

ARTFORUM

“Drawing Time, Reading Time”

THE DRAWING CENTER

35 Wooster Street

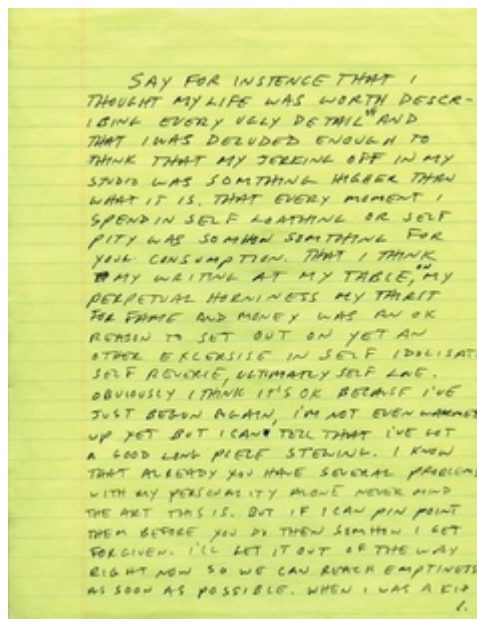
November 15–January 12

“Drawing Time, Reading Time” alternates between the temporal condition of text, which is read in sequence, and that of the image, which is apprehended more or less all at once. Included in this exhibition—which is felicitously paired with “Pencil Sketches,” a parallel and archly titled show of manuscripts by Emily Dickinson and Robert Walser—are works by Carl Andre, Pavel Büchler, Guy de Cointet, Mirtha Dermisache, Sean Landers, Allen Ruppersberg, Nina Papaconstantinou, Deb Sokolow, and Molly Springfield.

Take Ruppersberg’s and Springfield’s drawings of books, where the writing is often illegible and acts as a source purely for visual order and pattern. Likewise, Landers’s 1993 *[Sic]*, in which 451 yellow ruled journal sheets hang in an enormous grid across the west wall, shows his handwriting unspooling across the pages in a rambling verbal cascade that becomes abstract in scale. In a prefatory text, curator Claire Gilman contrasts these approaches to language with those of a more explicitly Conceptual turn, such as Mel Bochner’s, Hanne Darboven’s, and Lawrence Weiner’s, who she writes “submitted the written word to verbal and visual manipulation in order to evacuate the conventional meaning and uncover the materiality of language.”

If the works on view here at times engage in a similar manipulation, it isn’t so much in an effort to evacuate preexisting meaning as it is to heighten the interplay of overlapping ambiguities. Andre’s typewritten concrete poems, composed of red and black letters arranged across letter paper, have an architecture of interruption similar to that of the paintings of Christopher Wool, in which enjambment and disjuncture unseat and recode the words of which they’re made. De Cointet’s ink and pencil drawings from the 1970s and 1980s reimagine the conventions of letter formation, forcing phrases into systems of pulsing forty-five-degree angles or jittery, seemingly inverted calligraphy. The sign is arbitrary and so is its mode of presentation.

— Zachary Sachs



Sean Landers, *[Sic]*, 1993, ink on paper, 8 1/2 x 11".

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