

Between the Lines



Alexander Gray Associates

Between the Lines

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Luis Camnitzer

Jennie C. Jones

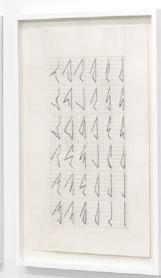
Hassan Sharif

Valeska Soares

Jack Whitten

September 11 – October 17, 2020

Alexander Gray Associates



Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)

Between the Lines

Alexander Gray Associates, New York presents *Between the Lines*, a group exhibition of recent and historic sculptures and works on paper by Luis Camnitzer, Jennie C. Jones, Hassan Sharif, Valeska Soares, and Jack Whitten. Borrowing its title from a 2013 piece by Camnitzer, the show juxtaposes each artist's distinct visual approach while underscoring the conceptual rigor and seriality that unites their disparate practices.

Jennie C. Jones anchors the presentation with two 2016 groupings of drawings from her ongoing series *Score for Sustained Blackness*. Much like Jones' celebrated *Acoustic Panel Paintings*, which integrate musical structures into their compositions, this series incorporates gesture into musical notation. Recalling expanded understandings of music that were advanced by Fluxus artists and composers like John Cage, the works deconstruct a musical staff. Transforming wild mark-making into booming crescendo, through repetition they establish a connection between drawing and the sonic. Shown in conjunction with *Song Containers* (2011), elegantly spare aluminum sculptures that replicate the packaging of analog playback technologies, Jones seamlessly integrates the formal with the aural to create a new abstract language.

Just as the hollow forms of Jones' *Song Containers* allude to silence—what can no longer be listened to—so too do the empty boxes of Valeska Soares' *Palimpsest I* (2016) suggest what is obscured—what can no longer be seen. Recontextualizing a series of Brazilian boxes with wooden marquetry tops that depict landscapes, the installation subsumes the makers of the boxes and the objects they might have once held in favor of producing a grand vista. Staining the boxes' lids and carefully installing them so that they share a horizon line, Soares crafts a mysterious panoramic nightscape whose individual trees and hills are effaced to emphasize a new collective narrative based on a tropical idyll. Also imbuing mundane items with an evocative artistic charge, Soares' *For To (X)* (2017) repetitively layers dedication pages torn from antique books into a tight oval on the wall. Exploring concepts of ephemerality and nostalgia, the formally austere work highlights the lives of authors and gift-givers, inviting viewers to read between the lines to construct past personal histories through messages of love and thanks.



Luis Camnitzer, *Between the Lines*, 2013

Displaying a similarly inventive use of materials, Jack Whitten’s groundbreaking 1974 *Xerox Project* monotypes experiment with toner as a medium. Carefully applied to rice paper, this powder allowed him to achieve a range of spontaneous effects—from deeply saturated volumes to delicate, streaky lines of pigment—while interrogating gesture and form. At once suggesting topographical mapping and satellite photography of the moon, these prints recall the artist’s time spent as a cadet at Tuskegee University. Works like *Xeroxed!* (1975) forward a process-driven approach to seriality by presenting multiple toner monotypes arranged in a grid and mounted on canvas. Eroding distinctions between drawing and painting, the piece marries gesture with technical experimentation. Ultimately establishing Whitten’s artistic framework, his Xerox monotypes paved the way for the aesthetic innovation of later series like the artist’s celebrated Greek Alphabet paintings.

Like Whitten, who sought to develop a more conceptual approach to painting, Hassan Sharif also invented alternative, cerebral ways to draft an image. Beginning in the 1980s, he coined the term “semi-system” to describe his compositional techniques, which were based on invented calculations and seemingly endless repetitive permutations. Sharif’s *Semi-Systems like Seven Points Angular Lines - Part 2* (2013) both follow and challenge the logic of these self-imposed rules. Presenting viewers with a system that is constantly on the verge of breaking down, the work’s agitated, pseudo-calligraphic strokes echo the frenetic development that occurred in the United Arab Emirates as it became a global economic hub.

In contrast to Sharif’s quasi-mathematical formalism, Luis Camnitzer uses language, itself, as a medium. His ten-part work, *Between the Lines* (2013), presents viewers with variations of the same sentence inscribed on lined paper. Beginning with the phrase “When I read between the lines the paper stares back at me ...,” each iteration constructs its own poetics around the creative process while forwarding an expansive understanding of that process based on the repetitive potential of constant revision.

Although Camnitzer ultimately concludes his 2013 artwork by writing, “When I read between the lines the paper stares back at me telling that I haven’t wondered enough,” the artists in the Gallery’s exhibition are always wondering—challenging and expanding upon established methodologies. Relentless innovators, they read between the lines of a musical staff, audio recording packaging, the horizon, books, toner, an algorithm, and a page to redefine approaches to art-making.

About the Artists

Luis Camnitzer (b.1937) is a German-born Uruguayan artist and writer who moved to New York in 1964. He was at the vanguard of 1960s Conceptualism, working primarily in printmaking, sculpture, and installations. Camnitzer's artwork explores subjects such as repression under systems of power, pedagogical norms, and the deconstruction of familiar frameworks. His humorous, biting, and often politically charged use of language as art medium has distinguished his practice for over four decades.

Jennie C. Jones (b.1968) was born in Cincinnati, OH and lives and works in Hudson, NY. Her interdisciplinary practice seeks to engage viewers visually and aurally. Drawing on painting, sculpture, sound, and installation, Jones' conceptual works reflect on the legacy of modernism and minimalism. Their unconventional materials and reductive compositions highlight the perception of sound within the visual arts.

Hassan Sharif (b.1951, Bandar Lengeh, Iran – d.2016, Dubai, United Arab Emirates) lived and worked in Dubai. Recognized as a pioneer of conceptual art and experimental practice in the Middle East, Sharif's artworks surpass the limits of discipline or singular approach, encompassing performance, installation, drawing, painting, and assemblage. Beginning in the late 1970s, he worked as a cultural producer and facilitator, moving between roles as artist, educator, critic, activist, and mentor to contemporary artists in the U.A.E.

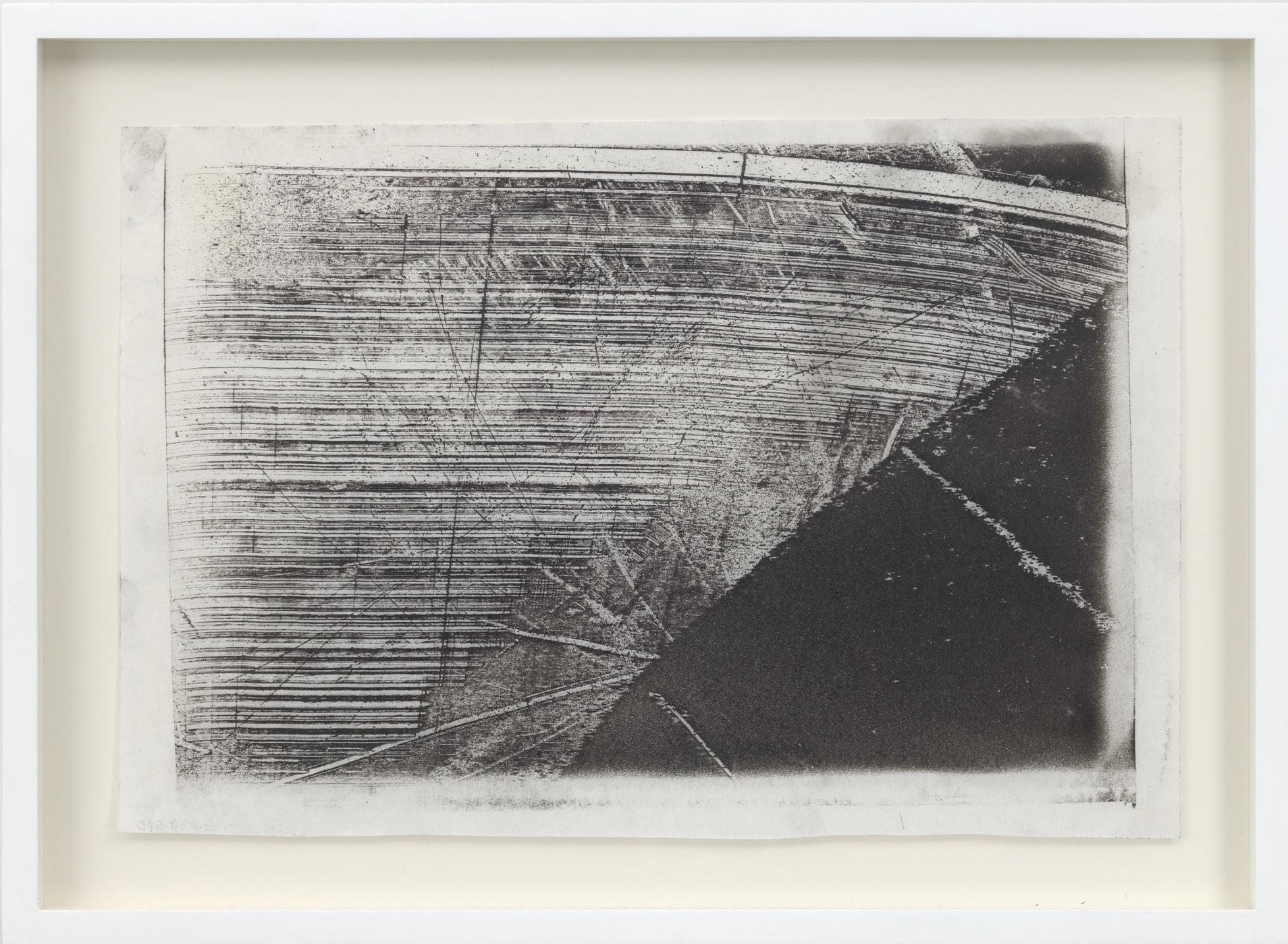
Valeska Soares (b.1957) was born in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and from a young age, she was exposed to references from a variety of cultural milieus, including poetry, literature, film, psychology, and mythology. She studied architecture at Universidade Santa Úrsula, Rio de Janeiro; this training reinforced an interest in site specificity, with artworks that consider both contextual history and spatial constructs. The Brazilian art scene in the late-1980s and early 1990s catalyzed Soares' artistic career in Rio and São Paulo, and in 1992, she moved to Brooklyn, NY, continuing her artistic education and career. From New York, throughout the 1990s and 2000s, her work has been positioned in multiple platforms, reinforcing the globalized art world's questions of geography, cultural and national identity, discipline, and form.

Jack Whitten (b.1939, d.2018) began his earliest experiments in painting during the 1960s by creating colorful, dynamic works inspired by Abstract Expressionism. He turned to abstraction in the 1970s as he developed new methods to create works that more closely resonated with photography. Eschewing brushy, expressive gesture, he began to "process" his paintings, creating works by dragging large slabs of paint across the canvas with a variety of tools. In the 1980s, Whitten utilized paint as a metaphor for skin, "casting" acrylic paints and compounds to construct new surfaces and textures. Continuing to question the limits of painting, in the 1990s, his paintings became progressively more sculptural. Transforming paint into tiles, he repurposed the medium into a material to construct mosaics. The resulting artworks allude to ancient architecture and murals while serving as homages and memorials to celebrated public figures and close friends. Before his death in 2018, Whitten utilized the gamut of techniques he had developed over the decades to further deepen his engagement with art history. Re-contextualizing his experimental approach to painting, he crafted innovative, lyrical new surfaces, structures, and symbols.



Between the Lines

Luis Camnitzer
Jennie C. Jones
Hassan Sharif
Valeska Soares
Jack Whitten



Jack Whitten, *Xerox Project* [Flat Plate Monprint], 1974



Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates,
New York (2020)



Jack Whitten, *Topographical Space #4*, 1974



Jack Whitten, *Xerox Project* [Flat Plate Monoprint], 1974
Right: detail





Luis Camnitzer, *Between the Lines*, 2013, Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)

When I read between the lines
the paper stares back at me
showing me the frayed edges.

Luis Camnitzer, *Between the Lines*, 2013 (detail)

When I read between the lines
the paper stares back at me
creating future memories.

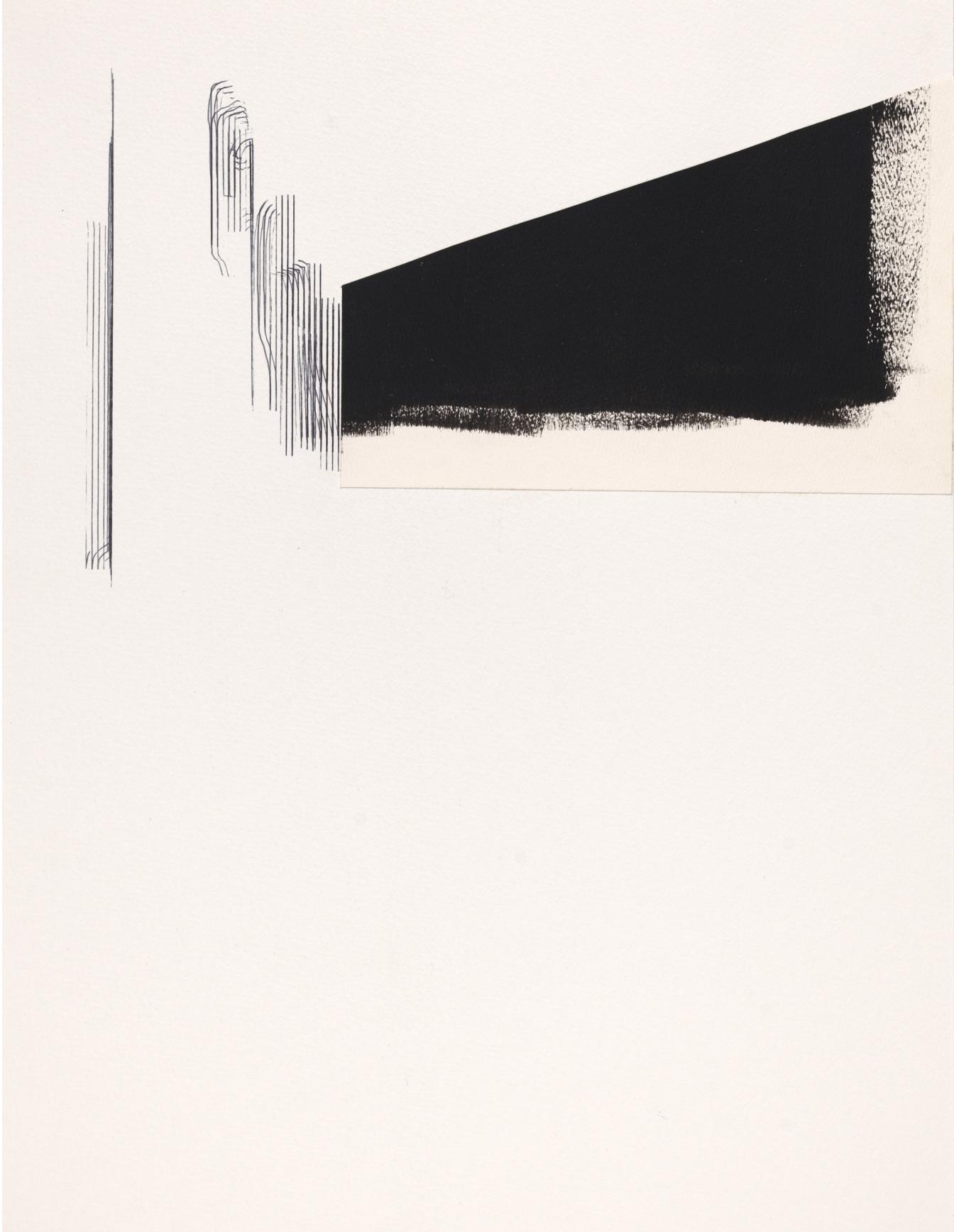
Luis Camnitzer, *Between the Lines*, 2013 (detail)

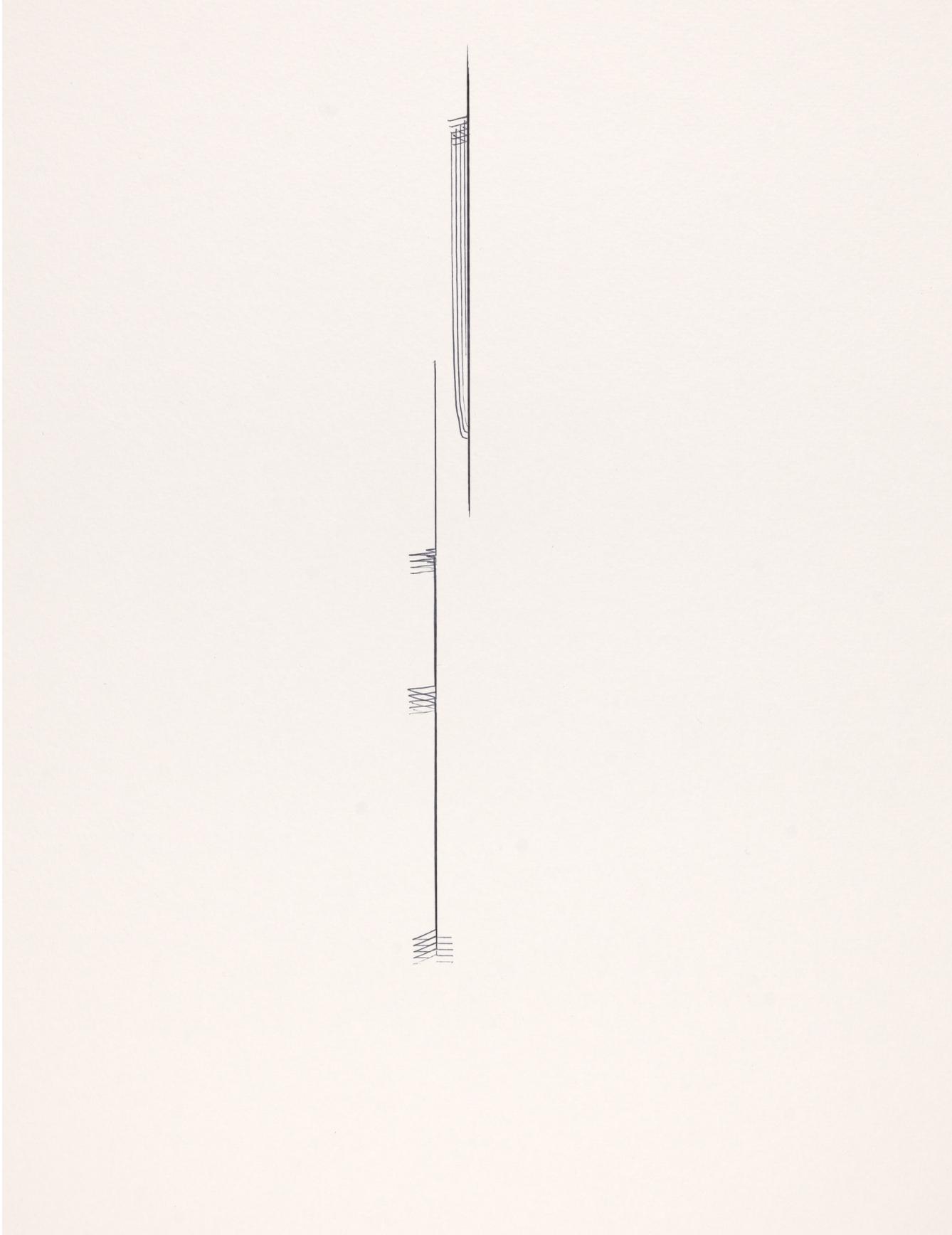


Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)



Jennie C. Jones, *Score for Sustained Blackness #5*, 2016, Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)
Right: detail





Jennie C. Jones, *Score for Sustained Blackness #6*, 2016, Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)
Left: detail



Jennie C. Jones, *Song Containers*, 2011



Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)



Valeska Soares, *For To (X)*, 2017, Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)
Following page: detail

For Charlotte and Fred

For Marc and Esther—may they sail far and wide

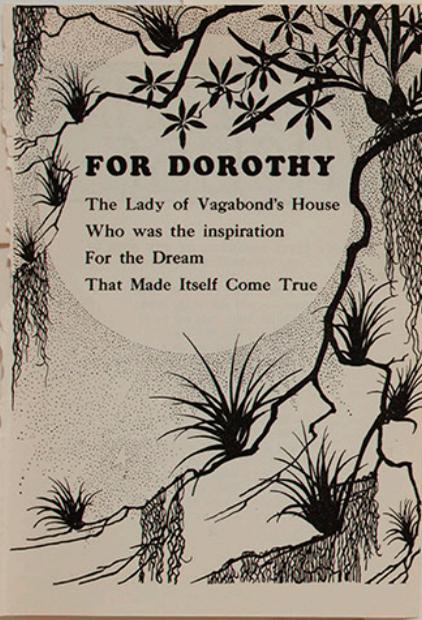
For E. P. O'Donnell

FOR
THE LIVING THEATRE

The sweet
American public
(and Francis &
Pat), who
didn't understand
with love for
Hazel
Christmas, 1962.

For our Nan

For
our three friends
M.E.H. (1923-1978), M.M. (1901-1978), A.Z. (1915-1977)



TO
ANAIS NIN

FOR
Jake, who began it,
John, who was patient, and
Marion, who made it possible.

FOR MATHILDE

Eager small hands now grasping only space,
Eyes bright and quick as those of April's swallow;
You shall find life a safe, a friendly place,
You shall find sweet the pathways that you follow.

For other hands and eyes, before you came,
The royal gifts of olden days had found you;
Lighting with frankincense earth's living flame,
Scenting with myrrh the welcoming world around you.

Giving you gold of love, that when you stand
At last on little feet grown strong and steady,
Our hands will all be ready for your hand,
Our waiting hearts will all be yours already.

With ten years affection to Paul

OTHER
FATHER
THIS IS FOR MY MOTHER AND MY FATHER

FOR DAVID

FOR GLYNIS

FOR VICTORIA
my love,
who makes it all seem so easy

TO
C. H. R.

IN LOVING MEMORY
TO
MY MOTHER

To My Mother and Father

PETER

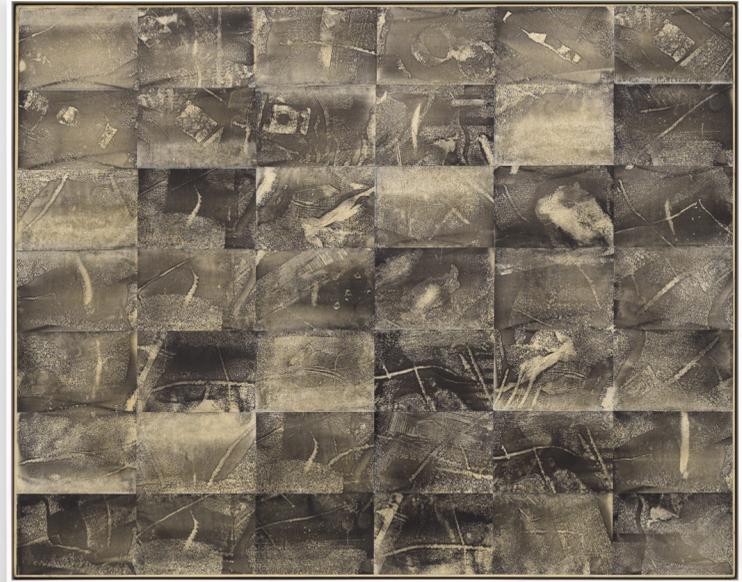
THIS BOOK IS FOR MY CHILDREN

Marian, Sally, Barbara and Glenn

SE POPULATION PROBLEMS, PLEASANTLY ENOUGH, BEGIN
AT HOME.



Hassan Sharif, *Seven Points Angular Lines - Part 2*, 2013,
Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York
(2020)



Jack Whitten, *Xeroxed!*, 1975
Right: detail



Between the Lines, Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)



Veleska Soares, *Palimpsest I*, 2016, Installation view,
Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)



Veleska Soares, *Palimpsest I*, 2016 (detail)



Veleska Soares, *Palimpsest I*, 2016 (detail)



Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)



Installation view, Alexander Gray Associates, New York (2020)

Exhibition Checklist

Luis Camnitzer
Between the Lines, 2013
 Ink on paper in 10 parts
 11 x 8 1/2 in each
 (27.94 x 21.59 cm each)

Jack Whitten
Xerox Project [Flat Plate Monoprint], 1974
 Xerox toner on rice paper
 10 x 14 6/8 in
 (25.4 x 37.47 cm)

Jack Whitten
Xerox Project [Flat Plate Monoprint], 1974
 Xerox toner on glazed paper
 10 x 13 1/8 in
 (25.4 x 33.27 cm)

Jack Whitten
Topographical Space #4, 1974
 Mixed media on paper
 8 x 11 1/2 in
 20.32 x 29.21 cm

Jennie C. Jones
Score for Sustained Blackness #5, 2016
 Collage, acrylic and ink on paper in 10 parts
 20 x 16 in each
 (50.8 x 40.6 cm each)

Jennie C. Jones
Score for Sustained Blackness #6, 2016
 Collage, acrylic and ink on paper in 10 parts
 20 x 16 in each
 (50.8 x 40.6 cm each)

Jennie C. Jones
Song Containers, 2011
 Aluminum
 In 4 parts:
 8 track: 5.25 x 4 x 0.75 in (13.3 x 10.2 x 1.9 cm)
 Cassette: 4 x 2.5 x 2 in (10.2 x 6.4 x 5.1 cm)
 45: 7 x 7 x 5.25 in (17.8 x 17.8 x 13.3 cm)
 Standard Double LP: 12.5 x 12.5 x 3.75 in
 (31.8 x 31.8 x 9.5 cm)
 Edition of 10

Valeska Soares
For To (X), 2017
 Collaged book pages
 73 3/4 x 154 in
 (187.3 x 391.2 cm)

Hassan Sharif
Seven Points Angular Lines - Part 2, 2013
 Mixed media in 3 parts
 Worksheets: 23 3/8 x 16 1/2 in each
 (59.5 x 41.9 cm each)
 Canvas: 31 1/2 x 15 5/8 x 7/8 in
 (80 x 39.7 x 2.2 cm)

Jack Whitten
Xeroxed!, 1975
 Xerox toner on rice paper mounted to canvas
 57 6/8 x 73 in
 (147 x 185.42 cm)

Valeska Soares
Palimpsest I, 2016
 Vintage wooden boxes
 18 1/4 x 87 x 5 in
 (46.4 x 221 x 12.7 cm)

Published by Alexander Gray Associates on the occasion of the exhibition

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September 11 – October 17, 2020

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Cover image: Valeska Soares, *For To (X)*, 2017, collaged book pages, 73 3/4 x 154 in (187.3 x 391.2 cm)

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Alexander Gray Associates is a contemporary art gallery in New York City and Germantown NY. Through exhibitions, research, and artist representation, the Gallery spotlights artistic movements and artists who emerged in the mid- to late-Twentieth Century. Influential in cultural, social, and political spheres, these artists are notable for creating work that crosses geographic borders, generational contexts and artistic disciplines. Alexander Gray Associates is an organization committed to anti-racist and feminist principles. Alexander Gray Associates is a member of the Art Dealers Association of America.

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