

GENE'S

Merideth Hillbrand

F Scale South

May 24th to July 5th

Ultimately, this is a love letter to a place, and I'm tracing its edge. These edges are spherical. Each model of a sphere contains the possibility of a universe. A sphere here can be both geometry (a solid round figure where every point on its surface is equidistant from its center) and sociology (an area of interest). The sphere here contains The California F-scale – a personality test on identifying and measuring traits associated with authoritarianism; it was created for the Studies in Prejudice Series, also known as the Berkeley studies. The *F* in F scale has come to stand for many things in developing this work; however, it was originally intended to stand for Fascist. But how does one measure personality? As it turns out, with error. I've taken the Means and Discriminatory Powers list from this study on a series of walks along a certain number of readings. For me, it has become a grid over the surface of which a subject moves. I read it with different lenses: as a poem, as a recipe for disaster, a random list of words, an omen.

I go on long walks, nearly every day. I often read until my eyes burn. Sometimes I wonder why. Perhaps it is because I have long thought that I would die young, and I've wanted to experience and consume as much as I could before that happened. I used to think that this was because of my myriad chronic health issues, but lately, I have been preoccupied with the idea that an early expiration might actually now be the result of some combination of authoritarianism, fascism, and a new plutocracy. Is this a legit omen or simply a placebo?

When I come to my gallery in MacArthur Park, and I walk past the weird-ass fencing structures that our corrupt government and police department have implemented to try to remove the unhoused, the addicts, and the vendors, I am overwhelmed by how truly dystopian our country has become. Remember when people tried to convince you to hope for change? In 2025, what are your hopes? Do you even have any left?

When I think about hope, I think about community. A place is a name; it is filled with faces; it can be balanced, it can be structured; it can be tight, or it can be expansive; it can be dense, or it can be empty; it can be crowded, or it can be barren. Does a place have a purpose, or do people give it one? Or is it the other way around? The future seems as bleak as ever, or at least it does for at least 89-plus percent of the world. And we can certainly look to the generation before ours and the one before theirs to blame for that. The present is always a present, though; I suppose it's up to each specific individual to decide whether or not to be open to opening it.

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When I think about Merideth, I think about hope. I think about love. I think about language. I think about process. I think about progress.

Ultimately though, this is a love letter to the sphere. All future thinking requires a grounded material reality. How things hang together is a form of philosophy. To produce objects is to channel how things are made, one's relation to it, and how it is placed. We make up scales and hold them next to things. Measured here is an electrical outlet, a yard stick, and a four-by-six-inch text. Measured here is also relativity, one subject over or under another, one object over or under another.

We acknowledge that Gene's Dispensary occupies land originally and still inhabited and cared for by the Tongva, Tataviam, Serrano, Kizh, and Chumash Peoples.

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Untitled (low), Brass, 3 x 5 x 1 inches, 2025

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Adventures in Poetry, Steel, laminated plywood, found objects,
18 x 25 x 12 inches, 2020-2025

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GENE'S



Famous, Found objects and inkjet print, 18 x 22 x 2 inches, 2025

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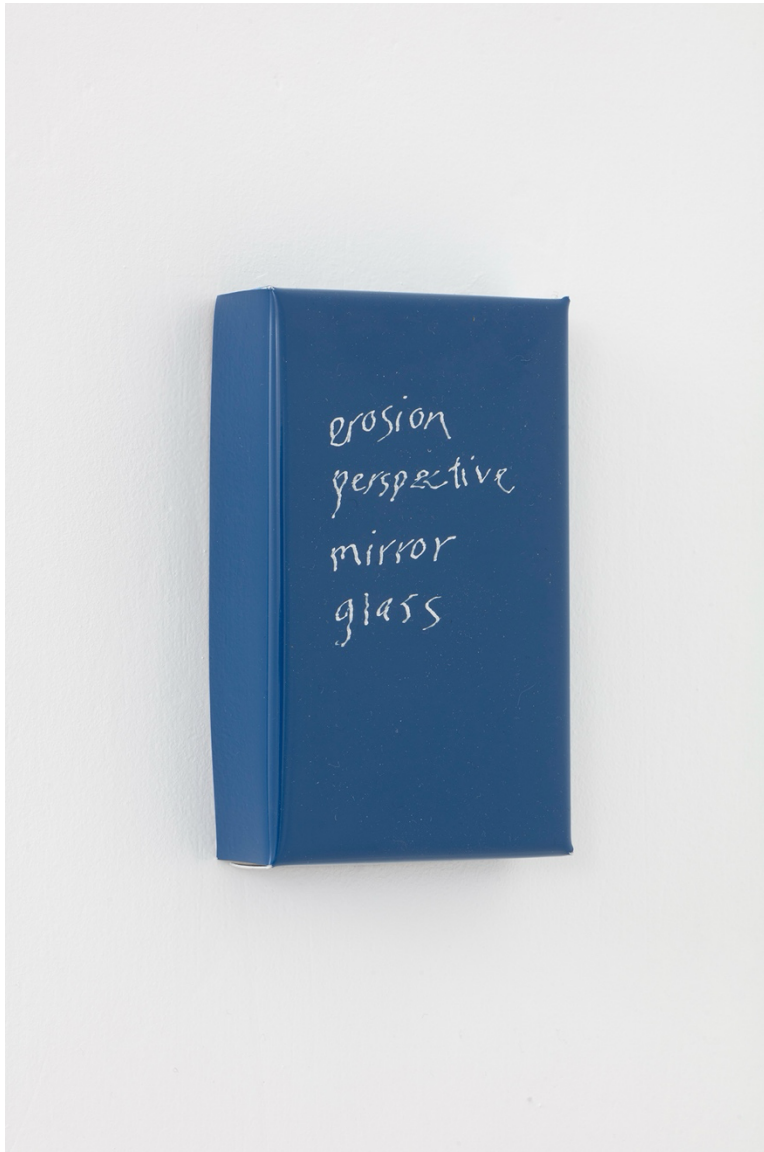


*Feeders, Electrical wire, bird feeders, steel ball bearings,
Aramid reinforced Buna-N, cork washers, silicone, night light bulbs,
indicator lights, LED chandelier bulbs, sockets, dimensions variable, 2025*

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GENE'S



Untitled (erosion), Aluminum, 3 x 5 x 1 inches, 2025

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GENE'S



Untitled (open), Aluminum, 3 x 5 x 1 inches, 2025

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