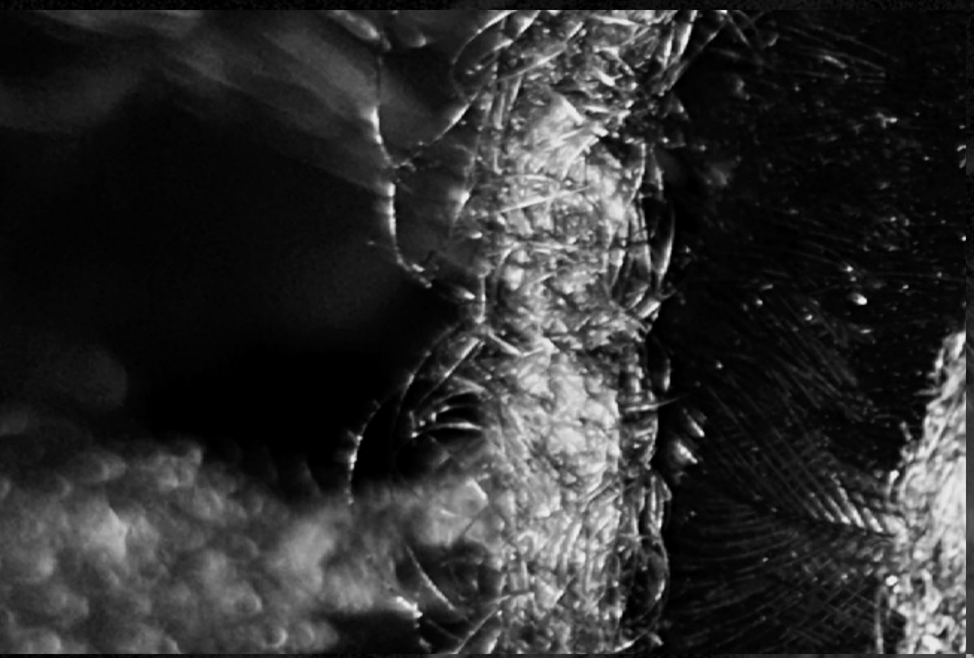
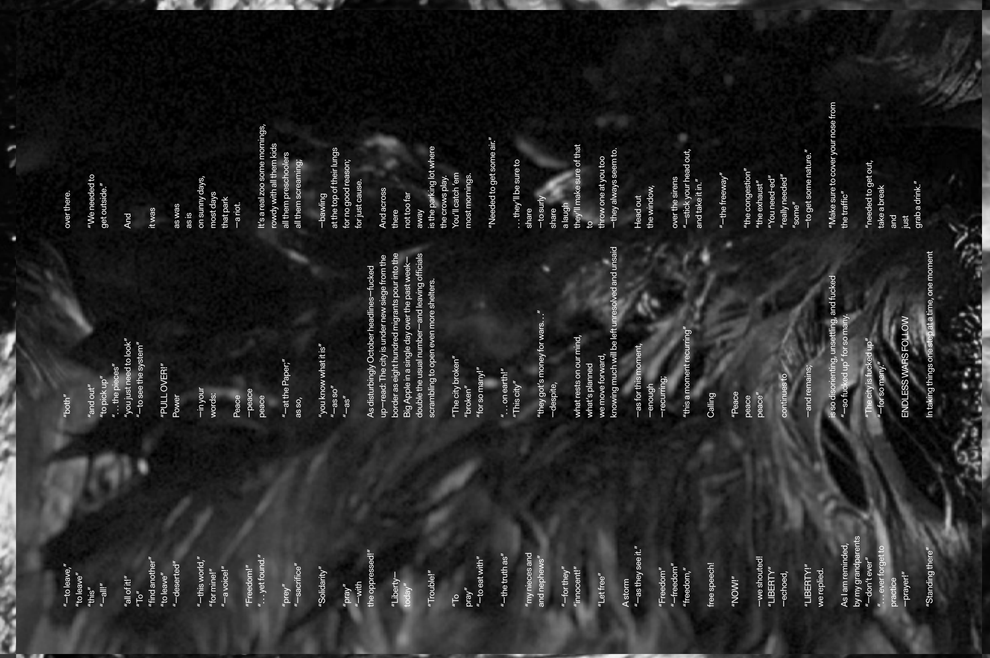
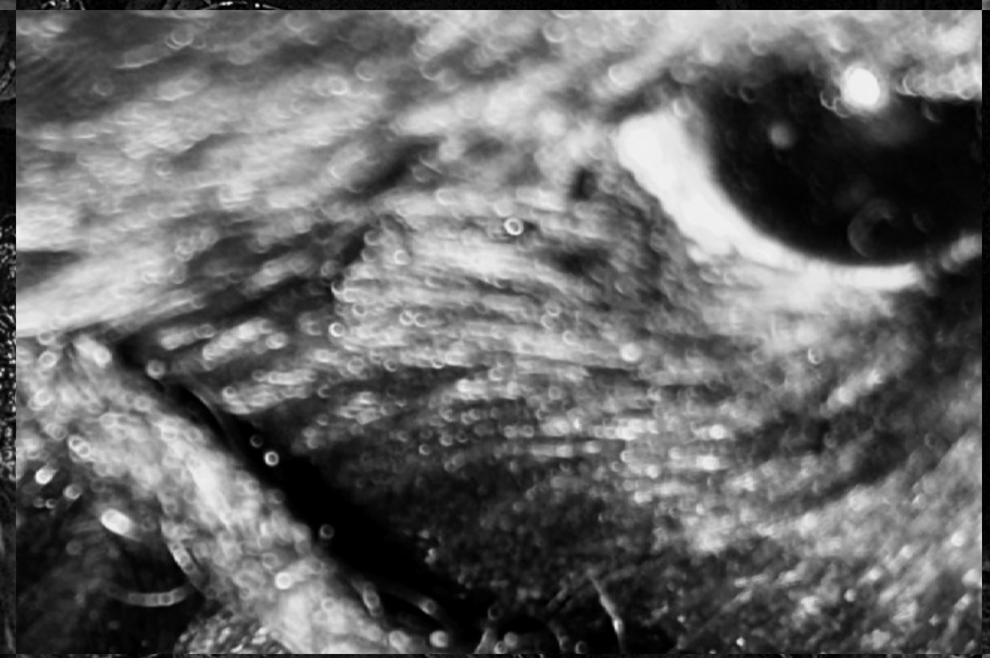
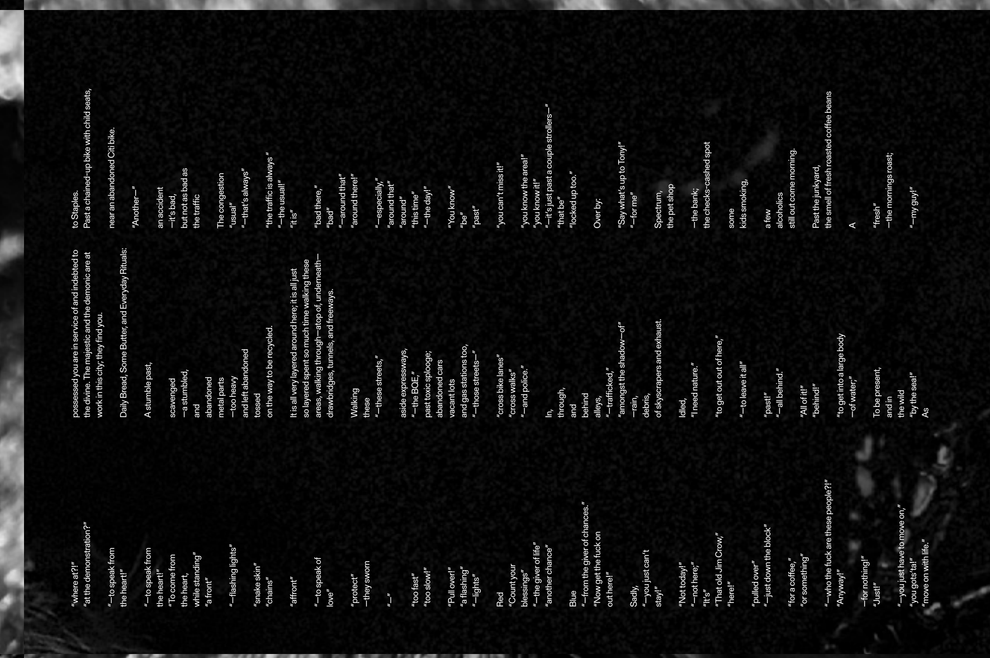
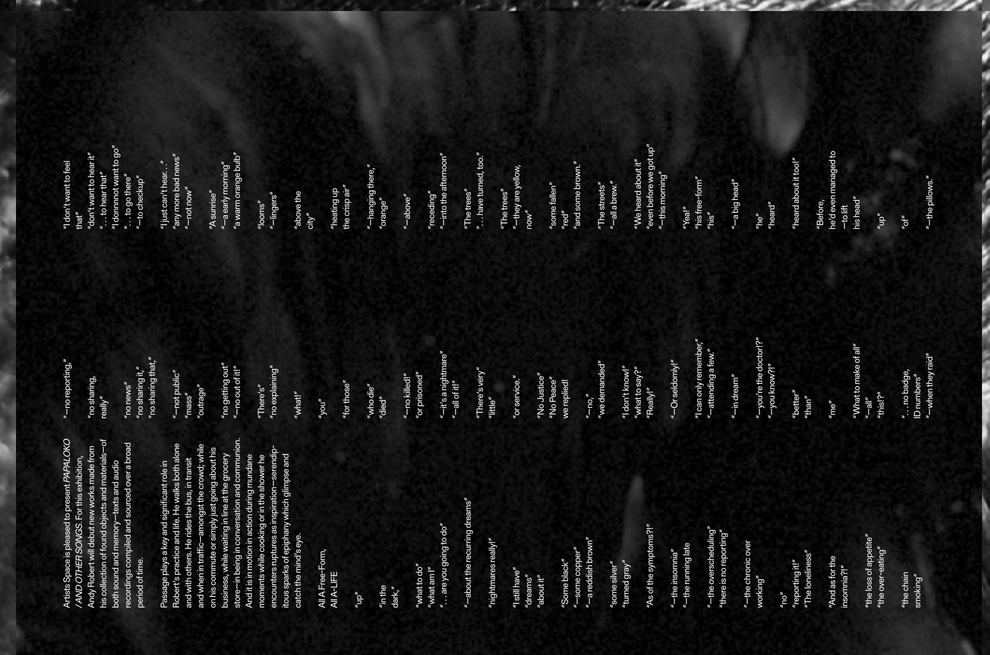










ARTISTS SPACE

Andy Robert: *PAPALOKO* is presented at Artists Space, December 13, 2023–February 17, 2024.

Lead support for Andy Robert: *PAPOLOKO* provided by The George Economou Collection and Michael Werner Gallery, New York and London. Exhibition support is provided by Candy and Michael Barasch, Olivier Beggruen, Amy and John Griffin, Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles, and Bernard I. Lumpkin and Carmine D. Boccuzzi.

Program support for Artists Space is provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Cowles Charitable Trust, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The I.A. O'Shaugnessy Foundation, The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, and Herman Goldman Foundation.

Editorial: Domenick Ammirati
Design: Eric Wrenn Office, New York

Staff of Artists Space
Jay Sanders, Director & Chief Curator
Kelly Taxter, Deputy Director
Danielle A. Jackson, Curator
Stella Cilman, Curatorial Assistant
Rezarta Seferi, Exhibitions Manager & Producer
Nusheen Ghaemi, Administrative & Program Assistant
Kate Temple, Director of Education
Witts, Installation Manager

Board of Directors

Cindy Sherman
Honorary Lifetime Member

Eleanor Cayre, President
Steven Schindler, President
Andy Stillpass, Treasurer
Liam Gillick, Secretary

Shane Akeroyd
Negar Azimi
Jonathan Caplan
Stephen Cheng
Martin Cox
Darby English
LaToya Ruby Frazier
Barbara Gladstone
Carol Greene
Rachel Harrison
Ebony L. Haynes
Joan Jonas
Philippa Polskin
Seth Price
Eleanor Heyman Propp
Allan Schwartzman
Amanda Sharp
Rirkrit Tiravanija

Super Friends

Stephen Cheng
Sadie Coles
Larry Gagosian
Barbara Gladstone
Dorothy Lichtenstein
David Zwirner

Anonymous
Daniel Buchholz & Christopher Müller
Paul Cooper Gallery
Nathalie & Charles de Gunzburg
Brendan Dugan
Lonti Ebers
Katherine Farley & Jerry Speyer
Agnes Gund
Kathy Halbreich
Lisson Gallery
Matthew Marks & Jack Bankowsky
Servane Mary & Jose Martos
Joe Nahmad
Orange Barrel Media
Philippa Polskin
Michael Ringier
Alexander S. C. Rower & Elan Gentry
Carol Saper
Ronnie Sassoon & James Crump
Allan Schwartzman
Karen & Andy Stillpass
Christine Wentz

Friends

Sarah Arison
Pedro Barbosa
Rebecca & Martin Eisenberg
Flag Art Foundation
Marian Goodman Gallery
Jane Hait & Justin Beal
Hauser & Wirth
Alice & Paul Judelson
Lianne & Alexander Leventhal
Dominique Levy
Glenn Ligon
Teresa Liszka & Martin Weinstein
Joshua Mack
John Melick
Modica Carr Art Advisory
Barbara & Howard Morse
Valeria Napoleone
Pace Gallery
Mato Perić
Almine Rech
Alice Weiner
Thea Westreich Wagner & Ethan Wagner
Christopher Wool

Anonymous
Judith Barry
Jordan Barse
Marianne Boesky
Broadway Gallery
James Cahn & Jeremiah Collatz
Company Gallery
Elizabeth Dee
Anne-Cecile Engell Speyer
Laura Roberson Fisch
Peter Freeman
Frieze
Kathy Fuld

Alex Glauber
Thelma & A. C. Hudgins
Elisabeth Ivers
Marjory Jacobson
Catriona Jeffries
Jacob King
Andrew Kreps Gallery
Stephanie LaCava
Nicola Lees
Jane Lombard
Susan & Glenn Lowry
Rob McKenzie
Karen Mehiel
Mendes Wood Gallery
Sophie Mörner
PPOW
Carolyn Ramo & Wesley Urqhuart
Regen Projects
Andrea Rosen
Cordy Ryman
Pat Steir Foundation
Stephanie Stevens
Michael Straus
Rob Teeters & Bruce M. Sherman
Fern & Lenard Tessler
Alexandra Tuttle
Maria Hummer-Tuttle & Robert Tuttle
Toby Webster
George Wells

"—to compete!"

"You haven't found"
"haven't developed past"
"competition"
"they haven't"
"past domination."

"you haven't found"
"heaven"
"Then dominate"
"—dominate then!"

"—but ask why"
"my participation"
"what of"
"this"

"—in your game!"

"Count me out!"

"—till what ends?!"
"—then why"
"why not leave me,"
"leave me"
"out"
"—leave me
be?!"

"Because
—life"
"—things were never"

"isn't"

"—isn't that easy!"

"You need me,"

"Let's dance"

"—you needed me"

". . . you need me"

"be,"

"me yours"

"—me close"
". . . me a distant"
"me"
"—all times;
me sometimes."

"Me—caged!"
"well done"
"—well then,"
"fuck that!"

"I need me,"

"I refuse!"

"so let live"
"live"
"—divorce"

"let's not be"
"afraid"

"Or try!"

"—your calling!"

"—Count your
blessings!"
"Or birds

—watching."
"Practice,"
"manifestation"

"as those"
"free
thinkers"

"the old folk"
". . . pray"
"—prayed!"

"As for I"

"the wind"
"at our
shoulders"

"—our sails"

"—the chose is

mind."

"Bounce back!"

"A lost"
"already lost"
"—wonder"

"a battle."

"Another war"

"all failures"
"—a lost cause,"
"empty"

"selves"

"log off!"

"remember
—a practice
—of prayer!"
"So much is going on"
"—going wrong in the world,"

"—the power
to change
things!"

"you know!"
"you jus'"

"just kills you"
"—a bit,"
". . . you look at"
"—that new Jim Crow!"

"—inside"

"well"
"—we protest"

new constructions, old constructions,
demolitions;
churches,
beneath overhanging rail bridges and subway
tracks. Standing there awaiting;
beside

welding

signs
there
waiting
—industrial kitchen equipment,
and marble

pedestrian

beneath fog

smoke
—there,
there
on the corner
"—there!"
—at that bus stop,
a drizzle now,
"—soon the rain will pass."

A drizzle, and a little smog—all amuck, as bird
and morning commuters—cars, trucks
—of all types throwing up colors;
cyclists
electric bikes
Razors
—deliveries,
scooters
—some on one wheel, others two wheels,
some on some new shit!

"on that wtf
—is that type shit!"

All types of newly crafted electric vehicles be
rushed
zooming past. As earlier this morning,
an ambulance too.

Its sound
from
—out the window,
beat
my alarm clock

—by minutes.

As was.

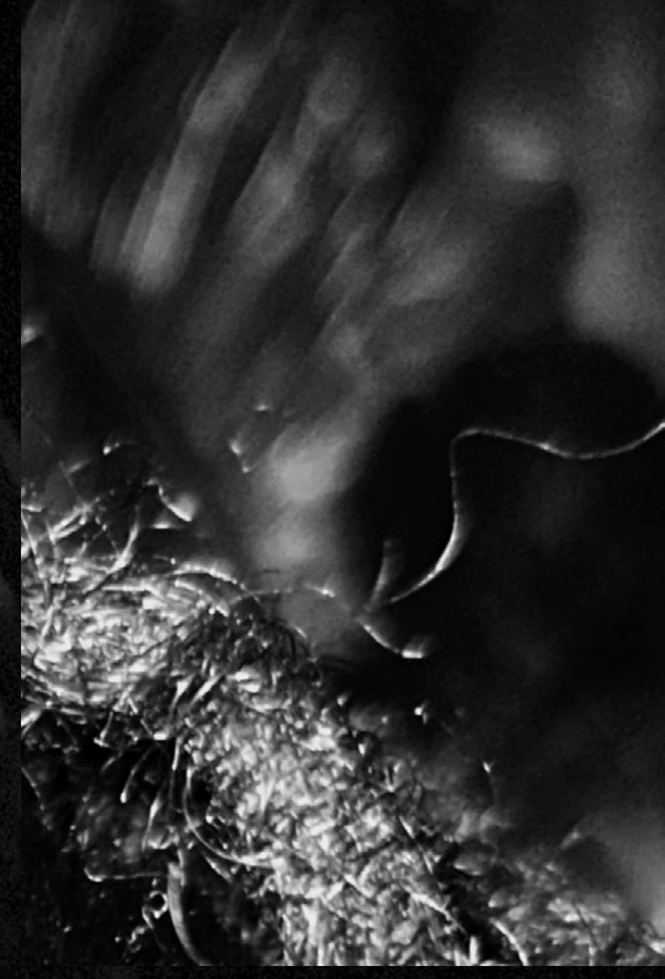
we were

heading towards the park,
the elementary

past that bacon-egg-and-cheese
spot.

We were
we are

we where
we stay
across
—the preschool



"hammering"
"from the construction"
". . . site across the
street."

"we manage"
"—we're holding it
together"

"love you,
bye!"
"have a great day"
"See you later,"
"see you when I get back"
"we say to each other"

"—little rituals,
—everyday"
"little prayers."
"—every morning"
"we say to each other."

"A pea-green"
"—the ceiling;

"...of a dark yellowish"
"gray"
"—bounced"
"bounces from
of the golden
curtains;"

". . . a pea-green,
of a dark yellow-ish
nature

turns"

"—the sound"
"come morning"

"—of slamming"
"and demolition"

"—of crains and
lifts."

"And saws!"

"—of motors"
"and engines

idling"

Who are we,
without our neuroses?

"An"

"insomnia-c"
"—awaits"
"coffee,"

"breakfast"
"—in a couple
more hours"
". . . in minutes"
"—really!"

"he'll"
"—heal"
"crash!"

"—lost,"
"down in the corners,"
". . . found deep in the cushions somewhere"

"Or some"
"somewhere tucked"
"fallen"

"—behind the mattress."

". . . the recurring thoughts!"

"No need"
"—you don't need"
"bombs"

"—no more bombs!"

"This world"
"already shattered!"

"Enough!"

At times you got to get out
—out of here;
escape.
Just
out
—the recurring thoughts

"to find"
"—to cobble"

"—the world"
"a pieces,"

"in pieces"

"—life"

"left a ruins."

"—left yesterday."
"to find peace
"within"

"a power within"

"—am I tripping?"
then follows

A dog barks
—a friendly hello,
muffled
behind a neighboring apartment
door.
Nowadays it's a hello,
a greeting
"—a smell-ya later,
and a have a chill day buddy!"

"Aight!"

"I gotta . . ." in a frustrated whisper,
a heavy tone,
and a growl.

"I need a walk"

". . . that"

"to go on"

"Just who?"
"fuck"

"—the fuck!"
"botherin' me!"

"it's dangerous"
"out here!"
"They won't chase me"

"out here,"
"not"
"here"
"not"
"out here"

"nowhere!"

"—stopping me,"

"I'll leave here for nature,"
"—for peace"
"to be"
"—at peace."
"Or closer to"

"—a campfire."

Time in nature,
time spent
at peace.

Rather than in hatred
—in fighting enemies.
Your enemies
will be

fine.

"Just fine!"

"—writing tickets,
and shit!"
"I guess!"

"Who's afraid?!"
"—too afraid to"
"dance?
"—to play!"

"to laugh, too!"

"—to mourn"
"to go through it"
". . . through it all"

"to go . . ."

"to grieve"
"to put to rest"

"CRAZY!"

"—all the
emotions"

"our losses"

"But"
what about
—others

"—our wine shop!"

you loved that one sushi spot?
The one

—next to the Pilates

and
karate;
you know the one across from that
gym.

That's where I'd get those flowers you like,
—the flowers
she
likes
—on the way back from the studio.

Above it all,
"—fuckin' vultures,"

as a helicopter intensely deafens
a screaming
past—momentarily
silencing all conversation.

"You know the area, right?"
"Huh!?"
"—remember,"
"how could you forget,
forget it!"

"I guess renovations atop renovation;
demolition follows new construction."

"you—you wouldn't recognize it."

"not anymore!"
"—you would not recognize this place anymore."
"not now!"

"remember that dope—that Chinese spot"
"—it still there!?"

". . . still here."

"And the really good taco truck, too;
and that late-night bodega—the one who,
whose cook be going till like 4 am!"

". . . take a good look around,
—and walk a bit;"

"the neighborhood still fire!"

"Some of us speak

two or more
—multiple
languages."

"Our tongues pierced
in multiple ways

and boroughs

—and in multiple places."

Cities too!
"What? you mean besides—Brooklyn?!"
"what you mean!?"

to not notice you've used up all the battery,
to stop again,
to take a piss,
to grab a bite,
"—at that Jamaican spot!"
"—the one with the goat-head stew!"
"fire!"
"—that be fire!"

Then,
a dive bar
—a drink

to borrow a charger;
to charge the phone

"to go check—"
"to go see!"

"over there by the American Legion."

"To bring back all the sand from
the beach."

"To have a nice day,"
". . . it was chill!"

"Here"
"I brought you a
seashell,"
"here's a feather"

". . . and this claw, too."

"—how was the pool?"
"—the sea!"

". . . a long
day!"

Diaspora and movement, migration and place all play equally pivotal roles Robert's thinking. A child of displacement, and a being of multiple cities—and transitions, a number of experiences, people, and events have shaped him.

In Untitled (let's call this game a city) plastic caps stolen off of metal bolts from the hard edges of scaffolds erected across the city's developing blocks become pieces as used in board games—literal "pawns"—to speak also to displacement, disparity and class struggles within a city.

A free spirit by nature things accumulate along his path, some things find him; subjects marinate. Ruminate and placed seated on his desk, or on a shelf; or windowsill. Becoming something else, sun-bitten or rusted over time. Or somewhere couched in the corner somewhere around the studio, or even somewhere more present that is the mind.

Amateur bee-keeping, gardening, and composting efforts find their ways into sculptures as well as help reshape and redirect pointing him towards other ways to live—communally, and inhabit the city.

Towards a
"local"

—and just about how long does that even take?"

"you know"
"to become"

"a part of the city again"
"to be

apart

of this city,
of the conversation!"
—a conversation.

"This city's
fucked up,"

"got us all
fucked up."

"—loco!"

"so how long?"
"—to be a part of something?"
"—a conversation,"
"—a city,"
"—fucked up!"

"Yeah, your right,
things sure have changed and
it is getting colder."

"Seasons have changed and we're all getting
ready for the next snow."

"Let me know if the kids need anything starting
school."

"I sure will."

"Thanks."

"I got an Airstream out there now, and try to just
head out"

"head over out there. It's nice to get some time
alone to think and write."

"to get out of here"

"it's nowhere really"

"some tomatoes"
"when it's good"
"there's ducks and chickens too."

"out"
"it's country out there."

"Peaceful!"
"—you'd think!"

"I do a lot of nothing,
I listen"

"and just listen"

"it's nice"
"Honestly, I listen to a lot of music out there."

"It's easy,
getting there is hard."

"however
it may manifest"

"—in some it's
self-destruction"

"anger"
"procrastination"
"chaos"
"control"

"in others
it's some kind of
perfectionism"
"—masking doubt"

"Overwhelmed"
"being tired"

"fatigued"

"alienation"
"isolation"

"—a distance"
"recluse"

"or exiled"

"—an unbalanced"
"unchecked"
"anxiety"

"nervousness"
"restlessness"

"questioning"
"panic attacks"
"a numbness"

"shocked"

"a deep
insecurity"
"quirks"

"addiction"
—pathologies masked;
"goes untreated"
"are you ok?"
"how is it going"
"—how is it today?"

"feeling?"
"and all types

of
energies

—moods?"

"obsession"
"overwhelming"
"boredom"

"rage"
"escape"
"guilt"

"Balance"
"—tuning in"

"no strategy
—no strategies"

"no getting out"
"—no out of it!"

"There's"

"what!"

"you"

"—can you"

"what"
"—you can do"
"about it"
"about that"

"when you die"
"—when they manage"
"to get you"
". . . in your sleep!"

"What about. . ."

"O!"

". . . about the"
"nightmares"
"—the recurring"

"They recurring, too"

"I see"

"Honestly,
I just couldn't. . ."

"from a distance"

"sleep"
"—weeks spent"
"up"

"all night"

"—couldn't sleep"
"I see!"

"—took an edible"

"the last"
"past couple of
of nights"

"that was"
". . . say around 2"
"—2am!"

"—so I wouldn't"
"you know"

"stare"
"stare up"
". . . up the ceiling"

"—up endlessly"
"into the weekend"

"Sometimes"
"sometimes I'll try"

"Before, he'd
manage to raise
really
his head up off
the pillow"

Free-formed
—some parts messy,
other parts neat."

"parts—wool,
wire
texture
tangled together
a cobble"

"—crocheted"
"a morning improvisation"

"some yours,
others

—some mine"

"free-form"
A yawn
—of morning
breath
—stinks,
like this city,
—he stinks, too.

"free-form"
off the radio,
—he swings his left,
hand,
his heavy arm

slams off the news.

And wipes the crust off
his eyes, too.

"free-form"
"free-form"
"free-form"

—screeched the
parrot.

"—for warmer air."

"Some fallen"
"left"
"behind"

"—fallen prey."

"or ill."

"frosted
"cold"

"left over night"

"Social"
"some"
"some do well"
"—masking"

"ill!"

"—at the bus stop"

"—at the shelter"
"waiting out"
"in the rain."

he found his favorite
person

"his"

"—you're my favorite
perch!"

"This"
"world"
"is"
"a"
"mess!"
"—the bombings,"
"the bombings"
"—the violence!"

"MUST!"

"STOP!"

". . . what fucking
shit!"

"what the fuck!"
"—the past few years
have been!"

". . . must stop!"

"we are sick"
"we feel"
"—pain."
"Honestly!"

"I CAN NOT WATCH
THIS
ANYMORE OF THIS!"
"ANYMORE!"

"Don't lose touch
with the divine"
"—pray!"

"—it is terrible!"
"—to what ends?"
"it is all awful!"

". . .
shocked!"
"—left unsettled,
uneasy."

"—I'll take no part!"
"I resign."

"Hard"
"—trying hard"
". . . not to sulk"

"—or be full of
loathing!"

"ran into some folk."
"—from my old

block"

at a time,
"I am following the news."

"Asking"
"But!"

2024 NO ESCAPE!

And realize we need to think it through and consider things on our ends a bit more carefully.

". . . we need to think it through"
"organize"

"I am"

"waiting"
"—awaiting a moment,"
although they claim
—his plans may take longer than expected
—or not come to fruition exactly as envisioned,
—or exactly as he sees it for this exhibition
—but, he is optimistically thinking about,
and wrestling with all this.

"—all this
"recurring"
"systems."

"But"

". . . what of
other places?"

"—other news?"

Behind these works lies this moment,
among others
—other songs,
much journaling,
processing
—writing,
reading
and reflections.

And again,
"it is all hard to read,"

"—so hard."
"I need to get out,"
again.

"Remember!?"

Recurring,
". . . to"

". . . get out of here;"
"you"
"—I"

"—and need to get into nature."
"we both do!"

"Maybe we visit,
your parents?!"
"—or something nice,
like that."

"—something nice"

At play, when you're in it your inner world meets the outer world. Your thoughts are not your own,

"—one drink."
". . . and a smoke."

"—OK, a few smokes!"
"—remember;"

"Just"

Head out
the window

over the sirens
"—stick your head out,
and take it in."

"out the window"
"and take it in."
"—take it all in."

"from
time to
time"

"the smoke-filled air—the smell of burning
exhaust and tires."
"You'll pass all types of dogs,"
"breeds,"
"fancy,"
"boutiques."

"Ol'hounds"
"You're sure to catch cancer—or something,
too!"
"Getting caught
walking around
too much
out here."

"Through all this"

"through all this 'air.'"
"through all that!"

There's pretty good
bagels;

—There's the CVS,
the pharmacy

tools and equipment
rentals

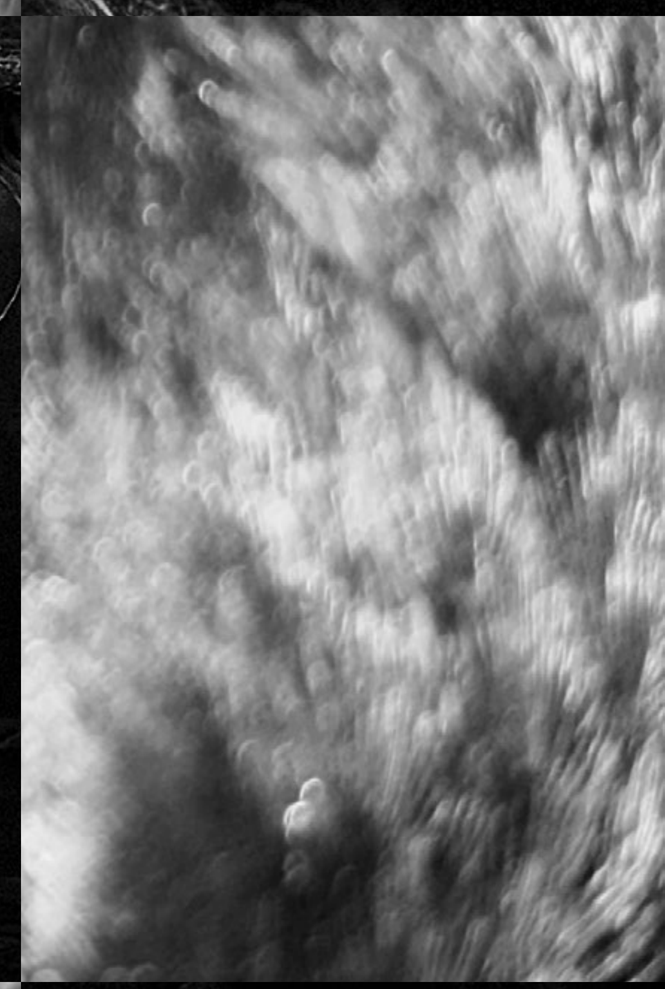
self-storage
air conditioning
flats
tires,
and more
bagels.

". . . there is always the fire escape
or the roof,
too!"

The market
—the grocery store across the street,
a few blocks down from the smoke shop.

The sounds of trucks
and guys pumping concrete.

Just a couple more blocks
down



feet

wakened"

"awakens"
"—the sun from the other night
before"
"—from out the window,"

"—the night before"

"slowly creeps"
"creeping in"

"and into
the afternoon"
"—a hangover,"

"warming"
"—a crisp"
"cool"
"air."

"Receding,
even further, now
—the leaves
have yellowed."

"a few birds"
"for now"
"—as of now,
"about most"
"have left"
"—for a warmer place,"
"—for warmer air."

"absent"

"By now,"

"the trees"
". . . have yellowed!"

"Now"

"now they've"
"some"

"some"
"even have
even have
even have begun"
"—fallen"

"some red,
others turned
brown"

"browned"
"some ochers
—others of a raw
brownish
—bruise."

For a Piece of Mind:

Scrummaging through what seems to be loose
change,
or misplaced references.

"Deep down,"
"left somewhere"

"out of town"
"not out this town!"

"—I'll leave when I . . ."

"when I am."

". . . ready,"
"when am called to."

". . . play"
—a little"

"Or not."

"—for nature."
"—to take a ride

"a ride"

"—to take a ride"

to rest
ones"
"head"

"to ride"
"not lost"
"—never too lost"

"just needs to escape a
bit"

"Whose"

". . . on my back"

"who"
"Just"
"—Who are these"

"Who the fuck"
"people?!"

"—wake yourself!"
"—dress your
self!"

"Not your . . ."
"—reference,"

"not your influence."
"Nor your"

"enemy!"

"Nor mine,"

"Who?"
"whose!?"
"Too scared"
"—to play"

"STOP"
"playing!"

"who?"
"who"
"WHO!"

"—these people!"
"Hassling"

"they'll"
"surly"

"they"

"know"
"—to kill a fire"

"kill your
fire,"

"your flame"
"surely"
"dies"

"before they"
"killing
you!"

"They'll"

"—put your shoes"
"back on!" angrily.
—
"Y'all hurt; yourself
out here!" they'd say.

"they said"

And yet,
"in seconds
—they 'all crack
my neck"

"they'll crack
your neck"

"Stomp you
out!"

"out here!"

"—who?"
"—the police?!"
"—who knows!?"

"You cannot love
me,"

"—care for me!"
"take care of"

"me"

"You only see-k"
"—to police"
"me"

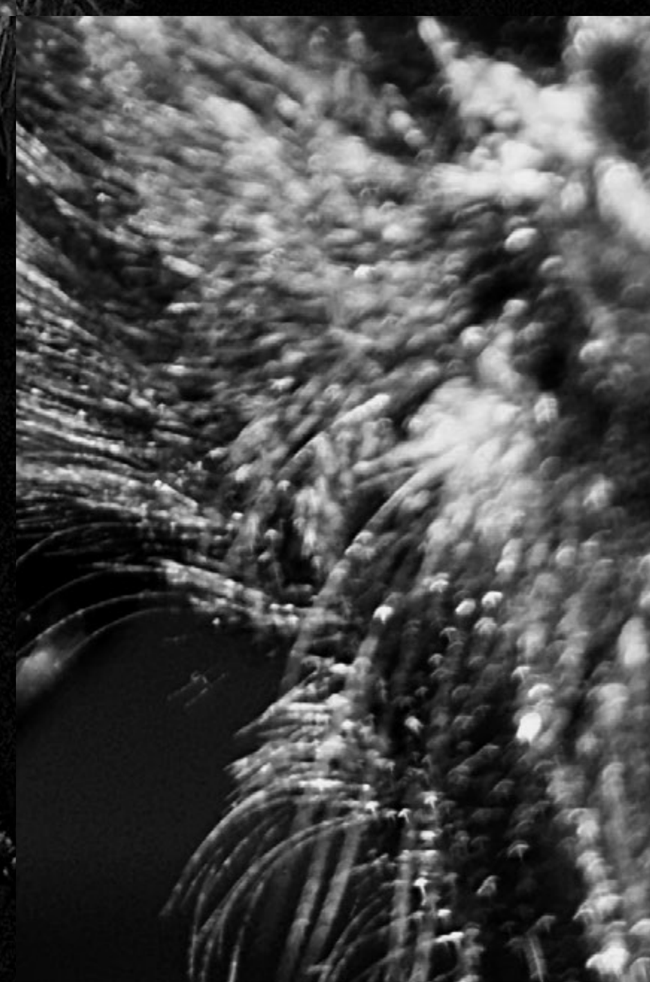
"cage me!"

"—to put
back on"

"my shoes!"
—my
chains!"

"—to correct!"
"me!"

"—to correct,
you"



"be there."

"—you mean without your phone?!"

"I used to"

"more"
"be there"

"to know"
"—knew more folk,"
"there"
"had"

"—their numbers too!"
"mad numbers"
"yeah, no more"
"—not anymore!"

"not no more,"
"you don't!"

"folk leaving"
"—shops closing"

"GPS isn't going to tell you that"

"—that they racist"
"there"
"—now!"

"—don't go there"

"—Or that
that's where everyone
takes a shit!"

"Isn't going to tell
you"
"—to back out"

"Or better yet,
head to the
beach!"

"But"
"—not without your phone?!"
"not as much,"
"sometimes!"
"—it's sometimes now"

"But I know
people"

"—got history"

"But"
"GPS isn't going to tell"
"you"
". . . what folks
be knowing"
"—I got peoples
there!"
"I know the names"
"—the names"
"they in your phone;"

"got some numbers"
"got they number"
"—numbers still."

"Fresh gestural markings
atop
old ones"
"side-by-side"

"Like fresh snow."

"—like fresh snow!"

"how could I
forget!"
"—the brick"
"on a snow day"

"brick!"

"—cold"
"—there's no getting out of
here now!"
"a touch of December
air."

"—not now."
"Where you're at,"

"at the end,"
"this is"
"it's the end."
"Last stop!"

Sculpting a life lived,
trips to the beach.

Of ritual
—to live another way;
that's aligned with the spirit.

To practice,
connecting rooks.

"But, if you ask,"
"don't ask me about it;
it's none of your business really,"
"—thanks for your concern."

"Trying,
—trying to get there . . ."

"But"

"it was
—somewhere else."

"—another time."
". . . somewhere else."

"—When?"
"You didn't know me then;
sorry!"

"you won't there."

"was out here"

"I'd found a spot,
in a RV

—the rent was cheap."

"I was,"

"the service was beautiful,
very well attended"

"a lot of people were there."

"family, old friends, even some folks from back
home flew out,"

"I ended up taking a Greyhound up there,
last minute"

"and some folks from the office where he
worked were there too"

"he was such a great guy."

"I'll miss him"

"he taught me how to play chess,"
"—he was the one!"

"we'll miss him."

". . . haven't been
right since."

"Keisha went into labor!"

Like his paintings, the improvisational works are "an intuitive articulation of hand, gesture, and mark—which captures the rhythm in what [he] was putting down, without reasoning, then in realizing, in foresight, then hindsight—in self-reflexiveness and action."

Processes of migration, translation, and abstraction give his subjects a new home. Like the city, a relentless building up and breaking down of his surfaces and their interiors is never quite finished. It is always caught up in a brutal cycle of possession and dispossession, intention and mistake. But as the artist optimistically states: "we were born a series of chance events, which both predate and precede, we may die little by little, yet we live!"

"We are taking care"
"—of our little bird,"
"—named Window"

"How is it?"
"—it is winter now,"
"winter all of a sudden!"