

The Academy of Saturn. Thomson & Craighead

HERE 24,859 MILES →

Temporary Installation in Front of the Library

Thomson and Craighead's HERE is a regulation street sign representing the distance the sign exists from itself while pointing toward the North or South pole. Photography welcome!

**February 2 to
April 26, 2018
Cooley Gallery
Reed College.
Tuesday–Sunday,
noon to 5:00 pm.
Closed Mondays.**

**Public lecture:
February 7, 2018
6:30 pm, Reed
Chapel, Eliot hall
followed by a party
at the Cooley with
the artists. Free.**

**Stephen E. Ostrow
Distinguished
Visitors in the
Visual Arts.
Reed College
3203 SE Woodstock
Portland, OR 97202**

COOLEY

Since the early 1990s, celebrated UK artist-collaborators Jon Thomson & Alison Craighead have explored the visual, statistical, and poetic nature of networked information and its relation to capitalism, war, and everyday life. The title of the exhibition—*The Academy of Saturn*—comes from Voltaire’s 1752 novella *Micromégas*, in which colossal astral travelers from The Academy of Saturn visit earth and engage in a philosophical discussion with a group of scientists. Radical scale shifts of knowledge and comprehension result in an absurd, zero-sum exchange between the species; the story is an acerbic parable about the inanity of war and the value of external perspective. With kindred tenacity and wit, Thomson & Craighead explore global information’s competing—and increasingly intertwined—experiences of intimacy and incomprehensibility, touching information to *be here now*.

Distillation, order, and observation take different forms throughout the exhibition. The monumental *Horizon* (2009–present) comprises a grid of real-time webcam images from every time zone in the world. In Thomson’s words: “The result is a constantly updating array of images that read like a series of movie storyboards, but also as an idiosyncratic global electronic sundial.” As *Horizon* conjoins time and space in axial form, it amplifies the lyricism of each circadian landscape, drawing us closer to *feeling* time as the work surveils it across distance.

Alongside their more ethereal projects, Thomson & Craighead snare and repurpose networked information in material form, often working with streams of personal utterance and inquiry. For *The Academy of Saturn*, the artists have created a new iteration of their text-based project *London Wall* (2010–present), entitled, appropriately, *Portland Wall*. The work is based on public “status updates” posted on Twitter and Facebook in a three-mile radius around the Cooley. The texts are transformed into graphic posters and installed onto the walls of the gallery, forming an architecture of endlessly combinable concrete poetry—fleeting thoughts, captured and echoed in their community of origin. In *Untitled (Balloon work)*, (2016), the names of military actions are printed onto balloons roaming across the floor of the Cooley. These physical balloons are accompanied by video footage of a corporate balloon drop in which a group of women spontaneously pop hundreds of balloons to clear them away. The golden balloons sound like gunfire as they’re pricked, casting political spectacle and warmongering alongside capitalism and corporate culture.

Thomson & Craighead’s interest in the found poetry of historical narrative and networked culture speaks to artistic forms such as the Oulipo movement founded in the 1960s. Oulipo artists constructed their work using patterned constraints such as palindromes and the S+7 technique, in which each noun in a text is replaced with the

seventh noun that follows it in the dictionary. The artists' sculpture *Here* (2011–present, also produced in a new iteration for the Cooley) is a regulation street sign displaying the distance the sign exists from itself if pointing in the direction of the North or South pole. Confusion ensues as one tries to conceptualize the work's beginning and end, which are collapsed into the same location while simultaneously imagining the entire planet. Like a palindrome, the work encapsulates its own unidirectional significance.

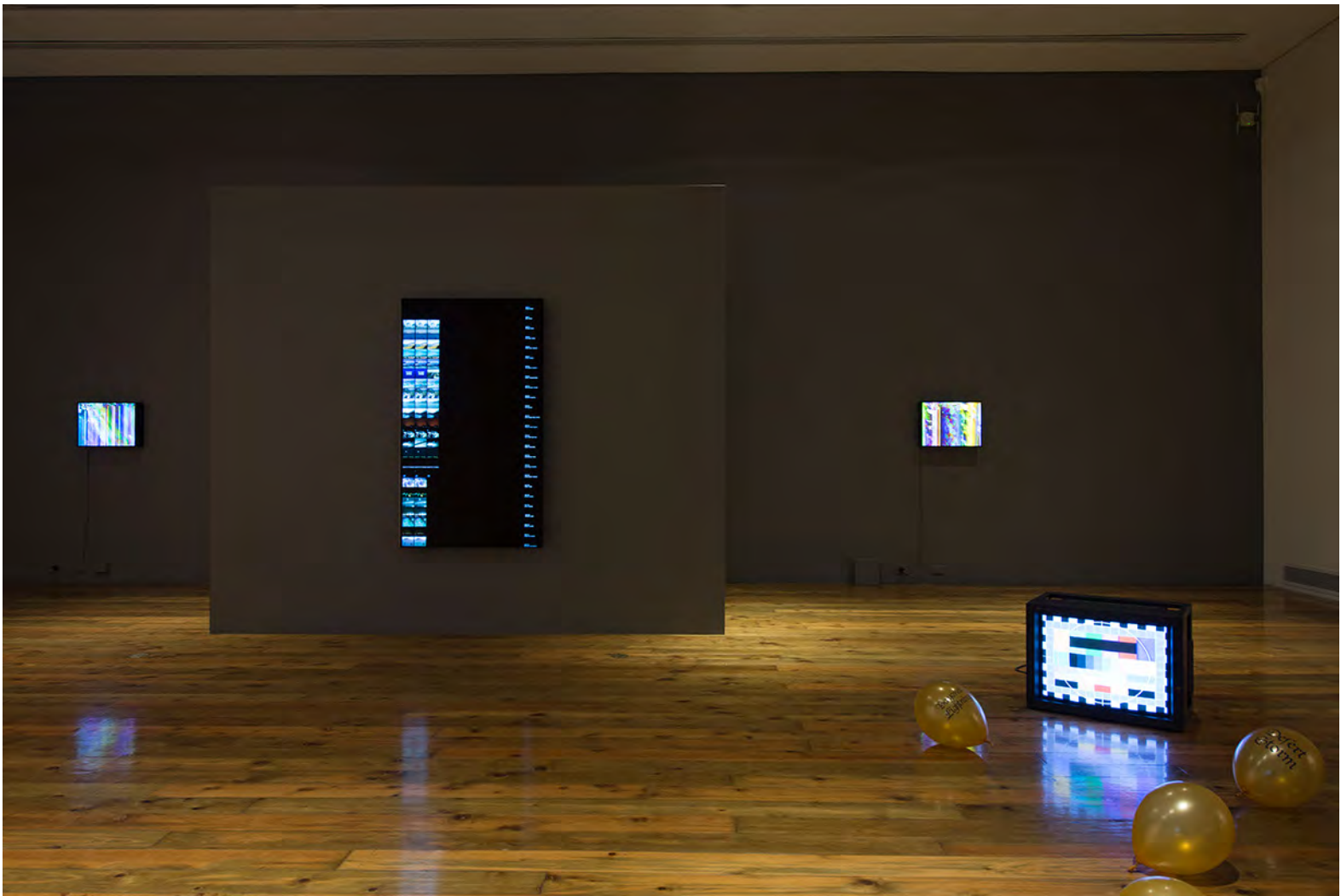
Similarly, BEACON (2006) captures live search-engine phrases from around the globe, syphoning them into an unending text-stream that shadows the present. Projected in the Cooley foyer, the original online version was initiated on January 1, 2005. The artists describe BEACON as a "silent witness ... a feedback loop providing a global snapshot of ourselves to ourselves in real-time." In his recent book, *Never Alone Except for Now*, Kris Cohen discusses the work's social dynamics: "BEACON materializes search as a scene of atomized, nonreciprocal togetherness, togetherness that is only barely not the same as being totally alone. Via the liveness of the connection, BEACON situates us with others in view of an activity that is as pervasive as it is recondite: web searches." (Duke: 2017) 115.

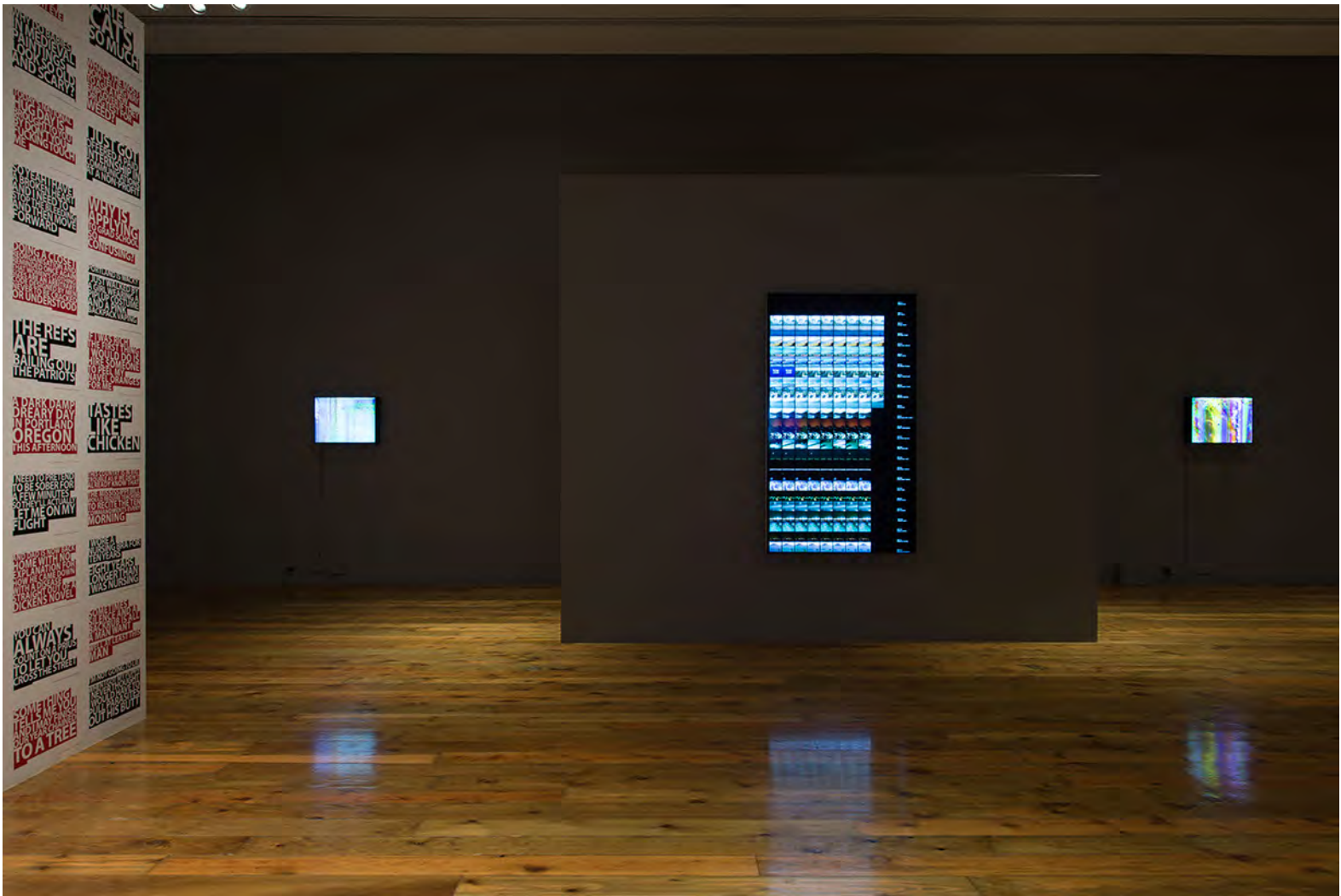
In the video environment *Control Room* (2017), a cache of 35mm color slides found in the Aberdeen, Scotland harbor archives becomes the catalyst for an emotionally evocative experience. As no information accompanied the slides, Thomson & Craighead created a narrative about the archive's characters, places, and events. A computer program randomly combines each image and line of dialogue, evoking the recursive presence of memory.

In *Corruption* (2014), the artists present a series of light boxes containing image-frames from a corrupted file designed to download a computer virus. The images were captured by viewing the file on a video player, as opposed to a computer. The psychedelic scenes are beautiful—abstract and painterly—and are printed in lenticular form to shift with the viewer's body. *Corruption* brings the malfunctions and distortions of technological life into a contemplative, aesthetic space. In *The End* (2010–present), Thomson & Craighead recontextualize place in relation to time and narrative with the simple phrase—The End—affixed in Gothic-style script to a window overlooking a verdant landscape. *The End* presents time as a translucent sliver of past and future moments and speaks to the creation of events and the fragility of life.

And lastly, the artists' most alchemical work in the exhibition—*Apocalypse* (2016)—atomizes the King James Bible's account of the horrors of the End Times in the form of a luxury perfume (developed in collaboration with Edinburgh perfumer Euan McCall). The project was inspired by Master Bertram von Minden's fifteenth-century altarpiece

depicting forty-five scenes from the Book of Revelations (housed at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London). The artists determined *Apocalypse's* olfactory notes by calculating the number of times a substance, such as "blood" or "flesh," is mentioned in the text.







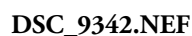


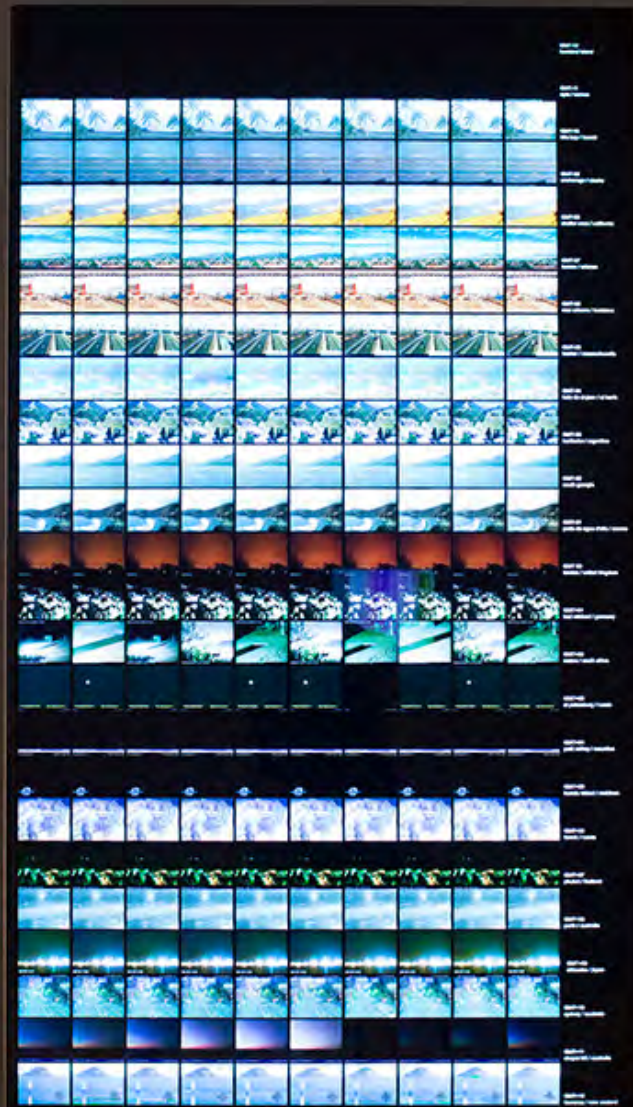














A new fragrance derived from olfactory materials described in the Book of Revelation as it appears in the King James Bible, published in the year 1611. The perfume has been created in collaboration with perfumer Eran Meiri. The box design is by Steve Carroll.

Keep away from light fabrics as this fragrance may stain.

Tall of storm-thunder, blood, the rocks of the mountains
renew, the smoke of the furnace, earth, hail and fire,
the sea, the creatures of the sea that have died, fountains
of waters, suppressed, a roll of fire, the opened earth,
a grievous war, the blood of a dead man, every living soul
that has died in the sea, plagues, a great fire that
will burn of her formation, animal bones, blood of the saints,
effluvia of her formation, blood of the martyrs of Jesus,
Beak, burned with fire, land, a lake which, burned with fire
and brimstone.

Thomson & Craighead, MCMVI














A new fragrance derived from olfactory materials described in The Book of Revelation as it appears in the King James Bible published in the year 1611. Apocalypse has been created in collaboration with perfumer Euan McCall. The box design is by Steve Carroll

Keep away from light fabrics as this fragrance may stain

List of terms:- thunder; blood; the rocks of the mountains incense; the smoke of the incense; earth; hail and fire; the sea; the creatures of the sea that have died; fountains of waters; wormwood; a rod of iron; the opened earth; a grievous sore; the blood of a dead man; every living soul [who has] died in the sea; plagues; a great river dried up; wine of her fornication; animal horns; blood of the saints; filthiness of her fornication; blood of the martyrs of Jesus; flesh burned with fire; [and] a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone

1/50 
Thomson & Craighead, MMXVI



A new fragrance derived from effluvia materials described in the Book of Revelation as it appears in the King James Bible, published in the year 1611. The prototype has been created in collaboration with perfumier Louis Mollet. The box design is by Marie Curie.

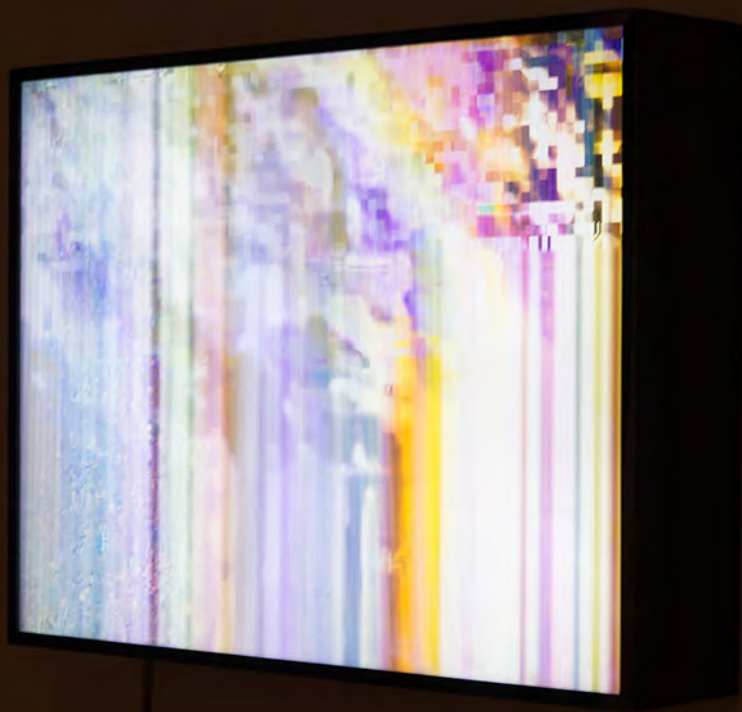
Keep away from light fabrics as this fragrance may stain.

*Let of terror, thunder, blood, the rocks of the mountains
scintillate, the smoke of the incense, earth, salt and fire,
the sea, the creatures of the sea that have died, fountains
of waters, supernovae, a land of iron, the opened earth,
a gigantic star, the blood of a dead man, every living soul
who has died in the sea, plague, a great war dead up,
vine of her formation, sword, horn, blood of the saints,
filaments of her formation, blood of the martyrs of iron,
fish, burned with fire, just a lake which, burned with fire
and brimstone.*

1/500 *Josephine* *1/1*
Thompson & Coughlin, Montreal

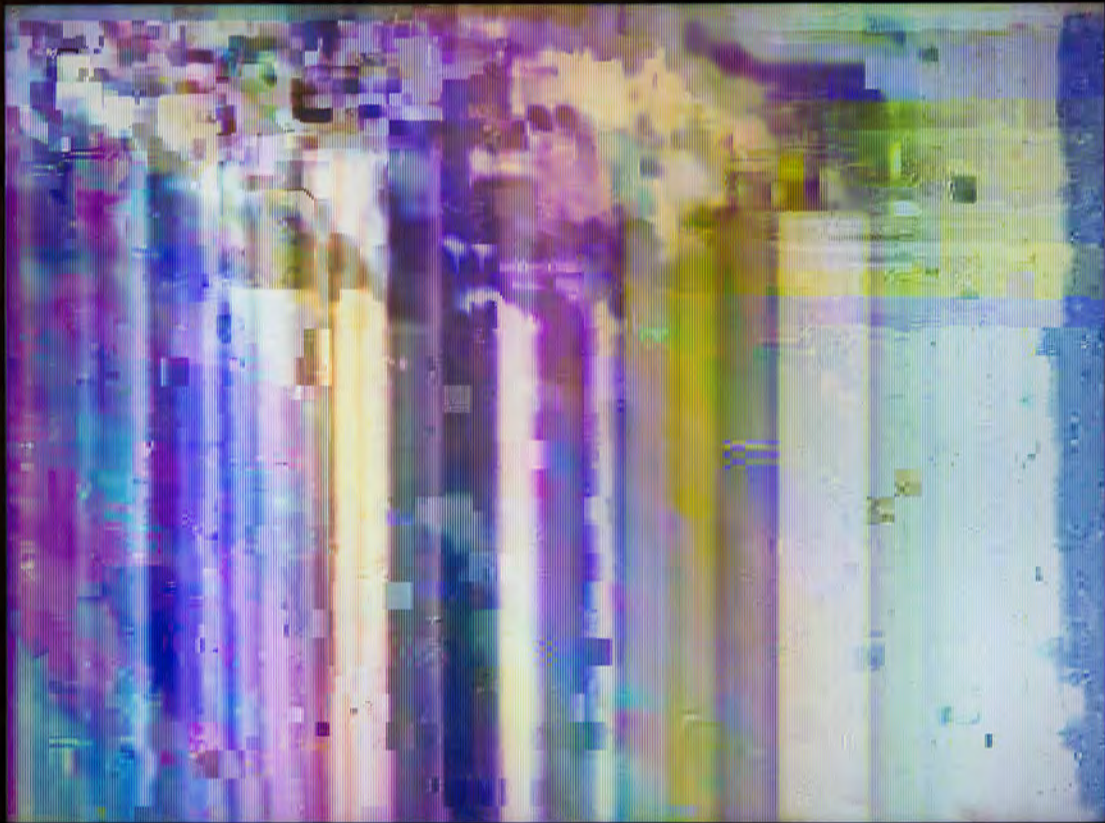




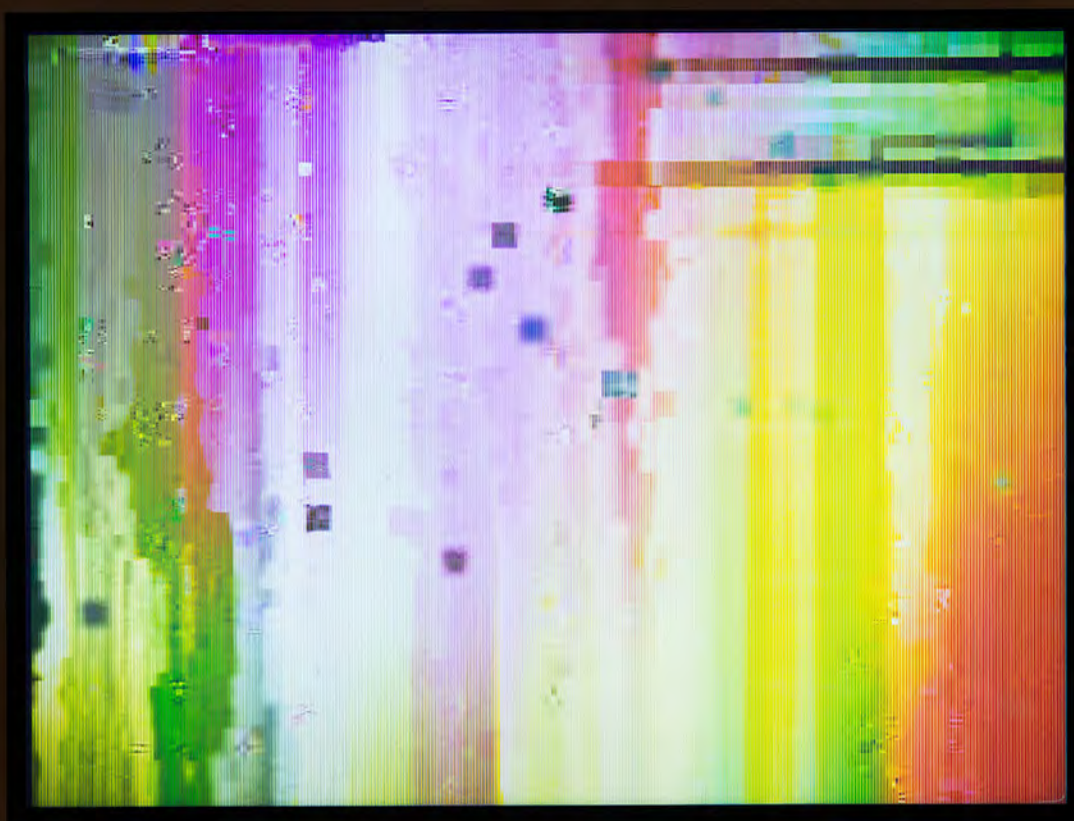






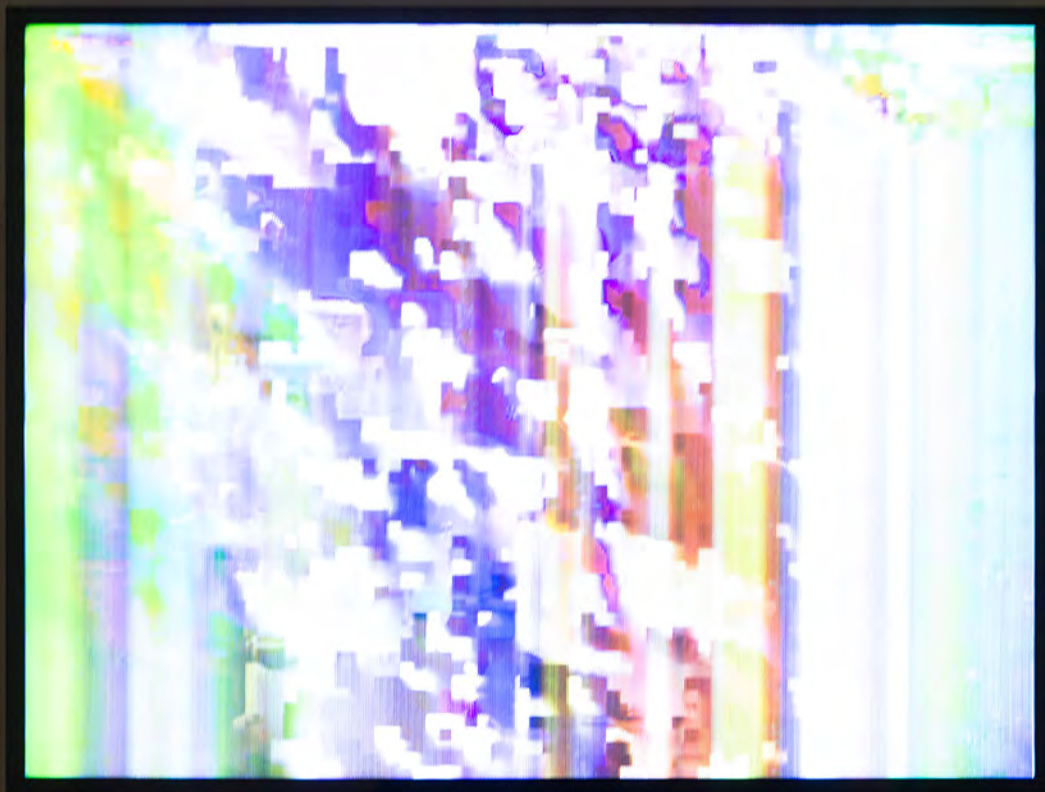


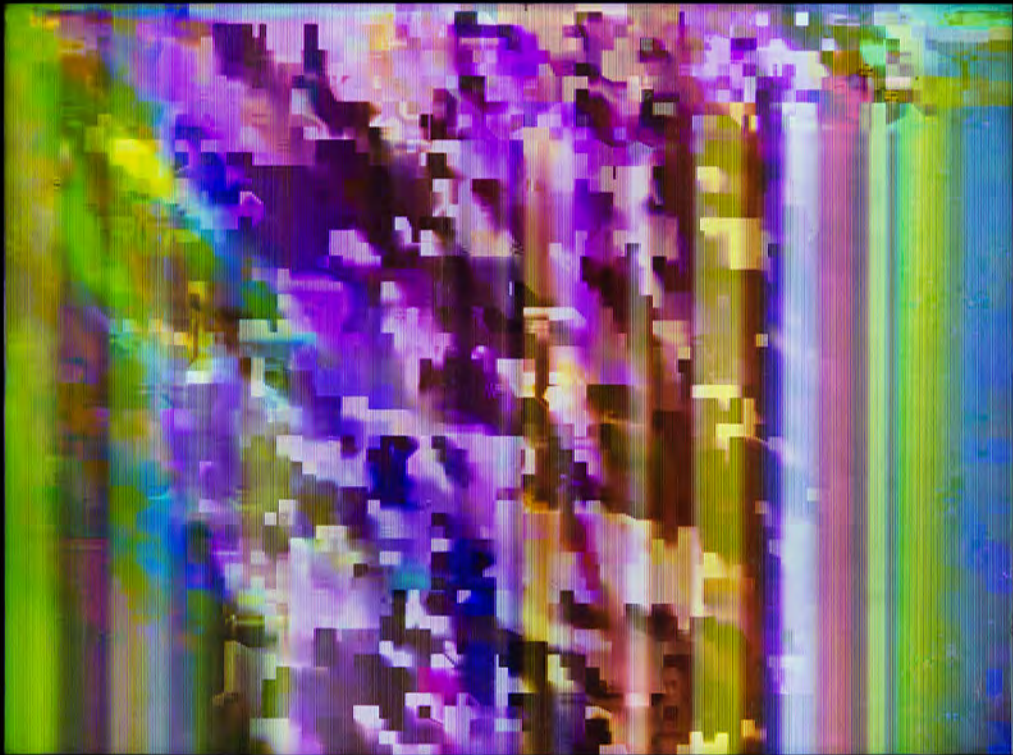


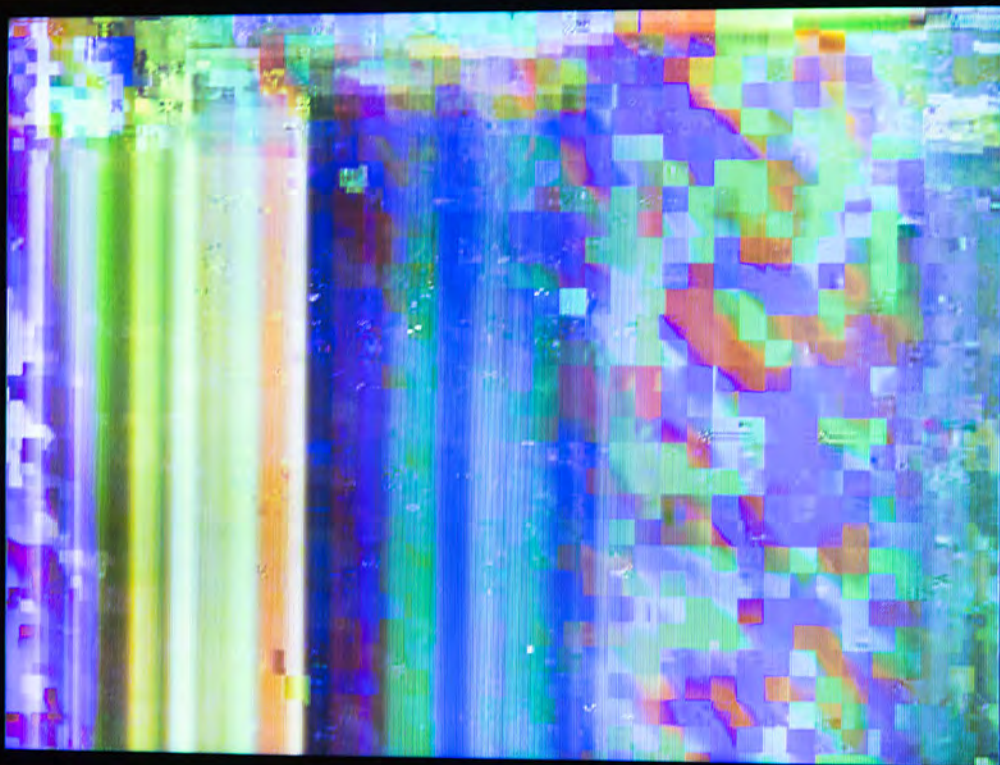




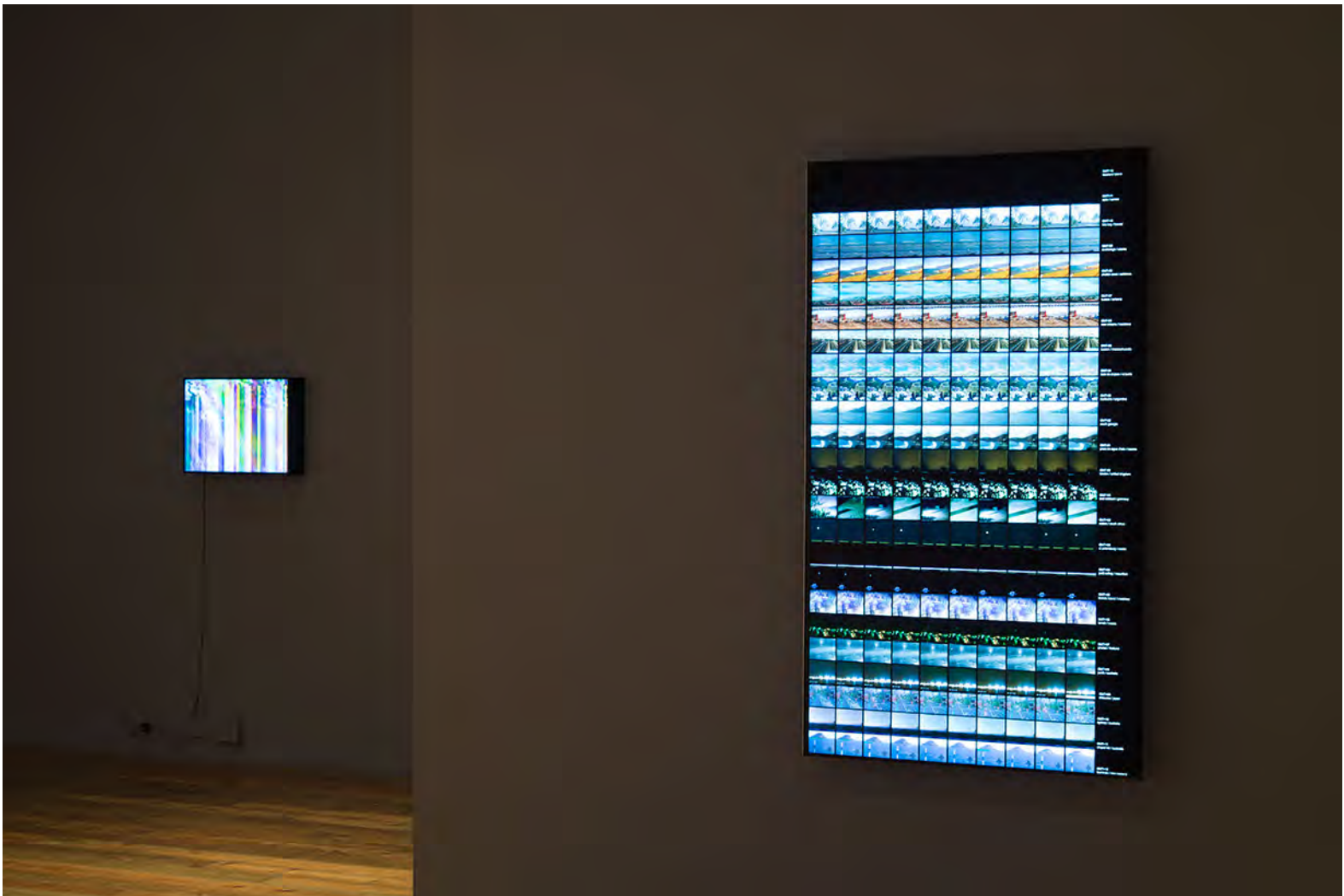


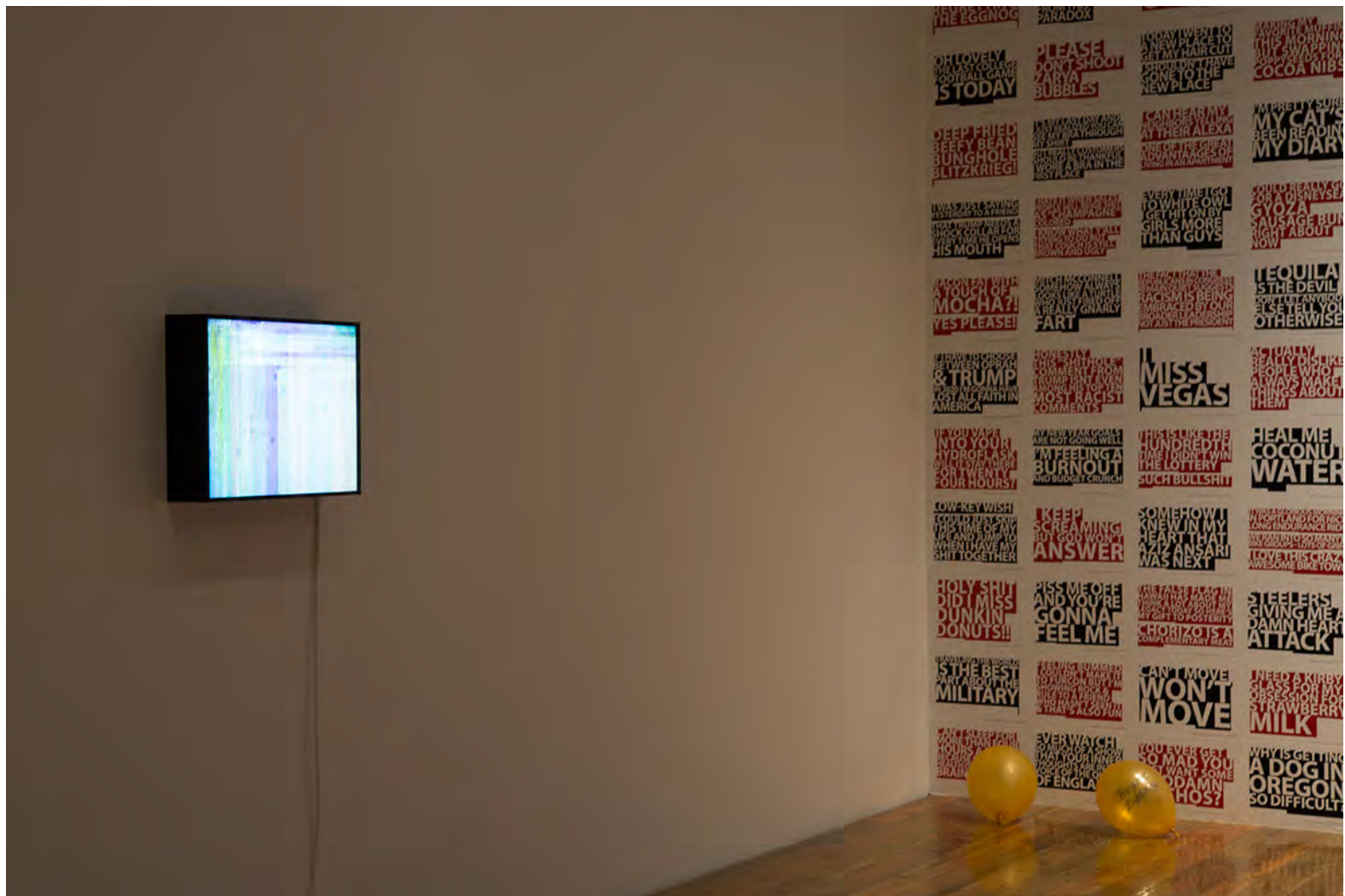


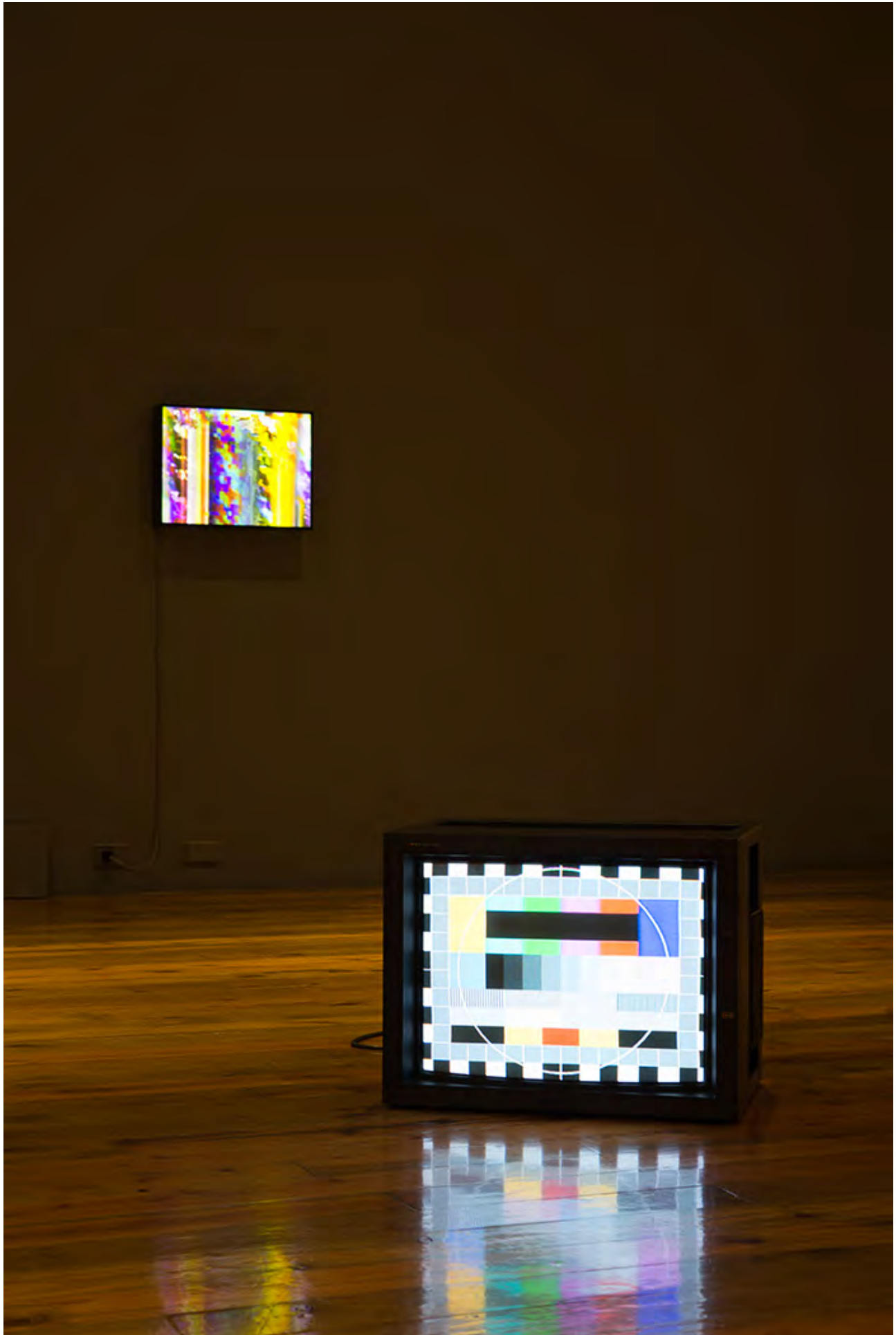






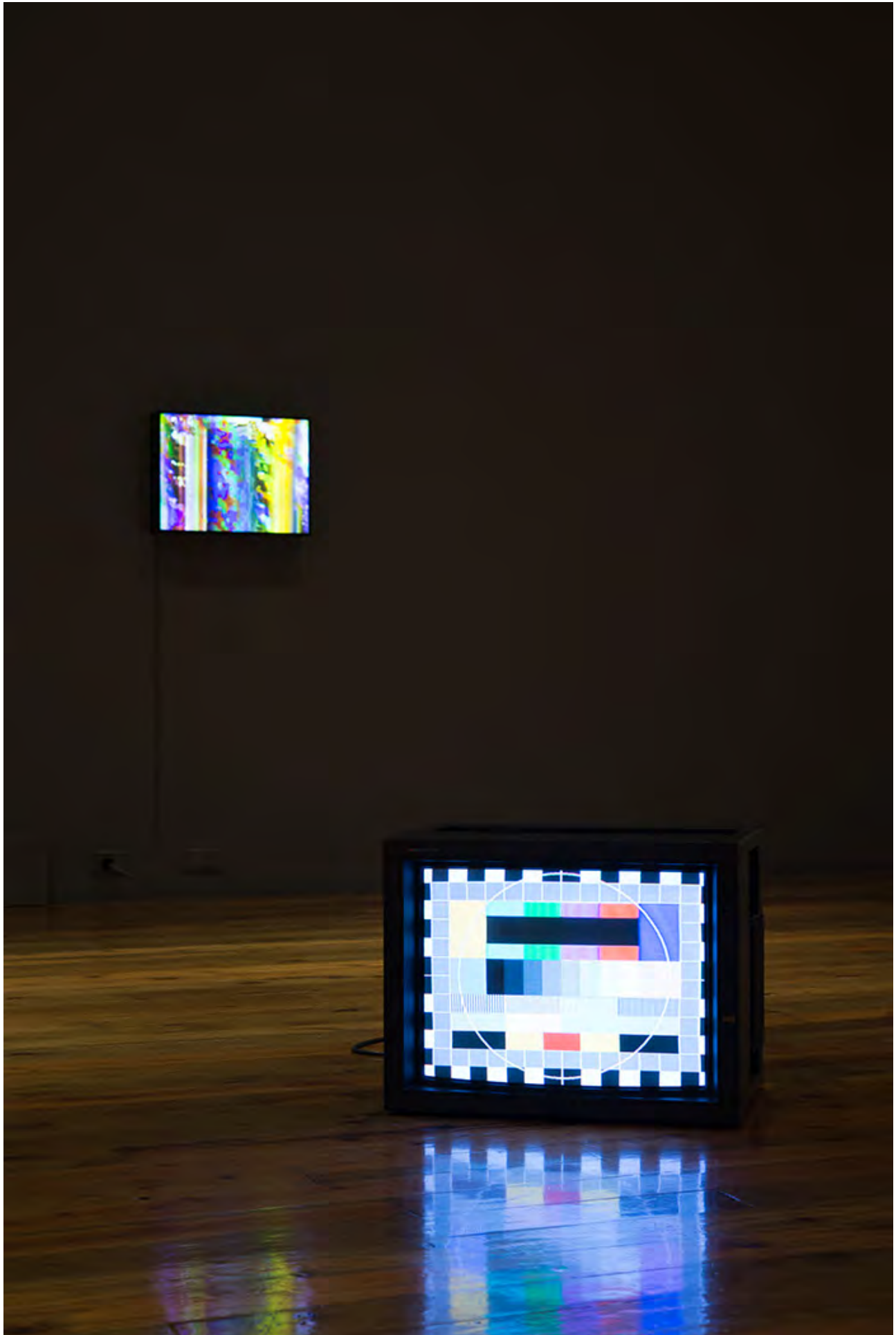
































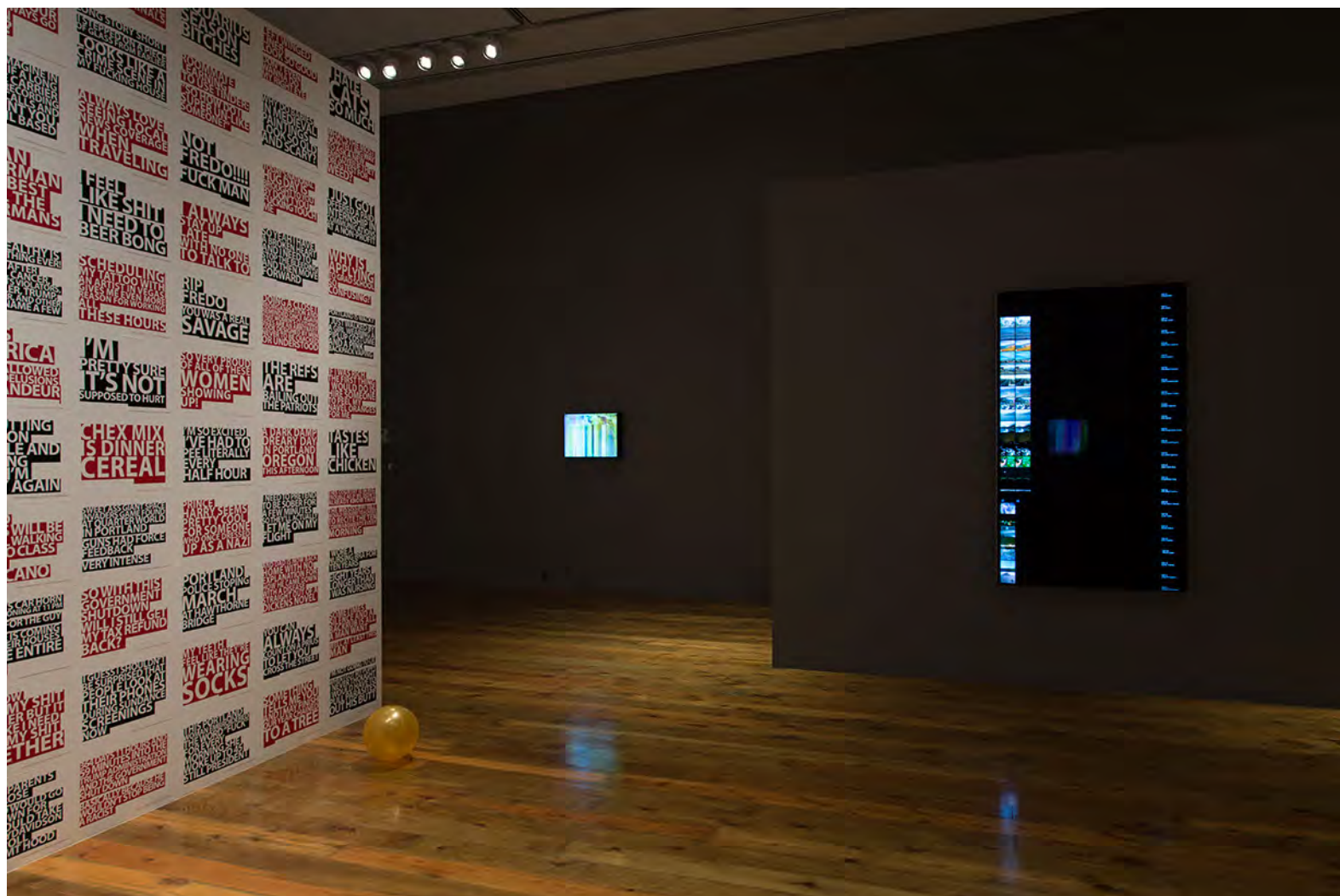


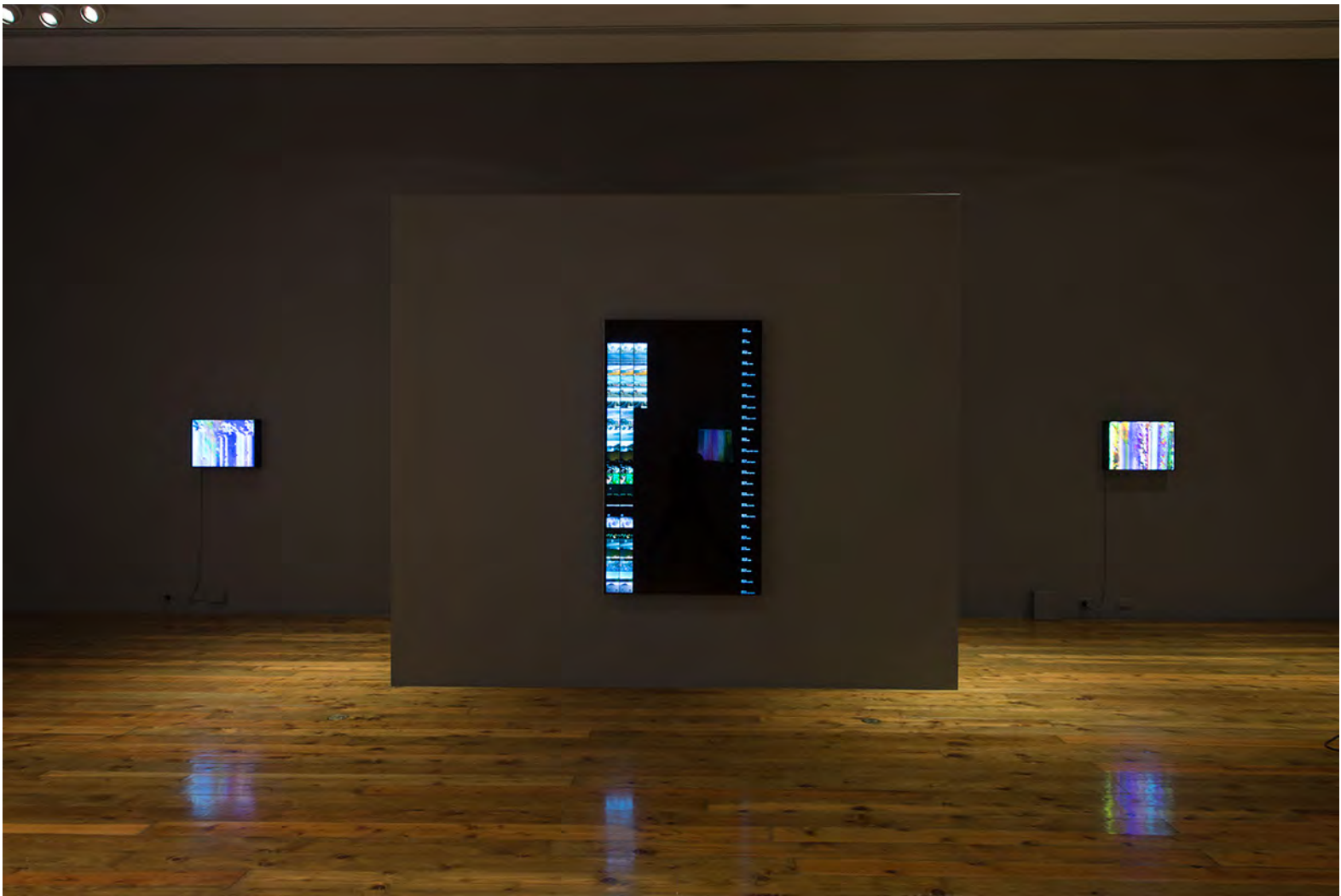
















N IS DEAD
UBLICANS
NABLED
KILLED IT

POSTED BY KILGANGKATLON AT 12:34PM ON 17TH JANUARY 2018

THE WORST THING EVER
YOU KNOW, AFTER
TERRORISM, CANCER,
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS,
CARBS, HITLER, TRUMP,
TICKETMASTER, AND OTHER
THINGS TO NAME A FEW

POSTED BY KIKASTOP62 AT 9:11AM ON 18TH JANUARY 2018

MY FART IS
AN ARTIST
GIVES ME EVERY
REASON FOR
ALL
THESE F

ANK
MY
MOTEL IN
WASHER

POSTED BY GABRIELVIALATH AT 12:58AM ON 17TH JANUARY 2018

THIS IS
AMERICA
YOU'RE ALLOWED
TO HAVE DELUSIONS
OF GRANDEUR

POSTED BY HANSELZYSCHOTZ AT 9:40AM ON 18TH JANUARY 2018

I'M
PRETTY
T'S
SUPPOSED

ONNA ASSUME
WEST METEOR
VAIIAN FALSE
ARE INDEED
Y THINGS & NOT
ORTH KOREAN
TS TO WIPE
THE MAP

POSTED BY JESSE, HARRIS AT 4:51PM ON 17TH JANUARY 2018

I AM PUTTING
KANYE ON
SHUFFLE AND
STOPPING
WHEN I'M
HAPPY AGAIN

POSTED BY ALEXHUNTHREYST AT 9:46AM ON 18TH JANUARY 2018

CHEX
S DIN
CER

I AND
NOSCOPY

POSTED BY ZAKRABURDIAZ AT 6:10PM ON 17TH JANUARY 2018

I AM AND
ALWAYS WILL BE
THAT GIRL WALKING
LATE INTO CLASS
WITH AN
AMERICANNO

POSTED BY FRIEDFOWSLAA AT 10:56AM ON 18TH JANUARY 2018

SWEET ASS G
INVADERS GA
AT QUARTE
IN PORTLA
GUNS HA
FEEDBACK
VERY INTI

I GET
UP ON
HIT
I CANNOT
D THAT

NEIGHBOR'S CAR HORN
IS MALFUNCTIONING AT 11 PM
I FEEL BAD FOR THE GUY
EVERYONE IS COMING
OUT OF THEIR HOUSES
FOR THE ENTIRE

SO WITH
GOVERN
SHUT DO
WILL I ST
MY TAX

**S A REAL
AGE**

POSTED BY PVBLOTHEPLUG AT 1:33AM ON 20TH JANUARY 2018

**THAT WOMEN'S CLOTHING
SIZES ARE AN ARBITRARY
CODE DESIGNED BY MEN
NEVER TO BE CRACKED
OR UNDERSTOOD**

POSTED BY EMPTHEHUBA AT 2:04PM ON 21ST JANUARY 2018

**PIPLUP
AND A
BACKPA**

**PROUD
OF THESE
MEN
NG**

POSTED BY APHLOPHANAS AT 4:14PM ON 20TH JANUARY 2018

**THEREFS
ARE
BAILING OUT
THE PATRIOTS**

POSTED BY JEFF_BURK AT 2:43PM ON 21ST JANUARY 2018

**FIWA
THE FI
WOUL
HIRE S
TO PEE
NAVEL
FOR M**

**XCITED
AD TO
ERALLY
HOUR**

POSTED BY FORANOBONES AT 3:03PM ON 20TH JANUARY 2018

**A DARK DAMP
DREARY DAY
IN PORTLAND
OREGON
THIS AFTERNOON**

POSTED BY MATTHEWGARDNER AT 3:32PM ON 21ST JANUARY 2018

**I AS
LIK
CHI**

**SEEMS
COOL
MEONE
E DRESSED
A NAZI**

POSTED BY JOE_PA AT 6:54PM ON 20TH JANUARY 2018

**I NEED TO PRETEND
TO BE SOBER FOR
A FEW MINUTES
SO THEY'LL ACTUALLY
LET ME ON MY
FLIGHT**

POSTED BY THEGRAV AT 3:13PM ON 21ST JANUARY 2018

**THIS COU
TROUBLE
ALREADY
THE MIS
WOULD RE
TO REC
COMMAN
MORN**

**AND
TOPING
CH**

**AND DAD IS NOW BACK
HOME WITH NO
EXPLANATION FOR
HOW HE CAME DOWN**

**WORE
NURSIN
TEN YE**

LEADERSHIP
RESIDENT

POSTED BY CHUCKED AT 2:09AM ON 13TH JANUARY 2018

ELSE TELL YOU
OTHERWISE

POSTED BY BWWR AT 8:51AM ON 14TH JANUARY 2018

TWE
MINU

AS

POSTED BY TABITHABLANCKEN AT 8:29PM ON 13TH JANUARY 2018

ACTUALLY
REALLY DISLIKE
PEOPLE WHO
ALWAYS MAKE
THINGS ABOUT
THEM

POSTED BY SONIA_98 AT 9:28AM ON 14TH JANUARY 2018

I'M G
MY WI
REN
NAC
HO

THE
EDTH
'T WIN
ERY
L SHIT

POSTED BY FALLINGDOWN AT 8:34PM ON 13TH JANUARY 2018

HEAL ME
COCONUT
WATER

POSTED BY TOPUPOO AT 1:02PM ON 14TH JANUARY 2018

WOUL
TRAS
TO BO
& VA
TO S
STYL

OW I
MY
HAT
SARI
KT

POSTED BY GRAY_BLOS AT 12:00AM ON 14TH JANUARY 2018

IT WAS A GLORIOUS MORNING
IN PORTLAND FOR NICE
LONG ENDURANCE RIDE
WE RAN INTO SO MANY
BIKE GROUPS - LOTS OF GRINS
I LOVE THIS CRAZY
AWESOME BIKE TOWN

POSTED BY SOAVEE AT 1:49PM ON 14TH JANUARY 2018

I MIS
FOR
FUC
FOR

LAG IN
ADE ME

STEELERS

THA

















