

Misunderstandings (A Theory of Photography) Exhibit

Mel Bochner's *Misunderstandings (A Theory of Photography)* (1967-70) consists of nine offset prints on note cards containing handwritten quotations from famous thinkers about the nature of photography. A third of these quotes were fabricated by the artist and, in the age of the internet, it remains unclear which. A tenth card reproduces a work from an earlier series, *Actual Size* (1968), as an impossible Polaroid negative. Contradictory statements, loss of meaning and questioned authenticity compound across the cards. Published by Multiples Inc. as part of *Artists & Photographs*, the work is a prescient and continuously relevant mediation on the subjectivity of the photographic image and documented thought.

"*Misunderstandings (A Theory of Photography) Exhibit*" brings together this Bochner work and ten photographic responses to the individual cards. Printed and hung as physical snapshots, the exhibition creates a feed of further translations during a time where content sharing of image and knowledge appears encompassing. The request made of these artists by Plymouth Rock mimics the constant request for disposable digital content by many institutions over the past few months. By transferring these ideas into the physical realm of an exhibition we question the throwaway treatment of creative thought and insist on considered, in person interactions.

Bochner's *Misunderstandings* stands out as a seminal work about the contradictions and subjectivities of not just photography, but of understanding and society and life. I am grateful for the consideration and time that Mohamed, Giulia, Maxwell, Marsh, Doris, Hardy, Brad, Adam, Ella and Jade took during these times to participate.

