

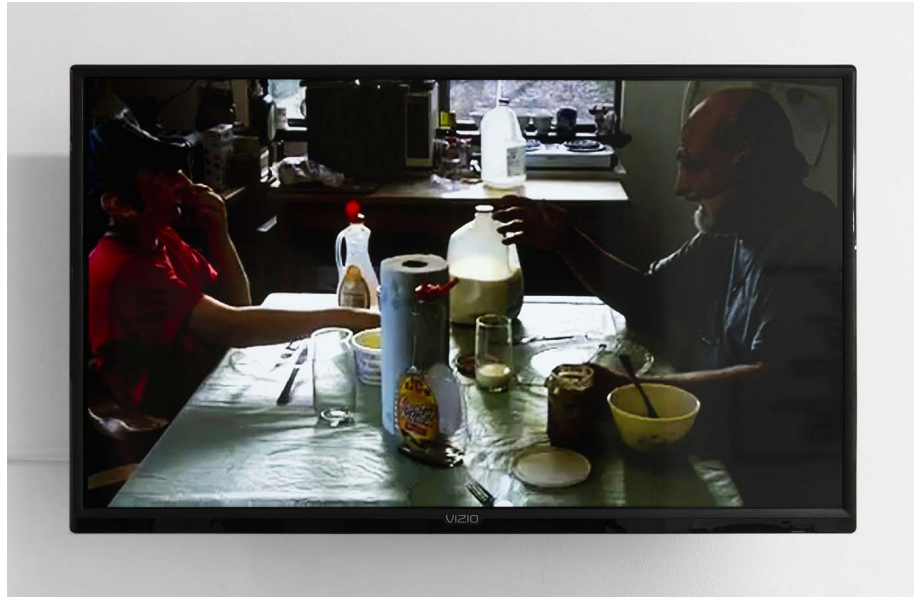
Derosia

Will Heinrich, The New York Times, April 2, 2020

# The New York Times

## Gene Beery

Through April 26. Bodega Gallery, Manhattan; [bodega-us.org](http://bodega-us.org).



A still from Gene Beery's digital video "Your Move," 2000s. Gene Beery and Bodega

In some ways, Gene Beery's "Transmissions From Logoscape Ranch" at Bodega Gallery was made to be seen online. Adapted from a career-spanning 2019 exhibition in San Francisco, it includes a host of this California conceptualist's small text paintings along with three short videos. The paintings, many featuring their jokey, unsettling koans in the artist's signature black on white, are easily read as JPEGs ("Unknown Unknowns," "What Is the Formula for Originality?"), while the videos may even look better on your laptop than they do installed.

But pay attention to the video "Your Move." Seated at a crowded breakfast table, the octogenarian artist and his grandson take alternate small actions — moving a lid, pouring milk — which they punctuate with the phrase "Your move!" It's an inspired distillation not just of how games are played, but also of how we communicate in general. The only limits on what we can say to one another are those of context and vocabulary: Whatever the grandson may mean by leaning his knife against a jelly jar, it would mean something different if he did it with a pencil, or in a restaurant.

In this way, the show also pins down the underlying sadness of looking at art right now, precisely because it looks so good online. It's still not the same.