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It's hard to talk about a collaboration, how it is formed and how it grows. Months ago Kennedy and Western began to exchange forms, in the shape of images, taken from exhibition history, design and architecture. Over time these forms have translated into features presented in this exhibition. They are fragments, notations that can be read together but that also exist independently of one another.

Andrew Kennedy Blaine Western

a hollow action,
a room held together by letters

28 November – 1 February



Andrew Kennedy, Blaine Western, *Component #9 a hollow action, a room held together by letters*, 2013, 525 x 775mm. Pigment print, harman gloss, baryta 320 gsm, oak frames, chip board, aluminum.

A steel structure partitions the space of the main gallery. The posts that compose the exhibition design are anchored to the concrete floor and find their way through the ceiling panels and newly inserted squares of poplar ply. The horizontal bars support two movable screens and thirteen photographic prints. These artworks are suspended with wire rope, generating new lines and a dynamic reading of the gallery's footprint.

The series of photographs by Andrew Kennedy depicts components of 'hollow actions': hand gestures performed or directed by the artist, juxtaposition of material features, of fabric or furniture, ambiguous interstitial spaces. These elements make us more aware of the architectural characteristics of the surroundings, and of the consideration invested in the materials the artists have chosen to work with.

The structure, as well as three of the works on display, are made collaboratively by Kennedy and Western. In one they have appropriated an unfinished model of the Gerrit Rietveld red and blue chair, the other two are studies of joinery combined with a corner structure which are photographed first through analog, and then digital means. A wide top rests on legs repurposed from two Artspace's old trestle tables, painted in the same grey as the steel structure. Under glass portions, ephemera and images reference expatriate architect Maurice K. Smith: the subject of Blaine Western's investigation. The artist's research departed from archival material and continued with site visits to the few buildings Smith designed in the North Island before moving to the US.

On one side of the gallery, a wooden relief occupies the hollow cavity created by removing the bottom half of one of the plaster board walls. This sculptural installation renders the formwork for a wall that- either never existed or has been removed from the Frith Concrete Offices in Hastings, a building designed by Smith and Len Hoogerbrug which is currently occupied by a company producing prefabricated sheds and trailers. A newly opened space is obtained from the extraction of another wall. Inside the room, are selected fragments of the mural found in a corridor of the Thompson House, recreated here by artist Rohan Hartley Mills. In his early career in New Zealand Smith built houses mostly for friends and the mural is an example of the sense of intimacy he wanted to suggest.

The long gallery's promenade is enhanced by a veneer of thin plywood sheets. The darkened space is inhabited by a protrusion of one of the steel bars from the main gallery which supports a screen. The first video captures fragments of the Odeon Theatre's mosaic wall, now visible in a dimly lit internet café on Queen St. The second work facing the viewer registers the play between exterior and interior views of Harry Turbott's house in Karekare¹. The camera



Andrew Kennedy, Blaine Western, installation view

moves horizontally through foliage and built environment capturing the tiniest atmospheric changes. Alongside noises recorded at the same location, a script is composed and recited by Western from fragments of dialogues he had with different people that knew, worked or simply inhabited Smith's buildings through the years. Their words give a vivid recollection of the idea of a place through kaleidoscopic views.

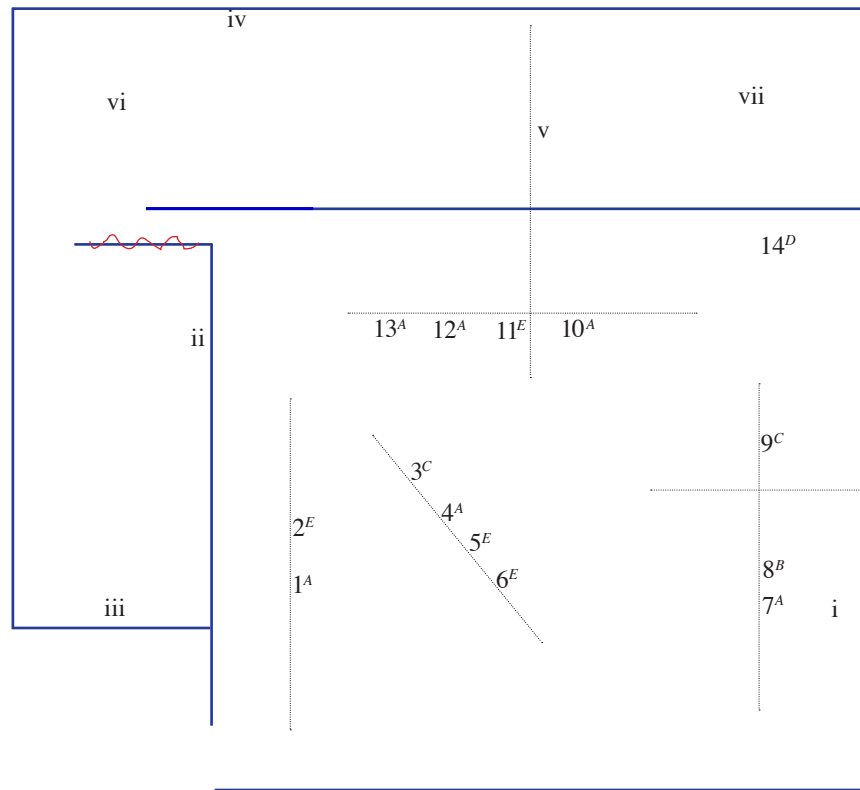
Smith's oeuvre is deeply inspired by the idea of the projected verse introduced by American poet Charles Olson in the 1950s. Olson was proposing an open form as the guiding ethos for the composition of verse and the making of a poetic language. This literary method has, in turn, been very influential to the making of this exhibition.

a hollow action, a room held together by letters works through associations, the works offer partial fragments to an open narrative.

¹ Harry Turbott is a Harvard-trained, New Zealand landscape architect and a contemporary of Maurice K. Smith. He has spent a lifetime producing buildings to the natural setting. He is the landscape designer of Freemans Bay, Auckland.

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Main Gallery

Andrew Kennedy

1 – 14 *Component # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14*

a hollow action, a room held together by letters

Pigment print, harman gloss, baryta 320 gsm, oak frames,
 chip board, aluminum

^A 620 x 775 mm

^B 775 x 620 mm

^C 525 x 775 mm

^D 1125 x 855 mm

^E 415 x 610 mm

Andrew Kennedy, Blaine Western

Component # 7, 9, 10

Blaine Western

- i Table
- ii Formwork
- iii Partial mural
- iv *Video 1*, 6.57, looped
- v *Video 2*, 10.02, looped
- vi *Audio 1*, 10.00, looped
- vii *Audio 2*, 40.00, looped

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Blaine Western
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ARTSPACE^{NZ}



Blaine Western. Formwork (*wall 3*, firth concrete offices, Hastings)



Andrew Kennedy, Blaine Western, installation view

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Left: Blaine Western. Table
(detail)

Below: Andrew Kennedy, Blaine Western, *Component #10, a hollow action, a room held together by letters*, 2013, 620 x 775 mm
Pigment print, harman gloss, baryta 320 gsm, oak frames, chip board, aluminum.



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ARTSPACE^{NZ}



Blaine Western. Partial Mural.



Blaine Western. *Video 2*, installation view

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28 November – 1 February

ARTSPACE^{NZ}



Blaine Western, *Video 1*, still, 6.57, looped



Blaine Western, *Video 2*, still, 10.02, looped

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Andrew Kennedy, Blaine Western, installation view

Thanks to: Bob Harvey, Rohan Hartley Mills, Len Hoogerbrug, Gregory Smith and his website lostproperty.org.nz, Jim Speers, Hamish and Priscilla Thompson, Torben Tilly, Harry Turbott, Tony Watkins.

Maurice K. Smith archival images have been digitally accessed on Dome (Massachusetts Institute of Technology libraries' collection).

Photographs by Sam Hartnett

