

# KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

**LUKE STETTNER**  
**RI VE RR HY ME SW IT HB LO OD**  
**JANUARY 29 – MARCH 16, 2019**

**Opening Tuesday, January 29 from 6-8 PM**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

This is an exhibition about muteness and linguistic affect, tools used to mitigate the atrocity of our world. Here, language is understood as a vehicle for impacted feeling as much as its blockade.

Many texts add up to an imperfect and inadequate language, sourced from a wide range of fields and disciplines: military reference books and dictionaries, hymn and songbooks, compositional assignments, literary criticism, books on anagrams, codes and ciphers, riddles and idioms, newspapers, and a theater script. My son mistakenly called a parrot a poet, and that perfect slip of the tongue entered the work too. Language — less fixed than photographs, and far more manifold — began to overlap with itself as I collected it: bombs dropping and rain falling are described the same way by meteorologists and military generals.

One of the few images that appear in this show is a photograph of my paternal great grandparents, who narrowly escaped the Nazis. This ceramic-framed picture overlooks a monolithic concrete sculpture modeled after a study carrel in my high school library, which I witnessed to be in the shape of a swastika. The documents in the exhibition are attributed to my maternal great grandparents and great Aunt, who were murdered in Auschwitz. The disconnect that I describe — between far-flung atrocity and my own conscious experience — exists not only between continents but right inside of my own history. It's a familiar story of attenuation: the members of my family that survived the holocaust never spoke a single word about it.

Many pieces in the exhibition are collaborative; I worked very closely with Max Stolkin & Tim Bearse, Tova Carlin, Will Cornwall, Lynn Kahan, Daniel Marcus, Ofer Wolberger, Suzanne Silver, Jon Beacham, Carmen Winant, and my mother, Carol Case. What we've made is outward looking in every sense, reaching towards language (rather than their own status as art objects) as a decidedly imperfect tool of exchange and mismatch.

*Luke Stettner (USA, b. 1979 in Englewood, NJ) received his BFA from the University of Arizona and his MFA from the School of Visual Arts. Stettner has held solo exhibitions at Kate Werble Gallery, New York, NY (2019, 2014, 2011); Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, NY (2015); Stene Projects, Stockholm, SE (2015, 2012, 2010); and The Kitchen, New York, NY (2014). His work has been exhibited at venues including the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH; MASS MoCA, North Adams, MA; deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA; Museum of Contemporary Art, Tucson, AZ; Wolfsonian Museum, Miami, FL; Exit Art, New York, NY; and 179 Canal, New York, NY. Stettner is a recipient of the 2013 Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace residency, and currently lives and works in Columbus, OH.*