



“*The eighteenth-century Eidophusicon has been variously described as a mechanical theater, a miniature stage, a diorama, a panorama, or a physiorama. Featuring lighting, mechanical motion, sound effects, architectural simulation, dramatic special effects and something akin to a storyline, the Eidophusicon would probably be described today as ‘multimedia’ or ‘virtual [real]ity.’*”

ARTIST’S STATEMENT
by Matt Neff

This body of work was made from plexi-glass letters etched, cut, mounted, and printed on a Vandercook No. 4 proof press. Layering the etched letters in different ways, allowing them to vibrate and moiré made for an exciting variable edition.

This series is based on an original edition of 100 made for the Center for Book Arts in NY as part of a folio project touring the country featuring new trends in letterpress printing around the country. Eido-phusicon was originally conceived, designed, and printed by Matt Neff and Christopher Van auken. The title of the edition originates from an 18th century spectacle of moving image made by Philip James de Loutherbourg.

CURATOR’S STATEMENT
by Kaegan Sparks

Triggered by a personal intrigue for this antique innovation in cinema, Matt Neff’s project reiterates the synthesis of an age-old practice of image production and new technology. In *Eidophusicon* Neff has used laser-cut alphabetic blocks on a traditional printing press, effecting the literal word-as-image in a remarkable visual multiplex. Via layering the letters themselves transform into abstract media alluding to the semi-transparent projections of the eidophusicon. Compounded gradients of depth and saturation, the holistic effect of each print depends on positioning and the density of lines composing its component letters. While the entire word is legible in none, like a reliable fugue-tonic a prominent “E” hallmarks nearly every piece. Neff’s work is especially powerful en masse—particularly striking is the transition from sign to image in their progression, as the negative space recedes with multiple layerings, recognizable letterforms recede into complicated lattices of color. Using the most understated and “normal” components for a letterpress series, in his *Eidophusicon* works Neff has taken text from material to metaphoric and back again with considerable finesse.