

• FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE •

## **Joel Swanson**

### *Eight-and-a-Half-by-Eleven*

December 13 – January 18, 2020

Opening Reception: Friday, December 13th, 6 - 8 pm

Free and open to the public/ Artist in Attendance

David B. Smith Gallery is pleased to announce Denver-based artist Joel Swanson's third solo exhibition with the gallery, *Eight-and-a-Half-by-Eleven*.

Recognized as both ubiquitous yet shaped by systems of class and privilege, language's unwavering written and spoken rules are inevitably internalized in the individual. From youth, the weight of the written word against the empty page shapes thought patterns and processes as it rigidly defines correctness. The blankness of the empty page, seemingly innocuous and devoid of content, Swanson views as possessing an invisible, rigid power that ultimately defines the underlying structure of free choice.

Throughout the main gallery, Swanson explores the tools, structures, and technologies of literacy. Using unconventional media including pink erasers and highlighter fluid, Swanson deconstructs the materiality of language used within the primary education of English.

*Eight-and-a-Half-by-Eleven* uses abstraction and composition to discuss language without the actual use of language. Without a single alphanumeric character, Swanson delves into the psychology of language and learning, incorporating autobiographical elements into what amounts to a critique of default truth as it pertains to language.

#### **About Joel Swanson**

Joel Swanson is an artist and writer who explores the relationship between language and technology. His work critically subverts the technologies, materials, and underlying structures of language to reveal its idiosyncrasies and inconsistencies. His work ranges from interactive installations to public sculptures that playfully and powerfully question words and their meanings.

Swanson is an assistant professor in the ATLAS Institute at the University of Colorado Boulder where he works and teaches at the intersection of language and technology. He received his Masters of Fine Art at the University of California, San Diego with a focus in Computing and the Arts. His artwork has been exhibited nationally and internationally at institutions such as the Broad Museum in Lansing, The Power Plant in Toronto, the Glucksman in Cork Ireland, and the North Miami Museum of Contemporary Art. In 2014 Swanson had a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver. In 2017 he showed work in Personal Structures, an official satellite show of the 57th Venice Biennale.

#### **About David B. Smith Gallery**

David B. Smith Gallery is committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions in its Denver location, featuring the region's most important emerging talent alongside internationally recognized artists. Through its curatorial program, participation in art fairs, and extensive media coverage in publications such as *Art in America* and *ARTnews*, David B. Smith Gallery has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works" and *The Denver Post* declared that it is the "premiere commercial space" in Denver. The gallery also maintains an active publishing division, which produces exhibition catalogues and editions.

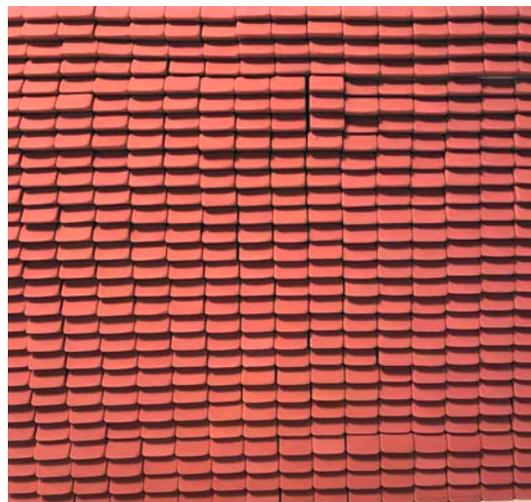


Image: Joel Swanson, *How many "Pinkie" erasers would it take to create a perfect cube?*, 2019, Pinkie erasers, 13 x 13 x 13 in. (33.02 x 33.02 x 33.02cm)