. They provide more protection against breakage and contamination during transportation.

AB It's interesting because you're in coastal Maine, a quintessentially American landscape: beautiful, sublime and a bit unruly. To then introduce into it an industrial object with these plastic egg cartons. There's a disjunction there.

CR There is a disjunction, you're right. That disjunction is based on how we construct the idea of nature and "the natural". The site of the exhibition is surrounded by what some would call "nature", but it's also next to a public storage unit. We're in Maine and you think about Victorian era retreats and the ocean and "Down-East" and lobster, etc. But there are also supermarkets in Maine, gas stations, Home Depots, lawns littered with political propaganda, and garbage and other kinds of detritus that punctuate the

landscape. At what point does "nature" begin?

AB This object is thus in a way very contemporary. It's not a "traditional" cardboard egg carton. It's super streamlined, very 21st century, designed for maximum economy.

CR Yes. And instead of local heirloom eggs, I chose supermarket eggs. Ones that are large, that are engineered today to be the same size and shape. They are measured to within fractions of an inch, dimensions that these plastic cartons are based on.

AB When did it all click for you?

CR It all clicked when I realized how you could stack them, and have things float inside them, and that I could build space with them, and how each "cell" is a little environment cradling another little environment.

AB Do you go to the supermarket and buy the cartons, or do you get them in bulk from a distributor for this particular project?

CR We got them from a distributor who makes them. I'm working with a pallet of cartons, about 5,000. The idea that started on a dining room table is now being scaled up to a 8' x 10' x 10' foot sculpture.

AB Wow.

CR I also have these used rubber treadmill belts, which are going to be part of the show. I'm figuring out how to present them because I've just gotten them to stretch into a shape I am satisfied with.

AB So you're still finding used and discarded materials, as in much of your previous work?

Where are they from?
CR Yes. They're from a company that refurbishes gym equipment. I got them a while ago and I didn't really know what to do with them.
AB Did you see them and think they would be interesting to use?
CR I was thinking about a treadmill as both an interior and an exterior space. If you've ever run on a treadmill, you get in a running zone and your sweat embeds itself into the rubber. And there's this indoor/outdoor thing where a lot of times these treadmills are facing a window or mirror when you're running. They are a site for self reflection, for processing emotions and that works its way into the material. And sometimes I think about the fact that somebody else has been running on this "place" for a while.
AB Many bodies in fact.
CR Exactly. Many bodies. I was really attracted to this as a concept. Then I take the concept and have to figure out how to make an interesting form out of it. Right now it's taking a circular form.
AB Is that a perfect circle?
CR As perfect as we could get it. It's hard to get it to stay in the form. It took us a couple months to get to this point.
AB What did you use for the support?
CR This is cold pressed steel. We started with fiberglass. We got the shape with fiberglass, but then we realized that the rubber itself was pretty heavy, so it would sink. We finally figured out a way to do it with

metal. There are interesting details on the rubber. For example, there is some writing because they have to be approved before they get used, because if a rubber belt snaps, that's very dangerous. So an employee and manager has to sign off on its construction. It also has all this banding, which are the marks of the interior part of the belt going over and over inside the machine. We estimated that there are about 20,000 to 30,000 human miles on each of these belts.

AB Amazing. Do you know how they determine when it needs to be replaced?
CR After a few years the machines get refurbished and as part of that they replace the belt. I found a place in Long Island and they said they got a lot of their machines from the tri-state area, and they gave them to me.
AB Was this something you were working on before the pandemic?
CR Yes. I started to collect them in January 2020. But this will be the first opportunity that I've had to show them.

[Moves screen to show eggs]

AB How do you blow out the eggs? Do you drill into the top?
CR We use a combination of dremel and drill bits. We have prepared about six hundred eggs total.
AB Why did you want to include eggs? So that the containers wouldn't be empty?
CR I wanted there to be a presence. I saw one possibility of

the work being viewed like a landscape in the context of this environment. However, even the idea of "landscape" is negotiable. A figure in a landscape has the potential to mediate how we understand the construction of nature. It mediates it, anchoring you within the work, and the work within the environment. Having something in it versus not having something in it changes the landscape. I put the eggs in the containers to both suggest how the containers are used, but—in painting them—I also distance the viewer from how they expect to see them.
AB So you think of the sculptures as landscapes?
CR In a way, yes. I think of them as environments, as architecture in a landscape. As all these little homes. Even one cell is an architecture for the egg.
AB Where will the exhibition be?
CR We chose a Quonset hut, a covered, prefab inside/outside space used for protecting all sorts of things—gravel, bricks, and so on—from the elements. There is a self-storage center on the same property, where we will also place the treadmill belts in two of the units. It's an environment with lots of variables: wind gusts, temperature changes, animals and insects. It's not as controlled as a gallery setting. For example, when we placed the work directly on the ground the horizon line was just two degrees off. The ground is perpetually shifting, which we did not anticipate so we had

to choose a platform that was sympathetic to the work, provided a sense of directness, and was readily available. We chose aluminum because of that metal's reflective property, which amplifies the play of light within the plastic cells without having to explicitly light the work. It's going to look like it came from that space, but also clean and from the future: metallic and light. That contrast will be satisfying, with all the dirt and debris around.

AB Almost like where these things might be stored in some other context.
CR I think it will have that feeling. When we put the work on the floor for the first time we were impressed because the light was hitting the cartons and they started to glow. Outside condensation builds in each cell. So we get back every morning and there's dew everywhere and that further refracts the light.
AB How do people visit? Is the site accessible or is it something that you have to know about?
CR It's in Maine. So for somebody from New York it's never going to be super accessible. But if you happen to be in the area you can just drive in. It's open and there's no barrier to entry. It's open 24 hours a day, so if you want to go there at midnight, you can.
AB Do you worry about the work getting vandalized?
CR That has been a concern. But I can order another pallet of egg cartons if I need to. It's blowing out and painting the

eggs that is time consuming.

AB How did you settle on the colors that you use for the eggs? How do you paint them?

CR That's still being negotiated. I do new color tests every few days. Some of them I paint and then dust them in velvet flocking. I like that because velvet absorbs light in a different way. You might not be able to tell within this configuration because it's integrated so well. But I think it will come across when all these other materials and colors are refracting light and you've got these little objects that are collecting it within the work. That was one of the considerations. I was also exploring automotive paint because I was interested in chroming some of the eggs. I've been working with a guy who repairs vintage cars and guns to come up with a plan that simulates that effect. Unlike the flocked surfaces, automotive paint tends to bounce light back. So there are formal issues of the tension between absorption and reflection in the sculpture.

AB Will the piece have one type of paint application or will it combine multiple?

CR I see them as being mostly one color. Red, say, with a few chromed. The other thing is whether to distribute them evenly so that the sculpture becomes a "field" or keep it a defined square, so that it's more in conversation with the language of painting.

AB In terms of scale alone this must be the most ambitious project you've done.

CR Yes. This is definitely one of the bigger pieces that I've done.

AB The scalability of the work is very interesting and seems very contemporary. Work made up of these egg cartons can be small enough to fit on a table top, or large enough to fill a storage hangar. That speaks to the object you're using, a carton which is not designed for the family farm, but for a factory scale of food production. You're playing on that type of expansion and contraction, the endless modularity of the carton.

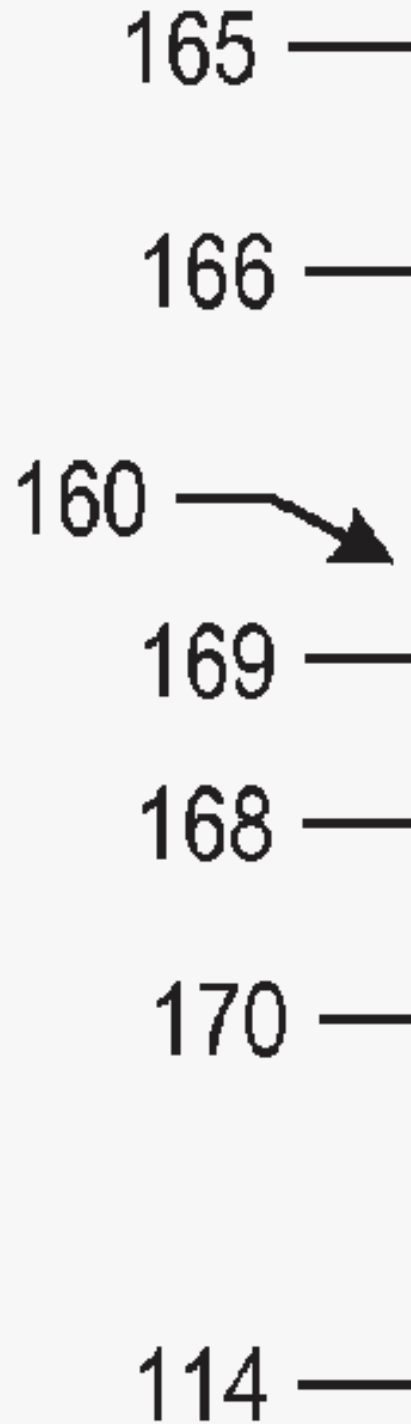
CR Yes. Somehow the scalability, the expansion and contraction, seemed conceptually in line with leveraging the intended distribution model of these materials towards a new form. It's almost like data visualization. Deciding on the size for example, since the cartons are sold as a pallet, I thought, "let's just work with a basic shipping unit, an entire pallet of them." Maintaining an improvised quality on this scale required an awareness of what is available but also perceiving and preparing for changing circumstances. It's like a moving puzzle. Even our interview, just by us talking, helps me see the work outside of myself and find possible solutions for what might arise.

10-30-2020

Works

1. saltwaterfarm
eggshell, acrylic, velvet flocking, plastic egg crates, aluminum, grit salt
8 × 10 × 10 ft
2020
 2. saltwaterfarm
treadmill belt, steel, lace
diameter 40 inches
2020
- Lot 34
1. saltwaterfarm
treadmill belt, steel
diameter 42 1/2 inches
2020
- Lot 71
1. saltwaterfarm
treadmill belt, steel
diameter 40 inches
2020
 2. saltwaterfarm
treadmill belt, steel
diameter 40 inches
2020

Carlos Reyes lives and works in New York. He has been featured in institutional exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Futura Center for Contemporary Art, Prague; the Venice Architecture Biennale; Hessel Museum of Art, Center for Curatorial Studies, Annandale-on-Hudson. His work is currently on view as part of Dust: Plates of the Present at Centre Pompidou in Paris. Recent solo exhibitions include Bodega, New York; White Flag Projects, St. Louis; and Arcadia Missa, London. He has also presented work at Société, Berlin; Luxembourg and Dayan, New York; Tanya Leighton, Berlin; Bortolami, New York; and Praz Delavallade, Paris. Reyes will have a solo exhibition at Soft Opening, London in 2021.



Waldo