

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

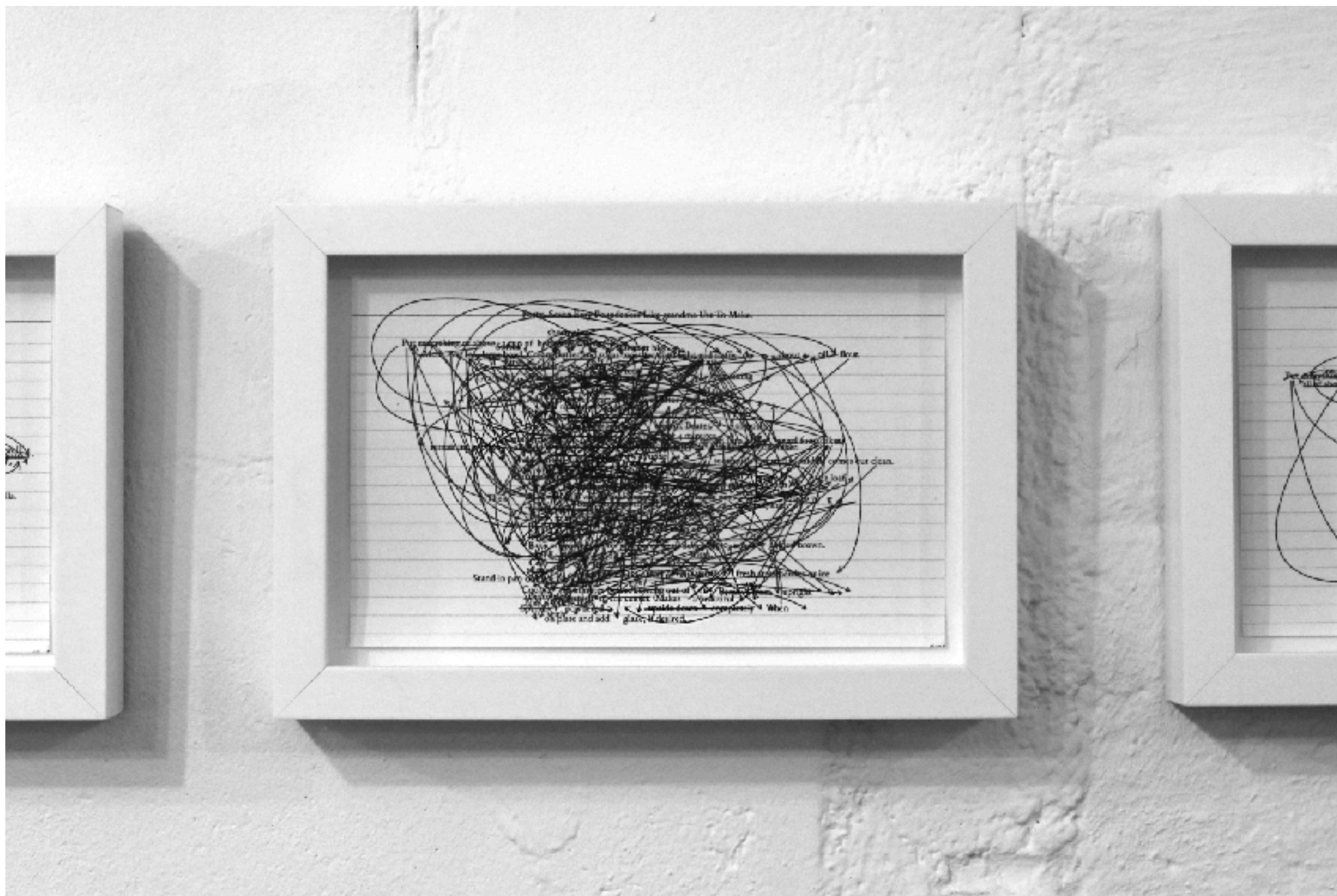




Film still. Sujin Lee, *This Voice*, 2013. HD Video, Color, B&W, Sound.



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



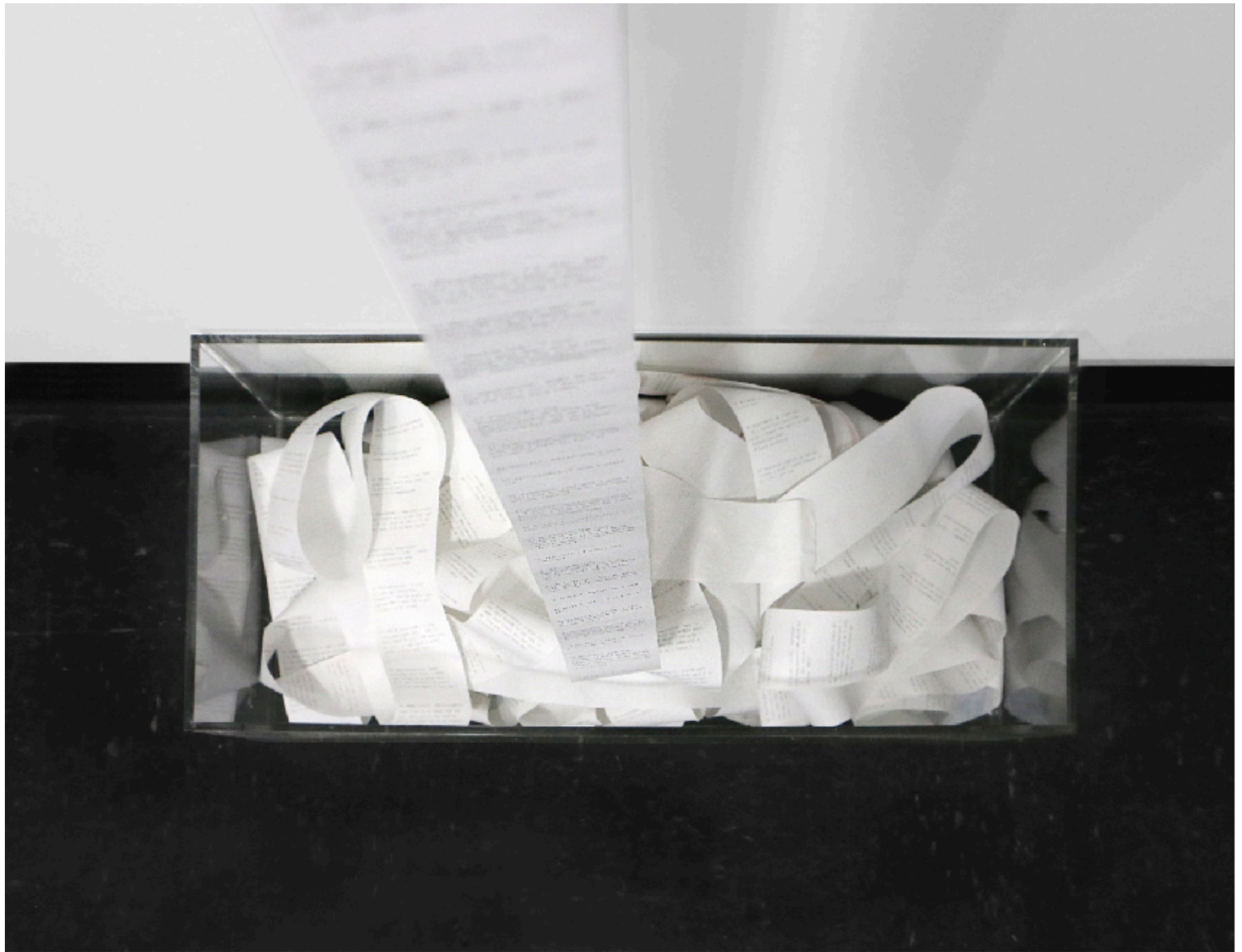
Detail. Nyeema Morgan, *Forty-Seven Easy Poundcakes Like grandma Use To Make*, 2007- 2012. Inkjet prints on index cards. Dimensions variable.



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

Drum cartridge has reached end of life.

Paperless[^]subscript

Language has always rendered 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.¹ 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.² Across Google and Twitter, in the steady erosion of memes, the internet reveals itself as a discourse that is too fast and too various 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 irresistible humanity of defeat. Such is the speed of a language composed of feelings when and hashtag, shout-outs, news-feed confrontations and 'Going' to an event that you didn't make time for.

¹ Kittler goes so far as to claim that media is the only possible instance of language. It is the limit with language, where language ends and where the question of what language was is also the question of how language remains meaning while being the work. Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (1986), Geoffrey Winthrop Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford University Press 1999), 100. ² In "Reality itself is post-modern and virtual; what is rendered as an effect. Far from being opposites, home, an unbridgeable crisis, image and word live in many cases just versions of each other. The gap between the things we do speculate on and those we say is the device

Edited by Nicole Kaack

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Drum cartridge has reached end of life.

Through the work of Rachel Haden and Nick Power,

Nyema Morgan, Benjamin Santiago, and Julia Lee,

"Paperless" considers the many ways in which

memory in text, as performance both digital and analog,

From these and other features two guest artists provide

What occurs in the transition from digital to analog, from

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1. Kittler goes so far as to claim that fidelity is only possible in the absence

of language. It is the same with language, which only leaves us the

choice of either retaining words while losing their meaning or, vice versa,

retaining meaning while losing the words. Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop Young and Michael Wutz,

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, 10.

2. "Reality itself is post-produced and scripted; direct rendered as

after-effect. Far from being opposites across an unbridgeable chasm,

image and word are in many cases just variations of each other... the gap

between them opens way to speculation and intense anxiety." Hito Steyerl,

"Too Much World: Is the Internet Dead?" in *The Internet Does Not Exist*,

Stenberg Press, 2012, 14.

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 *When I Was Conducting Interviews for a Project Titled*, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Project, I asked my interviewees who personally had known Cha 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

voice. We exchanged a few emails and then we were on a voice 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 re-written. This voice will be spoken again.

Small Editions Curator-in-Residence

Nicole Kasack is an artist and writer from Northern California, currently based in Queens, New York. Kasack graduated with a bachelor's degree in Art History and Visual Art from Columbia University and now works as the Dedalus fellow in the Museum Archives at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Kasack's writing has

^A subscriber

Paperless is part of Small Editions' ^subscript series, a bimonthly publication documenting the work of its Curators-in-Residence. Twice a year Small Editions select an emerging curator to organize a thematic exhibition series to nurture a conversation at the intersection of contemporary art and artists books.

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.

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