

Jenny Holzer: 1977 - 2013

March 21 - April 25, 2015

Barbara Krakow Gallery is proud to present Jenny Holzer: 1977 - 2013, a survey of works utilizing texts the artist wrote, compiled and presented in different forms over the past thirty-five years.

The earliest work in the show is the iconic Truisms (1977-79), presented here as eight sheets of black text on white paper. The Truisms series was written by Holzer to resemble existing truisms, maxims, and clichés. Each Truism distills difficult and contentious ideas into a seemingly straightforward fact. Privileging no single viewpoint, the Truisms examine the social construction of beliefs, mores, and truths. When they are displayed in serial format, as they are in this exhibition, Holzer organizes the aphoristic statements in alphabetic order. The Truisms first were shown on anonymous street posters that were wheat pasted throughout downtown Manhattan, and subsequently have appeared on T-shirts, hats, electronic signs, stone floors, projections and benches (the last two of these forms are also included in this exhibition).

To the left of the Truisms suite hang a group of 20 sheets from Inflammatory Essays (1979-1982). Influenced by Holzer's readings of political, art, religious, utopian, and other manifestos, the Inflammatory Essays are a collection of 100-word texts that were printed on colored paper and, originally, posted throughout New York City. Like any manifesto, the voice in each essay urges and espouses a strong and particular ideology. By masking the author of the essays, Holzer allows the viewer to assess ideologies divorced from the personalities that propel them. With this series, Holzer invites the reader to consider the urgent necessity of social change, the possibility for manipulation of the public, and the conditions that attend revolution.

In addition to these two early bodies of work, there are numerous other works, including several photographs of recent projections, one etching, a 49-minute looped projection and two LED pieces, one of a small scale and one of a large (76") scale, each of which utilizes one or more texts from throughout Holzer's career. Not only a survey of the texts used, this exhibition serves as a display of the varying and dynamic readings of the texts when presented through the different media that Holzer uses.

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