



figure of SPEECH

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Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote that “Language is a part of our organism, and no less complicated than it.” Embedded within one’s language – spoken, written, or communicated through gesture or sign – are specific histories, experiences and a unique understanding of the world. San Diego is home to an ethnically and

culturally diverse population, where more than 100 languages are spoken. As the point of convergence of so many languages, the airport is an ideal setting to offer original perspectives on language and its influence on culture and modern life. *Figure of Speech* features fifteen distinct exhibitors whose artwork and collections explore the complexity, history, and beauty of language. Selected by a jury of art professionals, the participants were chosen based on their creativity, unique use of media and relevance to the exhibition theme.

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DO THINGS THAT MATTER TO YOUR HEART

susan o'malley

"Do things that matter to your heart" is just one of hundreds of simple yet profound pieces of advice that artist Susan O'Malley collected from people aged 7 to 88 for her project *Advice from My 80-Year-Old Self*. O'Malley asked individuals to consider what words of wisdom they would pass on to their younger selves if given the chance. The resulting collection features powerful statements of affirmation and perseverance, humor, and reminders to be present and appreciative of every moment. Presented as bold graphic posters, these phrases reflect the positivity and desire to create authentic connections between strangers that characterized O'Malley's artistic practice.

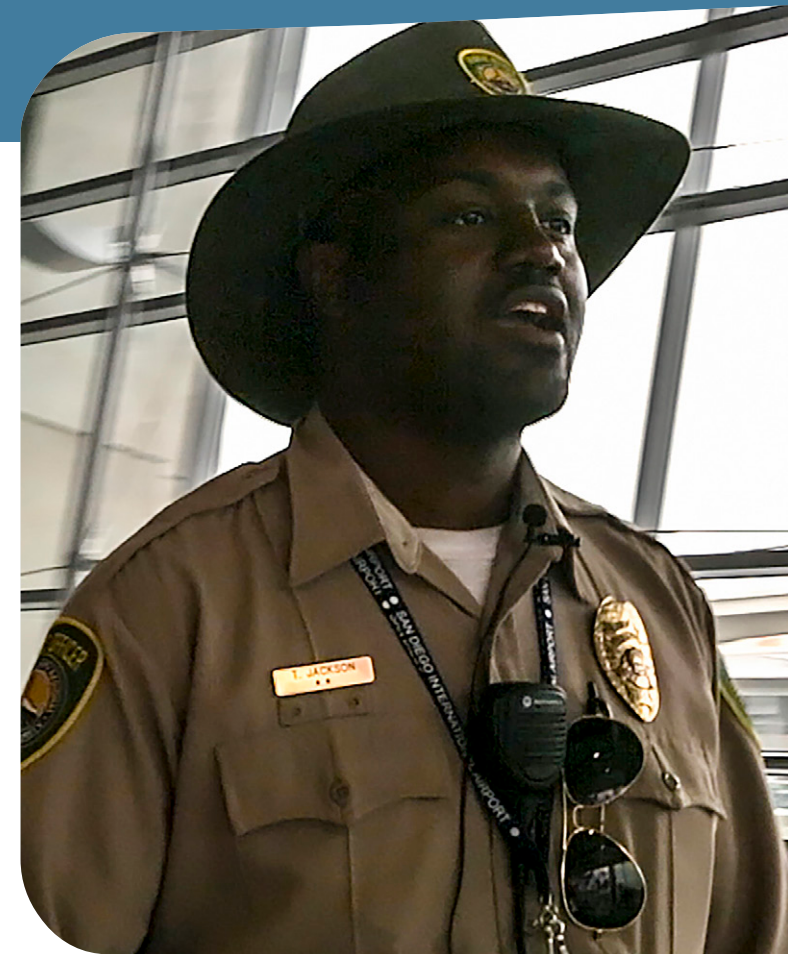
Susan O'Malley (1976–2015) was an internationally exhibited artist and curator based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

TERMINAL 1 | CURBSIDE &
TERMINAL 2 WEST | PRE-SECURITY
CHECKPOINT 6

sarah mendelsohn

Artist Sarah Mendelsohn shows the human side of airport security through her video installation *Security Chorus*. In the video, a dedicated Airport Traffic Officer performs a favorite song in Spanish and a retired TSA agent croons with confidence. To create this work, Mendelsohn filmed security personnel from throughout the airport performing and singing songs of their choosing. The piece addresses the power dynamic that can cast security staff in a negative light due to the strictly regimented processes they must abide by. Mendelsohn hopes to bridge the gap between the transactional encounters that occur at security checkpoints and the diverse personalities of these individuals.

TERMINAL 1 | POST-SECURITY | GATE 18 &
TERMINAL 2 EAST | POST-SECURITY





nina preisendorfer

Artist Nina Preisendorfer crowdsourced the traveling public to determine which words or phrases best captured the essence of San Diego. *Sun*, *Fun*, and *Life* were repeated by travelers as being quintessential descriptors of the San Diego region. She translated these words into knots, leveraging a knot alphabet created in the 19th Century as a method of communication for the blind. Her project illuminates the history of knot tying as a centuries-old writing tool. The brightly colored forms sculpted by Preisendorfer create a physical representation of language that the artist encourages the visitor to experience tactilely as well as visually.

TERMINAL 2 EAST | PRE-SECURITY
ENTRY CORRIDOR

boehm gallery collection palomar college

“Art is all over” was the signature phrase of San Diego artist Russell Baldwin, often reproduced in his artwork with found objects, etched glass, or paint. Such a playful use of text was common in the conceptual art movement that Baldwin and his better-known contemporaries such as John Baldessari represented. In the 1960s both artists challenged the norms of art-making, defying the expectations of what art should be, or portray.

The affiliation that artist-teachers Baldessari and Baldwin shared contributed to the impressive collection assembled by Palomar College’s Boehm Gallery, where Baldwin served as Director from 1965-1986. The selections from Boehm featured here bring this relationship into focus, highlighting how both artists believed that art was a form of communication akin to language, and so encouraged an intermingling of both.

TERMINAL 2 EAST | PRE-SECURITY
EAST END GALLERY



MASTERING THE

We invite you to pause during

one cannot think or play and

FIRST KNOCK ON DOOR if you see

The Authority does not interfere

Download free guided meditations and

Once you pass this point you

This is not an Airport Instructional

matthew hebert

Artist Matthew Hebert's found text poetry invites travelers to reexamine language that is all around us. To compose this artwork, Hebert spent time touring the airport, documenting interesting phrases and words that grace the walls and signage throughout the terminals. He then cut and paste phrases to alter their meaning, and assembled selected words into an original, absurdist poem. Read in a new context and scale, directional or instructional signage becomes playful or even silly. By reproducing some text as flat and some in three dimensions, the artist also embeds a poem-within-a-poem for passengers to discover. Though much of the language will be familiar to travelers, the last line of the poem offers a tongue-in-cheek comment to make clear that this is in fact artwork, and not to be read as official airport signage.

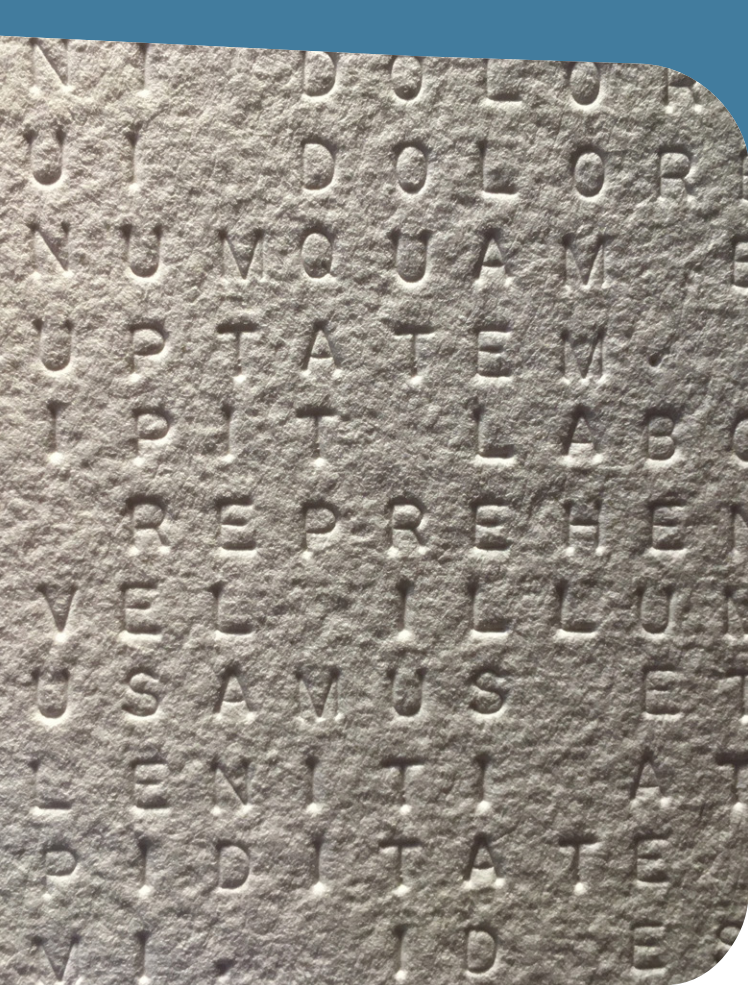
TERMINAL 2 EAST | POST-SECURITY
GATE 24

michelle montjoy

Artist Michelle Montjoy creates intricately knitted sculptural environments from graphic t-shirts, using large table-top looms reminiscent of those used for traditional knitting projects. Buried within these suspended forms are fragments of language. As Montjoy sees it, t-shirts with printed language allow individuals to express aspects of their identity, such as their world-view, sense of humor, or hobbies, and therefore, offer an opportunity for people to find common ground or spark a conversation between strangers. Montjoy draws a parallel between the ways that strangers connect and interact with how the material from the shirts are woven and bound together. Montjoy will continue this dialogue between strangers by periodically engaging travelers during the exhibition to help knit new forms to be incorporated into the project.

TERMINAL 2 EAST | POST-SECURITY
FOOD COURT





tml dunn

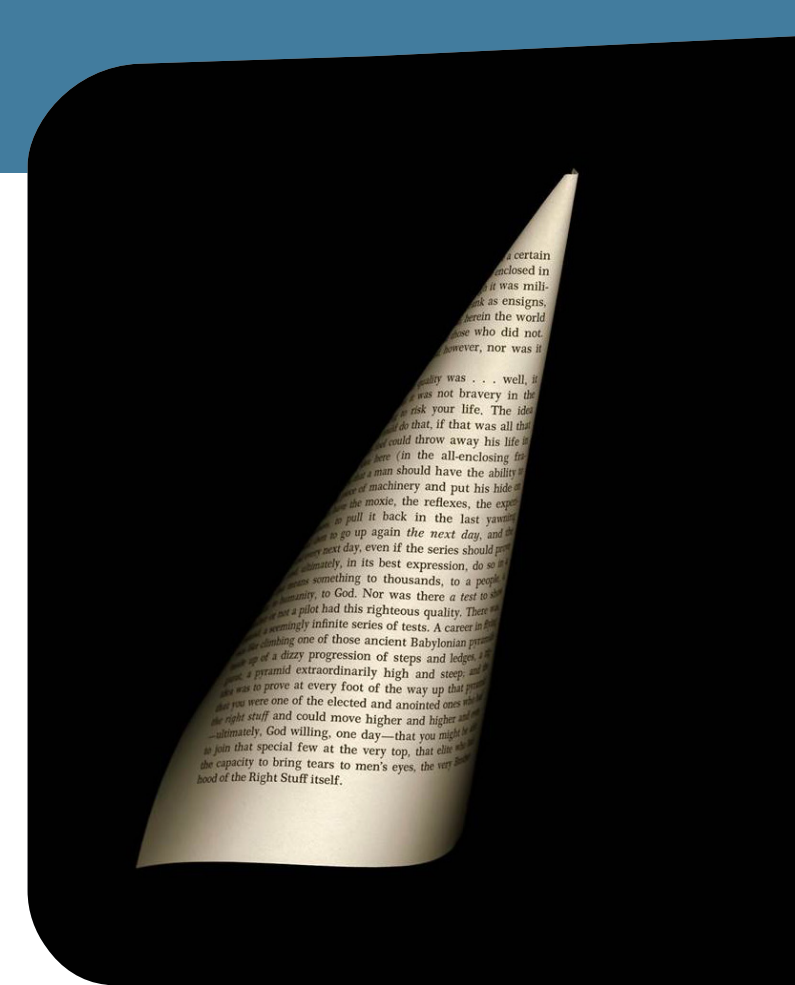
Viewed from a distance, TML Dunn's pieces may appear to be blank pages, but upon closer inspection, viewers will find more than 46,000 letter marks made by hand, through a painstaking process. Dunn's practice relies on rules he sets to guide his artistic production. To create these pieces, he replicated the phrase *Lorem ipsum* hundreds of times. This variation on a Latin expression has been used by graphic designers as placeholder copy in design documents since the 1970s. In a reversal of its typical automated application with a computer, Dunn meticulously calculated the spacing each letter occupied in order to have the phrase fill 8 sheets of paper. The resulting pieces are subtle in appearance but rich in texture, and reflective of many hours of a labor-intensive technique.

TERMINAL 2 EAST | POST-SECURITY
GATE 28

david fokos

In photographer David Fokos' *The Book Pages Project*, yellowed and worn pages are set free from their binding and brought to life through playful manipulations of their form. Created through a high-resolution scanning process, the images reveal the rich textural quality of the pages and subtle variations in printing. Fokos sets each page against a stark backdrop and uses dramatic shadows to present them as objects of great rarity and value. In an era when writing is increasingly consumed digitally rather than in print, this series celebrates the physical form of the book and reflects the ability of literature to transport us to other worlds.

TERMINAL 2 EAST | POST-SECURITY
TRANSITIONAL CORRIDOR





whitney lynn

Embedded within a colorful floral arrangement lies layers of symbolic meaning. Flowers have been used throughout history and across cultures from Ottoman Turkey to the Dutch Golden Age to express ideas and communicate meaning. In creating her collage of hundreds of species of buds and petals, artist Whitney Lynn was inspired by the Japanese proverb 見ぬが花 which states that “Not seeing is a flower.” This has been interpreted to mean that often our fantasies are more extraordinary than the realities we face. This lush, verdant collage is a creation of Lynn’s imagination.

**TERMINAL 2 EAST | PRE-SECURITY
BAGGAGE CLAIM ENTRY**

brighton press

The selection of books, prints, printing plates and tools on view from Brighton Press illustrate the diversity and complexity of the printed form. In an age of pervasive digital readers, Brighton Press continues the long tradition of bookmaking by hand. This collection showcases a small sample of the 46 books published by Brighton, focusing on books that use language in unique and unexpected ways.

Highlights include *Speaking Subaltern*, by Moroccan-born artist Jinane Abbadi. She uses etchings and personal replies written in her native Arabic, to respond directly to French Orientalist writers like Gustave Flaubert. In *Three Poems Disrupting a Language*, the intricacies and complications of communication are illustrated and explored through translation and collaboration by Bill Kelly and Miya Hannan. The selection of books on display experiment with language to enrich the experience and interactive possibilities of visual art and the written form.

TERMINAL 2 WEST | POST-SECURITY | GATE 33



barona cultural center & museum

BARONA INTER-TRIBAL DICTIONARY 'IIPAY AA TIIPAY AA UUMALL

The influence of the Kumeyaay-Diegueño language is far-reaching and visible throughout San Diego, as evidenced in numerous words used in English and Spanish spoken in the region, as well as place-names such as Palomar and Cuyamaca. The artifacts on view here document and celebrate that influence, introducing passengers to a rich linguistic heritage.

In an effort to preserve their culture and language for future generations, the Barona Band of Mission Indians published the *Barona Inter-Tribal Dictionary: 'Iipay Aa Tiipay Aa Uumall* in 2008. This comparative dictionary explains the etymology of specific words and phrases within the Kumeyaay-Diegueño language, while also drawing analogies between this language and the English or Spanish words we use today. The project was researched and developed over a period of nearly 30 years and required the collaboration of numerous individuals including the few remaining native speakers, tribal elders and linguists.

TERMINAL 2 WEST | POST-SECURITY | GATE 34

gilbert neri

Gilbert Neri's handmade resin sculptures rise and fall across a wall's expanse, suggestive of a physical landscape or wave. Embedded within each form or speech glyph are excerpts of texts that have helped to shape Neri's own identity and relationship to language, such as a Spanish-English dictionary, Aztec codices, and maps.

The shape created by these hundreds of cast pieces is based on a visual representation of layered audio files of the phrase "I am home," in various languages indigenous to the San Diego region. Neri is interested in the many possible interpretations of this phrase, particularly for individuals who have migrated or for whom "home" is not defined by a single place.

TERMINAL 2 WEST | POST-SECURITY
NORTH CONCOURSE | GATE 36



gabi schaffzin & zachary kaiser

the stars begin
teal way
me dorthy jenny
upon asquint
or azure mist u
the mountain's
and never thole
passions lang

As you approach or pass by *Colors Passing*, a sensor on the artwork detects the color of your clothing, and suddenly, a poem appears on the embedded display screen. To design this playful, interactive piece, artists Gabi Schaffzin and Zachary Kaiser developed software that translates perceived colors into a universal digital language and generates a unique code for each and every color. These codes are used as a key to generate a poem, using a pool of phrases collected from famous poetry about color.

Colors Passing uses poetry to illustrate the translation of a common computer code into human language, and invites travelers to experience poetry about color from a diverse range of cultures and perspectives.

TERMINAL 2 WEST | PRE-SECURITY
1ST FLOOR | CENTRAL ROTUNDA

kevin larsen veterans art project

Artist and former Marine Kevin Larsen used local military veterans as models for his bronze casts of hands, which collectively spell out *honor*, *courage* and *commitment* in American Sign Language (ASL). Larsen chose these powerful words for their relevance to the military community with which he collaborates on a daily basis. The Veterans Art Project (VetArt) aims to give veterans a voice through art by providing free classes in bronze casting and ceramics for them and their families. Through hundreds of classes, workshops and demonstrations across the San Diego region and country, VetArt has enabled veterans to connect with others, and discover an outlet for expressing their emotions and experiences through the art-making process.

TERMINAL 2 WEST | PRE-SECURITY
1ST FLOOR | CENTRAL ROTUNDA





st. madeleine sophie's center

Suspended above the concourse are the colorful woven banners of *Peace Portal*, created by St. Madeleine Sophie's Center, a non-profit providing arts instruction to adults with developmental disabilities. Sophie's Center held multiple community workshops with partners throughout San Diego that encouraged participants to write poems and wishes of good will on strips of fabric. These messages were then used to weave panels in the Japanese Saori method, which utilizes a freestyle approach to weaving, allowing anyone to express themselves regardless of age, gender, or ability. The written thoughts and intentions of the participants blend weaving and writing as a gesture of their contribution to an atmosphere of peace.

TERMINAL 2 WEST | POST-SECURITY
WEST CONCOURSE

SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ARTS PROGRAM

The Arts Program at SAN infuses the airport with light, levity, comfort and memorable experiences. The program surprises and delights travelers with art of the highest caliber, and showcases the region's rich cultural community. Bringing texture and depth to the airport environment, the program involves artists in the planning and design of the airport.

Whether you're making your way to your gate or collecting your luggage, take a moment to notice the art around you – it was designed with you in mind.

For more info visit: arts.san.org



PUBLIC ART



PERFORMING
ARTS



TEMPORARY
EXHIBITIONS