



"NORTH AMERICAN," 2013, **Kim Rugg**

INK ON PAPER, 21¼" x 26½"

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND MARK MOORE GALLERY

## LOS ANGELES

### **Kim Rugg: "Patterns of Landscape" at Mark Moore Gallery**

Kim Rugg obsessively cuts apart maps, newspapers and magazines. She then re-assembles the numerous fragments into new configurations that retain the structure of the original. Rugg's restructurings are based on specific systems and follow rule sets whose outcome creates beautiful gibberish. She renders the texts unreadable, creating a form of concrete poetry. In *The Sentimental Journey* (2013), the front page of *The New York Times* is intricately cut apart, letter-by-letter, then put back together in alphabetical order arranged by point-size. The accompanying photographs on the page are cut into tiny rectangles (like pixels) and realigned from light to dark, to form a large rectangle at the bottom of the composition. While the news of the day becomes a jumble of type, the configuration of the newspaper remains intact. Rugg uses a similar approach with a copy of the British newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*, obfuscating the news. "ABIOSTY"—an alphabetized anagram for "It's A Boy"—references the birth of Prince George. It is also the title of the work and the only translation that Rugg supplies.

The hand figures more directly in Rugg's world map recreations. In many of these works she draws the names of places where they would normally appear on the printed map. The variation in density of her hand drawn words suggests a topographical map

or a landscape. By stripping maps of their traditional signifiers—borders, colors and geographical data—and replacing them with handwritten letters, Rugg's maps communicate with compassion and emotion. The title *Human World* (2013) encapsulates the goal of these works, to imbue information with humanity. Rugg's alterations can be subtle. The maps in *The World* (2012) and *North American* (2013) appear at first glance to be just that, maps of those locations. Upon closer scrutiny, it becomes evident that the maps have been cut into thin strips and reassembled upside down or reversed. Through reordering, inverting and weaving of visual information, Rugg makes strange or defamiliarizes what we take for granted so it can be seen anew.

Central to Rugg's endeavor is an investigation into meaning and how content is disseminated and (mis)interpreted. She transforms printed ephemera that convey information into artworks wherein that information is rendered unreadable. Rugg coyly alludes to the original content through titles (*Human World* and *It's A Boy*, for example). Because she maintains context, transforming only content, her works resonate far beyond mere formal manipulations.

—JODY ZELLEN