

*A Couple of Pencils and Some Paper* is an exhibition of drawings and works on paper that Candy Jernigan made between 1983 and 1991.



Evidence is often far from evident. Only after a careful (and obsessive) process of observing, collecting, and cataloguing does an object that seems to be inconsequential turn out to be far from it.

When applied to a context, evidence goes from being an object to being *proof*—a crumpled receipt or a clipped toenail takes on the added property of being an affirmation or a confirmation of a broader state of affairs. That cigarette butt must have belonged to a cigarette, which was probably smoked not too far away, not too long ago, by someone who smokes that brand. And whoever picks it up from the ground has proof that she, too, was there.

Candy Jernigan picked all sorts of things up from the ground. Her work tells the story of a life spent turning details into evidence and, by extension, into poetic bits of social commentary. While she would often incorporate those objects in collages or attach them to the pages of her diaristic travel journals, she would also bring them back to her studio and draw them. As representations, they stop being physical evidence but become something closer to a diagram or a record.

Just as there is a difference between reading a word and pronouncing it, Jernigan's drawings and works on paper imbue a (discarded or rejected) physical fact with a sense of empathy and dignity.



Untitled (Still Life) 4.10.83 (Luggage tag), 1983

Evidence can come in all shapes and sizes, but Jernigan preferred the type she could pick up and put in her bag (and then, sometimes, in her freezer, a few inches away from dinner). She wasn't interested in unique or precious "rare finds." Instead, she was after the surplus, all that which is also already available in every corner store or on every other sidewalk.

RAVEL SERIES PART 6.



Pop Top.  
R.M.E.

*Pop Top - Rome, 1983-1984*

**As a collector of evidence, Jernigan didn't do any digging but simply picked up whatever the city coughed up on its own. She understood that a place keeps its secrets not in what it prizes but in what it rejects.**





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a city map showing where the cans came from (the city blocks, the food markets, and the aisles —aisle 3 and aisle 5)

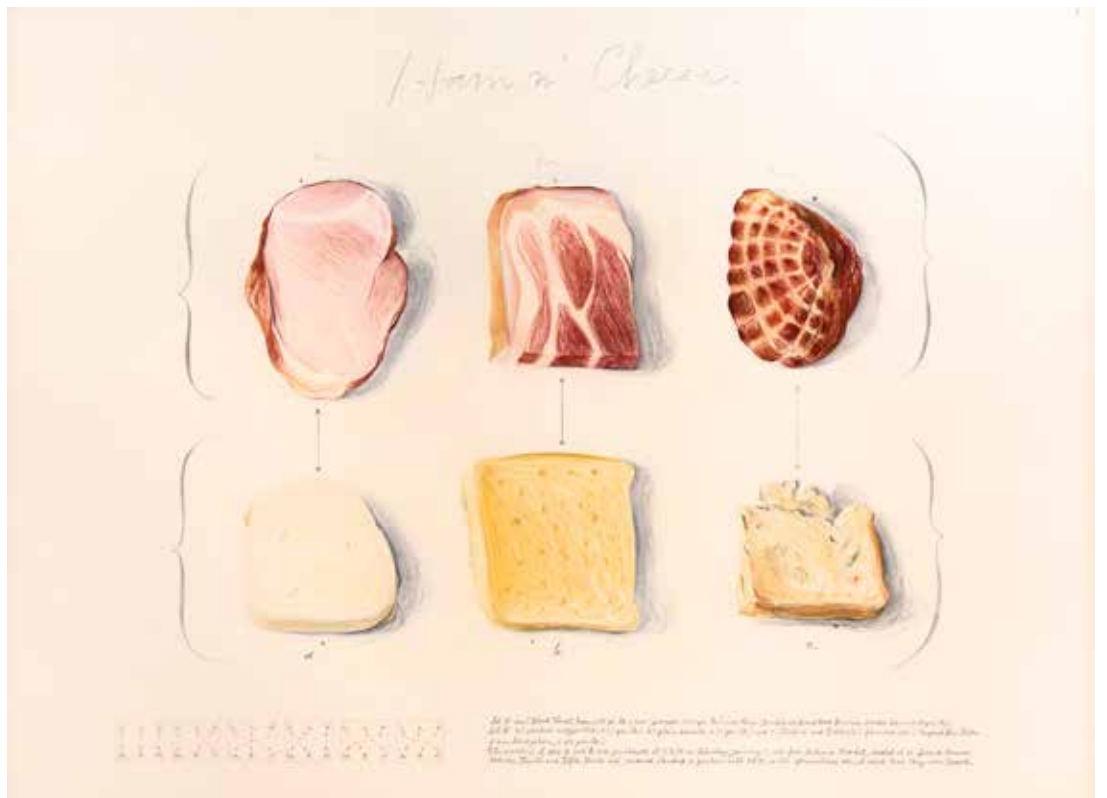
and a drawing of a body, showing where the food ultimately ended up (the mouth, the esophagus, and the stomach).

Previous page:  
THE NEW YORK COLLECTIONS,  
Ten Kinds of Beans (Homage to Goya), 1986

Other specimens require mathematical computation. Arrows and brackets accompany *Ham n' Cheese* (1988), where ingredients are presented as three possible sets of ham and three possible sets of cheese:  $\{a, b, c\} \cap \{1, 2, 3\}$ .

Right:  
*Ham n' Cheese*, 1988

In case the text on the bottom right is too small to read: Members of sets A and B were purchased at 11am on Saturday, January 9, 1988 from Indiana Market, located at 80 Second Avenue between Fourth and Fifth Streets and remained standing in position until 8pm on the aforementioned date, at which time they were tossed.



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Jernigan was born in 1952 in Miami (Florida), went to Pratt (Brooklyn), worked as a set and costume designer in Provincetown (Cape Cod), and finally moved to New York in 1980, where she worked for Paul Bacon, a book and album cover designer. In 1981, on a flight from Amsterdam back to New York, she found herself sitting next to the composer Philip Glass. They got married and lived together for ten years, until she died of liver cancer. She was only 39.

During the last few weeks of her life, Jernigan worked late into the night on a series of watercolors. She would make five or six every night. She called them *Vessels*, and each features a single vessel—a vase, a cup, a bowl, or a pitcher—sometimes two. Each is set against a washed-out colored background, light blue, sky grey, sunset red, pale yellow, some with pulled-back curtains painted near the top two corners. The depth of field is at its bare minimum, often no more than a single line to imply a surface or a tabletop, with the object casting a slight forward shadow. They are haunting but also heartbreaking, fragile but also timeless, especially when considering her state of mind and health at the time.



*Untitled (vessels)*, c. 1990-1

**To me, all of this work is about fragility. Bodies are fragile, drawings are fragile, memories are fragile, love is fragile, even cities are fragile. Bugs, leaves, and Cheez Doodles are fragile. If monuments or memorials are meant to counteract fragility, Jernigan chose to preserve it, even caress it, with a couple of pencils and some paper.**

**—Anthony Huberman**



*Candy Jernigan: A Couple of Pencils and Some Paper* is on view at CCA Wattis Institute from June 1 to July 29, 2017.

Candy Jernigan (b. 1952, Miami; d. 1991, New York) showed her work in exhibitions at Greene Naftali Gallery in New York (2014) and Dance Theater Workshop in New York (1989 and 1985). Her work has been included in major exhibition such as *America Is Hard to See*, Whitney Museum (2015), and *This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s*, MCA Chicago (2012).

*Candy Jernigan: A Couple of Pencils and Some Paper* is curated by Anthony Huberman and organized by Leila Grothe with assistance from Magdalena Hartelova, and is made possible thanks to the generous support of CCA Wattis Institute's Curator's Forum. Special thanks to Rebecca Litman, Philip Glass, Jeri Coppola, Stokes Howell, and Greene Naftali Gallery.

Cover image: *Candy Jernigan Gauloises, R.X. Nov.13 1983, 1983.*

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