

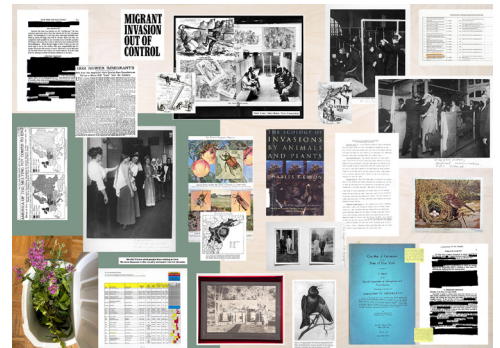
# A.I.R.

## ***Invasive Species: Of Natives and Strangers*** **Sandra Erbacher**

November 18–December 17, 2023

Opening Reception: Saturday, November 18 from 6–8pm

GALLERY III



Sandra Erbacher, *Drifter 1*, 2023, Inkjet print, 50 x 36 inches.

A.I.R. Gallery is pleased to announce *Invasive Species: Of Natives and Strangers*, a solo exhibition by Sandra Erbacher. Employing an interdisciplinary, research centered approach, Erbacher seeks to compare and contrast the discourse on invasive species in the natural sciences with the media rhetoric surrounding immigration.

*Invasive Species* brings together a wealth of historical and contemporary images, text, and ephemera to explore how fears surrounding foreign flora and fauna echo anxieties about immigration and disease and the rise of xenophobia. Materials are sourced from the archives of the New York Public Library Pictures Collection, The Eugenic Record Office at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, and from scientific books, journals, and newspaper archives. As part of this research, Erbacher delves into the role eugenics played in shaping nineteenth and early twentieth century policies on immigration and how these ideologies continue to influence contemporary public perception and discourse surrounding immigration.

The resulting installation of photographs, video, and sculpture seems at first glance to employ traditional archival modes of representation. However, a closer look reveals that the spatial hierarchies of display have been turned upside down: a deconstructed archival table rises vertically from the center of the gallery, and a small video is projected into one of its storage compartments, asking viewers to crouch down to actively engage with the work.

By disrupting visual conventions, *Invasive Species* intends to challenge dominant narratives and provoke critical engagement with issues related to immigration, invasive species, photography, and colonialism. It deconstructs the use of photography as a tool of documentation and truth-making, and the archive as a repository of dominant histories, while highlighting the socio-political factors that have led to the binary view of nature and culture as being in and out of place, native and non-native. By shedding light on the historical roots of immigration discourses, Erbacher aims to deepen our understanding of the social constructions of "invasion," and foster critical dialogue on the enduring impact of these ideologies.

*Invasive Species* is funded through a faculty development grant by Pratt Institute. Research was supported by a travel stipend awarded by Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (CSHL) Library and Archives.

**Sandra Erbacher** is a German interdisciplinary artist living and working in New Jersey and New York. She earned her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2014) and her BFA from Camberwell College of Art, London (2009). She also holds a BA and MA in Sociology from Goldsmiths College, University of London. Erbacher has exhibited nationally and internationally, at Rueff Gallery, Purdue University, Cuchifritos, mh PROJECT, ISCP, Stellar Projects, Spring/ Break, Grin Providence, the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, the Chazen Museum of Art, Madison, WI, Parisian Laundry, Montreal, and Space, Portland. Most recently, Erbacher has won a Manhattan Graphics Center Scholarship (2023). She participated in the Center for Book Arts Residency (summer 2023), the 2019 Artist Alliance Inc LES Studio Program, the 2017-18 LMCC Workspace Residency, and the 2015 NARS Foundation Residency. She is the recipient of a 2019 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant, the 2014 Chazen Prize to an Outstanding MFA Student, a University of Wisconsin fellowship and the Blink Grant for Public Art 2013.

A.I.R. Gallery is wheelchair accessible via ramp. There are accessible toilets in the venue. There is comfortable seating with backs. Free tap water is available. The venue is nearest to the F train at York St (0.2 miles) and the A train at High St (0.5 miles). The nearest wheelchair accessible trains is the B, Q, R at Dekalb Av (1.1 miles) and the 2, 3 at Borough Hall (0.8 miles). The roads immediately surrounding the gallery are cobblestone. The nearest accessible parking garage (for an hourly fee) is two blocks away at 100 Jay St. No ID necessary for entry. Please contact [info@airgallery.org](mailto:info@airgallery.org) for more information.



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