



Adams and Ollman

Jennifer Levonian: *Speed Reader*
August 3–31, 2024

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Adams and Ollman is pleased to present *Speed Reader*, a solo exhibition by American artist Jennifer Levonian (b. 1977, Martinsburg, WV; lives and works in Vigo, ES). The exhibition will include a new stop-motion animation and an installation of drawings used in the animation's making. The exhibition opens on Saturday, August 3 with a reception with the artist and is on view through August 31, 2024.

Levonian's newest stop-motion animation, *Speed Reader*, follows a set of identical twins as their lives weave in and out of one another, creating a poignant portrayal of what it is to see and be seen or not seen by loved ones through the vicissitudes of life. One twin is free-spirited and seemingly without focus; the other, an obsessive reader. While the bookish twin turns page after page and devours novel after novel, the other sister cartwheels in the supermarket and drums in their teenage bedroom—a kinetic abstraction or perhaps a foil to her sister's interiority. As the sisters grow and age, their apparent differences draw them together in unexpected ways. Levonian's self-referential and surrealist whirlwind of personhood and place creates a moving illustration of the human capacity and drive for connection, as well as the tender irony of being shaped and defined by that which goes unnoticed.

For nearly fifteen years, Levonian has created complex critiques of American culture and class using her unique style of stop-motion animation, a medium that aligns her practice with traditions of storytelling and myth-making. The work reflects on hard truths and absurdities of our modern condition employing surrealist impulses and cartoon-like characters to create a nuanced critical edge. Levonian's hyperbolic subjects and narratives scrutinize the perverse and mundane, the surface and substance of daily life to heart-rending effect. Like Levonian's other animations, *Speed Reader* was created from thousands of hand-drawn backgrounds and puppets, and blends documentary and fictional elements to create a narrative in which the absurd, surreal, heartbreaking, and hilarious are perpetually in play.

In conjunction with the screening of *Speed Reader* will be a sprawling installation of drawings used in its creation. This encompassing display speaks to the vastness and richness of life and the impossibility of perceiving events in

their entirety outside of the present moment. Levonian's installation allows us to briefly experience the intensity of collapsed time and the many beings and shapes that we inhabit and encounter throughout our lifetimes.

Jennifer Levonian's (b. 1977, West Virginia; lives and works in Vigo, Spain) work has been exhibited at venues including the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI; the Tang Teaching Museum, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY; Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA; National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY; Exit Art, New York, NY; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH; the Philadelphia Museum of Art and; the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, both Philadelphia, PA; and Sante Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe, NM. Her animations have been screened at, among others, the London International Animation Festival, London, UK; the D.C. Independent Film Festival, Washington, D.C.; the Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; the Chicago Feminist Film Festival, Chicago, IL; and the DTLA Film Festival, Los Angeles, CA. Levonian has been a resident at Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Atlantic Center for the Arts, Omaha, NE; Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME; and the Millay Colony for the Arts, Austerlitz, NY. In 2009, she was awarded the Pew Fellowship in the Art. She received her BA from The College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA, and her MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI.



Jennifer Levonian
Speed Reader, 2024
stop motion animation
TRT: 4:17 minutes
Music by Corey Marc Fogel
edition of 5 + 2 AP
JLev202401



Jennifer Levonian
*I shut my eyes and the world drops
dead, 2024*
collage with marker on paper
as installed: 75h x 181w in
190.50h x 459.74w cm
dimensions variable
JLev202402



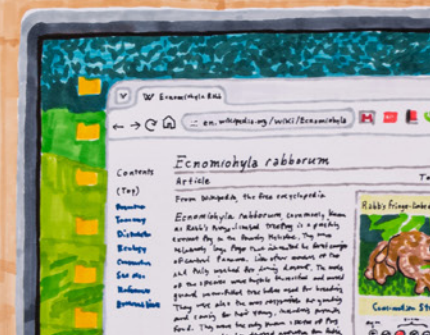
Detail: Jennifer Levonian, *I shut my eyes and the world drops dead*, 2024



Detail: Jennifer Levonian, *I shall murder and the world goes dead*, 2024



Detail: Jennifer Devonian, *I shut my eyes and the world drops dead*, 2024





Detail: Jennifer Levonian, *I shut my eyes and the world drops dead*, 2024



Installation view: Jennifer Levonian, *Speed Reader*, 2024



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