

ARTFORUM

Dianna Frid

DEVENING PROJECTS + EDITIONS
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Humanity's often poignant reliance on language at the precise moments when it falls short—or fails altogether—is a subject of continual fascination for Dianna Frid. In her current solo exhibition, titled "Evidence of the Material World," the works on view attempt to give form not to sublime or ineffable experience, but to the inevitable gaps and fissures that arise from our use of language to describe it. Frid's *Words from Obituary* (#1) (all works cited, 2011) consists of four graphite-covered sheets of paper on which the text "The Fourth Word Spoken on the Moon" appears, each letter embroidered in various shades of pink and purple. These words straddle the uneven grid formed by the irregularly sized sheets, so that the letters in "spoken" are literally broken apart. Rather than the historic "first words" delivered during Apollo's lunar touchdown, Frid's text work points to the unmemorable (yet arguably no less significant) utterances that followed.

Frid builds her larger-scale collages by drawing, painting, and sewing on multiple sheets of paper, revising the resulting compositions by papering over previous iterations, whose outlines still remain faintly visible, like shadows, from beneath the works' topmost layers. A similar subtlety animates two white sculptures, together titled *I alone was to hear their voices/Their ravishing voices out across the air (the relative length of two Homeric lines as translated by Robert Fagles)*. Their smooth verticality conjures a pair of rocket boosters, but their title references two lines from Homer's *Odyssey* that describe Odysseus's encounter with the sirens. It bears noting that, in Homer's epic, the sirens' alluring song survives only as written text; fittingly, Frid based the proportionate height of each sculpture on the relative lengths of those two Homeric lines, as if to measure the immeasurable space between imagination and its mundane material manifestations.



Dianna Frid, *I alone was to hear their voices/Their ravishing voices out across the air (the relative length of two Homeric lines as translated by Robert Fagles)*, 2011, cardboard, plaster, gesso, paper, graphite, powder dyes, fixative, dimensions variable.

— Claudine Ise

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