

Shannon Ebner *FRET SCAPES*



FRET, acronym for the Forecast Reference Evapotranspiration Report, is a report generated by climate scientists to measure the rate at which water that falls to the ground will evaporate to the sky.

The poem "FRET" is comprised of seventeen screen compositions that are written with the WET LETTER alphabet, a holdover from my 2019 show *WET WORDS IN A HOT FIELD*. The alphabet was constructed with a set of paper letters approximately the size of an outstretched hand. To photograph the letters, I pasted them to the inside of a building with water. Handling the wet letters was a delicate act. By the time I would get from A-Z the letters would dry and fall to the ground. Sometimes a corner or edge might keep its grip, but most would succumb to gravity quickly, leaving the photographed environment looking like an alphabetic field in disarray, a vanishing act of language. And so the process went like this, a series of water intrusions enacted for a camera on a paper alphabet. Thin and pliable, not quite typographically black, more like photographically ashen, the alphabet became weakened by the laborious process of its rising and falling under the spell of the camera's steady lens.

In the context of this exhibition, I think of the poem as a weather event that is facing off with a group of images that are forecasting the social world — pictures that are reflecting, deflecting, depicting and reassembling signs and messages whose whereabouts in time and space are directionally unclear.

— Shannon Ebner