

Nobutaka Aozaki

Grocery Portraits

Exhibition dates: December 16 2022 – February 4, 2023
Reception for the artist: Friday, December 16, 5-8 pm

Marinero is pleased to announce *Grocery Portraits*, Nobutaka Aozaki's first solo exhibition with the gallery, inhabiting Gallery Two.

Aozaki's multidimensional practice involves re-contextualizing found ephemera in an attempt to illuminate unseen connections between place, the lives of others, and the artist himself. These serendipitous threads act as the cultural material Aozaki uses to trace a socioeconomic map of the city, outlining the various perspectives of people navigating urban life.

In his Grocery Portrait series, the artist collects found shopping lists from the streets of Manhattan, purchases the listed items, and photographs the merchandised assemblage as a still life portrait. The lively photographs assume a personality of the mysterious list-maker, conveying aspects of the cultural habits of the city's diverse population.

Juxtaposed with the portrait series, *Value Added* features one grocery item, which Aozaki continuously repurchased at multiple stores, utilizing a blind spot within the inventory management barcode system. Each repurchase exposes the fluctuating prices charged for the same commercial object with its ever-expanding stack of receipts. This determined methodology establishes a subtle relationship between the passage of time and the arbitrary nature of value, as the artist stretches the life of found objects and mass-produced products beyond their disposability.

Nobutaka Aozaki is a New York-based artist born in Kagoshima, Japan. He has been awarded the Artists' Fellowship from New York Foundation for the Arts, Queens Art Fund from Queens Council on the Arts, and the Artist Files Grant from A Blade of Grass. His work has been shown at Brooklyn Museum, Queens Museum, Sculpture Center, Whitney Museum, Japan Society, and ISCP in New York, and SPIKE, Berlin, and Société d'Electricité in Brussels, and Void Plus, Tokyo. He has participated in the Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program Residency, the LMCC's Workspace Residency program, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Queens Museum Studio Program. His work has been written in publications including New York Times, Huffington Post, Hyperallergic, ArtAsiaPacific, and Cabinet Magazine. He completed his MFA at Hunter College in 2012.