

Rebecca Silberman, "Disappearing Act"
Statement

On a shelf in my home office is a stack of five composition notebooks with mottled black covers. The earliest dates recorded, along with the delicate pencil sketches, are from the 1920ies, when my grandmother was in her late teens or early twenties. There is a self-portrait of her and a depiction of two slim girls (likely my grandmother's sisters) sleeping on a bed with the caption, "Dead to the world." Other pages depict babies and animals. There is a floor plan of the house my grandmother built for herself and her family, with only the sparsest of details. Mostly the journals are empty. Rather, emptied. Before they were offered to me, at some point over the years the images that were taped into the blank pages were removed, with only the discolored squares of where the adhesive had been remaining. My grandmother thought I might like to refill them with my own drawings and ideas. The heartbreak of this erasure has been defining and consuming for me as an artist. This installation brings together work from the past thirty years in an alphabetical index. It reads as a kind of jumbled poetry: Air trance apparition ascending ash poem. Bed in the woods birds and flies burrow the bridge bone doll drawings see trespassers. Chemical poem conversations with ghosts covered landscape. Display currently unavailable dreaming listener Dr. t. f., III, VII and X. Eclipse evil mother extras. Family portraits fragments. Garden of chosen ones marker. Housekeeping. INdirectory see U Invisible birds. Journals. (I) Know the rain, like the clouds know the sky. Lessons in waiting listener man with car to the ground LoneR lullaby. Milk clouds missing mothers murmuration. (I told you) Not to get lost in the wild. Ol' boy omens. Pitch black reading room of the Secret Museum proof. Quitting the house see W. Resurrection. SINKer sisters of MythOfUs (I) Speak to birds and tell them where to fly stutter. Tests Houdini code inscriptions trespasser drawings this is not art, this is drinking see P. UR (NOT) Here, INdirectory see I. Vessels. (I) Waited for you but you never came we had a good home, but we left. X axis. You are (NOT) here see U.

*Nearly every project attempts to fill the void while also accepting the inevitable. The "Disappearing Act" is inescapable.

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List of Works

A. 1. ~~Air Trance~~. 2. ~~Apparition~~. 3. ~~Ascending~~. 4. ~~Ash Poem~~.

B. 1. ~~Bed in the Woods~~. 2. ~~Birds and Flies (Burrow, The)~~. 3. ~~Bridge~~. 4. ~~Bone Dolls (See "Trespassers")~~.

C. 1. ~~*Chemical Poem~~. 2. ~~Conversations with Ghosts~~. 3. ~~Covered Landscape~~.

D. 1. ~~Display Currently Unavailable~~. 2. ~~Dreaming Listener~~. 3. ~~Dr. t. f., III, VII and X~~.

E. 1. ~~Eclipse~~. 2. ~~Evil Mother~~. 3. ~~Extras~~. **F.** 1. ~~Family Portraits~~.

2. ~~Fragments~~. **G.** 1. ~~Garden of Chosen Ones, Marker~~. **H.** 1. ~~Housekeeping~~.

I: 1. ~~INDirectory (See "U")~~. 2. ~~Invisible Birds~~. **J.** 1. ~~Journals (See "B" and "W")~~.

K. 1. ~~(I) Know the Rain, Like the Clouds Know the Sky~~.

L. 1. ~~Lessons in Waiting~~. 2. ~~Listener (Man with Ear to the Ground)~~. 3. ~~LoneR~~. 4. ~~Lullaby~~.

M. 1. ~~Milk Clouds~~. 2. ~~Missing Mothers~~. 3. ~~Murmuration~~.

N. 1. ~~(I told you) Not to Get Lost in the Wild~~.

O. 1. ~~Ol' Boy~~. 2. ~~Omens~~. **P.** 1. ~~Proof~~.

2. ~~Pitch Black Reading Room of The Secret Museum~~.

Q. 1. ~~Quitting the House (See "W")~~.

R. 1. ~~Resurrection~~.

S. 1. ~~SINKer~~. 2. ~~*Sisters of MythOfUs~~.

3. ~~(I) Speak to Birds and Tell Them Where to Fly~~.

4. S T U T T E R.

1. 1. ~~Tests (Houdini-Code inscriptions)~~. 2. ~~Trespassers (Drawings)~~.

3. ~~This is Not Art, This is Drinking (See "P")~~.

U. 1. ~~U-R (NOT) Here, INDirectory (See "I")~~.

V. 1. ~~Vessels~~.

W. 1. ~~(I) Waited For You
But You Never Came~~.

2. ~~We Had a Good Home
But We Left~~.

X. 1. ~~X Axis~~.

Y. 1. ~~You Are
(NOT) Here~~

(See U).

**Z. 1. ~~0 ≤ X~~.

**If zero is less than or equal to X, see X.

*Collaborations (please see notebook materials.)