

NIGEL POOR

Reminders: god, sex and animals talking

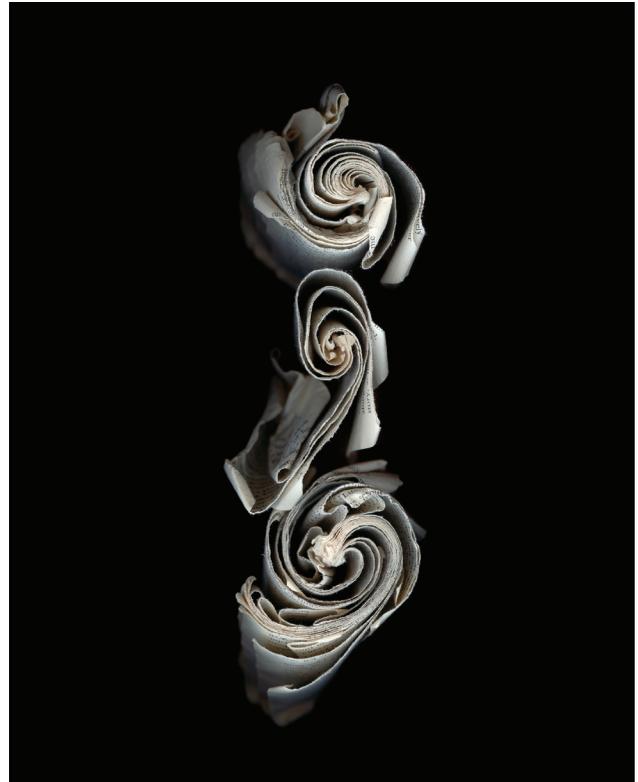
February 23 - April 7, 2012

God, sex and animals talking are the three chief reasons books are banned and are the subject of Nigel Poor's fifth exhibition with Haines Gallery. Poor examines and deconstructs the notion of censored books through photographic, sculptural and text-based works. This project commenced in 2008 when Poor was invited to participate in an exhibition focusing on this subject and chose to focus her investigation on books that included women's names in the titles or overtly referenced women; the list consisted of 40 books including *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, *Girl Interrupted*, *Julie of the Wolves* and Anne Frank: *The Diary of a Young Girl*. Poor subverts the conception of these books as "dirty" or "unclean" by washing and drying each of the selected books, empowering those tasks typically associated with women's housework in a new appraisal of these works. She explains, "laundering took the book from being a concrete object with the ability to communicate a story, characters, concepts, etc. to a maimed fragment of itself," facilitating the reconceptualization of these books under different parameters.

Poor began making photographic images of what remained of these books after their laundering. The resulting photographs present captivating sculptural objects that offer fragmentary



Lolita (a) from the series *Reminders: god, sex and animals talking*, 2010, Inkjet print, Frame: 28 x 23 x 1.25 inches / Image: 20 x 16 inches, Edition of 3



The Fortunes and Misfortunes of Moll Flanders (a) from the series *Reminders: god, sex and animals talking*, 2010, Inkjet print
Frame: 28 x 23 x 1.25 inches / Image: 20 x 16 inches, Edition of 3

glimpses of sentences, character names and illustrations. While she can control the way the remnants are approached photographically, chance dictates the way these books respond to washing and drying. Books of high literary repute are printed on better paper, allowing the pages to resist the severity of Poor's treatment; lesser works of literature printed on newsprint are virtually washed away. This material is pushed even further through a series of waxed book sculptures that evoke the form and delicacy of bird's nests. Through these sculptural works, Poor utilizes the book materials to their fullest extent, honoring them in this somewhat elegiac manner.

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; and Duke University Art Museum, Durham, NC. She has been included in exhibitions at the Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego; San Jose Museum of Art; and San Francisco Arts Commission. Since 2003, she has served as an Associate Professor of Photography at California State University.