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Julien Bismuth
Stenograms
30.01.-14.03.2015

The title of the show is *Stenograms*, there are twelve pieces in the show titled *Stenogram 7-18*. Texts that I wrote and had transcribed into the dead letter language of stenography. Texts that I initially composed in windows, feeds, chats, posts, and pages of conversations that had gone dead. To join the conversation when everyone else has left the room. When a text becomes illegible it turns into an image or afterimage of the language from which it stems. Each *Stenogram* contains bits and pieces of writing stolen from the virtual pages on which it was drafted. They have formed a show, they will form a book, yet neither the book nor the show informs or is informed by anything other than its component parts.

All of the information related to the works on view are contained in the exhibition work list, including the texts of the *Stenograms*. Everything in the show is also an image. Anything becomes an image once it's shown. The other works on view follow a banal logic of selection, composition, and presentation. Collectible stenographic postcards purchased on internet auctions are used to produce six collections and a video. The diary of a 17 year-old boy from Waco, Texas (written in 1921 in a modified shorthand that he doubts he "will be able to read, or anyone else will be able to read") is shown in a video that can be read like an open book. A found image of a high school stenography class illustrates the announcement for the exhibition. There is also a collection of miscellaneous stenography related objects: a stopwatch, a matchbook, three stamps and five pins.

Stenography is short for language as a medium of or for communication, transaction. Intentions are complex, but so is the desire to streamline them into the overlit prose of an explanation. How do you make an image of language? Nothing is hidden but everything is spaced. Thoughts composed in a hidden, hiding hand. Stenography is neither a thread nor a theme, it's an alibi for a series of works marked by their timid perversity. As the pace of things accelerates and amplifies, so does our tendency to stockpile and leave it all behind. Every show needs a signature, and the signature here belongs to my father. There is an anecdote attached to it, which will be communicated upon request.

Julien Jonas Bismuth