

Jackson Mac Low: Lines–Letters–Words
January 20–March 19, 2017

Drawing Room

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 19, 6–8pm

For further information and images, please contact
Molly Gross, *Communications Director*, The Drawing Center
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November 16, 2016



Jackson Mac Low, *Untitled*,
1951. Ink on paper, 6 x 8
inches. Collection of Anne
Tardos.

New York – In *Jackson Mac Low: Lines–Letters–Words*, The Drawing Center will present the first solo museum exhibition of visual works by Jackson Mac Low (1922–2004) that span the multidisciplinary artist’s practice from the 1940s to the 2000s. Tracing the arc of his creative output, specifically through the lens of drawing and handwriting, this exhibition will provide a new understanding of Mac Low’s oeuvre outside of the world of poetry. Curated by Brett Littman, Executive Director.

Mac Low began drawing in his early teens and continued to create visual work throughout his life. Through drawing, Mac Low experimented with chance procedures and automatism, allowing form and process to shape content before these themes entered his poems. The earliest drawings in the exhibition, created in the late 1940s and early 1950s, consist of pre-linguistic marks made with gestural ink brushstrokes that resemble Roman and Japanese characters. Works from the 1960s through the 1990s include series of drawings that emphasize the visual and aural qualities of written language, acting as both graphic representations and performance scores. Fusing letters and words in the *Drawing-Asymmetries* and later *Vocabulary* series, Mac Low transformed discrete characters into sometimes unreadable pictographic landscapes. The equally visual *Gathas*, which consist of individual letters drawn omnidirectionally on graph paper, function as performance scores. The bands of color visible in the rarely performed *Skew Lines* series also serve as scores for vocalized actions. A series of thirteen observational drawings made in 1995 echoes the unsettled system of marks in Mac Low’s early works, returning the artist to a visual form that is more purely grounded in drawing rather than in text or performance.

The Drawing Center, through *Jackson Mac Low: Lines–Letters–Words*, identifies drawing as a foundational medium—one that significantly informed Mac Low and influenced his multidisciplinary practice for more than sixty years.

ABOUT JACKSON MAC LOW

Born in Chicago in 1922, Jackson Mac Low was the author of thirty-one books of poetry and included in more than ninety collections of poetry. Creating drawings in tandem with poetry during his seven-decade-long career, Mac Low collaborated with arts organizations as a means to explore digital media and installation, including a residency at the Art and Technology Program of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1969 and as part of the exhibition *Sound at PS1* at PS1 Contemporary Art Center (now MoMA PS1) in 1979. Mac Low was the subject of a 2012 solo exhibition at Galerie 1900–2000 in Paris. In 2013, Mac Low’s work appeared as part of a group exhibition at the Museo Reina Sofía; his work has also been included in several group exhibitions in New York, including shows at The Museum of Modern Art, Marianne Boesky Gallery, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (with writer, poet, and collaborator Anne Tardos), and the New Museum of Contemporary Art.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Thursday, February 23 from 6:30–7:30pm

Join artist Tyler Coburn and art historian Katie Anania, postdoctoral fellow at the Morgan Library and Museum, for a conversation about the theory and practice of chance- and machine-generated texts. Through a combination of reading aloud and intimate discussion, Coburn and Anania will explore what it means to be a reader in the digital age.

PUBLICATION

To accompany *Jackson Mac Low: Lines–Letters–Words*, The Drawing Center will produce an edition in the *Drawing Papers* series, which will include an introduction by the exhibition curator Brett Littman, Executive Director of The Drawing Center, a preface by writer, poet and Mac Low collaborator, Anne Tardos and an essay by New York writer, poet, and translator Sylvia Mae Gorelick.

CREDITS

Jackson Mac Low: Lines–Letters–Words is made possible by the support of Glenn Horowitz, Steve Clay and Julie Harrison, Susan Bee and Charles Bernstein, and several anonymous donors.

Special thanks to Anne Tardos, Executor of the Estate of Jackson Mac Low, and to composer Michael Byron.

ABOUT THE DRAWING CENTER

The Drawing Center, a museum in Manhattan's SoHo district, explores the medium of drawing as primary, dynamic, and relevant to contemporary culture, the future of art, and creative thought. Its activities, which are both multidisciplinary and broadly historical, include exhibitions; Open Sessions, a curated artist program encouraging community and collaboration; the *Drawing Papers* publication series; and education and public programs.

LOCATION, HOURS & ACCESSIBILITY

35 Wooster Street between Broome and Grand Streets in SoHo, New York.
Gallery hours are Wednesday–Sunday 12pm–6pm, Thursday, 12pm–8pm.
Tickets: \$5 Adults, \$3 Students and seniors, Children under 12 are free, and free admission Thursdays 6-8pm.

The Drawing Center is wheelchair accessible.

212.219.2166 | info@drawingcenter.org | drawingcenter.org

FACEBOOK: [The Drawing Center](https://www.facebook.com/TheDrawingCenter)

TWITTER: [@drawingcenter](https://twitter.com/drawingcenter)

TUMBLR: the-drawing-center.tumblr.com

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AT THE DRAWING CENTER

<i>Cecily Brown: Rehearsal</i>	Through December 18, 2016
<i>Olga Chernysheva: Vague Accent</i>	Through December 18, 2016
<i>Open Sessions 9: Cartography of Ghosts</i>	November 18–December 18, 2016
<i>Mateo López: Undo List</i>	January 20–March 19, 2017
<i>Jackson Mac Low: Lines–Letters–Words</i>	January 20–March 19, 2017
<i>Amy Sillman: After Metamorphoses</i>	January 20–March 19, 2017
<i>Mark Dion: Tropical Research Lab</i>	April 14–June 25, 2017
<i>Open Sessions 10</i>	April 14–June 4, 2017

Installations

<i>Gary Simmons: Ghost Reels</i>	Through October 2017
<i>Jackie Ferrara: Lines</i>	Through March 2017

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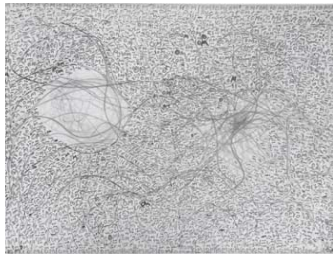
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Images Available for Reproduction

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Jackson Mac Low, *Untitled*, 1951.
Ink on paper, 6 x 8 inches.
Collection of Anne Tardos.



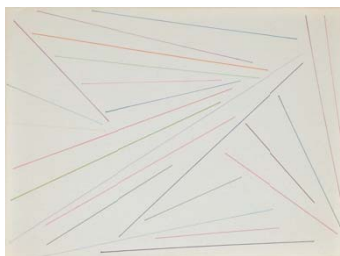
Jackson Mac Low, *Om in a Landscape*, 1961. Graphite on paper, 14 x 22 inches. Collection of Anne Tardos.



Jackson Mac Low, *A Vocabulary Gatha for Anne Tardos*, May 1980. Pen on graph paper, 11 x 8 1/2 inches. Collection of Anne Tardos.



Jackson Mac Low, *Stephanie Vevers*, August 1977. Pen on paper, 8 3/4 x 11 1/2 inches. Collection of Anne Tardos.



Jackson Mac Low, *Skew Lines*, 1979. Pen on paper, 11 x 14 inches. Collection of Anne Tardos.



Jackson Mac Low, *Happy Birthday 57th for Anne*, 2007. Crayon on paper, 14 x 20 inches. Collection of Anne Tardos.