

NIGHT GALLERY

2276 E. 16th Street, Los Angeles, California 90021 nightgallery.ca

Nicholas Chittenden Morgan, Review: Cara Benedetto at Chapter NY, Artforum, January 2019

ARTFORUM



Cara Benedetto, *missing*, 2018, lithograph print with drawing, 40 x 26".
NEW YORK

Cara Benedetto

CHAPTER NY

249 East Houston Street

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News outlets frequently cover school shootings with a macabre enthusiasm—we are assaulted with body counts, gruesome testimonies from eyewitnesses, and conjecture by the stupidest passersby. The event cuts you to the bone, until another horror quickly displaces it. Cara Benedetto's current show pushes against mass media's spectacle. A master printmaker, she employs the unwieldy technique of stone lithography, which requires care, patience, and a great deal of time. The stone she used for three of the five large prints on display here cracked while she was making them and is now set in the middle of the gallery as a sculptural form (*Stone Broke*, all works 2018). It bears the wax outline of a spectral figure with a set of numbered concentric circles over its torso. It's a design for a human target, a familiar sight at shooting ranges everywhere.

Each print has been modified with either scribbled texts (evocative of graffiti in a high-school bathroom) or tender swaths of colored pencil. The radiating violet halo of *genius penis* seems at odds with the creepy melting clown face at the center of the picture. In the top right corner of the piece, a graph is titled “number of hits.” Yet the assassin’s disturbingly cold calculations get undercut here and there with moments of eerie sentiment. For instance, in *paid/pain*, an innocent-looking heart, hastily drawn in pink marker, hovers above an Oedipal message: “I’m in love with my father.” *Missing*, however, brings us back to unremitting cruelty; it reads, “I missed you into absence (text me when yr dead).” Benedetto’s works give the viewer what the ceaseless news cycle never does—a quiet place to think. And mourn.

— Nicholas Chittenden Morgan