

ALTMAN SIEGEL

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Matt Keegan

USE YOUR WORDS

February 28 – April 20, 2019

Opening reception Thursday, February 28, 6 - 8 pm

Altman Siegel is pleased to present “USE YOUR WORDS,” Matt Keegan’s fourth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Continuing his deep interest in language and cognition, Keegan has created works that interrogate primary and secondary forms of language and associative parameters of communication. Among the three central works are new *Cutout* sculptures, which, started in 2014, serve as surrogate units for words and concepts; abstracting the layers of language systems to its more playful and aesthetic permutations. These symmetrical wall-based forms are carefully translated from their original hand-cut paper templates to machined, bent and powder coated steel.

The symbiotic negotiation of language and translation is further evidenced in the presentation of 50 mounted C-prints that comprise the complete photographic series *Have you seen my language?* Each photo presents a mass-produced ESL (English as a Second Language) flashcard paired with a related item or surface within the artist’s home. The flashcard image, from this same set, for the word “puzzle” (not included in *Have you seen my language?*) features a partially assembled children’s puzzle with a cartoon puppy in front of his dog house. Keegan found the original puzzle depicted and remade it at a larger scale for *Puppy Puzzle*, a five-color silkscreen on CNC-routed MDF sculpture with cast-pigmented silicone. This iterative work spans the three rooms of the gallery.

Since 2010, Keegan has returned to a specific deck of ESL flashcards handmade by his mother for use as a teaching tool; and perhaps his most elaborate video production to date, four commercial-length videos based on those flashcards will be shown. Each shot is a high-fidelity recreation of appropriated images found on the original learning aids. Assembled in the early-to-mid-1990s from advertisements

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and other mass-market print materials that came into his family home at the time. Divorced from their initial context, reference to their original intent is eschewed for a re-articulation of form and function.

Also included in the exhibition is a Xeroxed publication made in collaboration with Bay Area poet and writer Kevin Killian based on Keegan's *Have you seen my language?* series.

The works in the show uniquely present the socially constructed context of language as material and content. Keegan's holistic and intimate treatment of space, memory, material and color produce objects embedded in a narrative structure that investigates the impact and limits of language.

Matt Keegan is a New York-based artist. He is currently featured in a two-person exhibition with the work of Corita Kent at Potts, Los Angeles. He was subject of a solo exhibition at the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (2018), Participant Inc., New York, NY (2017); Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria (with Kay Rosen); Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX (with Kay Rosen, both 2016). He has been included in notable recent group exhibitions including "The Artist's Museum" at The ICA Boston, "The Sun Placed in the Abyss" at the Columbus Museum of Art, "Reconstructions: Recent Photographs and Video from the Met Collection," The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and "Storylines: Contemporary Art at the Guggenheim," The Guggenheim, New York. In May, Keegan will present his first public sculpture in Court Square Park, Long Island City. Commissioned by Sculpture Center, NY this work will be on view from May-August of this year.

For more information please contact info@altmansiegel.com.