

Kerry Tribe

356 S. MISSION RD.

356 South Mission Road

April 10, 2015–May 31, 2015

A long projection wall cleaves the space in two. The first half, daylight, contains a veritable chromed forest of warped, Seussian C-stands, composed along with piles of pristine apple boxes, potted plants, and the occasional parabolic-mirror pod or monitor. Here, the accoutrements of photo-media production are pretentiously made into sculpture, the artist expressing, barely, an attempt at expression.

The second portion is a darkened theater screening Tribe's three-channel video *The Aphasia Poetry Club* (all works 2015), narrated by three members of the titular group. "I'm aphasic," says one, "and you are an artist, but we have a commonality: trying to express ourselves." Over broad, beautifully edited shots of minerals and fruit, which the speakers haltingly describe, as well as CT-scanned images of arboreal blood vessels (aphasia is often linked to stroke), each narrator tells the story of how they suddenly, seemingly at random, became stricken with the inability to process language. The video ends in a kind of poignantly zany cartoon, envisioned by one sufferer, a screenwriter: *The Loste Note* (from which the show takes its title). A spider conductor leads a choir of singing pill bugs and shrubs: "I can't speak, but I can sing / I have seen some awful things, / but it's OK when we sing together."



View of "Kerry Tribe: *The Loste Note*," 2014.

This backstory reframes the sculptures, allowing them to be read as practical objects, "things," abstracted and bent toward poetry. Two sets of silk-screen prints hang opposite each other: Stroop color word test / Moondust, a simple set of mismatched color words used to detect brain damage, and *Is Popcorn Alive?*, another cognitive diagnostic tool—here reframed as text art. Other sculptures including minerals and a miniature mill illustrate the narrators' stated interests, and seem to suggest a therapeutic utility—which the artist's recontextualization subverts, somehow compromises, yet to which Tribe's art aspires.

— Travis Diehl