

HAINES GALLERY PRESENTS

# NIGEL POOR

## SAN QUENTIN PRISON REPORT

SEPTEMBER 4 - NOVEMBER 1, 2014

Opening reception: Thursday, September 4, 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Haines Gallery is pleased to present a selection of new works from Nigel Poor's *San Quentin Prison Report*. Poor's ongoing work with the inmates of San Quentin has served as a point of departure for this collaborative, three-part photographic project.

To create the first iteration, Poor asked inmates to respond to the work of William Eggleston, Lee Friedlander, Stephen Shore and other iconic photographers, inviting them to write and draw directly onto the prints, mapping the photographs and constructing narratives inspired by the imagery. The prisoners' voices speak with surprising clarity and insight through their hand-written embellishments. At Haines Gallery visitors are encouraged to handle these double-sided prints and spend time reviewing the inmate's reflections.

In another of the project's components, Poor examines an unexplored archive of historic negatives taken at the prison between 1960 and 1987. Selecting and reprinting photographs from this vast collection, Poor's prison photos are a surprisingly diverse array of images that are by turns cryptic and revealing, reflecting, in the artist's words, "the desire to know, the possibility of knowing and the acceptance of leaving room for the unknowable." In keeping with her ongoing fascination with typologies, Poor has identified a dozen or more categories through which the images can be organized, such as "Escape & Confinement" and "Holidays & Ceremonies." For their display at Haines Gallery, the artist has chosen one image of each type; the results will challenge viewers' expectations of what prison life can look like.

Poor's most recent work comprises the third part of the exhibition. Again, she invites the inmates of San Quentin to augment photographs with written commentary and observations, this time using images selected from the prison's archives. Here each inmate's relationship to the photographs is more intimate; the prisoners reflect on depictions of incarceration with astute insights, humor and compassion.



Nigel Poor, *Untitled (People & Animals Typology)*, 2014, black-and-white photographic print from archival negative

*San Quentin Prison Report* demonstrates Poor's longstanding commitment to facilitating a dialogue around how we manage crime, punishment and rehabilitation in the United States. Poor has been working with the inmates at San Quentin Prison since 2011.

Nigel Poor's work is held in the permanent collections of a number of institutions including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA; and Duke University Art Museum, Durham, NC. She has been included in exhibitions at the Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, CA; San Jose Museum of Art, CA; and San Francisco Arts Commission. Since 2003, she has served as an Associate Professor of Photography at California State University, Sacramento.

For press inquiries or images, please contact Brent Nuñez:  
Brent@Hainesgallery.com

For sales inquiries, please contact Catie Rini Patton:  
Catie@Hainesgallery.com