

Keren Cytter / Israel Lund

Violence

September 14 - October 25

Opening reception: Friday, September 14, 5-8pm

| VIOLENCE |

Regards,

A Note on Violence While My Infant Son Sleeps in the Next Room

When I was growing up I never knew violence to give any warnings. Like on television before a fight the men would yell at each other, they would dare each other, they would puff out their chests. But in my neighborhood it always seemed like a fight would break out of nothing and nowhere. Men standing around and then suddenly beating one another, stabbing one another, shooting one another. In war it is women and children who rate the highest in casualties. In war people call it brutality. The brutality of war. In peacetime they call it cultural norms. I wonder what it is about two armies of men killing each other that promotes the rape and murder of kids? Women and children are raped systematically in my country. My country was built on violence. When people say that violence is in our blood as a nation they are wrong. It's not in our blood, it is our blood, it is everything we are, our lungs and liver and heart and soul. It should also be said that we like it. We like it so much that it is in every part of our expression as a people, as Americans. This place is just the reverberation of slavery. We are the only animals that kill when we are not hungry or protecting ourselves or our children. We are the only animals that try really hard to eradicate ourselves. Right now my son Owen is sleeping in the next room. I can hear his chest rise and fall. One day someone might stab him in that chest, that sweet creamy baby chest, one day someone might shoot him. Violence doesn't care who you are. Sometimes it's not even someone else attacking you. Sometimes it's your own body. We are all living inside something that can kill us. Violence has no hours, has no schedule, and if you have not been the victim of violence it is only a matter of time. If you have never been the perpetrator of violence it is only a matter of time. And anyway you have been the perpetrator of violence you just don't think about yourself in a very honest way, you just think you're good but you're not. And that's the point too. Violence does not identify itself as good or bad, it just is. Like my son asleep dreaming about puppy dogs and kittens. That's not good or bad. That's a dream. Though if anyone were ever to harm my son. I would cut their hands off. I would cut their head off.

– Matthew Dickman