

A.I.R.

CURRENTS: *ABORTION*
January 5 -February 4, 2018

STATEMENT

Art is visual listening. We use all of our senses to listen and to understand. In this turbulent moment in history, the ability to listen to one another has become a matter of urgency. *Listen:* women still do not have control of their bodies. Abortion is an inflammatory, overloaded word. We abort missions and we abort the unborn. We take lives in war and execute those who have committed what we deem unpardonable acts. Many women still die in childbirth and others are forced to bring a pregnancy to term created by rape or incest. We sit in judgment.

Little art has been produced about abortion. This show is an opportunity to change that, for artists to give voice to their emotions and perceptions about this subject. You will find depictions of choice, loss, and anger; of fecundity, disease, shame, and pain. There are images of helplessness and images of power. There is work that reaches into the past to demonstrate ways in which women used abortifacients. There is work that is pro-life as well as work that is religious.

In making selections for the exhibition I looked for the unexpected as well as for what you might expect to see. You will not find much blood and there is only one image of a hanger, as both blood and the symbol of the hanger are tropes from which I wished to disengage. Their familiarity makes it easier to narrow down the range of representations that allow us to look at abortion in different ways; make us less able perhaps, to dismiss or to sustain our view of it.

Those who are pro-choice are as passionate as those who are not. I believe all of us are pro-life: it is the definition of the term that is not the same. Herein lies the dilemma. How do we ever bridge this divide? We listen.

Barbara Zucker