

paperless

Small Editions, Brooklyn, NY
60 Sackett St, Brooklyn, NY 11231

July 29 – September 10, 2017
Reception July 29th 7-10pm

Max Fowler and Rachel Haberstroh, Sujin Lee, Nyeema Morgan
Performance of “ligg-ehn ah-figgy” by Benjamin Santiago, August 18th, 2017 at 7PM

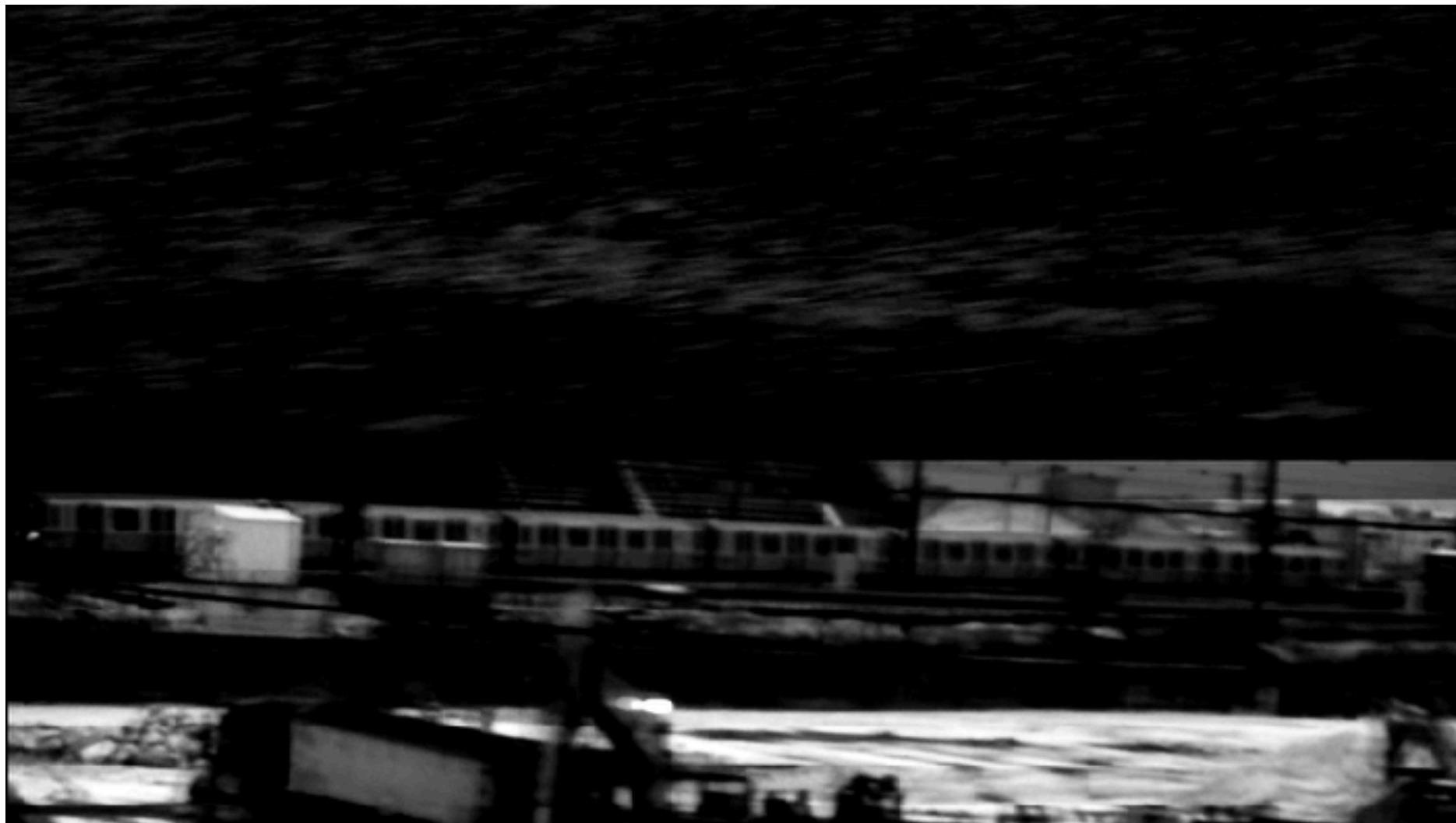
Paperless. What traces are left when we burn our words, allow them to dissolve? What do we hear in the silence of a pause or a period? Although silence, redaction, and erasure emerge as different forms of not-knowing, each divulges a narrative. Omissions are never necessarily mistakes and redactions are proof that nothing can truly be unsaid; we read these grey boxes like expressions or inflections of voice, as palpable and revealing as lips parted to speak. Haberstrah and Fowler, Morgan, and Lee create rhythms in the transparency of strike-throughs and the opaqueness of the backspace, leaving the lines between to speak volumes. Through this work the apparent violence of erasure becomes a means of continuing to converse.

Rachel Haberstroh and Max Fowler's *Infinite Wishing Well* (2016) is fed by a twitter account that periodically retweets wishes sourced from across the media platform. As printed tweets unfurl directly into a clear basin of water, the *Well* realizes these dreams for only so long as it takes for paper and ink to dissolve. Nyeema Morgan's *Forty-Seven Easy Poundcakes Like grandma Use To Make* (2007-2012) layers the titular recipes in different configurations with each other and with the actual recipe that Morgan's grandmother habitually baked. The resultant brambles of text are illegible instructions that compel action without allowing for it. In these constellations that burn out in an excess of ink, Morgan illustrates the attempt to achieve a quality that no permutation of these recipes can teach. Sujin Lee enacts a similarly futile struggle in *This Voice* (2013), attempting to articulate the character of another voice. Lee's own tones and expressions become as a redolent mirror to those of the other individual, who grows increasingly abstract in the subjectiveness of this description. In overwriting their subjects, Morgan and Lee express how unfit are our words when confronted by the ineffable, by the human.

These works test the failures of communication, from social forums to private notation. Although destructive in nature, the gestures themselves become new loci of speech. Set at the beginning of this curatorial project, this exhibition acknowledges the moments when words are insufficient; the two following shows will find ways of making do without.

Installation Images

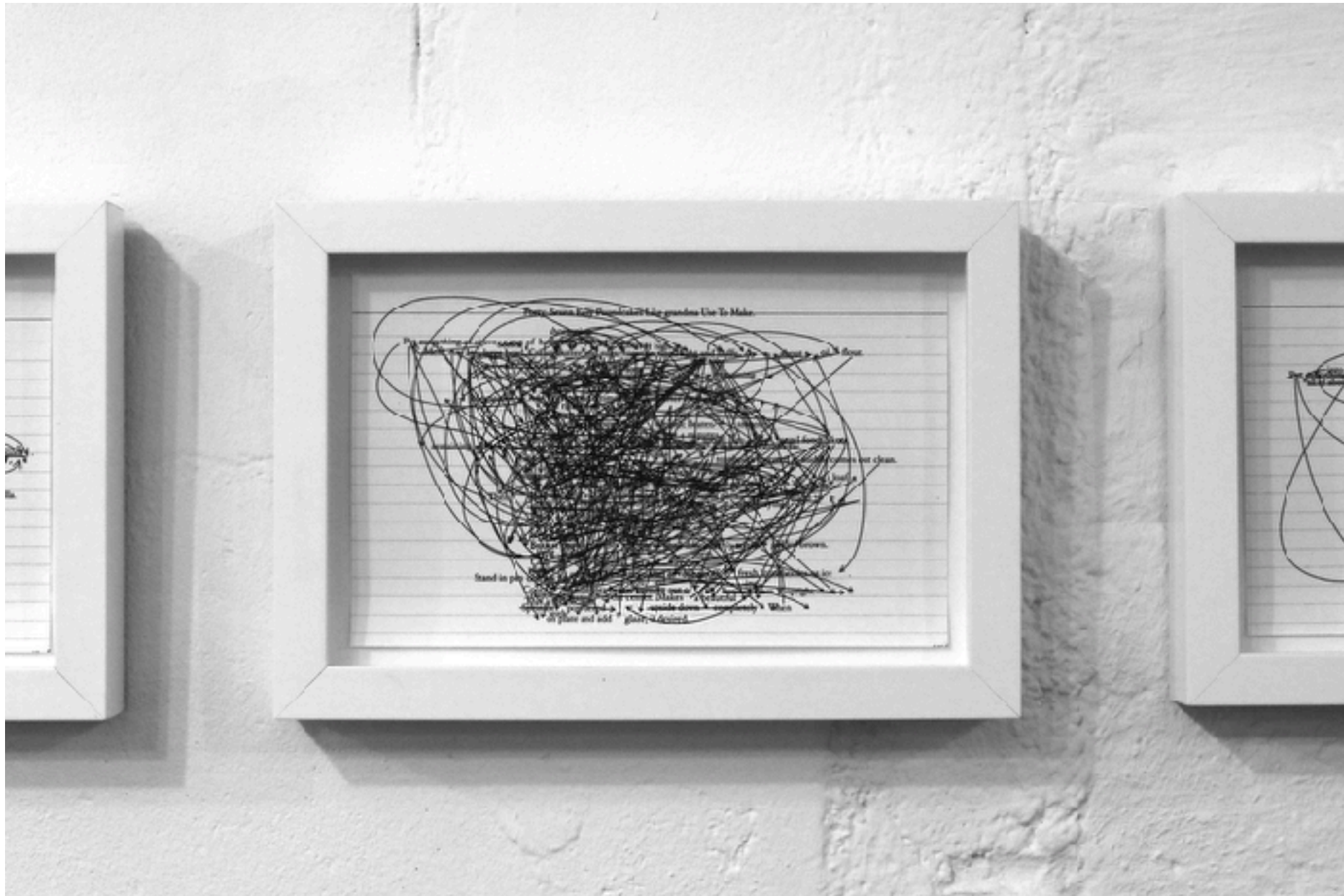




Film still. Sujin Lee, *This Voice*, 2013. HD Video, Color, B&W, Sound.



Film still. Sujin Lee, *This Voice*, 2013. HD Video, Color, B&W, Sound.



Detail. Nyeema Morgan, *Forty-Seven Easy Poundcakes Like grandma Use To Make*, 2007- 2012. Inkjet prints on index cards. Dimensions variable.



Detail. Nyeema Morgan, *Forty-Seven Easy Poundcakes Like grandma Use To Make*, 2007- 2012. Inkjet prints on index cards. Dimensions variable.



Rachel Haberstroh and Max Fowler, *Infinite Wishing Well*, 2016.



Detail. Rachel Haberstroh and Max Fowler, *Infinite Wishing Well*, 2016.

Exhibition Catalog

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Language has a unique, irreplaceable function as vehicle for
and delimitation of thought. In an endless transition
between feeling and expression, language provides us
with containers for meaning which are – nonetheless –
distinct from reaching itself. (Theodor Friedrich Kittler) (1)
claims that media's additive property declassifies that
either our expressions turn themselves to language
or we sanctify language to maintain an autonomy of
expression. We cannot speak that for which we have no
word.

Now, however, we introduce the digital render, the false photorealism that is also, potentially, the render of breaking down. Across Google and Twitter, in the steady erosion of images, the Internet reveals itself as a discourse that is too fast and too vast, one to double as archive, home instead to the degraded image, the failed image. For all these, there persists the conviction that such failures are important, if not intentional, if at least expressive — of urgency, of circulation, of the resistible humanity of defect. Such is the speed of a language composed of feelings when and hashtag shout-outs, news-feed confrontations and *going to* events that you didn't make time for.

1. Many of the actors in the film have been in the industry for a long time, but it is the same with the director, Green, who has made the choice of returning to the screen with a more serious role, as a director, rather than being "the funny guy" (as in a later film, *Goodbye, Mr. Toshiro*). The film, however, is a comedy, written by Young and directed by Green, and it is a comedy, but it is a comedy that is not a comedy, and it is a comedy that is not a comedy.

Edited by Nicole Kaack

Drum cartridge has reached end of life.

through the work of Rachel Hershovitz and Max Powell).

Knaack, Nicole

Language has always functioned dually, as vehicle for and delimitation of thought. In an endless translation between feeling and expression, language provides us with containers for meaning which are, nonetheless, distinct from meaning itself. Theorist Friedrich Kittler claims that media's additive property necessitates that either our expressions format themselves to language or we sacrifice language to maintain an authenticity of expression.¹⁰ We cannot speak that for which we have no words.

Now, however, we introduce the digital render, the false photorealism that is also, potentially, the render of breaking down. Across Google and Twitter, in the steady erosion of memes, the internet reveals itself as a discourse that is too fast and too vicious to double as archive, home, instead to the degraded image, the failed image. Nonetheless, there persists the conviction that such failures are important, if not intentional then at least expressive — of urgency, of circulation, of the insistent humanity of defeat. Such is the speed of a language composed of "feelings when" and hashtag shout-outs, news-feed confrontations and "going to" events that you didn't make time for.

1. Kitter goes so far as to claim that for this is only possible in the absence of language: "It is the world with language which only leaves us the choice of either retaining words without losing their meaning or vice versa: retaining meaning while losing the words." (Friedrich A. Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop Young and Michael Wutz [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986], 13).

Notes on This Voice

Marguerite Duras's literary works often include notes on the voices or suggestions on how her text should be spoken when it is staged for the theater or film. They remind me how intimately voices and text can be held together as well as how far apart they can be from each other.

When I was conducting interviews for a project titled "The Voice of the Past," I asked my interviewees who personally had known Chao to describe her voice. The more "information" I gathered, the more alive her voice seemed to have become. I decided to try describing a voice that I knew, and I wrote the text for this book.

After we exchanged a few emails and then we were on a video call to discuss the piece. I had initially expected a video call. During our conversation, I kept thinking about the fact that I was hearing her voice through a machine without seeing her. I may have been talking about more than one voice in this voice. This voice may have been my own. This voice was spoken. This voice was heard. This voice was remembered. This voice was written. This voice was spoken. This voice was forgotten. This voice was to write. This voice will be spoken again.

The book is a collection of essays and interviews. It is a book about the voice. It is a book about the past. It is a book about the future. It is a book about the present. It is a book about the voice.

[^]subscript

Founded in 2012, Small Editions collaborates through studio visits and conversations with artists to publish small editions bookworks and artists books. Seeking to support experimental artist publishing, Small Editions developed a business model that provides book production services to clients as a means to funding its publishing and exhibition programs.

Special thanks to Alexander Benenson, Harry Burke, Rebecca Cleman, Lucy Hunter, and Leslie Lasiter for their generous support as Curatorial Advisors to our residents.

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www.smallcditions.nyc