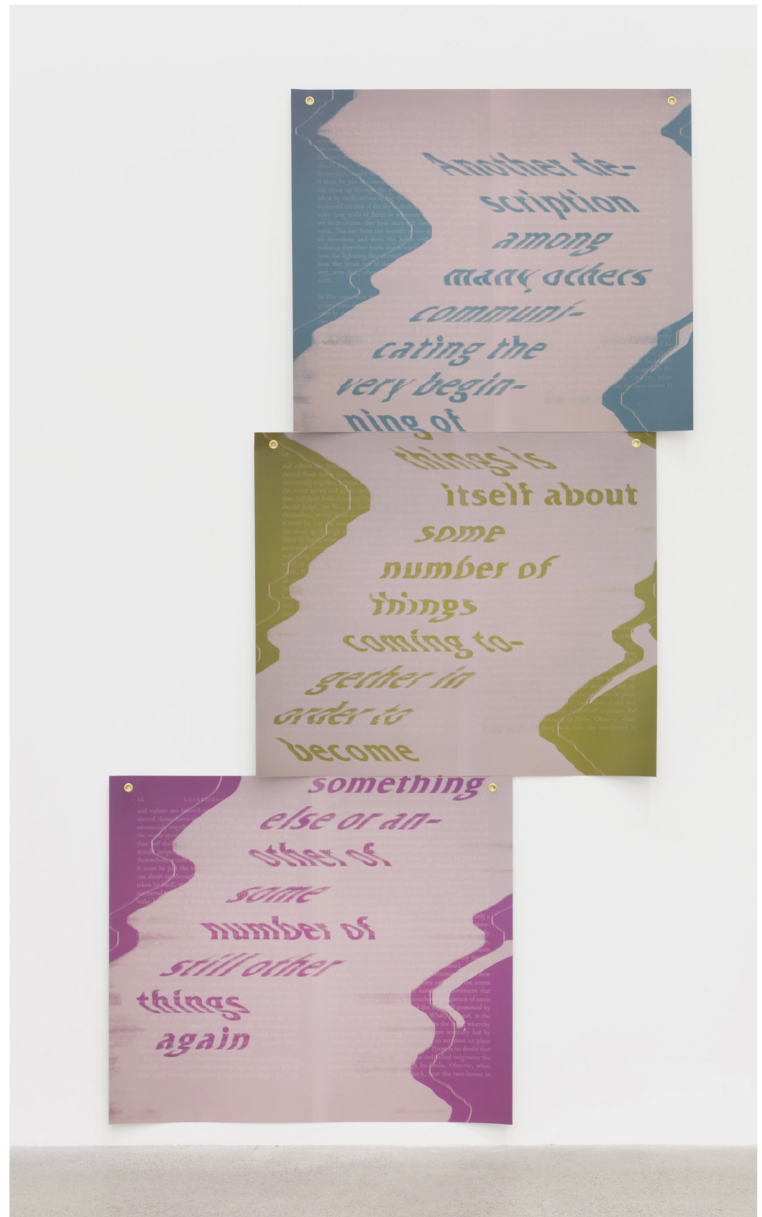


# RAYMOND BOISJOLY ■

"Language is bound by experience, and yet it is never quite fully our own to use," reads a printed text. Enigmatic refrains such as this—rendered near illegible by digital and analog manipulations—are central to Raymond Boisjoly's engagement with the written word. An artist of Haida and Quebecois descent, his conceptual inquiry explores the tension between Indigenous experience and colonial mechanisms of knowledge production. Boisjoly asks after the assumed authority of text as a means to define the "other" and proposes novel ways in which ambiguous phrases and material mediations might defer such authority. Pursuing alternative understandings beyond dominant cultural and political assumptions, he simultaneously highlights and evades the limitations of language. ■ Bending written text toward abstraction, Boisjoly's words become linguistic images, boldly graphic yet hard to decode, their letters warped beyond easy recognition or broken into collaged fragments. Each is mediated through technologies intended for the reproduction of knowledge—image-editing software, photocopiers, printers, scanners. Yet rather than create near-perfect facsimiles, Boisjoly works against these duplicating mechanisms to magnify errors in transmission. Take the rippling, fluid phrases in *Clinamen* (After Lucretius) and *After Some Imbalance, After Henri Focillon* (both 2021), produced by moving a page of printed text across a scanning bed as the bulb travels the length of the glass. The single word in *newer figures of another fleeting (non) relation* (2017), which, having been magnified many times over, is legible only at a distance, its confusion of shapes and colors finding a momentary form: *DISCORDANCY*. Words shift from printed type to textual artifacts, the sequence of processes that distorts them an analogy of the divergence between language and experience, the categorical and the provisional. ■ To Boisjoly, this visual distortion parallels French philosopher Michel Serres's theory of "noise" as both the medium by which ideas are communicated and an inevitable obstacle in all spoken and written exchanges. Such noise—characterized by interference and confusion—necessarily misshapes meaning. Yet its effects, Boisjoly suggests, rather than undermine the intended message, have a generative potential. "There is a productive character to misrecognition or misunderstanding," he said in a 2016 conversation with curator Sarah Robayo Sheridan at the Koffler Gallery in Toronto. "If we disorient our vision, if we seek to misunderstand that which is being viewed or recorded, then another type of understanding can emerge, one that only comes through detour or obstacle." In making apparent transmission's imprecisions, in attending to the interval between sender and receiver, Boisjoly renders the noise of language visible and asks how Indigenous voices might be heard—or misheard—within the din. ■ LUCIENNE BESTALL

■ Born 1981, Langley, Canada. Lives and works in Vancouver, Canada.

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- A CLINAMEN (AFTER LUCRETIUS), 2021. Solvent-based inkjet print on vinyl, grommets. 108 × 61 in. (274 × 155 cm)
- B ALWAYS SOME NUMBER OF THINGS, 2021. Beer can on wall. 118 × 148 in. (300 × 376 cm)
- C AFTER SOME IMBALANCE, AFTER HENRI FOCILLON ("...ESCAPE THE BONDAGE OF TIME:" "...COULD NEVER REPLACE THE MEANEST WORK OF ART:" "...FORM, EXPERIENCE MANY REMARKABLE ADVENTURES."), 2021. Solvent-based inkjet print on vinyl, grommets. 36 × 144 in. (91 × 366 cm)