

Lisa Cooley

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Alex Fleming

Lisa Cooley, through April 12

In his solo debut, Alex Fleming (whom regular Cooley visitors may recognize from a series of events he organized at the gallery last fall) seems determined to introduce himself as quietly as possible. Presenting newsprint sheets studded with reflective alphabet stickers, a repetitive video-and-slide projection and a hermetic found-object sculpture, Fleming appears less concerned with making a splash than with testing the waters. But while the work may look tentative at first, its outwardly underdeveloped appearance ultimately reveals a questing spirit. Only the awkward visual relationship between the works on paper and the stand-alone sculpture—a yellow silk jacket and scarf pressed under glass and embellished with two casually placed snapshots—detracts from an otherwise elegant and genuinely experimental exhibition.

The newsprint works, which dominate the room, incorporate legible words only occasionally. More often, their inscriptions suggest fragments, acronyms or abbreviations, an allusive alphabet-soup with hints of Dada and Fluxus. These are texts that invite recombination, the letters' mirrored surfaces making the viewer a perceptible part of each piece.

The projection, *The lace curtains of his apartment*, shows a blank page being turned (lifted from Alfred Hitchcock's *Marnie*) in combination with a sequence of female headshots. It might be a meditation on variety contained within outwardly incremental difference, or on the construction of sexual identity. The untitled sculpture takes up the latter theme, striking a melancholic note in its evocation of a human life preserved as display.

—Michael Wilson