A queer archive eats itself because at times it craves fixity, even when it is supposed to be constantly in motion. What would queerness be if it did not have in-between-ness, oppositionality, or fluidity? How could queerness not be those things? We sometimes seek lovers who can tell us that there is more to who we are than the various adjectives with which we can be described.
Eve Fowler, with it which it as it if it is to be (neon), 2016. Neon. 14 × 150 inches. Courtesy the artist and Morán Morán.
Indeterminacy is not inherently radical, and neither is ephemerality, and neither is earnestness, and neither is appropriation, and neither are touching or not touching, and neither is doing away with radicality, and neither is writing a memoir. There is an unfathomable joy in allowing queerness to exist in and of itself and to sit among the East Side lesbians smoking cigarettes atop a scraggly hill. Were Eve Fowler to write a book, the chapters might be as follows:

1. One needing kissing then
2. Needing kissing
3. Needing anything just then
4. Needing some kissing then
5. Epilogue

The Epilogue reads: “This is a love story, and this is a fairy tale. I want you to find someone who reminds you of everyone, who reminds you of everyone and no one.” Each chapter would be illustrated with a primary color that has none of that avant-
garde mysticism and instead inhales the mysticism of the Lesbian Hill.


In “Giotto’s Joy,” Julia Kristeva writes of his painting: “We must then find our way through what separates the place where ‘I’ speak, reason, and understand from the one where something functions in addition to my speech: something that is more-than-speech, a meaning to which space and color have been added.” Though Kristeva has dis-identified in some ways with feminism, her words nevertheless could contribute to a queer-feminist methodology of archiving.


Fowler’s “more-than-speech” is in fact a profusion of speech, an amassment of small choices and small attachments that are neither/both autobiography and history. Yet when the “I” wishes to remain intact, Fowler stays with it. Kristeva continues: “My choice, my desire to speak of Giotto (1267–1336)—if justification be needed …” Neither Kristeva nor Fowler need justification, so they speak in the subjunctive, in the tense of possibility. Their choices are unabashedly desires, and their desires are histories.
So on newsprint you find that lover whose touch you recall but not their face, someone who moved you to write poetry when you thought you could only produce quixotic coming-of-age tales. Their hair falls in a manner slightly different from what you remember.

On your way home, the midnight streets open up just enough so that you can find yourself in them, plucked into the present by a memory that you haven’t experienced yet.

—William J. Simmons