

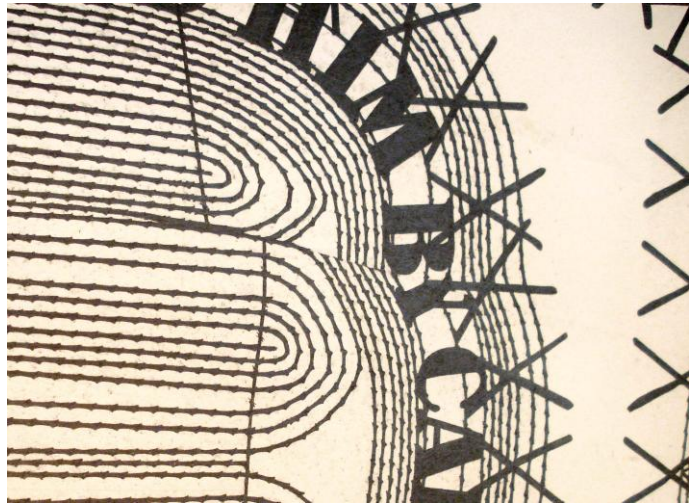
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ALYSSA PHEOBUS

To Have, Hold

6 NOVEMBER – 23 DECEMBER 2009



TO CARESS HIM BY CARESSING THE WORDS (detail), 2009

Tracy Williams Ltd. is pleased to announce Alyssa Pheobus' first solo exhibition at the gallery. In *To Have, Hold*, Pheobus continues her practice of investigating the conceptual and formal interplay between language and the marked line by creating large-scale, labor-intensive graphite drawings from enigmatic excerpts of text culled from sources both familiar and obscure.

To Have, Hold registers a thematic shift in Pheobus' work. Whereas her prior drawings investigated the dynamics of desire and power, coercion and aggression, her new work stages the expression of devotion through labor while exploring the comforts and anxieties that occur simultaneously in acts of commitment. To do so, Pheobus extracts and abstracts phrases and fragments from a range of sources—a Sufi devotional poem, a Jean Genet novel, a traditional lullaby—and critically refashions them through a process of inscription that gathers stenciled letters and other symbols into cohesive patterns and forms. The resulting drawings locate the excerpts within an austere visual grammar that forefronts the ability of the line to constrain, confine, and be read.

In each drawing, her careful typographic renderings evoke the affective tone of the text, creating acute resonances between form and meaning, image and language. The repetition of certain marks and phrases suggests an attachment that hovers between the contemplative and the compulsive. In *Comber*, undulating rows of ladder-like words are stacked against each other, their arrangement evoking the motions of a comb. In other works, her stark imagery adopts the appearance of branding irons, fences, rooms, and embroidered garments, creating visual motifs that gesture toward uneasy narratives of possessive desire, orderliness, confinement, and intimacy.

Pheobus received her MFA from Columbia University in 2008. Her work has recently been exhibited at *The Open* at Deitch Studios, 2009; *LAY IN THE REINS* at Bellwether, 2009; and *DESIRE* at Holster Projects, London, England, 2009. She lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

Please join us for the opening reception on Friday, the 6th of November from 6 – 8 pm

For further information and images, please contact the gallery at 212.229.2757.
Gallery Hours: Tuesday- Saturday, 11-6