

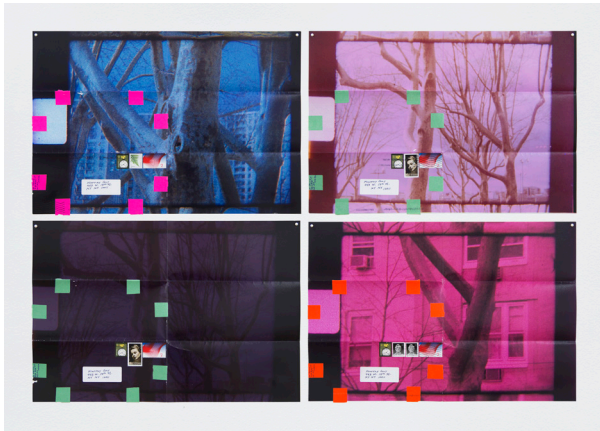
Murray Guy

453 West 17 Street New York NY 10011 T: +1 212 463 7372 F: +1 212 463 7319 info@murrayguy.com

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Moyra Davey, 7 Albums
by Martha Schwendener
Murray Guy



Moyra Davey, *Four Trees*, 2016, 4 c-prints, tape, postage, ink, 12 x 18 inches each, 24 1/2 x 36 1/2 inches overall, unique

A key to Moyra Davey's show "7 Albums" at Murray Guy can be found within "Notes on Blue" (2015), a 28-minute video that is the centerpiece of the exhibition. The video is a diaristic meditation on the filmmaker Derek Jarman, who died of AIDS in 1994, as well as on Ms. Davey's own diagnosis of multiplesclerosis, and other artists — Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath and Jorge Luis Borges, for example — who have had to cope with challenging conditions, like blindness and depression.

Near the end of the video, Ms. Davey, speaking into a small, hand-held recorder while wandering around her apartment, says, "I live in a strange suspension, straddling the analog technologies I used to know but am quickly forgetting, and the digital ones I struggle to learn, imperfectly at best." The tension between these poles — old and new, past and present, analog and digital — resonate throughout the show.

Accompanying the video are photographs displayed in Ms. Davey's signature, self-invented fashion, printed on mailers that she has stamped and sent to the gallery. One image depicts the inside of a tube amplifier (a supremely analog device) and includes a Johnny Cash postage stamp; other works feature postage stamps with the face of Ingrid Bergman, another legend of the bygone analog era (this time film).

The show is steeped in nostalgia, which could easily deteriorate into sentimentality, but not in Ms. Davey's hands. The changes forced on her by technology serve as a metaphor for receiving a difficult diagnosis. What Ms. Davey shows, however, is that these can be the foundation for a new creative process around which an artist's life revolves.