JOEL W. FISHER ABRIDGED PROOF

Ice Cream Scoop, 2016/2017

Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art
Lewis & Clark College
0615 SW Palatine Hill Road
Portland, OR 97219

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Lewis & Clar College

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is a great pleasure to present the exhibition *Joel W. Fisher: Abridged Proof* in the Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art at Lewis & Clark College. Fisher is an assistant professor of art and the studio head of photography at Lewis & Clark, a position he has held since 2012.

Fisher received a BA in English from the University of New Hampshire in 1997. He received an MFA in photography from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2006, followed by a Fulbright Fellowship that took him to the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig, Germany, where he studied with Heidi Specker. His work has been shown nationally and internationally in both group and solo exhibitions.

In 2015, Fisher collaborated with photographer Justin T. Leonard to publish *Landmark*, a book of photographs taken in and around Detroit during the years 2009–14. In *Landmark*, Fisher and Leonard reexamined the socioeconomically challenged postindustrial landscape of the urban Midwest. Their monograph was short-listed for the 2015 Paris Photo–Aperture Foundation PhotoBook Awards, an apt indication of the quality of Fisher's ongoing studio output.

Fisher has a long-standing interest in the dissemination of content through the photobook format, and in the exhibition *Abridged Proof* we are invited to preview a much larger, longer project of his entitled *Agapage*, which will consist of both book and web-based pieces. In this complex and compelling work, Fisher fuses text with images that examine the contemporary photographer's relationship with lens-based media and the meaning of pictures.

At the same time as Fisher's exhibition is shown at the Hoffman Gallery, the Museum of Modern Art presents *American Surfaces and the Photobook* (November 22, 2017–March 18, 2018). The MoMA exhibition acknowledges that the photobook is a current and dynamic vehicle through which to view, curate, and collect photography. Fisher's serious and enthusiastic investigation of the photobook, which *Abridged Proof* is part of, is evidence of his currency in conversations about contemporary photography.

Linda Tesner
Director
Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art

JOEL W. FISHER ABRIDGED PROOF

TEXTING Stanley Wolukau-Wanambwa

A B C D E F G

We begin with parts 5 and 15 of a rhizomatic series by Joel W. Fisher entitled *Agapage,* which will ultimately stretch to an eighteen-part piece (series of works? series of *texts*?). They thread together strands of A. R. Ammons's book-length poem *Garbage* (written in 1989), William Gaddis's novel *Agapē Agape* (completed in 1998), and a series of parallel photographic musings or responses into a stream that might sprawl onward endlessly in compounding fashion. The elements of this work, that is, seem simple and straightforward enough. But they have no center, no governing structure, and so I am moved to ask (on my behalf, and perhaps on yours): Of what does this piece/work/text consist? To respond schematically (again, I know—repetition will be crucial, is in fact *constitutive* here, I think), *Agapage* appears to consist of:

- *an ordered disorder of textual appropriation and invention* ostensibly *sourced from Ammons's single-seating stream-of-consciousness poem;*
- *Gaddis's bricolage-d, palimpsestic, sparsely punctuated ream of "spoken" text (cum-novel);*
- *twenty-one photographs.*

In book form, these elements (part 5 and part 15) are combined into two discrete chapters of an unfinished work, with sections of blank verse intersecting and interrupting each other in vertical seams, occasionally counterposed against or interacting with images Fisher has been making over the last several years. In this sense, the work is polyphonic and hybrid. This sense is amplified by the profusion of identifiable utterances within its weave ("Maine Lobsters are far more superior / Than Floridian Lobsters"; "So we all just listen / *I have to ask,* I think" and so on).

These utterances intimate "voices," which are in turn amplified by their interactions with imagery that seems to correspond to them, as when the prose reads "*I have to ask,* I ask, *can I..., can you / Twist your middle around your index*— / (distal, middle, proximal phalanx)" following a photograph titled *Oregon Lottery (Daniel Baldwin Crossing His Fingers)* (2012) that depicts such a gesture [*at right*]. Equally, however, such amplified specificities as these particular voices might constitute are neutralized by the very profusion of *voice* throughout the text, and by the perfunctory indifference *to* specificity in the form of address essential to the advertising that Fisher repeatedly photographs. We are enmeshed in a dense simultaneity of utterances that have no fixed beginning or ending, and that tend, gradually and poetically, toward the unenumerable condition of noise.[1]

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Parenthetical.

In a 1971 essay titled "From Work to Text," Roland Barthes wrote that "there is now the requirement of a new object, obtained by the sliding or overturning of former categories. That object is the *Text*."[2] In an order that obtained *before* the Text, there was the work. For Barthes, according to this order, "work is caught up in a process of filiation."[3] Consequently, the "author is reputed the father and the owner of his work: literary science therefore teaches *respect* for the manuscript and the author's declared intentions, while society asserts the legality of the relation of author to work."[4] The work is a stable object triangulating relations between the author and the reader, and it conveys fixed meanings and points toward stable signifieds. Meanings are thus guaranteed by the father figure, the author through whom the work is filiated.

Over and against the unity and autonomy of the traditional "work," Barthes argued that the cumulative revelations of Marxist theory, psychoanalysis, and structuralism demanded

"the relativization of writer, reader, and observer (critic)," so that where a "work" could "be held in the hand," "can be seen," and is "a fragment of substance," this newly inaugurated (discovered?) *Text* is "a methodological field," "a process of demonstration" that can be experienced "only in an activity of production" in which the reader/observer is integrally involved.[5] Meanings are no longer fixed or guaranteed through the work's filiation to the author. This moment marks the famous dialectical death of the Author, in and through which the birth of the Reader is announced—not as a coherent and autonomous figure, but as a processual mode of being: the Reader constituted as an interacting series of gestures within an extensive *field* of text(s).

LIMITS

Ammons's poem *Garbage* was composed on eighty one-foot-long reams of adding machine paper and typed in a single sitting in 1989. He states that for Truman Capote, "the poem is typing, not writing," soliciting our sensitivity for the ways in which the apparatuses we construct tend to fashion us in turn.[6] The choice of this particular material form for poetry represents the selection of an arbitrary limit. First and foremost, the adding machine paper constitutes a limit in its restriction on the line length of a poem, which Ammons saw as "just right for a kind of breaking and spilling": a chaotic transgression or exceedance of strict limits.[7] Writing/typing on the tape clarified for Ammons that the "point, like and unlike a novel, was to get to the other end."[8]

But the tape is also the vertiginous assembly point for routine and anonymous calculations of the adding machine: its scale is governed by the legibility of numbers, its length governed by the needs of transactional volume, its breadth hostile to the extensive gestures of coherent poetic form. In Ammons's unrevised poetic utterance, in his unbroken serial speech, this constriction induces abrupt breakages in temporality, in narrative trajectory, and in the meter of his blank verse. Pondering the poem even as he writes it, which is to say as he bears witness to its becoming *by uttering* it, Ammons writes:

> *should it act itself out, illustrations,*
> *examples, colors, clothes or intensify*
>
> *reductively into statement, bones any corpus*
> *would do to surround, or should it be nothing*
>
> *at all unless it finds itself: the poem,...*[9]

This "intensification" via "reduction" that Ammons describes has figurative resonance with a kind of automation and atomization (of experience, of meaning, of bodies) and a kind of flattening and stratification (of objects and of subjects) characteristic of modernity and of late capitalism.[10] Ammons's imbrication in a language that speaks him as he speaks it—his poem's entanglement within the arbitrary confines of a computational form—resonates with our individual and collective capture within the de-territorializing and re-territorializing ruptures of a neoliberal moment utterly defined by processes of continual fragmentation.

Gaddis's novel *Agapē Agape* is fashioned from a tissue of precisely such disparate constellated fragments. In the novel, which is framed as the interior monologue of a dying man lamenting the demise of the player piano—a self-playing instrument powered by pneumatic or electromechanical systems—the player piano "emerges as a symbolic register for the modern-day rush toward mechanization and rationalization and as a key link in the development of data processing technologies," writes literary theorist Michael Wutz.[11] The weaving of

a tessellated field from dispersed fragments is not then merely a matter of literary form, but of thematic content integral to Gaddis's long-standing concerns with "entropy, plagiarism, the pressures of capitalism, the threat of mass culture to artistic authenticity, and the continued viability of literature."[12]

As literary scholar and media theorist Joseph Tabbi writes, *Agapē Agape* is made up of working material "cut from popular magazines and newspapers," in a process in which Gaddis would

> *combine strips on a single topic or under a single date and tape them all the way along one side, on a single long page. When correcting galleys and typescripts, he would insert words and small phrases by hand, but he preferred to lay in new material in typed strips cut with scissors. Composition, for Gaddis, was a distinctly material practice, involving a literal organization and arrangement of found materials, even as his narrator struggles literally to hold himself together.*[13]

Such a process of writing necessarily collapses together into irregular cohesion utterly disjunct forms and meanings, proposing a sort of hybridity and polyphony that cannot be reduced to the logic of a single order. Such a Text (to borrow Barthes) "does not stop at (good) Literature; it cannot be contained in a hierarchy, even in a simple division of genres. What constitutes the Text is, on the contrary (or precisely), its subversive force in respect of the old classifications," because it "poses problems of classification (which is furthermore one of its 'social' functions)."[14] Gaddis's text rejects the rationality of a rectilinear conception of the text, morphing its surface into an edgeless and absolutely uneven globe (or piano roll) onto, into, through, and around which multiplicity erupts like a kind of dyskinesia.

> *By now electricity is spreading its blessings everywhere, from refinements on the reproducing piano with the, where, in Germany? No that was my invention wasn't it? Wrote it down yes and somebody stole it? The reproducing piano is made possible by an electric motor attached to the pump providing constant and predetermined air pressure, while back at home here the electric player with a magnet for each key appears, the nickel in the slot making the electrical contact pounding out its mechanical note; missing some in bad weather, but still in the vanguard other public entertainment a murderer named Kemmler provides material for the first electrocution at Auburn Prison.*[15]

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Parenthetical.
Talking about the insurrectionary effects of the Text on the stability of the "work," which functioned according to a closed relay in which author creates ⟶ object, which acts as a ⟶ sign pointing toward a ⟶ specific, delimited signified, Barthes writes that by contrast, the Text "practices the infinite deferment of the signified, is dilatory," expansive, elusive, in a process of constant slippage.[16] For Barthes, this means that we should not approach the signifier (the thing that points toward the *signified*) "as 'the first stage of meaning,' ... but, in complete opposition to this, as its *deferred action*." What used to stand between the reader and the author under the order of the work was the thing that pointed us toward its signified, toward its meaning. But now this is to be perpetually deferred, so that "in the field of the Text," "the *infinity* of the signifier ... is realized ... according to a serial movement of disconnections, overlappings, variations" (there's repetition (endlessly) again). The Text works according to a logic in which one thing may stand in for an ineffable number of signifieds, so that "the activity of associations, contiguities, cross-references coincides with a liberation of symbolic energy"—a field of *play*.[17]

LIMITLESSNESS

So what is a photographer like Fisher doing pottering around in all this textuality? Maybe running riot? I'm thinking here of the sense in which artist and theorist Allan Sekula identified photography as another potentially destabilizing force for bourgeois culture (and its precious norms), by virtue of its capacity to absorb and reflect anything, to conjoin what is not only disjunct but what should be categorically and hierarchically separate. In his 1986 essay "The Body and the Archive," Sekula reckons with the incipient threat to the stability of a cultural and political paradigm that photography would come to both abet and transform from the moment of its invention. He describes photography as representing "a technological outpacing of already expanding cultural institutions," writing that it "promises an enchanted mastery of nature," but warning that "photography also threatens conflagration and anarchy, an incendiary levelling of the existing cultural order."[18] For this reason, he writes:

> *Photography is not a harbinger of modernity, for the world is already modernizing. Rather, photography is modernity run riot.*[19]

We should recall here the transformative processes (and logics) of modernization, and thus of modernity, already operative or evolving in the nineteenth century and requiring, as art critic Jonathan Crary writes, an "immense reorganization of knowledge, languages, networks of spaces and communications, and subjectivity itself."[20] Photography is not merely coincident with this, but integral to these processes (as Sekula goes on to show in his essay in relation to portraiture, physiognomy, and the intensifying disciplinary powers of the State). In a chapter titled "Modernity and the Problem of the Observer," Crary reminds us of the decentering multiplicative force of capital within and on modernity, mapping out a churned-up and reconstructing ground:

> *Modernization is a process by which capitalism uproots and makes mobile that which is grounded, clears away or obliterates that which impedes circulation, and makes exchangeable what is singular.*[21]

The effects of modernization seem comparable to those of the Text on the former stability of the work. We might consider here the ways in which this experience of paradigmatic destabilization by capital/modernity is comparable to (in fact consubstantial with and formative of) the penetration of the sign by (post)structuralist theory: bye-bye work, hello Text as a field full of signifiers in infinite deferral. Art historian and theorist Hal Foster writes that "this dissolution reflects the penetration of the artistic sign by the capitalist dynamic of reification and fragmentation. Such is the political unconscious of this semiotic breakdown, which, precisely because it was unconscious, could not then be grasped in its historical agency."[22]

So where Ammons repeatedly questions the poem he brings into existence *by such questioning* of his means and ends:

> *... is a poem about garbage garbage*
>
> *or will this abstract, hollow junk seem beautiful*
> *and necessary as just another offering to the*
>
> *high assimilations*[23]

and where Gaddis writes of writing's futility as the voice which has

> *dwindled to the dry scratch of a grasshopper and the legs are gone, they're just not there and it all comes down in a heap good God look at them!*[24]

Fisher ponders photography within this degenerating, transforming, borderless terrain. He does so by doing what photography does best, which is also what capital does best: the appropriation and *revaluation* of appearances.[25] He borrows the titles, the names, the attendant symbolisms and resonances of *Garbage* and *Agapē Agape*, reordering them (and their contents) according to an unstated and arbitrary logic of recombination, and then willfully inserting his own prose, his own poetry, to fashion volatile new meanings and nonmeanings from material that reproducibility ensures is now readily at hand.[26] But more than this, he makes photographs that reflexively implicate the production of photography within the vexed networks of relations (and circuits of power) that subtend any artistic expression *through* photography. He holds up his means as a photographer as a matter equally subject to questioning as his ends as an appropriator, or an artist, or a capitalist.

Penske Positive (2016) & *Penske Negative* (2016) [*at left*]
These twinned color-field abstractions that perhaps recall the abstract expressionist painting *Untitled* (*Rabat*) (1964) by Frank Stella sit side by side, paired across a double picture spread, the former a deep lustrous yellow with sonorous shadows, the latter a rich and yet anodyne blue. Each image is marked by the thrust of thick parallel vertical lines that sweep up in strict symmetry from the frame line, ending in the diagonal slope of an arrow. Their abstraction is not merely a matter of the recalcitrance of visual description—what "object" do we see, or is it "merely" form?—but a matter of the photographs' symbolic elision of mobility with capital flows and photographic reproducibility itself, so that abstraction is both a *way* of describing *and* the thing described. The lines are the characteristic symbol inscribed on the sides of Penske trucks. The monochromatic density of each image (*Positive* being yellow; *Negative* being blue) works to exaggerate and thus make visible the simplistic signaling of the corporation, and the instrumental value of the image to the constant circulation of photographs and of capital.

The Bund #1 (2015) & *The Bund #2* (2015) [*at left and on p. 7*]
Fisher has said of the first of these two images (the figure of the diptych may be key here; repetition again) that it "was a candid and out-of-focus photograph that I shot with my phone while walking along the Huangpu River in a historical section of Shanghai that was once full of European banks."[27] In making it, he described himself as "interested in the collision of the older 35mm camera technology with the iPhone … as well as the notion of one subject experiencing and participating in the landscape while the other documented herself in the experience."[28]

I cannot avoid the postcolonial, geopolitical, and racial resonances at work here within and across these sliding signifiers: the decaying authority of European (financial) power symbolized by the disappearance of its banks from the borders of this Chinese river; the elision of tourism and photography with the feminine figures of East Asians; the struggle for political and economic ascendancy through and in technology; the figuration of a dyad in which one woman looks on at another linked to but separated within a common but differentiated field. Photography serves here as a proxy for the geopolitical war between "the West" and "the East." But photography also serves as the stage in which we return to a figuration of the Other through the stereotypical values inscribed in the touristic use of the camera by an

figure (all that is missing, along this recrudescent line, is the bun bag[29]).

But the title *Bund* seems crucial here too. Wikipedia tells me that it is a Chinese word whose etymological roots flow through Persian and Hindustani—the word *band*, meaning "levee" or "embankment"—and that this word is "a cognate of English terms 'bind,' 'bond' and 'band,' and the German word 'Bund.'"[30] The point perhaps being that the Europeans didn't get here (or anywhere beyond their immediate territorial borders) "first" at any point in history. The point perhaps being that by "cognate" we mean here "born together with," so that "the Asian" is born in the simultaneous creation of "the European," each being an Other for the other in uneven but dialectical relation.

These interweavings of capital and race, or of technology and power, occur elsewhere in the Text, and these reoccurrences mark such interdependent phenomena as integral to the role photography plays in *Agapage* as a whole. For instance, the photograph *American Canvas* (2014) [*at right*] fuses disparate geographies and histories of labor and exploitation together in the compositional recession from the abutting bumpers of two worn-down American trucks to the hand-painted signage above a store that gives the photograph its name, to the gleaming billboard photograph of an iPhone at the rear of the frame, deep in the valley of the hill atop which the photograph was made. The picture draws together characteristic signs of the hereditary moral value of American labor with the slick, placeless modernity of the iPhone screen, reminding us that Foxconn and the Ford factory floor have been bonded by a common logic of exploitation under political systems that ostensibly have drastically different ends. The photograph also maps a teleology or a linear history from Fordism (in the trucks) to mechanization and mass reproducibility (through the sign) to de-territorialized transnational capital (through the iPhone screen), which is to say it grounds disjuncture and transformation in a given history.[31] It also reminds us (perhaps only faintly) that these powers are and have always been racialized.

Writing in his book *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty* (2015), sociologist and design theorist Benjamin Bratton describes his figurative "Stack" as the agglomeration and spatialization of "planetary-scale computation" that takes "different forms at different scales," encompassing "subterranean cloud infrastructure," "urban software," "massive universal addressing systems" spanning everything from social media to drones to subsea broadband infrastructure to orbiting satellites and cell phones.[32] He warns that

> *the Stack is an accidental megastructure, one that we are building both deliberately and unwittingly and is in turn building us in its own image.*[33]

In this sense, the Stack is an apparatus in which photography plays an integral role. Fisher's photographs work to foreground the ways in which photography participates in planetary transformations, not merely of economic norms, but of political relations, cultural hierarchies, and ecological sustainability. In this historical process, one's sense of an orientation toward the world and toward Others cannot be effectively bracketed off from the means that help to shape and situate that sense within the social and cultural field that these apparatuses act on and survive through. In short, we cannot get outside of this mess to encounter ourselves or each other separately from these forces.

Vilém Flusser reminds us in *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (1983) that once elementary tools became machines,

> *their relationship to human beings was reversed. Prior to the Industrial Revolution the human being was surrounded by tools, afterwards the machine was surrounded by human beings. Previously the tool was the variable and the human being the constant,*

> *subsequently the human being became the variable and the machine the constant. Previously the tool functioned as a function of the human being, subsequently the human being as a function of the machine.*[34]

If in the moment of photography's invention we lived in disciplinary societies, in the moment of the Stack we live in control societies. Gilles Deleuze wrote that in such an order

> *we're no longer dealing with a duality of mass and individual. Individuals become "*dividuals*," and masses become samples, data, markets, or "*banks*." Money, perhaps, best expresses the difference between two kinds of society, since discipline was always related to the molded currencies containing gold as a numerical standard, whereas control is based on floating exchange rates, modulations depending on a code setting sample percentages for various currencies. [...] Disciplinary man produced energy in discrete amounts, while control man undulates, moving among a continuous range of different orbits.* Surfing *has taken over from all the old* sports.[35]

Photography is implicated at every level of such a process, from the accumulation to the dissemination and analysis of information integral to multiple forms of control, to the spectrum of forms of expression that reject such strictures and insist on the complexities of presence and encounter, and the endlessly open-ended nature of possible meaning. Bratton writes that it "may be that our predicament is that we cannot design the next political geography of planetary computation until it more fully designs us in its own image or, in other words, that the critical dependence on the future's futurity is that we are not yet available for it!"[36] If the problem is our imbrication in the planetary circuitry of communication and control, perhaps the strategy should consist (at least in part) of evasion and nonsensical participation in these flows.[37] Deleuze says:

> *Maybe speech and communication have been corrupted. They're thoroughly permeated by money—and not by accident but by their very nature. We've got to hijack speech. Creating has always been something different from communicating. The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control.*[38]

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Parenthetical.

Perhaps we should return here to the Text? Barthes writes, "The Text (if only by its frequent 'unreadability') decants the work (the work permitting) from its consumption and gathers it up as play, activity, production, practice. This means that the Text requires that one try to abolish (or at the very least to diminish) the distance between writing and reading, in no way by intensifying the projection of the reader into the work but by joining them in a single signifiying practice."[39] We might begin to envisage a kind of continual activity not governed by fixity, uniqueness, or stability, but by constant deviation, variation, repetition through transformation that seeks to evade the strictures of the work in favor of the liberated and unpredictable connectivity of the Text. Barthes reminds us that "*reading*, in the sense of *consuming*, is far from *playing* with the text. 'Playing' must be understood here in all its polysemy: the text itself *plays* (like a door, like a machine with 'play') and the reader plays twice over, playing in the Text as one plays a game, looking for a practice which re-produces it, but ... also *playing* the Text in the musical sense of the term."[40]

What is to be valorized here is collaborative and not autonomous, uttered and enacted, not silent and scripted. "The Text is very much a score of this new kind: it asks of the reader a practical collaboration. [...] The Text ... is bound to *jouissance*, that is, to a pleasure without separation. Order of the signifier, the Text participates in its own way in a social utopia; before History (supposing the latter does not opt for barbarism), the Text achieves, if not the transparency of social relations, that at least of language relations: the Text is that space

where no language has hold over any other, where languages circulate (keeping the circular sense of the term)."[41]

We're back to the piano roll, the globe, and the circuit (after a fashion). We are imbricated in, inseparable from, but also operative within and upon the apparatus and the Text. Perhaps we should consider *Agapage* not as a possible (or actual) book, nor a series of printed and framed works on a wall, but as a Text awaiting its enactment in performance—as "a score of this new kind." Perhaps it should emerge in relative or absolute simultaneity, in a dissonant chorus of inchoate voices and flickering images, and perhaps also in the dark (but not in secret). Perhaps, then, what you hold here is merely a provisional step in a move toward that phase of electric immediacy and dynamic intersection, of nonmeaning and creative encounter: a kind of vacuole.

Flusser ends the paragraph from which I quoted earlier, in which the human is now a function of the machine, with the question "Is the same true for the camera as for the machine?"[42] It seems to me that this is precisely where Joel W. Fisher's work begins.

NOTES

1. If *enumerable* means susceptible to counting in direct correspondence with the set of all positive integers, *unenumerable*—though the word does not officially exist—suggests the impossibility of this state of affairs. *Unenumerable* can be thought of as a term whose necessity and whose definitional force has been in existence as a negative limit on the positive term that it opposes.
2. Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," in *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984), 170.
3. Barthes, "From Work to Text," 172.
4. Barthes, 172.
5. Barthes, 170.
6. A. R. Ammons, "On *Garbage*," in A. R. Ammons, *Set in Motion: Essays, Interviews and Dialogues*, ed. Zofia Burr (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996), 125. Originally published in *The Best American Poetry 1993*, ed. Louise Glück (New York: Scribner's, 1993).
7. David Lehman, "The *Paris Review* Interview," in *Set in Motion*, 101.
8. Lehman, "*Paris Review* Interview," 102.
9. A. R. Ammons, "Garbage," *The American Poetry Review*, March/April 1992, 37.
10. The instrumentalization of this fragmentation as an expressly political calculus is powerfully articulated as a form of neoliberalism by Wendy Brown, who writes that "not only is the human being configured exhaustively as *homo oeconomicus*, all dimensions of human life are cast in terms of a market rationality. While this entails submitting every action and policy to considerations of profitability, equally important is the production of all human and institutional action as rational entrepreneurial action, conducted according to a calculus of utility, benefit, or satisfaction against a micro-economic grid of scarcity, supply and demand, and moral value-neutrality." Wendy Brown, "Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy," *Theory & Event* 7, no. 1 (2003), 193.
11. Michael Wutz, "Writing from between the Gaps," in *Paper Empire: William Gaddis and the World System*, ed. Joseph Tabbi and Rone Shavers (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2007), 187.
12. Wutz, "Writing from between the Gaps," 187.
13. Joseph Tabbi, afterword to *Agapē Agape*, by William Gaddis (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), n.p.
14. Barthes, "From Work to Text," 170.
15. William Gaddis, *Agapē Agape* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), n.p.
16. Barthes, "From Work to Text," 171.
17. Barthes, 171.
18. Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. Richard Bolton (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989), 343. Originally published in *October* 39 (Winter 1986).
19. Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 343.
20. Jonathan Crary, "Modernity and the Problem of the Observer," chap. 1 in *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990), 10.
21. Crary, "Modernity and the Problem of the Observer," 10.
22. Hal Foster, "Wild Signs," in *Universal Abandon: The Politics of Postmodernism*, ed. Andrew Ross (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 260.
23. Ammons, "Garbage," 39.
24. Gaddis, *Agapē Agape*, n.p.
25. Crary continues: "Photography and money become homologous forms of social power in the nineteenth century. They are equally totalizing systems for binding and unifying all subjects within a single global network of valuation and desire. As Marx said of money, photography is also a great leveler, a democratizer, a 'mere symbol,' a fiction 'sanctioned by the so-called universal consent of mankind.' Both are magical forms that establish a new set of abstract relations between individuals and things and impose those relations as the real." Crary, "Modernity and the Problem of the Observer," 13.
26. Readers will note that the term "Germanwings," now the name of a low-cost German airline, makes an appearance in the poetry in part 5 of *Agapage* despite the company of the same name having been *created* in 2002, which is to say four years *after* Gaddis had died, and thirteen years after Ammons had composed *Garbage*.
27. Joel W. Fisher, written conversation with the author, November 21, 2017.
28. Ibid.
29. "Bun bag" is a British colloquial term for what Americans call a "fanny pack."
30. "The Bund," Wikipedia, last modified December 3, 2017, 20:55, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Bund.
31. We should be suspicious of such uniformity, even if the camera's rendering of Renaissance perspective is designed to produce and naturalize it.
32. Benjamin H. Bratton, "The Models," in *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2015), 4–5.
33. Bratton, "The Models," 5.
34. Vilém Flusser, "The Apparatus," in *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 23–24.
35. Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on Control Societies," in *Negotiations: 1972–1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 180.
36. Bratton, "The Models," 15.
37. For more on this, see Boris Groys, "Entering the Flow," in *Realism Materialism Art*, ed. Christoph Cox, Jenny Jaskey, and Suhall Malik (Annandale-on-Hudson, NY: Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, 2015), 71–80.
38. Deleuze, "Control and Becoming," in *Negotiations*, 175.
39. Barthes, "From Work to Text," 173.
40. Barthes, 173.
41. Barthes, 174.
42. Flusser, "The Apparatus," 24.

Joel W. Fisher: Abridged Proof is published by the Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art, Lewis & Clark College, 0615 SW Palatine Hill Road, Portland, OR 97219. Design: Heather Watkins. Copyediting: Allison Dubinsky. Printing: Premier Press, Portland, OR. COVER: *Chauncey Creek*, 2012/2017, inkjet print, 21 x 17 in. POSTER: *Germanwings*, 2007/2017, inkjet print, 41 3/4 x 33 in.

JOEL W. FISHER ABRIDGED PROOF

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

PRINTS Part 5 (Version 1)

Chauncey Creek, 2012/2017, inkjet print, 21 x 17 in.
Oregon Lottery (Daniel Baldwin Crossing His Fingers), 2012/2017, inkjet print, 15 1/4 x 12 5/8 in.
Penske Positive (Yellow), 2016/2017, inkjet print, 42 x 30 in.
Penske Negative (Blue), 2016/2017, inkjet print, 42 x 30 in.
Germanwings, 2007/2017, inkjet print, 41 3/4 x 33 in.
American Canvas, 2014/2017, inkjet print, 14 x 11 in.
Silver Lake Extension, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 11 x 14 in.
GE High-Voltage Laboratory, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 31 3/4 x 37 in.
Debbie Wong and Wonder Bread, 2017, inkjet print, 54 1/2 x 40 3/4 in.
Muralo, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 28 1/4 x 21 in.
Al Einste, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 14 x 18 3/4 in.

PRINTS Part 15 (Version 1)

Ice Cream Scooper #1, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 43 1/4 x 28 1/2 in.
Ice Cream Scooper #2, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 43 1/4 x 28 1/2 in.
Ice Cream Scooper #3, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 43 1/4 x 28 1/2 in.
Ice Cream Scoop, 2016/2017, inkjet print, 12 3/8 x 8 3/8 in.
Mechanic, 2016/2017, 2014/2017, inkjet print, 31 1/2 x 41 in.
Hair Twist, 2014/2017, inkjet print, 16 x 23 in.
Flyer, 2014/2017, inkjet print, 31 3/8 x 41 3/4 in.
Logger, 2014/2017, inkjet print, 55 3/4 x 41 3/4 in.
The Bund #1, 2015/2017, inkjet print, 14 x 11 in.
The Bund #2, 2015/2017, inkjet print, 54 1/2 x 40 7/8 in.

OTHER

Untitled (Pictographs #1–4), 2016, acrylic and steel, 49 x 18 x 9 in. each
Untitled (Peeling Paint), 2017, gelatin silver, acrylic, inkjet print, LED, walnut, 11 1/8 x 7 1/8 x 3 1/2 in. and 28 3/4 x 19 1/2 x 6 in.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Joel W. Fisher received a bachelor of arts in English from the University of New Hampshire in 1997 and a master of fine arts from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2006. From 2006 to 2007 he worked and studied at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig, Germany, on a Fulbright Fellowship. In 2015–16 he participated in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace program, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Oregon Arts Commission, and the Ford Family Foundation. Fisher is an assistant professor of art and studio head of photography at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon.

Stanley Wolukau-Wanambwa is a photographer, writer, and former editor of the contemporary photography website *The Great Leap Sideways* (2011–17). He has contributed essays to catalogs and monographs by Vanessa Winship, George Georgiou, Marton Perlaki, and Paul Graham; been an artist in residence at Light Work; guest-edited the Aperture *PhotoBook Review*; and written for *Aperture*, *Foam* magazine, Rutgers University Press, the Barbican, and the Photographers' Gallery. He has lectured at Yale, Cornell, New York University, and the New School, and is a faculty member in the photography department at Purchase College, SUNY.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Abridged Proof was realized through the generosity and support of many colleagues, friends, staff, and students at Lewis & Clark College. A nod of gratitude to Stanley Wolukau-Wanambwa for his thoughtful insights and words on this version of the work; to Heather Watkins for her vision and beautiful design of the exhibition publication; and to Jess Perlitz and Linda Tesner for their encouragement. Finally, a particular special thank-you to Dru Donovan, for everything. —Joel W. Fisher

COLOPHON

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