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MOYRA DAVEY
Ornament and Reproach

1 March – 5 April 2014

For her third solo show with Murray Guy, Moyra Davey presents a new iteration of a recent exhibition at Presentation House in Vancouver, organized in collaboration with John Goodwin.

It was by chance that Davey came across the memorial tablet of a certain Jael Boscawen (1647–1730) in St. Mary Abbots Church in London. A phrase from the tablet lends itself not only to the exhibition's curious title, but also to a constellation of folded and mailed photographs, and a musical composition for piano. Accidents, coincidences, and the circumstances of the everyday are the subject and setting for Davey's work. Historic and literary explorations are interconnected to Davey's family and friends through a cumulative yet intimate methodology. The collaborative nature of her practice is especially apparent in this inclusive exhibition of projects that Davey has undertaken with Goodwin since 1993.

In *Ornament and Reproach* the gallery is transformed into a space of contemplative dialogue between artist and curator. Over the course of the last year, Davey took photographs in and around Trinity Church Cemetery near her home in Washington Heights, and sent the prints to John Goodwin. The images record the destruction caused by hurricane Sandy, as well as Ed Koch's tombstone, photographed both when the former Mayor of New York City was still alive and also after his death in 2013 when an erroneous birthdate on the head stone had to be corrected. As Goodwin received each photograph in the mail he stacked them atop his piano. He would also place them in turn onto the music stand as he played, the images, annotated with brightly colored tape, resembling a musical score. A new piece of music composed by David Lang and inspired by the events leading up to the exhibition will be performed by Jake Araujo-Simon during the opening reception and can be played by visitors to the gallery throughout the duration of the show.

In 2002, Davey first showed her black and white photographs of empty whiskey bottles in John Goodwin's Toronto gallery, goodwater. The bottles are included in *Ornament and Reproach* as editions subsequently published by goodwater. In the second room, vintage photographs that had originally been exhibited in 1987 at Presentation House, are paired with a new work titled *Kevin Ayers*, recently shown in the artist's solo exhibition at Tate Liverpool. Many of the photographs in *Kevin Ayers* were taken at vinyl record fairs. Davey writes, "*Kevin Ayers* concerns the collector's pursuit of coveted sounds. But most important for the voyeur with a camera is the array of fascinating hand gestures: fingers flipping at a frantic pace through stacks of dusty, cat-clawed albums, or, most beautiful of all, the pivot of the vinyl disk held in suspension between palm and fingertips to catch the light and reveal fatal flaws."

Moyra Davey (b. 1958 Toronto) lives and works in New York. Throughout the 1990s, she exhibited with Colin de Land's gallery American Fine Arts Co., and from 2005 to 2008, she was a partner in the influential Orchard gallery. In 2008, Davey was the subject of a major survey show at the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University and in 2010 a survey of her work was presented in at the Kunsthalle Basel.

Currently Davey has a solo exhibition of new work at MUMOK, Vienna, which will travel to the ICA, Philadelphia in September. This April, the Camden Arts Centre, London, will mount a survey exhibition of her work. In 2013, Davey had solo exhibitions at Tate Liverpool and Presentation House, Vancouver. She participated in the 2012 Whitney Biennial and the XXX Bienal de São Paulo also in 2012. Her work has been included in a number of recent group

exhibitions such as *New Photography 2011*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, *Photography on Photography*, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *The Way of the Shovel* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, *Mixed Use Manhattan*, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, amongst others.

John Goodwin has been operating goodwater, Toronto since October 2001. The Gallery was originally formed with Roger Bywater, but since 2006 it has been under the direction of Goodwin. Goodwater has presented exhibitions by artists such as Rodney Graham, Mark Dion, Richard Prince, Garry Neill Kennedy, Steven Shearer, Moyra Davey, Jeremy Deller. Goodwin was the executive director of Art Metropole, Toronto 1983–1988 and again 2000–2001 and of Printed Matter, Inc., New York 1988–1993. In 1991 he started Shark Editions with the late Jackie McAllister.