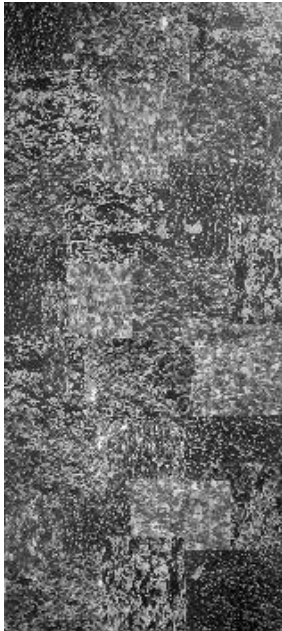


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Thomas Lail, *Crowd I*, cut xerographic prints on panel, 2015 (one of nine panels)

Grand Street Community Arts is pleased to announce an opening reception for artist Thomas Lail's *Crowd*, on Friday, May 29, 2015 from 5:00 – 6:30. The project will open in conjunction with a fundraiser screening of the documentary film "The Neighborhood that Disappeared" to benefit the ongoing restoration of the historic St. Anthony's church.

Lail's *Crowd* consists of nine large panels constructed for each of the window niches in the historic St. Anthony's Church on Madison Avenue in Albany, NY. Made from thousands of pieces of paper cut in diminishing sizes, *Crowd* is Lail's largest work to date in the Capital District. Each window panel is collaged with black and white reproductions of images of gatherings of people: crowds, protests and demonstrations, representing, as Lail states, "the accumulation of bodies that lead to utopian ideals or incremental change."

Lail's xerographic collage process includes enlarging, copying and re-copying his source images until all detail is obliterated and only a graphic, abstracted image remains. These copies are cut and collaged, layer upon layer into large scale abstractions. It is only upon observing the work both from a distance and at close range that the source images become decipherable and the latent content of the work becomes legible.

Though based in historic imagery acquired from archives, news sources and journals, Lail's methodology results in images that, like the utopian experiments they picture, disintegrate into near illegibility and non-existence.

The dissolution of the image is not, however, entirely abject. Though communal utopias and protests are, by nature, short lived, they, like Lail's images, persevere in bits and pieces, coalescing into new organizational groupings, new hopes, new crowds. An illustrated catalogue with essay by artist and freelance arts writer Amy Griffin will be available at the reception.

Thomas Lail is an artist and musician who exhibits in the United States and internationally. He is represented in New York by Masters Projects. Lail performs and records with soundBarn and

Location Ensemble. He has published numerous reviews and essays including two catalogue essays on the work of Robert Longo and publishes poetry and experimental writing through soundBarn Press. He is Associate Professor of Fine Arts at Hudson Valley Community College, SUNY in Troy, NY and lives and works in Kinderhook and Brooklyn with artist Tara Fracalossi and their son, Coltrane.

The mission of Grand Street Community Arts is to create unity and connection, especially through the arts, in an inner-city neighborhood with racial and economic diversity. By restoring historic St. Anthony's church as its home, the arts center creates and nurtures a link with the unique living history of the local community. Visit grandarts.org for more information.