

## Moyra Davey

MURRAY GUY 453 West 17th Street March 1–April 5

In Moyra Davey's new exhibition, "Ornament and Reproach," two paintings bearing the artist's name and the show's title hang amid predominately photographic work. In lieu of standard opening and closing information is the curious timespan, "June 5 1647 to April 14 1730." Funerary and historical, this modest preamble signals a layering of effects that requests an active reading.



View of "Ornament and Reproach," 2014.

Vestiges of the artist's earlier works populate the space; time—as subject and as tempo—is inferred and occurs in their re-configurations. Black-and-white prints from Davey's "Bottle Grid" series, 1996-2000, portray empty whiskey bottles atop the same kitchen counter, like artifacts from successive nights of bonhomie. Re-photographed "Copperheads," 1990—portraits of Lincoln on pennies—resurface as color prints-cum-mailers, sent to Toronto gallerist John Goodwin and returned for exhibition (superimposed with postage marks and other traces of journey). A well-worn piano abuts the west wall, its keys displayed below David Lang's handwritten composition, "ornament and reproach, for Moyra Davey." Surrounding the instrument are thirty-four mailers addressed to Goodwin, depicting scenes around the artist's Washington Heights neighborhood. Trinity Church Cemetery, which figured in Davey's video *My Necropolis*, 2009, reappears across changing seasons with attention spent on uprooted trees (from Hurricane Sandy), visitation stones, and Ed Koch's grave (photographed before and after his passing; while alive, Koch facetiously noted his birthdate as 1978).

Davey's mailers, which she has been sending out and re-collecting since 2006, are rich palimpsestic surfaces that bear in their material history literal and metaphoric narratives. Displayed en masse they represent an accumulation of relations and intentionalities, as well as instances of time being suspended in a way that we risk losing touch with from inside Internet temporality. There are resonances between this slowness, this methodical taking of time, and the quiet, profound details captured across Davey's work. Placing stones on a grave, for example, is both an act of remembrance and a symbol for the permanence of memory.

— Corrine Fitzpatrick