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Erica Baum

KLEMM'S

Fascinated by the printed word, concrete poetry, and the beauty of language permeating our daily lives, the American artist Erica Baum could be best described as a “poetphotographer”.

She has become internationally known for her photographic practice based on found texts and images. With her reflected, nonchalant use of strategies akin to the work of the Pictures Generation, conceptual art, and minimalism, Erica Baum has developed a unique and truly authentic visual language. For two decades now, her enigmatic close-ups of books, newspapers, and other printed matter have been investigating the nature, traditions, and essences of the photographic, steadily „re-materializing“ its visual, haptic and thematic qualities.

Erica Baum’s works are “photographic” in a very specific fashion: alongside the fleeting and ephemeral quality of the constant flow of images on display, she places an objectlike presence and a precise interest in the material context of photography. By developing her series of pictures in direct close-ups, focused on surprising details with a shallow depth of field, she evokes a poetic power: indexically precise and at the same time abstract and trans-temporal like a collage, fragmentary and yet possessing a narrative power; seemingly everyday, trivial, and at the same time charged.

Baum’s pictures are emotional in a special sense – they have a soul and demand most careful attention. They question and confirm in very fundamental ways: text, image, writing – their message, significance and use – an understanding of the essence of our culture.

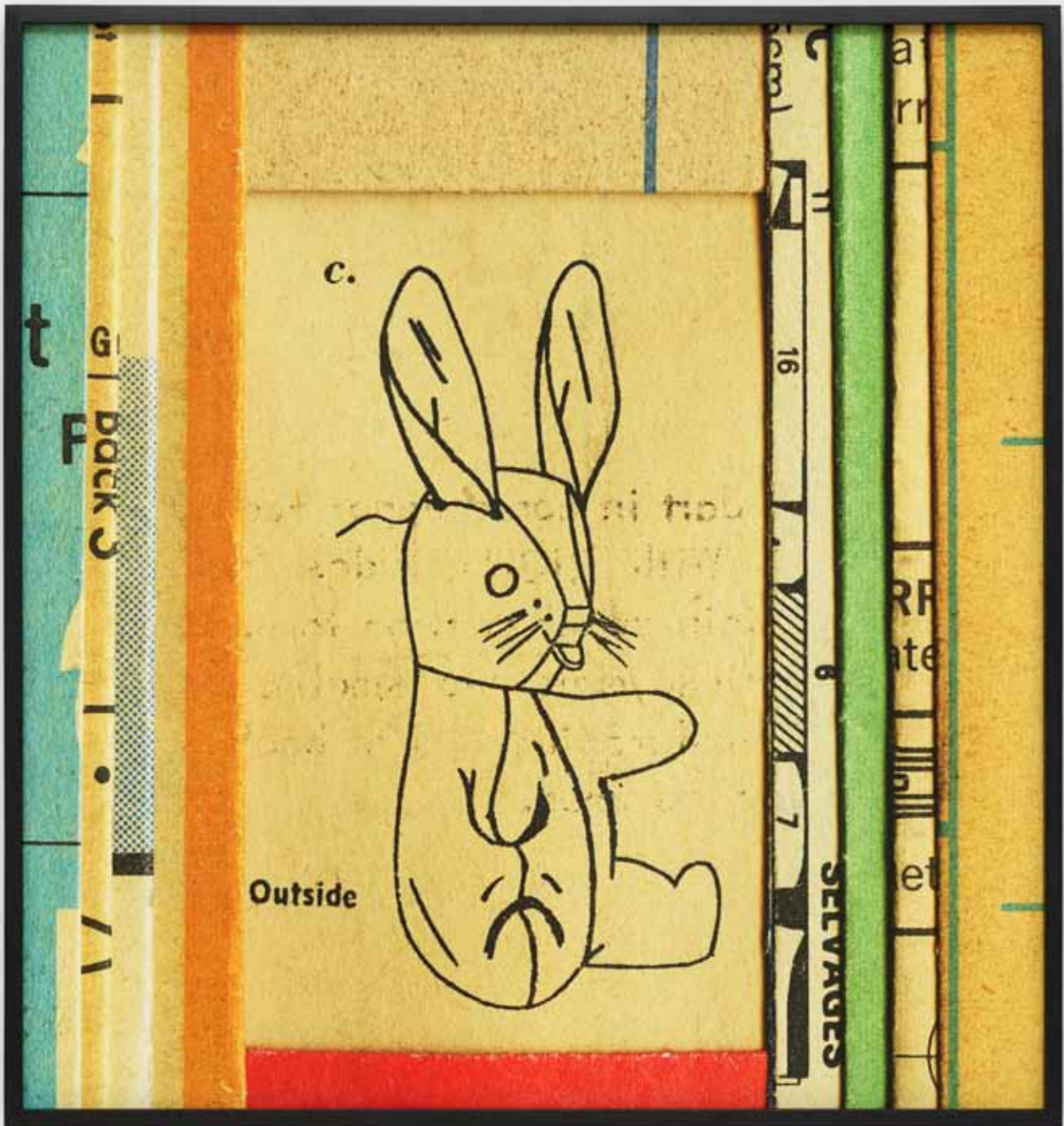
The series ‚Patterns‘ (2019 - ongoing) is drawing a line between the “dictate” of fashion and the language of sewing patterns – Baum lets the words resonate on their own, freed from the canvas of a sentence. Somewhere between technical drawing, geometric diagrams, and a minimalist sketch book. While the poetic quality known from earlier series is strongly at play, Erica Baum’s Patterns bring to mind political sub-tones of alienation and de-humanization, palpable below the surface of the images.

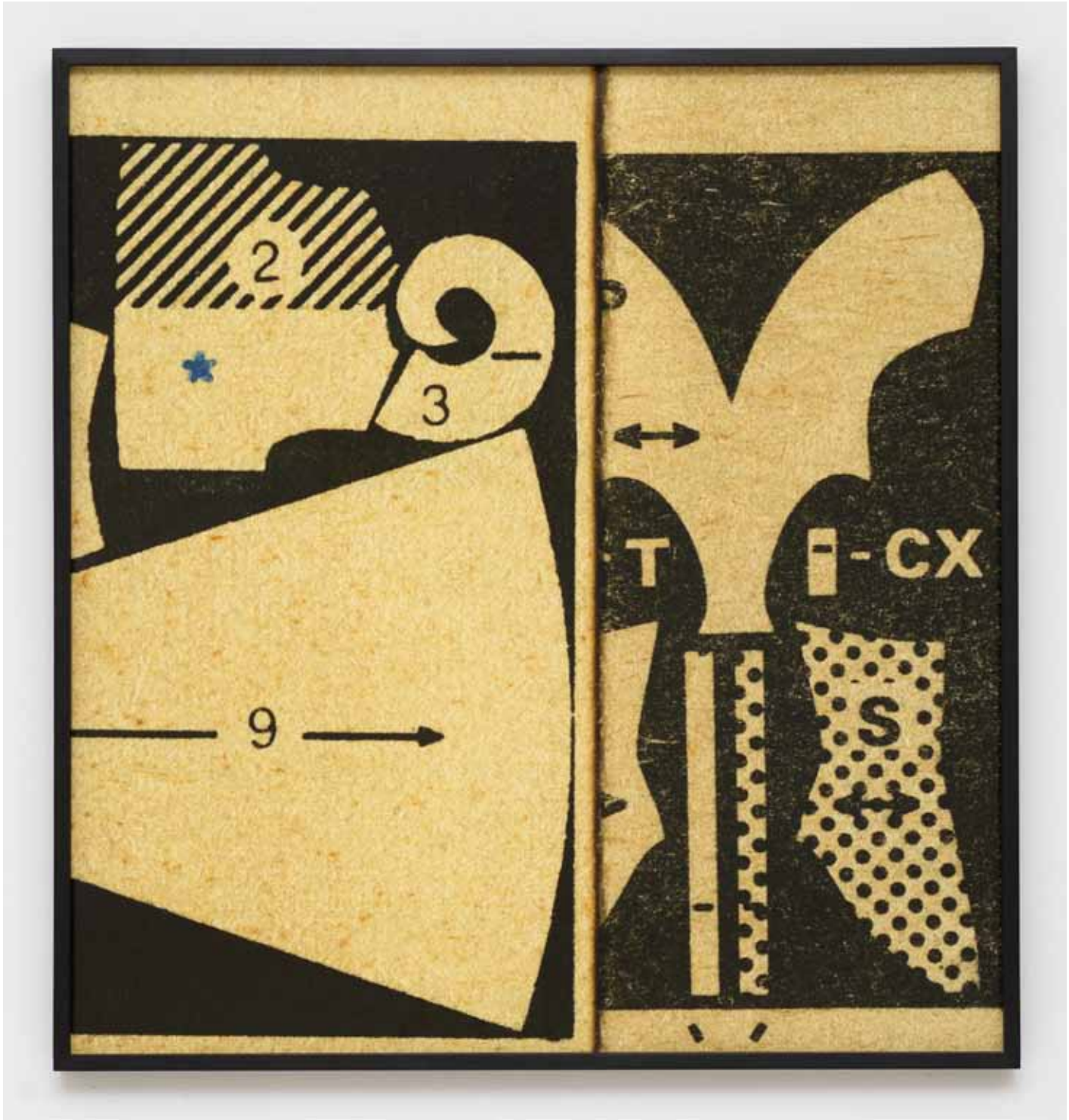


installation view: *A Method of a Cloak*; Klemm's, Berlin 2020

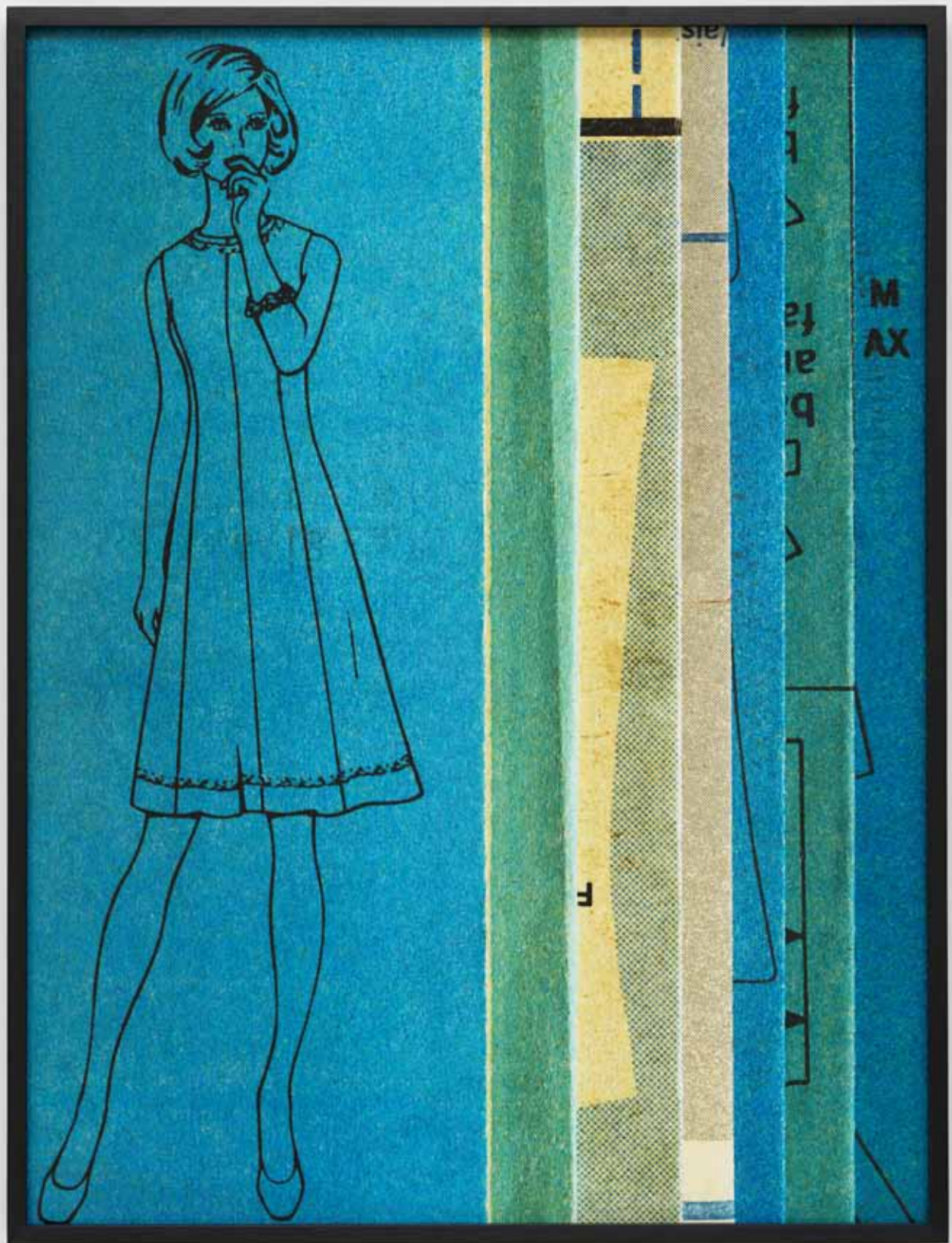


installation view: *A Method of a Cloak*; Klemm's, Berlin 2020





Insect Selvage 2019; from the series 'Patterns'; archival pigment print, 91,44 x 86,08 cm, ed. 4+2 a.p.



Worry 2019; from the series 'Patterns'; archival pigment print; 91,44 x 69,11 cm; ed. 4+2 a.p.



Hip 2019; from the series ‚Patterns‘; archival pigment print, 40,64 x 39,73 cm, ed. 6+2 a.p.



Skirt GreenRed 2019; from the series ,Patterns'; archival pigment print, 40,64 x 39,73 cm; ed. 6+2 a.p.



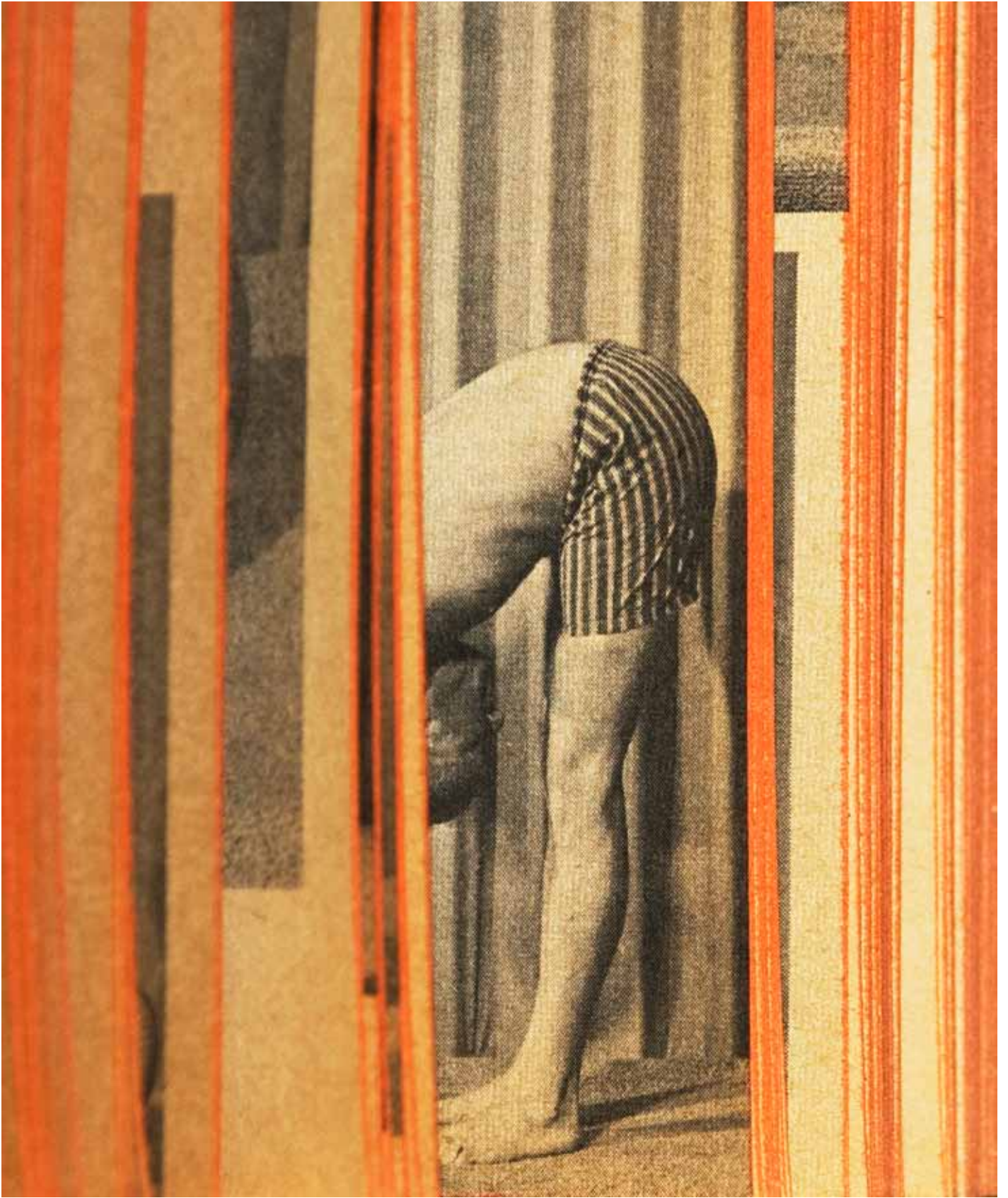
installation view: *'Patterns' - 'A Long Dress'*; Bureau Gallery, New York 2019

Naked Eye (2008 – ongoing)

For her *Naked Eye series* (2008–), Baum directs her camera into the partially opened pages of stipple-edged paperbacks from the 1960s and '70s, capturing slivers of image and text separated by the vertical striations of adjacent pages' brightly dyed edges. Her strategic cropping and framing of their illustrations, glimpsed between fragments of text and the turquoise, marigold and vermillion edges of their pulpy pages, evoke new narratives born of each viewer's own free associations. While Baum's compositions range from the lushly figurative to more dramatically spliced geometric abstractions, all of the works share a sense of dark romance and a voyeuristic appeal.

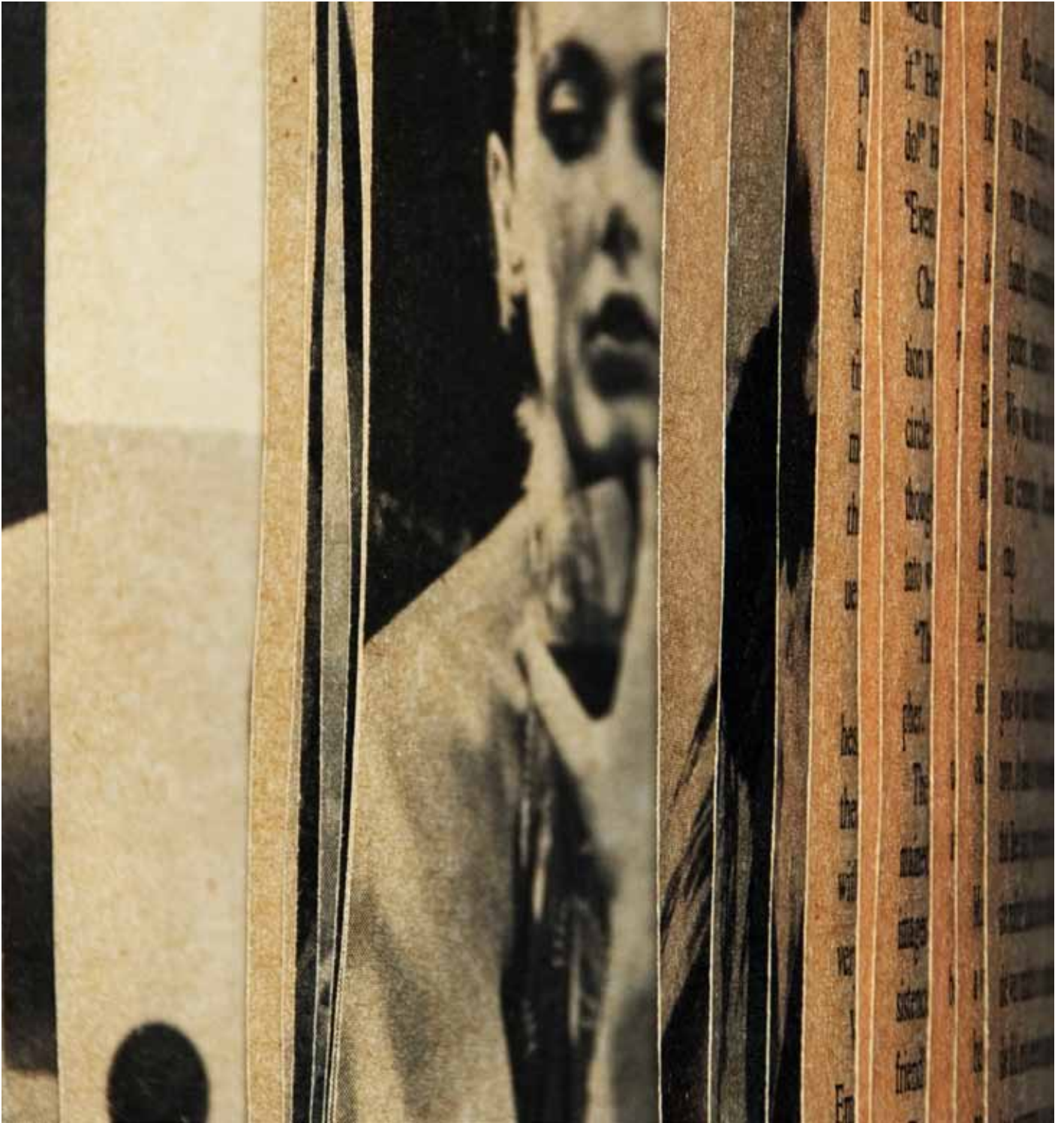
„...words appear sliced or foreshortened, giving way to flattened strips of images—film starlets, clouds, fragments of buildings—that (...) are sandwiched between the rippling and vividly dyed edges of surrounding pages. Bereft of caption and context, these illustrations take over the role of displaced signifier previously held by catalog keywords like daggers and cloaks. Digging through old books on cinema (...) Baum selects anonymous figures who either cast oblique glances off the frame of the page or seem poised for the gaze. Leaving their narratives necessarily unresolved, she spins a web of longing that resonates with her own attraction to the source material (...).“

(Nat Trotman in Aperture Magazine 2014)

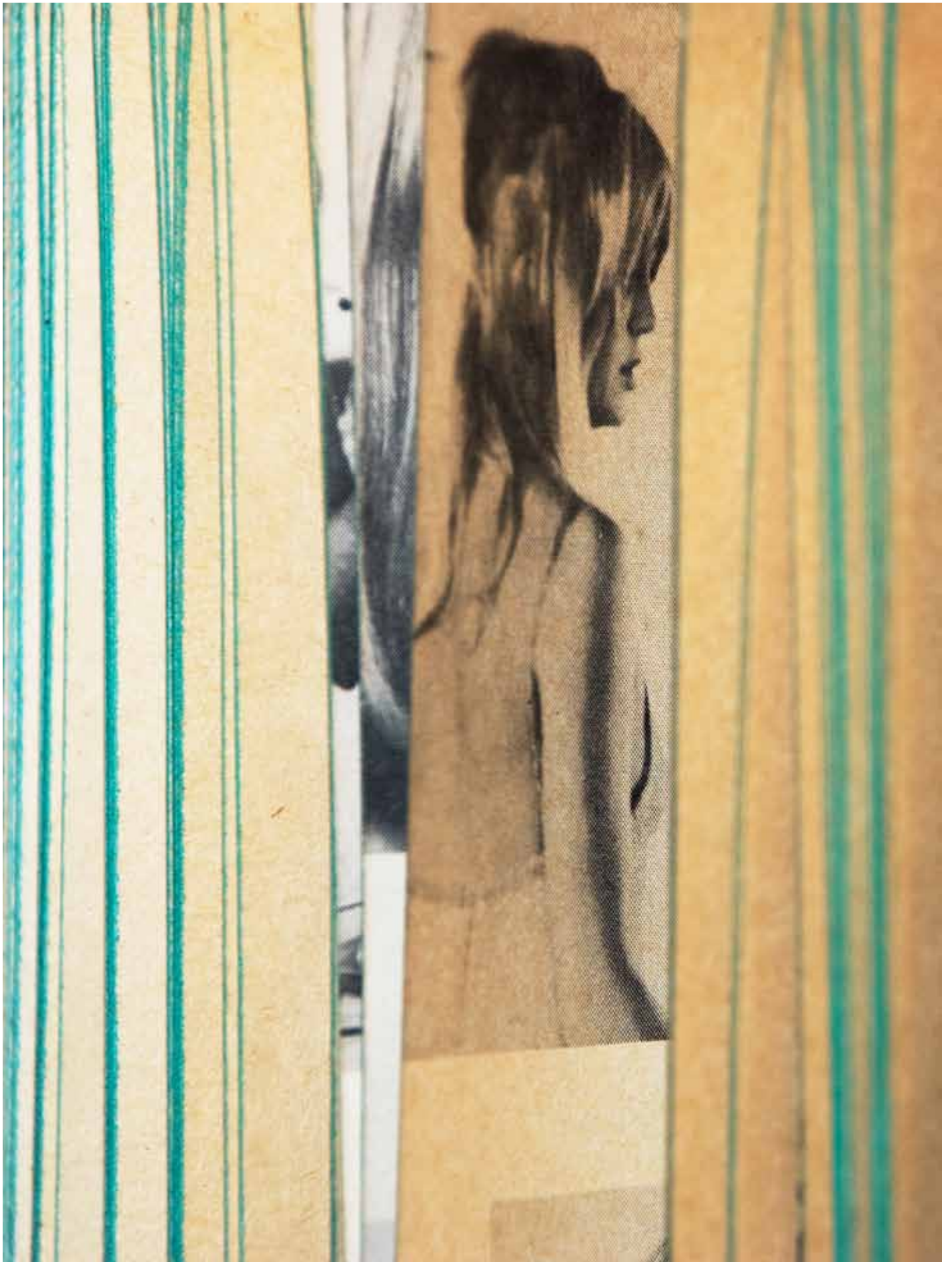


Head Bend (The Naked eye) 2012; archival-pigment print, 39,72 x 43,18 cm, ed. 6+2 a.p.





Alchemy (The Naked eye) 2009; colour inkjet-print, 43,2 x 40,6 cm, ed. 6+2 a.p.



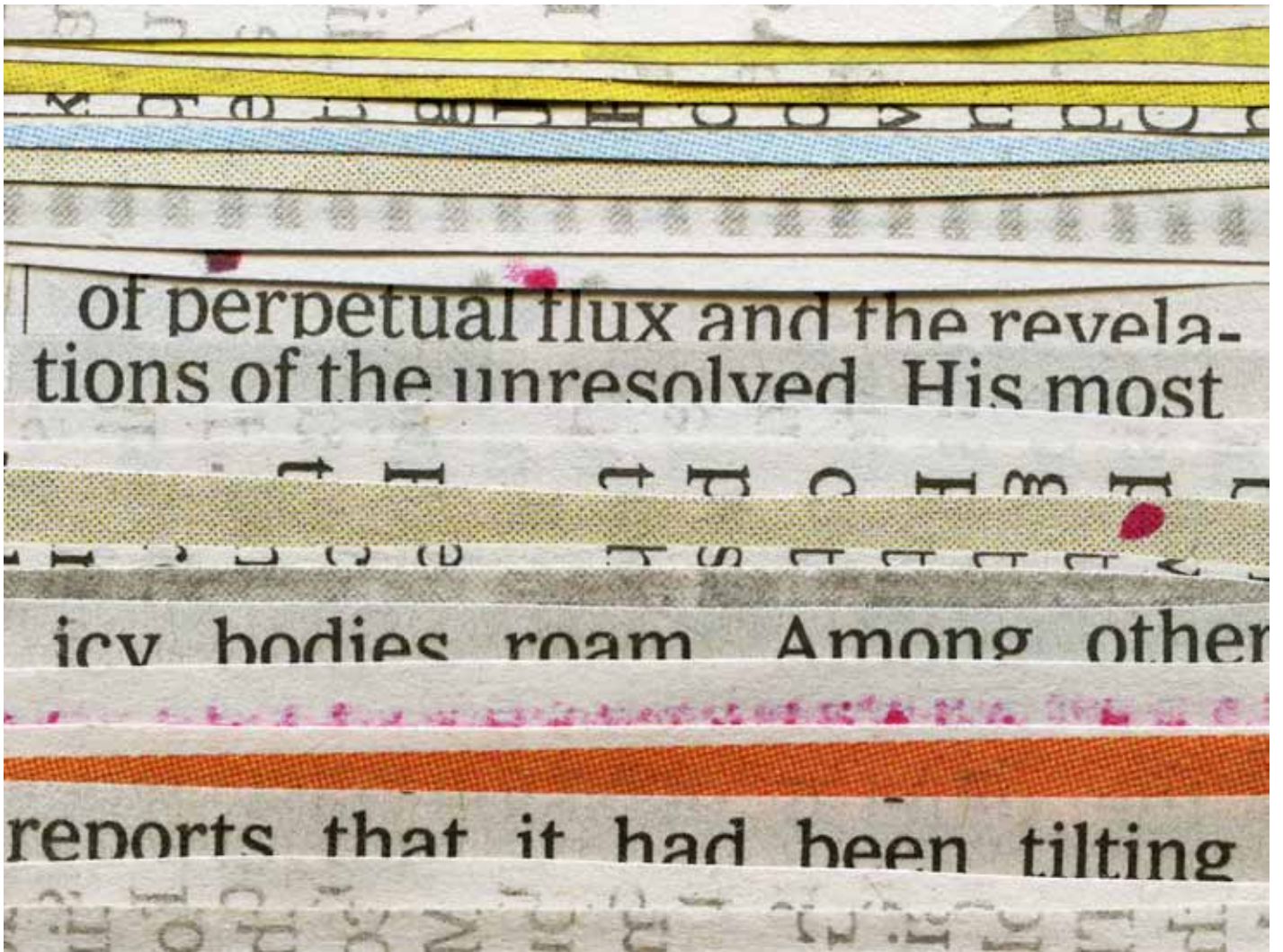
Shampoo (The Naked eye) 2008; colour inkjet-print, 48.26 x 35.56 cm, ed. 6+2 a.p.



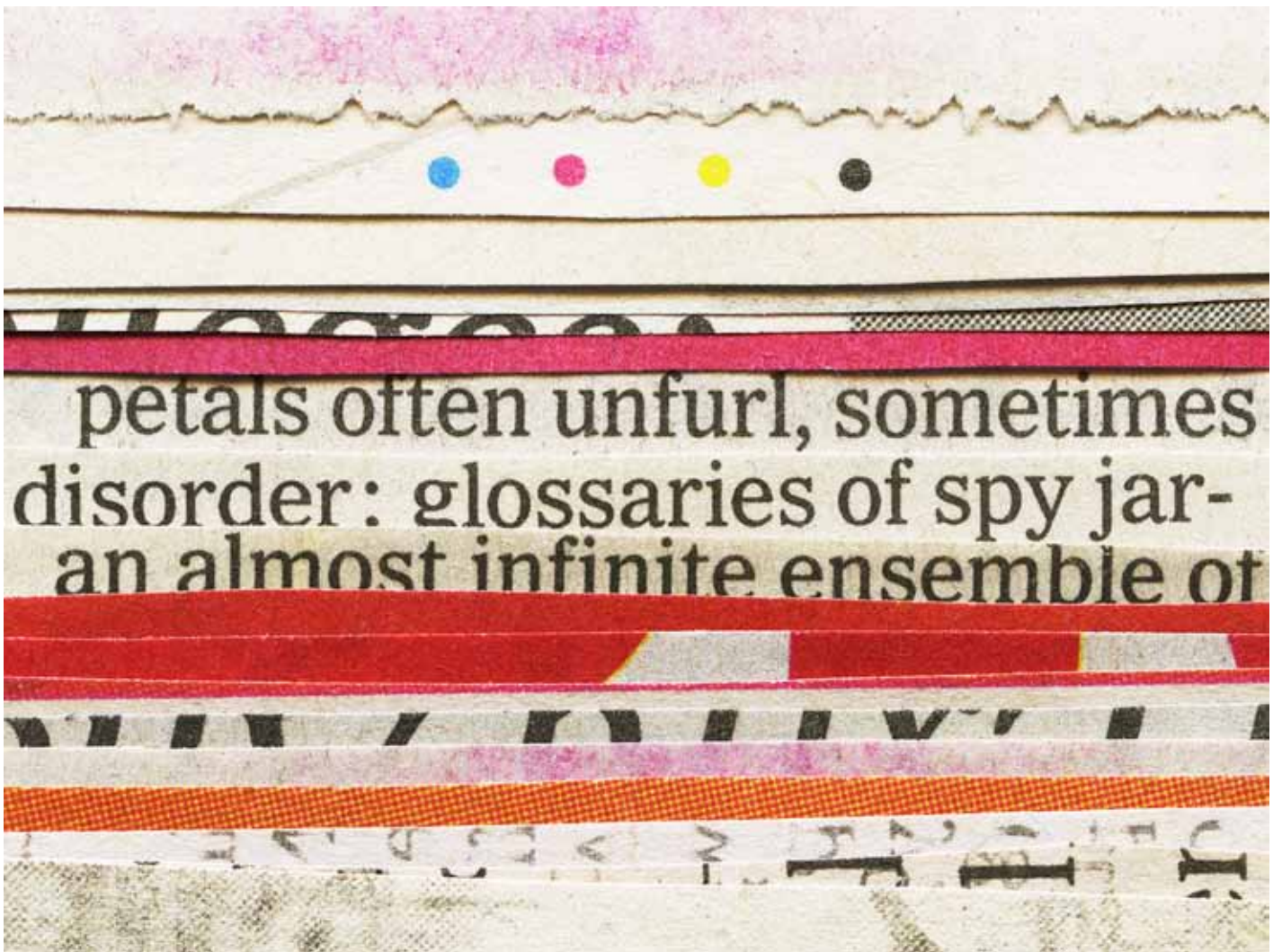
installation view: *The Naked Eye Series* ; „The Imminence of Poetics“, Bienal de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo Brasil 2012



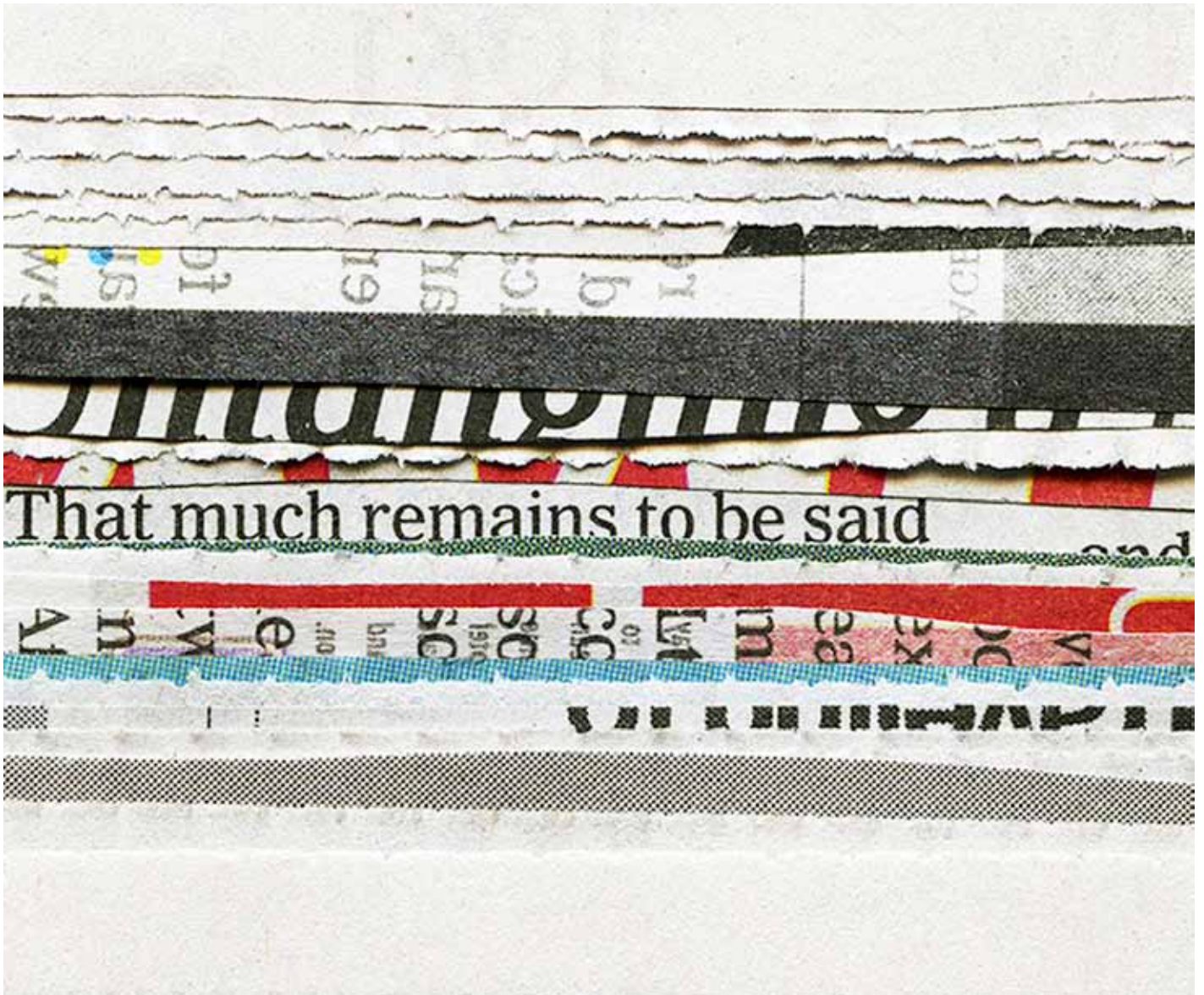
installation view: *Photo Poetics*; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum New York, 2015



Perpetual Flux (Newspaper Clippings), 2014; archival pigment print, 29.7 × 35.6 cm



Unfurl (Newspaper Clippings), 2016; archival pigment print, 29.7 × 35.6 cm



Remains to be Said (Newspaper Clippings), 2010; archival pigment print, 29.7 × 35.6 cm



installation view: *Photo Poetics*; The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum New York, 2015



Dog Ear (2009-ongoing)

In her ,Dog Ear' series Erica Baum ingeniously fuses these verbal and visual qualities by photographing the folded corners of book pages. She draws attention to the physical layout of margins, page numbers, line spacing, and font design while transforming their found texts into syncopated blocks of signification in potentia. The regular folds that cut diagonals across each square frame recall the formal rigor of Minimalism even as they reference the more subjective act of marking significant passages in old books. Baum draws out the luscious physicality of these common objects: the various textures of woven paper, the yellowing tones of age, the hint of ink bleeding through thin pages.



exhibition view: 'The Imminence of Poetics', Bienal de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo Brasil

calls. The inner ear was
everything sounded
First, Venice, 'it as the sun.'
miraculously, 'on the water.'
was like listening
morning
best
O. But

to visit me at my
demigod, only k
prescription d panes, rotten
I hesita d entrance
tears e to foot
and
ear

sense of tragedy.

104

I'm enclosing
 you can also re
 I'm turned
 answering
 Yes
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 me
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do here, or remain
 do now this,
 with you if I
 no tiniest
 so it is

105

32

MIST

“Yes! Yes!” I

I was mad.

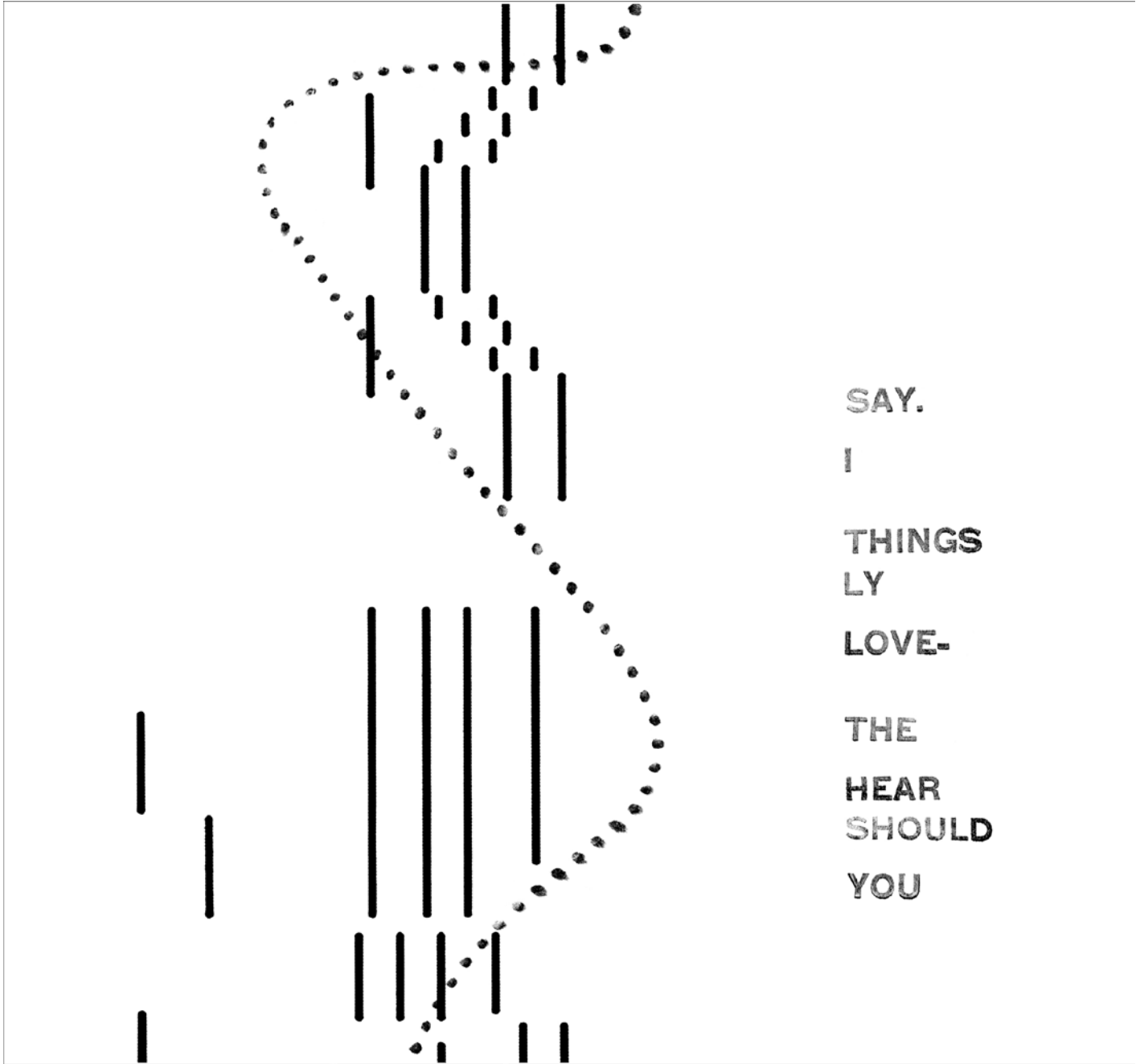
Our carriage
in his fingers
leaping

Me the
Sue the
thou
with a
the couch.
“The doll

33



installation view: ,Reconstructions / RecentPhotography&Video from the Met Collection'; Metropolitan Museum New York 2015



SAY.

I

THINGS

LY

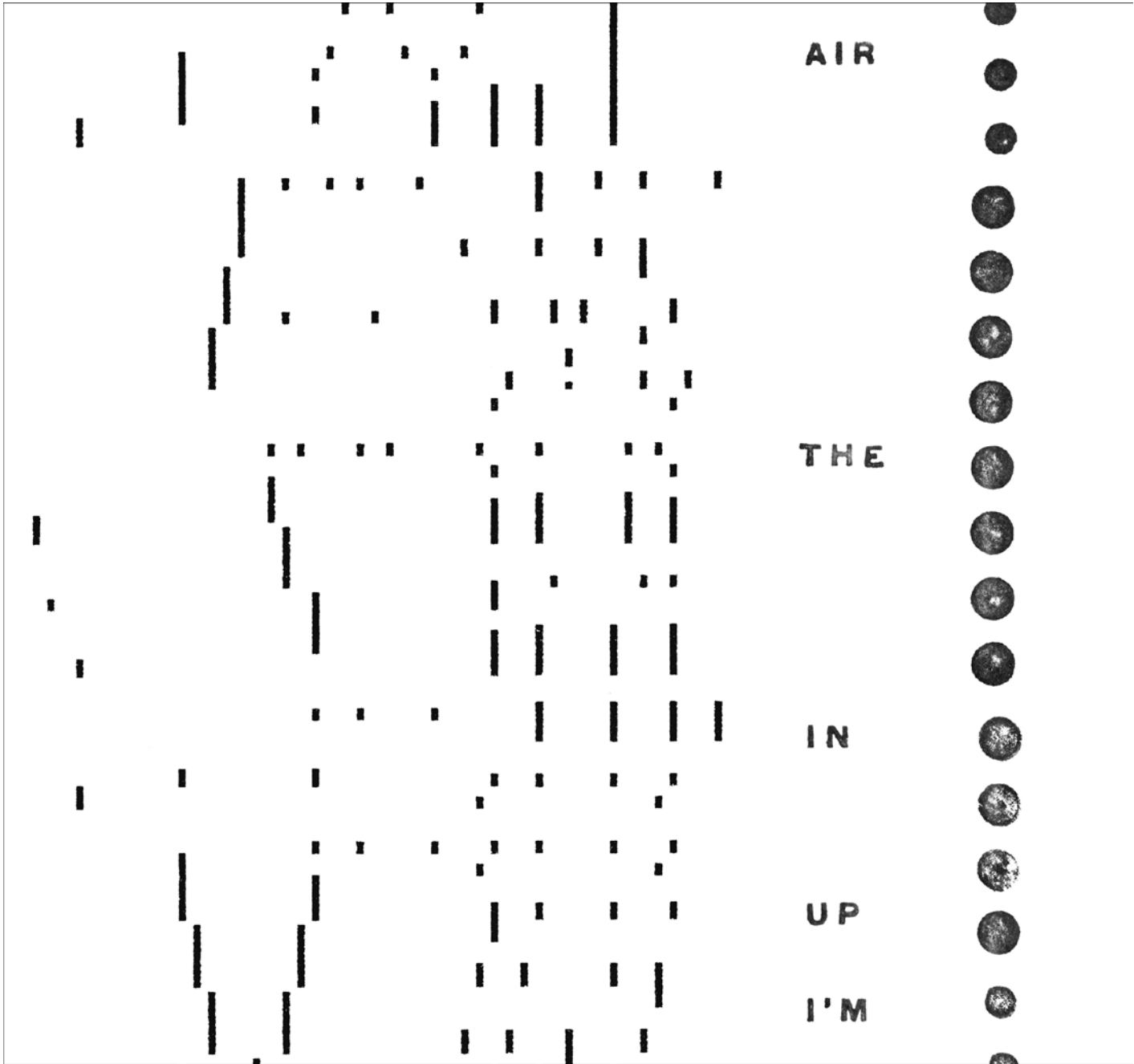
LOVE-

THE

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SHOULD

YOU

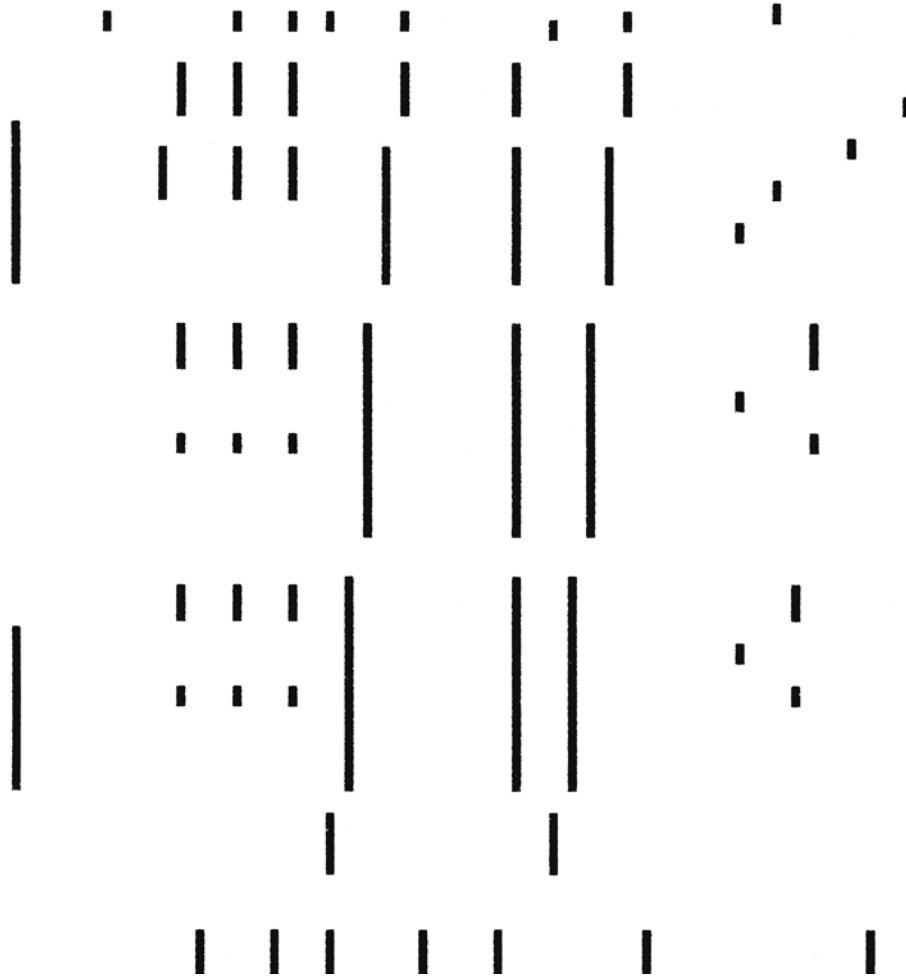




exhibiton view: ,The Imminence of Poetics', Bienal de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo Brasil 2012



WALLS
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WE

Blackboards / Card Catalogues / Frick-Series / Index-Series (1994-2000)

In her early series *Blackboards* (1994–96) – while studying at Yale University – Erica Baum turned her large-format camera lens onto classroom blackboards. She took photographs of the smudges, partial erasures, and stray marks left on the surfaces.

"I began my work there in almost anthropological fashion, taking photographs of college life – fascinated, in particular, by Yale's preppy, upper-middle-class aspects, which were foreign to me. Gradually I focused less on the students and more on details and textures, until I found myself photographing the squiggles, marks and partial erasures left on blackboards after classes were dismissed. I'd established a set of parameters within which theoretically endless encounters could unfold."

Abandoned bits of hastily written text appear everywhere. Chalk gathers in the slates' cracks, while drips of water vanquish any worthwhile messages. Erica Baum gets intimate with these relics of language and pedagogy. She captures every detail, as if she's quietly recording the discovery of a new language.

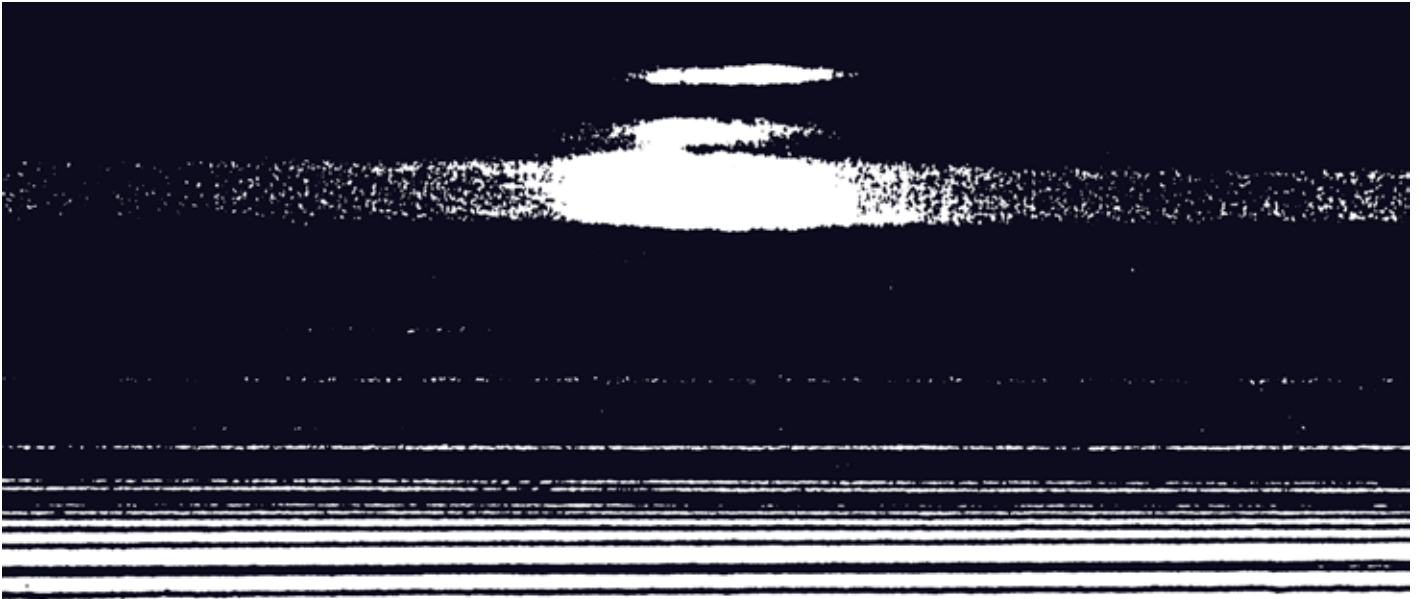
The Card Catalogue series pictures its eponymous subject in extreme detail, focusing on just a few subject markers amid rows of index cards bearing information related to those topics. In Baum's hands these headings seem to hover against an abstract visual field, like ghostly relics of a pre-digital era....Opening a card catalogue "...was a kind of revelation: there were whole worlds in there. Photography, I realized, was a form of concentration; I could turn my attention to anything."

Absurd juxtapositions appear as a natural part of our 'ordering systems'. Words bump up against each other for no other reason than an alphabetical connection, leading the viewer to project their own associations onto the text and content...

The close-up, cropped format of these series of images and their focus on inscribed communication already show signature aspects of her work.



installation view: „A une heure de la civilisation“, Galerie Crèvecoeur, Marseille 2017

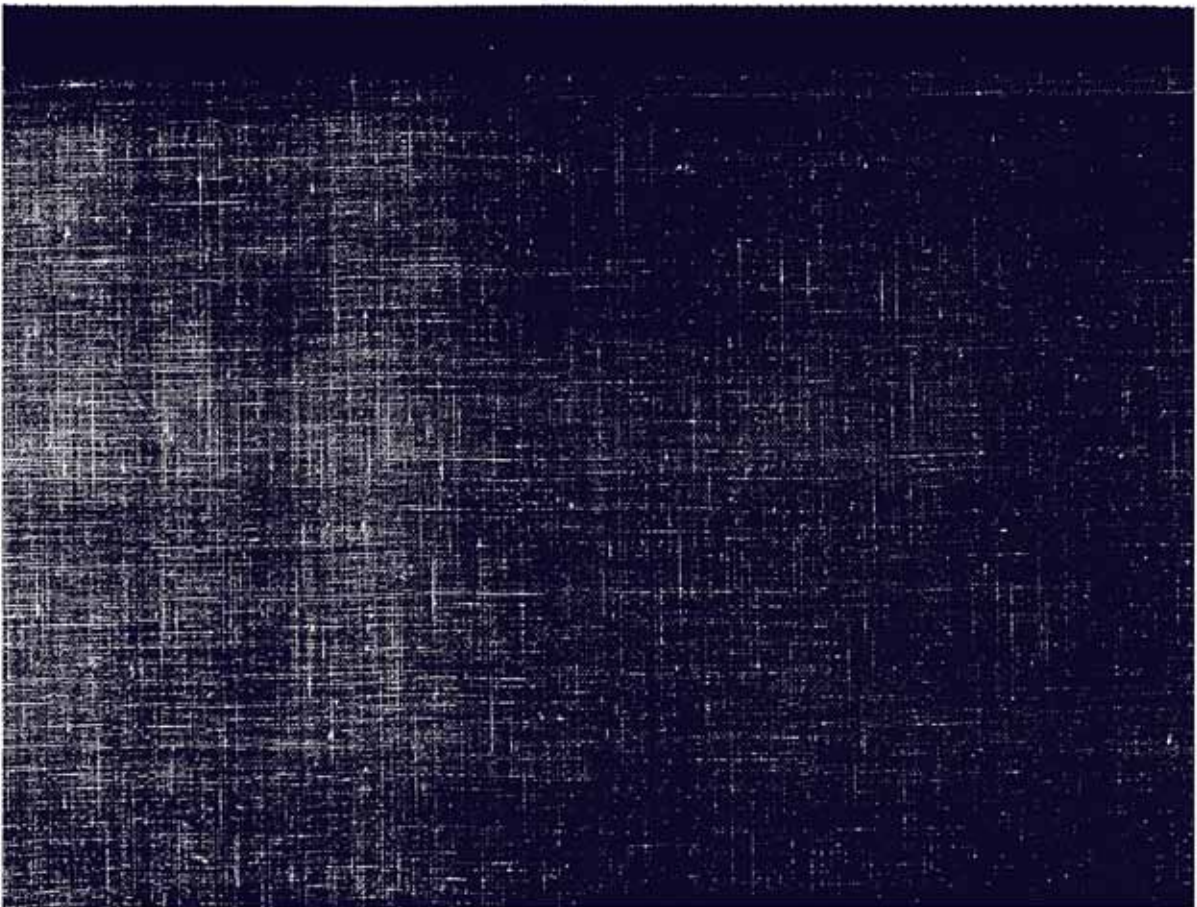


rather than, 116
reason why, 181–2

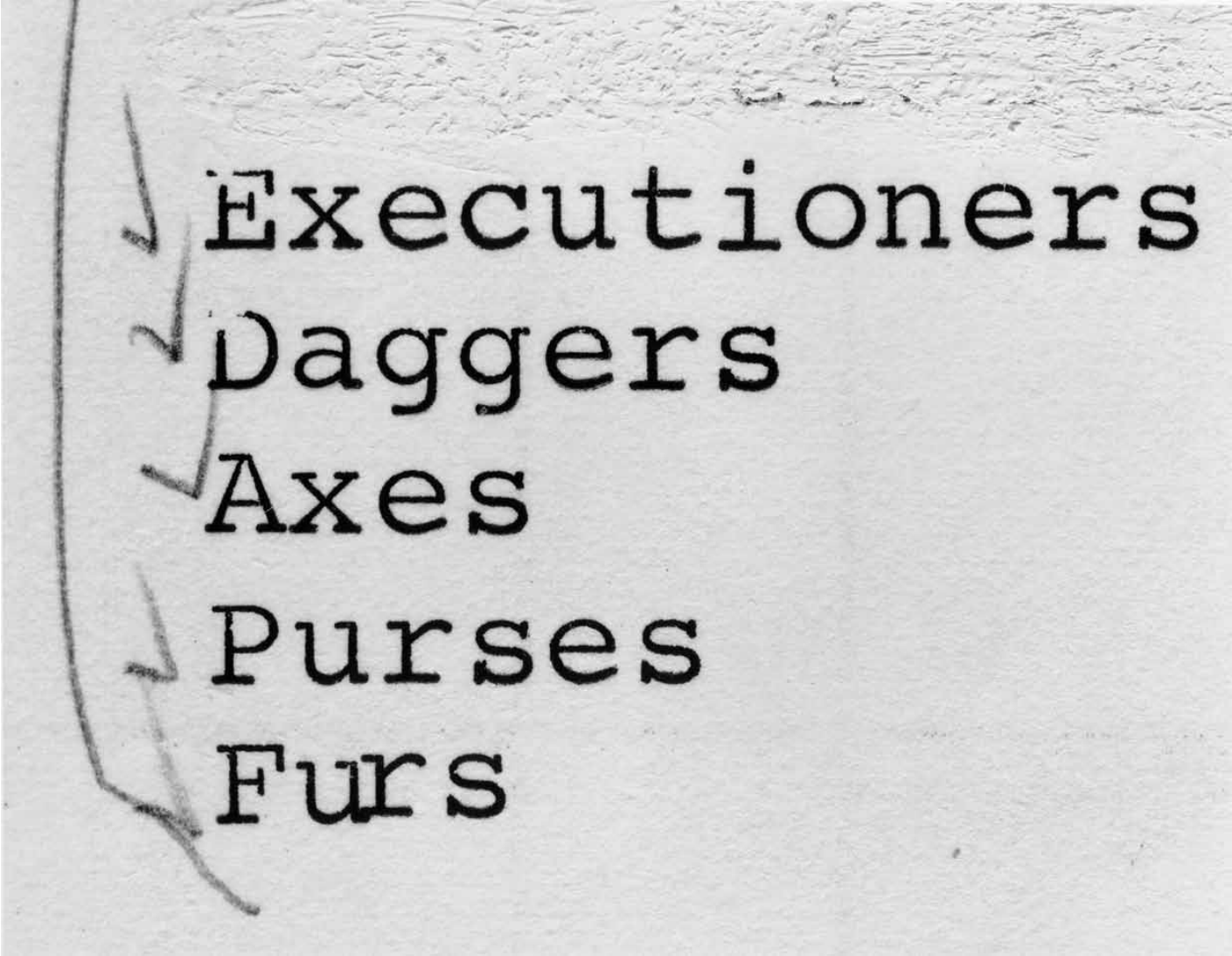
Resolution of the Week, 313,
314

Results, concrete, 271–286

Reverie, 92, 154, 163, 172







Executioners

Daggers

Axes

Purses

Furs

A

> Daggers
> Cloaks

118-12
A

Swans
Amputees



card catalogues; installation view: 'The Following Information', Bureau Gallery, New York 2016



Untitled (Reason), 1996; from the series *'Card Catalogues'*; gelatin silver print; 43,1 × 53,4cm



Untitled (Deja-Vu), 1996; from the series 'Card Catalogues'; gelatin silver print; 53,4 × 43,1cm

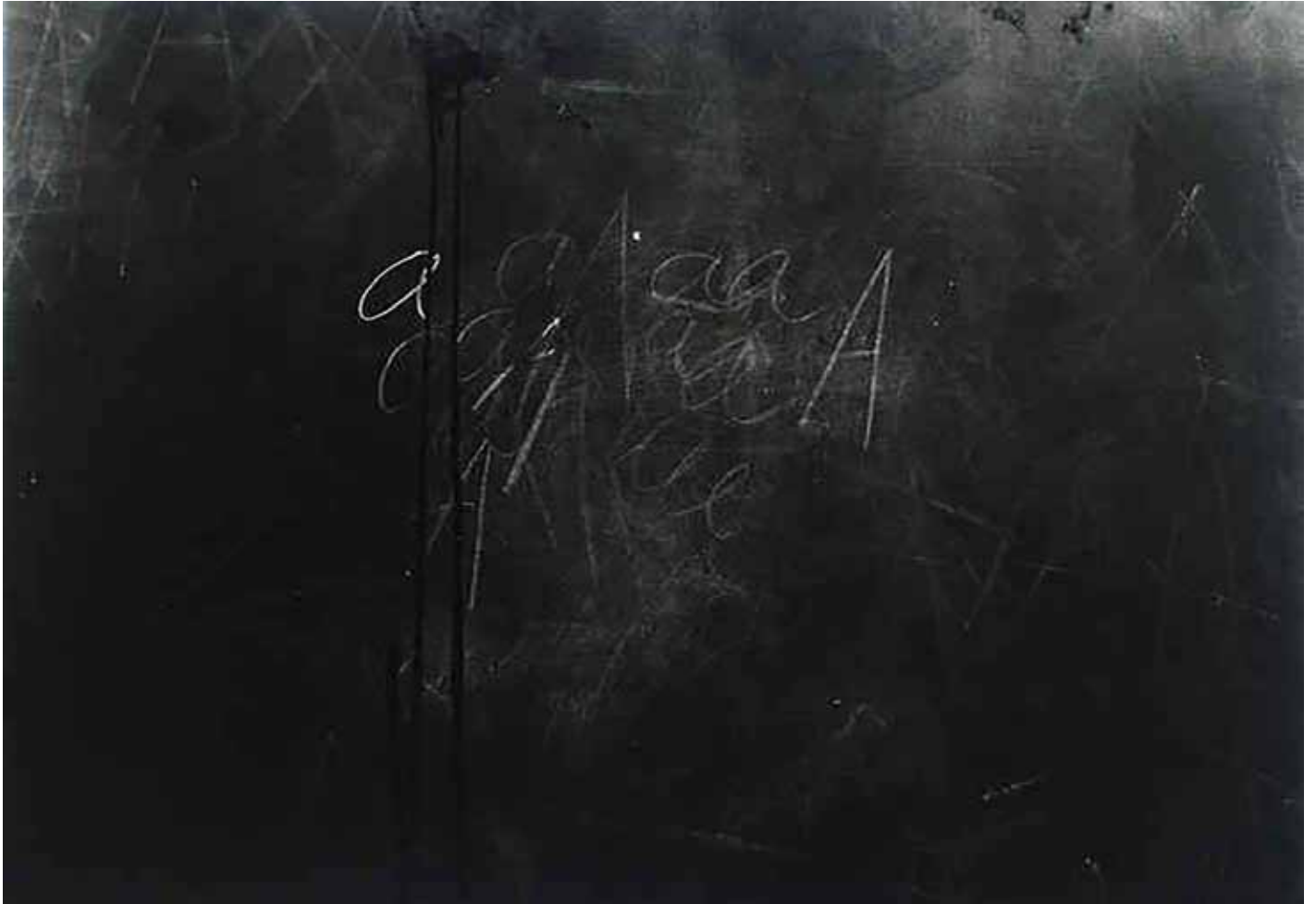
Subversive activities

Suburban homes

Apparitions



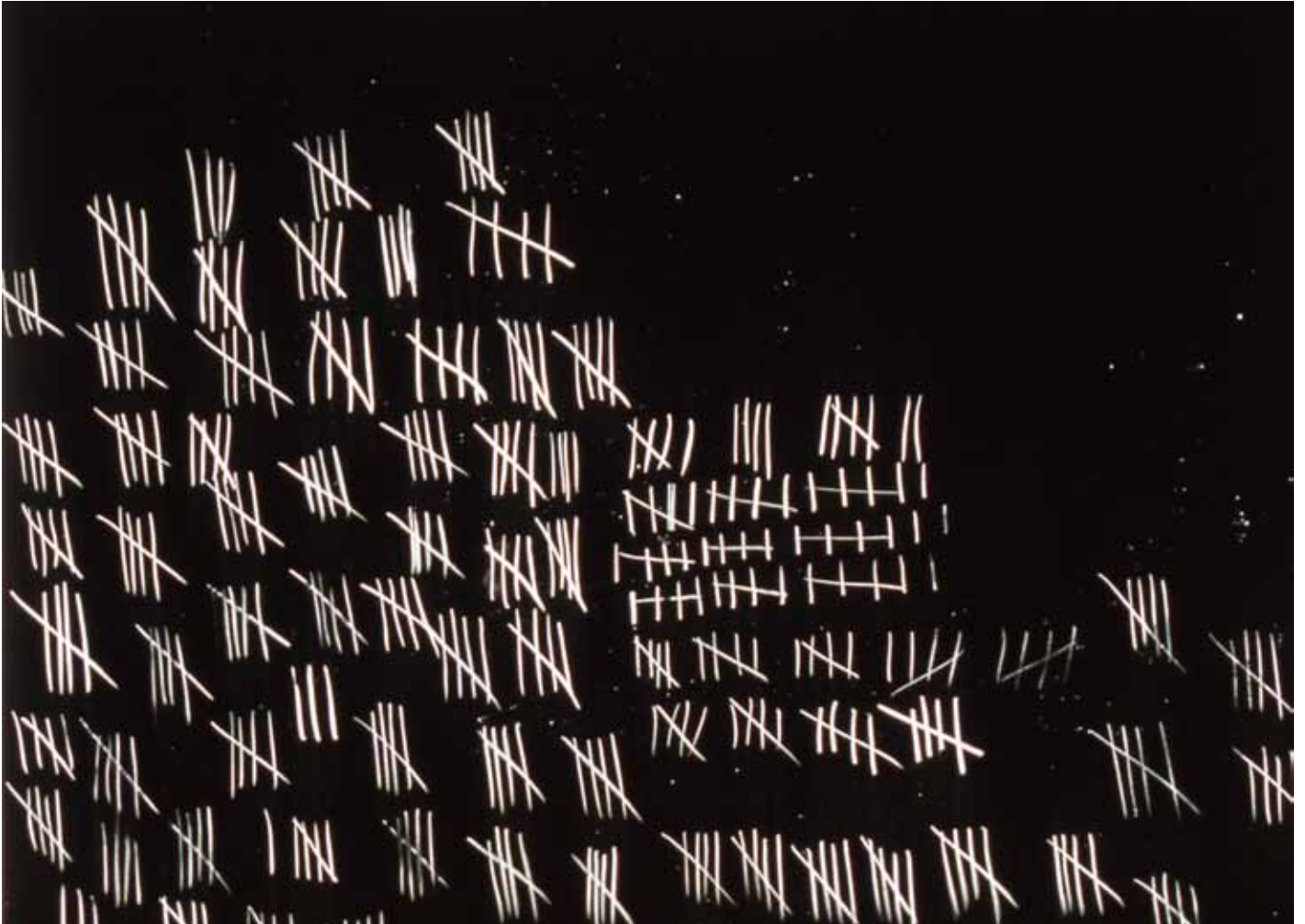
installation view: *The Following Information*; Bureau Gallery, New York 2016



untitled (a drip), 1996; from the blackboard-series; gelatin silver print, 50,8 x 60,9 cm



untitled (malo), 1996; from the blackboard-series; gelatin silver print, 50,8 x 60,9 cm



untitled (counting), 1996; from the blackboard-series; gelatin silver print, 50,8 x 60,9 cm

Erica Baum

b. 1961, New York; lives and works in New York

education

- 1994** Yale University School of Art, M.F.A. Photography, New Haven, CT
- 1988** Hunter College, CUNY M.A. TESOL/Applied Linguistics, New York, NY
- 1984** Barnard College, Columbia University, New York B.A. Anthropology, New York, NY

selected publications & projects

- 2017** The ARCADES: Contemporary Art and Walter Benjamin, edited by Jens Hoffman, contributions by Caroline A. Jones, Vito Manolo Roma, and Kenneth Goldsmith, Exhibition Catalog, The Jewish Museum, New York
- 2016** Erica Baum, Dog Ear, second printing, Ugly Duckling Presse
- 2015** Photo-Poetics: An Anthology, contributions by Jennifer Blessing and Susan Thompson, Exhibition Catalog, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
- Erica Baum, 'Colors / Cadmium Red,' Cabinet Magazine, Issue 58 'Theft,' Summer
- Erica Baum, The Naked Eye, Crèvecoeur/oe Paris & Bureau New York
- 2013** Idra Novey, Clarice: The Visitor, artworks by Erica Baum, University of Chicago Press
- 2012** Fundacao Bienal de Sao Paulo, Exhibition Catalogue
- Erica Baum, Melody Indicator, Triple Canopy
- Francis Baudevin/Erica Baum, Regency Art Press
- 2011** Dispatch 2007-2011, Dispatch New York
- Erica Baum, Sightings, One Star Presse
- Erica Baum, Dog Ear, with Kenneth Goldsmith and Béatrice Gross, Ugly Duckling Presse
- 2009** Erica Baum, Naked Eye, with Kenneth Goldsmith, Free Association
- 2008** Erica Baum, Roll Playing, Kelly Writers House, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Exhibition Catalog

selected collections

- Albright-Knox Art Gallery
- Aishti Foundation
- Bury Art Museum & Sculpture Centre
- Centre National des Arts Plastiques (CNAP)
- FRAC Ile de France
- FRAC Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur
- Hood Museum of Art
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art
- MAMCO Genève
- Norton Museum of Art
- The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
- University of Guelph McClelland & Stewart Art Gallery
- Whitney Museum of American Art
- Yale University Art Gallery

selected solo&duo-exhibitions

- 2020** Square is the Chatter, Galerie Markus Lüttgen Düsseldorf/ A Method of a Cloak, Klemm's, Berlin, Germany
- 2019** A Long Dress, Bureau, New York, NY
- 2018** Naked Eye Nature Morte, Galerie Crevecoeur, Paris, France
- 2017** Until It Makes Sense, Erica Baum & Ajit Chauhan, SVIT, Prague, Czech Republic / AAa:Quien, Erica Baum & Libby Rothfeld, Bureau, New York, NY
- 2016** The Following Information, Bureau, New York, NY
- 2015** Stanzas, Galerie Crevecoeur, Paris, France
- 2014** The Paper Nautilus, Bureau, New York, NY / Harpoon the Monster: Blackboards, Blanks and Viewmasters (with Francis Baudevin), Galerie Mark Müller, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2013** The Public Imagination, Lüttgenmeijer, Berlin, German/ The Public Imagination, Galerie Crevecoeur, Paris, France / Erica Baum, Kunstverein Langenhagen, Langenhagen, Germany / Erica Baum: Blanks/Naked Eye Anthology, Melas Papadapoulos, Athens, Greece / Solo Show, Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa, CA
- 2012** Naked Eye Anthology, Bureau, New York, NY
- Naked Eye, Marc Jancou, Geneva, Switzerland
- 2011** The Public Imagination, Circuit, Lausanne, Switzerland / Shuffled Glances, Bureau, New York, NY
- 2009** The Naked Eye, Dispatch Bureau, New York, NY / Reference, Luttgenmeijer, Berlin, Germany
- 2008** Word Each to Cling I, Kelly Writers House, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
- 2004** Them, D'Amelio Terras, New York, NY
- 2003** Play, D'Amelio Terras, New York, NY / Directions, Dance Theater Workshop Gallery, New York, NY
- 2000** Recent Work, D'Amelio Terras, New York, NY
- 1997** New Photographs, Clementine Gallery, New York, NY
- 1996** Southern Light Gallery, Amarillo College USA
- 1995** University of California, Berkeley Extension, San Francisco

selected group-exhibitions

- 2021** On the Basis of Art: 150 Years of Women at Yale, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, USA (forthcoming)/ True Pictures? Contemporary Photography from North America/ From Document to Concept, Museum für Photographie Braunschweig, Braunschweig, DE (forthcoming) / Casa Nova, Crèvecœur, La Porta, Corsica, FR / RABBIT HOLE, F Gallery, Houston, USA
- 2020** Pictures, Revisited, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA/ Summer In Love, O V project, Brussels, BE
- 2019** Face à face, frac île-de-france, Campus de Villeteuse, France / Making Knowing: Craft in Art, 1950–2019, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA / Photographie et documents, 1983-2018: Une histoire de la collection du Fonds régional d'art contemporain #2, Frac Provence Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Marseille, FR / Condo New York, Bureau hosting (STANDARD OSLO), New York, USA / The Second Body, organized by Sam Contis, Klaus von Nichts sagend Gallery, New York, USA / Cut - Copy - Paste, o v project, Brussels, Belgium / What is an edition, anyway?, McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, San Francisco, USA
- 2018** Anna Atkins Refracted: Contemporary Works, The New York Public Library, New York, NY /The Swindle: Art Between Seeing and Believing, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY /Lever le voile, frac île-de-france, Paris, France /Types of Typewriting, Schreibmaschinentexte seit den 1950er Jahren, Galerie Oqbo, Berlin, Germany /Hours and Places, Bkowski, Baum, DeJong, Bureau, New York, NY /mark, Team Gallery, New York, NY / The Remains of Cinema, Künstlerhaus Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz, Austria / Condo London, Southard Reid hosting Bureau and Park View, London, UK
- 2017** Satellite TV, organized by Anne Eastman, Tetsuo's Garage, Nikko, Japan /L'art dans tous ses états – chap.8, frac île-de-france, Les Réservoirs, Limay, France /Threads Left Dangling, Veiled in Ink, curated by Béatrice Gross, Galerie Emanuel Layr, Vienna, Austria /A une heure de la civilisation, Galerie Crèvecoeur, Marseille, France /The Arcades: Contemporary Art and Walter Benjamin, The Jewish Museum, New York, NY /Tuer la marionnette, curated by Clement Delepine, CACBM, Paris, France /Elective Affinities: A Library, curated by Jocelyn Spaar and Sarah Watson, 205 Hudson Gallery, NewTake Note, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA /Strange Days, Le Plateau, Frac Île-de-France, Paris, France /Erica Baum, Francis Baudevin, Stéphane Dafflon, Philippe Decrauzat, Blair Thurman, Galerie Nikolaus Ruzicska, Salzburg, Austria
- 2016** Her Crowd: New Art by Women from Our Neighbors' Private Collections, Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT / Tongue, Ange la Meleca Gallery, Columbus, OH /Two Years of Looking, New Art Projects, London, UK /Thought Patterns, Deborah Ronnen, Rochester, NY /For the Love of Things: Still Life, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY
- 2015** Revelations, FRAC Île de France, Paris, France /Photo-Poetics: An Anthology, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY /Pangrammar, P!, New York, NY / Jeux de langage, FRAC Île de France, Paris, France /The Exhibition of a Film (Screening), Tate Modern, London, UK /The Exhibition of a Film (Screening), Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France / Reconstructions: Recent Photographs and Video from the
- 2014** PLATEFORME(S), Centre d'art contemporain d'Yverdon-les-Bains, Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland/ Lucid Gestures: An Exhibition of Barnard Alumnae Artists, Mccagg Gallery, Barnard College, New York, NY / The Exhibition of a Film, Centre D'art Contemporan Geneve, Geneva, Switzerland / The Built Environment: Lower East Side in Istanbul, Mixer, Istanbul, Turkey /Infinite Tuning, Murray Guy, New York, NY / A Poem a Day, Mu.ZEE, Ostend, Belgium / Seymou CEEAC, Strasbourg, France / Langue des oiseaux et coq à l'âne. Autour de Raymond Hains, Le Frac Bretagne, Rennes, France / Lists, Bury Art Gallery, Lancashire, UK
- 2013** AGORA 4th Athens Biennale, Athens, Greece / Anthology, Summerhall, Edinburgh, UK /Printing Out the Internet cur. Kenneth Goldsmith, Labor, Mexico City, Mexico / Step Right In, Visual Arts Center, Austin, TX /Postscript: Writing After Conceptual Art (Extended), The Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, East Lansing, MI & Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, Toronto / Chick Lit: Revised Summer Reading, Tracy Williams, Ltd, New York, NY / Desire, Yancey Richardson Gallery, New York, NY / October 18, 1977, Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert, Inc, New York, NY / Jew York, Untitled Gallery and Zach Feuer Gallery, New York, NY / Everyday Epiphanies, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY / Bass! How Low Can You Go?, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY /The Feverish Library Cont'd, Capitan Petzel, Berlin, Germany /Speaking and Thinking, Galerie Nordenhake, Stockholm, Sweden / DOWNTOWN: a view of the Lower East Side, James Cohan, Shanghai, China / 30th Bial de São Paulo Touring Program, Sesc São José do Rio Preto, São Paulo, Brazil
- 2012** The Imminence of Poetics, Fundacao Bial de Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo / Lost & Found: Anonymous Photography in Reflection, Ambach & Rice Gallery Los Angeles, CA / Postscript, Denver MCA, Denver, CO / The Feverish Library, Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York NY / Coquilles Méchaniques, FRAC Alsace, Altkirch, France / B-Out, curated by Scott Hug, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY / Journal d'une chambre, Cur. Jean-Max Colard, Galerie Crevecoeur, Paris, France / Slow Numbers, Showroom 170, New York, NY / Erica Baum and Sara MacKillop, Bischoff/Weiss, London, UK / Spelling the Image, Marc Jancou Contemporary, New York, NY / (im)possibilities, Visual Art Center, Univ. of Texas, Austin, TX
- 2011** Library Science, Artspace, New Haven, CT / Summer Salt, The Proposition, New York, NY / Pictures Extra and Others, Helena Papadopoulou Gallery, Athens, Greece
- 2010** ITEM, curated by Mamie Tinkler, Mitchell Innes & Nash, New York, NY / Woodman, Woodman, Spare That Tree, Luttgen meijer, Berlin, Germany / Freischuss, Kleine Humboldt Galerie Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany
- 2009** I know nothing of the weather when I know it is either raining or not raining, Pacific Northwest / College of the Arts, Feldman Gallery Portland, OR / We'll Know Where When We Get There, Centre National de l'Estampe et de l'Art Imprime, Chatou, France

- 2008** Useful Gestures, Useless Gestures, Dipatch Bureau, New York, NY / Subject Index, Malmo Konstmuseum, Malmo, Sweden / A New Reality: Black-and-White Photography in Contemporary Art, Stedman Art Gallery, Rutgers University, Camden, NJ
- 2006** Re-Make/Re-Model, D'Amelio Terras, New York, NY
- 2002** Gravity Over Time, cur. John Pilson, 1000 Eventi, Milan, Italy
- 2000** Summer group show, D'Amelio Terras, New York, NY / Foul Play, Thread Waxing Space, New York, NY / Summer Reading, Yancey Richardson, New York, NY / Neither-Nor, Grand Arts, KansasCity,
- 1998** Gel, D'Amelio Terras, New York, NY / Hotspots, Nassauer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden, Germany / Inventory, White Columns, New York, NY / Sourpuss, Lubelski Gallery, NY