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STATEMENT

2018 Works on Paper

I am interested in the possibility of transcendence through the repetition of words and phrases. By typing a word countless times and applying it to a grid, I create a matrix wherein the original meaning drops away and the word transcends its former signification.

I often choose words that derive from religious belief systems, as their potent and omnipotent associations are deeply ingrained in the psyche. Devotees of all traditions use the repetition of words and phrases for spiritual purposes. The Tibetan Buddhist endlessly repeats a mantra while performing daily tasks; the Catholic believer recites assigned Hail Marys; the Hindu invokes a deity through chanting the appropriate mantra. In these instances, repetition leads to another form of transcendence—that of overcoming the ego. The loaded word then becomes a proxy for a deeper psychological experience.

Language is an imperfect form of communication, and words can only approximate our intended meaning. However, once its limitations are embraced, one can marvel at the capacity of a single word to generate a common reaction. “Cicada” evokes a shrill buzz on a hot summer afternoon. “Tangerine” invariably elicits a tingling in the jaw. And “Virgin”, especially with a capital V, signifies the Mother of Christ and the cult of worship surrounding her.

When my work is viewed from a distance, the words read as marks on paper, and the use of reflected color creates a pattern that is visually stimulating. Up close, the typed word can be seen, interpreted, and reacted to. Once the meaning of the word is dissolved through repetition, it remains as a marker, a signifier of its former content.