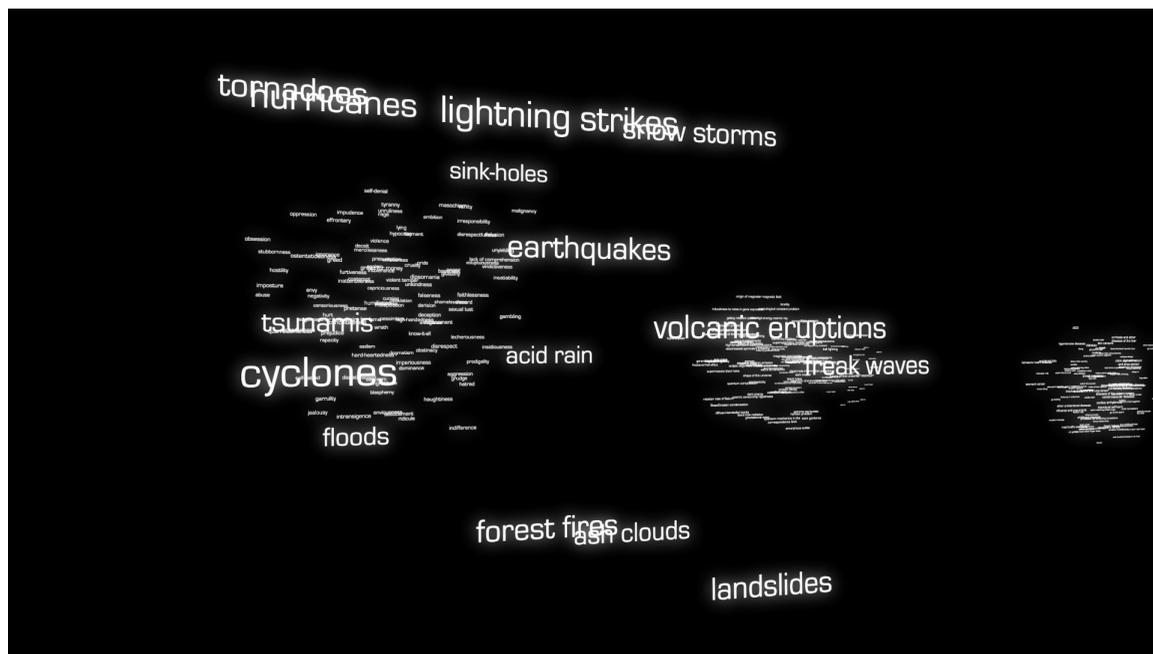


## ART REVIEW

### A serene state of mind in orbit

BY DAVID PAGEL



**THE CLUSTER** of words in Grant Steven’s video “Supermassive” reflects on events and experiences

“Supermassive,” Grant Stevens’ L.A. solo debut, is a high-tech invitation to slow down and look inward. At a time when digitally transmitted info provides more visual stimulation than ever, the young Australian artist’s exhibition at L.A. Louver turns away from the image glut of modern life to make room for an old-fashioned, even romantic experience of one’s place in the cosmos.

The three-room show begins in an intimately scaled gallery in which six modest prints hang. Delicate and refined, they act as a sort of decompression chamber between the outside world and a pair of darkened galleries in which two videos play.

The first, “Tranquility Falls,” is a floor-to-ceiling projection of what appears to be a synthetic waterfall and a cascade of phrases that describes various features of self-help culture. The words start slowly, earnestly and meditatively. Accelerating to an annoying crescendo, in three short minutes they leave viewers with a snide sense of being superior to such well-meaning illusions.

Less preachy and far more ambitious, the second video, from which the show takes its title, is alone worth a visit. Projected on each of a large gallery’s four walls, the 11-minute piece travels slowly and serenely through a few dozen clusters of words. The words are organized in sensible constellations and include all sorts of experiences and events, goals and pet peeves, lists and lyrics. Like linguistic galaxies in the mind’s eye, they take us from fast food chains to organized religions, as well as from leading causes of death to common narrative plots.

An elegiac mournfulness pervades Stevens’ bittersweet piece, as does a forward-looking sense of adventure.

L.A. Louver, 45 N. Venice Blvd., (310) 822-4955, through Feb. 23. Closed Sundays and Mondays. [www.lalouver.com](http://www.lalouver.com)