



View of "Words," 2009.
LONDON

"Words"

AM NUDEN DA

7 Ravenscroft Street

December 5, 2009–January 17, 2010

This exhibition consists of eighty-five sheets of A4 paper, hung edge to edge and in a row. Each page contains an artist's text. (The artists range broadly in age and approach.) The texts were e-mailed to the gallery and then converted to Arial and ten point, which gives uniformity to what is, otherwise, a huge variety of approaches. There are aphorisms, poems, linguistic axioms and reductions, instructions to the viewer, segments of local news, letters, and pastiches of various kinds. There are numerous lists (Roland Seto). A few pieces revive famous gestures from 1960s Conceptual art (Stefan Burger). Generally the text is black and page white, but in one case this is reversed (Martha Rosler). Sometimes the words are calligrammatic, forming two circles (Chris Peters) or climbing up and to the right of the page (Daniel Mueller-Friedrichsen). One page has even been crumpled at the request of the artist (Kathryn Andrews). Since there are so many pieces, it is nearly impossible to comment on all of the individual works, although no doubt the viewer will have her favorites. "Words" succeeds not only because of the texts themselves, though, but due to the coherence of its gesture: A self-conscious return, via constraints, to an aesthetic of administration, and the resulting tension between the expressive aspects of the works and the forced blandness of the whole.

—*David Lewis*