

Kay Rosen, *Stirring Wirds* At Alexander Gray Associates, New York

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Provocateur extraordinaire—Kay Rosen—is back in New York with her feisty, inventive paintings. Using words, letters, typography and syntax, Rosen’s work is a puzzle maker’s dream and a cruciverbalist’s challenge. Some paintings are obvious—well, more or less. Others take time to decode or decipher. *Trickle Down* is nearly an ideogram of a slowly leaking faucet—drip, drip, drip. It is an obvious critique of dubious economic theory. A painting titled *IOU* does double duty, a frequent feature of Rosen’s work. The IOU is buried within the tribal name SIOUX, itself a homonym for the legal term “sue.” *WH v. AM*, a truly mega wall painting, literally packs a punch, condensing the current political turmoil in the United States into three abbreviations. Rosen’s paintings are not linguistic gymnastics. They are more like jiu-jitsu. The title of the show—*Stirring Wirds*—is apt. As a noun, a wurd is an utterance, a remark. As a verb, wurd means to express oneself. Rosen’s sharp-witted political and social commentary is rendered precisely.

Kay Rosen, *Stirring Wirds* at Alexander Gray Associates, New York, through April 7, 2018.