



microscope gallery

1329 Willoughby Avenue, 2B
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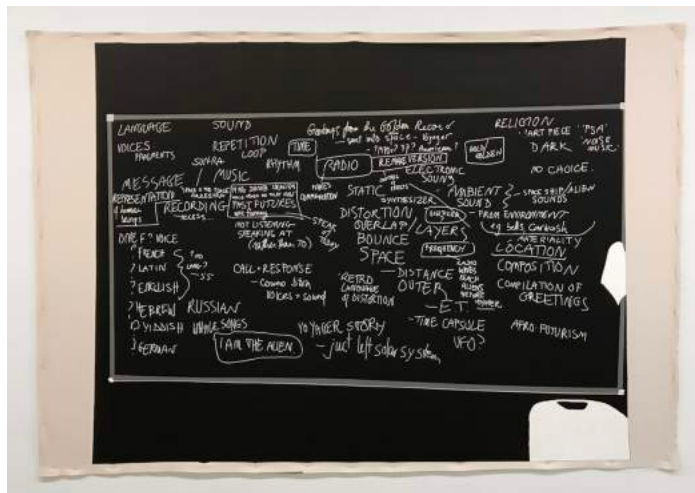
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Matt Town

PORTRAITS

October 26 - December 2, 2018

Opening Reception Friday October 26, 6-9pm



Matt Town, "CRITIQUE (235511202351222581141418)", 2018, acrylic and chalkboard paint on canvas, 84 x 120 inches
Image courtesy of Matt Town and Microscope Gallery

Microscope Gallery is very pleased to present *PORTRAITS*, the second solo exhibition at the gallery of works by Los Angeles-based artist Matt Town.

In new paintings, video, and 35mm slide installation works — inspired by the invention of the whiteboard in the 1950s by photographer Martin Heit who realized his notes with permanent ink could be erased from film negatives — Town draws his attention to concepts of memory, tracing/retracing, recording, erasure, and reproduction, especially in relationship to documentary and portraiture. Town's subjects and subject matter in *PORTRAITS* arise from personal encounters in his daily life, which often mirror or reflect upon wider social concerns and frequently incorporate collaborative and collective processes.

Acrylic and chalkboard paint on canvas works from the series "CRITIQUE" (2015-2018) can be seen as portraits of an anonymous artist's artwork and the collective critiques and thoughts it raised in a 20-member introductory MFA class. The imagery of the paintings replicates the notes written by the professor on the whiteboard — as well as furniture and other objects in the classroom — and is based on the photographs taken by each presenting student of their "board", but with the colors inverted.

These digital snapshots of the whiteboards appear in a 35mm slide installation "620231582114418541620518129651815151361518124", a work that discloses the process behind the paintings and the original colors of text and boards, and connects them to a specific place and time. The titles of the paintings and slide installation include a coded string of numbers each corresponding to a letter of the alphabet, which the artist invites us to decode.

“TRACE” (2018, Hi8 to digital video, color, silent, 15 minutes 33 seconds), a new video recorded and performed by Town’s father according to specific written instructions by the artist, is an unspoken conversation between father and son on the issue of gun ownership. The work shows the father searching for and then tracing on paper all of the guns he is able to locate in his Florida home. Although they stand on opposite sides of the gun debate, their closeness comes through in this work that was shot with the same Hi8 camcorder Town’s father used to record Town skateboarding in his youth.

A final work “PROBLEMATIC” (2016, 16mm film, sound, 4 minutes 33 seconds) consists of letters written with black marker on clear 16mm film leader attempting to spell out a sentence which our minds fill in the missing letter to read: “The whiteboard was conceived after the inventor realized they could wipe permanent marker off of a film negative”. As the film runs through the projector, the individual letters on the frames become less and less visible, recalling the erasure of marker on whiteboards as well as the nature of education and our tendency to read into situations, or to make assumptions that could be swiftly dismantled by the actuality of what appears before us.

PORTRAITS runs from October 26 – December 2, 2018, with an opening reception on Friday October 26th from 6-9pm. Gallery Hours: Thursday through Monday 1-6pm, and by appointment. For additional information please contact the gallery at inquiries@microscopegallery.com.

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Matt Town (b. 1989, Sarasota, Florida) is a Los Angeles-based artist working with moving image, photography, painting, installation and sculpture. His work is primarily concerned with a sense of community and one’s role within it and has appeared at Night Gallery, LA; The Box, LA; Torrance Art Museum, Torrance, CA; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Anthology Film Archives, New York; Millennium Film Workshop, New York; Union Docs, New York; among others. In 2017 he was awarded a year-long CalArts REEF Residency. Matt Town received a BA in Film & Media Studies from the University of Florida in 2013 and an MFA in Art from California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in 2017.



Still from “TRACE”, single-channel Hi8 video transfer to digital, 15 minutes 33 seconds
Images courtesy of the artist and Microscope Gallery