

ONE WALL, ONE WORK: Jenny Holzer

January 6, 2018 - February 10, 2018

Jenny Holzer's "Arno, Blue", 2005, is the latest work in the gallery's ongoing series, One Wall, One Work. The piece, a 77-inch tall LED sign with white diodes in stainless steel housing, presents a never-ending loop of two of Holzer's texts. Visually, the piece is quite powerful - scrolling text, varying "animations" (blinks, order, direction, positive/negative, etc.) but to truly get the work, it's important to understand the texts, both separately and together.

"Arno", 1996, began as an account of losing someone to AIDS. More expansively, it treats living with the death of one who was loved. A version of the text made its debut in a music video for "Red, Hot and Dance", an AIDS fundraiser. The writing was completed and made general so as to treat anyone's loss after a great and terrible love. It was next presented to the public as a light projection on the Arno River in Florence, Italy, in 1996. This action on the Arno was Holzer's first light projection and this medium has been crucial to Holzer's practice ever since.

"Blue", 1998, is more lyrical and obliquely narrated than Holzer's earlier works. It touches on the pervasive fallout of abuse and bad sex. The text examines how individual memory can be situated next to and within unnamed but global catastrophe. By addressing and eliding individual and mass trauma, this text indicates that no disaster is purely local and thus leaks into the world's political and psychological groundwater.

Within the last ten years or so, Holzer has gone back into her texts and combined different ones so that, while the individual bodies of text continue to cause impact, the juxtaposing of subject matter between texts cause a challenging dialogue. Much like within the early Truisms, where no single viewpoint is privileged, the relationship between the subjects between Arno and Blue provide a non-hierarchical approach to investigation.

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