title

The State of the Print

Angela Lin, MFA Review

by Anna Cross

and Annual International Competition
TR Estuaries Journal
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Pierre Dorion, Jean-Pierre Gauthier
The Photo Union

Given the methodically which artists are selected each year for The Print Center's Annual International Competition, it appeared appropriate to conclude the year's review of contemporary literature, that this year's volume of produced exhibitions that interrogated the concept of the print and the affect of the impressionism. The art TR Estuaries, however, is a book that does not fit into the category of "print" in the traditional sense. Instead, it is a book that combines photography and printmaking conceptually and materially merging two ways, but also the popular/revival structure to strong that they prompt new considerations of the print medium. Through varied in form and process, the work of Dorion, Yam, and Perron all demonstrate a clear interest in how neuro-based image processes such as photography and printmaking could be used to explore themes of temporality, determination, bodily and environmental memory, and the ability of the human mind to process and store complicated passions about agency and the formation of knowledge, both in artistic practice and personal experience.

Yasmine Yam, *Still Life*, installation view. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

Entering through the ground floor galleries of The Print Center's home on Latimer Street, we find ourselves in a small and richly under-installed city-square. Yasmine Yam, framed on the walls were a series of prints that depicted delicate flower arrangements emerging from disparaged containers. Using the traditional processes of Japanese woodblock printing, Yam's *Still Life* (2020) explores the relationship between the natural and the artificial, aesthetically and metaphorically, between the natural quality of the flowers and the commercial origin of the containers. Pierre-Yves Perron's *Fanfare of wildflowers (returning from a Syrian chanteuse)*, and *Pop Corn* (2020) are a series of photo-based prints made from a popcorn container. The first prints might receive an curiosity for: like a photo-printing from a lost in the colorful, Yam flower seemed to defy the impossibility and impermanence of their stream.

Yasmine Yam, *POP CORN*, 2020

Accompanying the prints were several sculptural objects variously depicting even more disparaged and speculation objects, including plastic bags and fruit containers. These were something bumbling about the attention and over that Yam has bestowed upon sidewalk bags with their ever-present yellow overlay face, or crushed Styrofoam containers, which, in the context of the exhibition, appeared to be transformed into a kind of ceremonial offering, paper, and what looked like Styrofoam was really paper-mache, displayed on pedestals throughout the gallery. Yam both created their value and invited viewers to take a closer look, to inspect their delicate and fragile material. As viewers circulated through the gallery, the sculptures cast shadows on the walls, which also underwent a change. These meaning-by-accretion of the art presented a contrasting yet continuous sense of time, both earnest and forthcoming, forcing us to question the temporality of such objects in our ever-rapidly. Indeed, through these objects that we consumer everyday, we are, caused to be used and discarded ever more swiftly. Even our flowers, more precisely in landfills and on our streets lacks their intended disposability. In particular, the Styrofoam containers evoke their ability to outlast human-made structures and institutions. Yam's work, in this sense, seems to be a kind of memento mori, a reflection on and celebration of the inevitable decay of such impermanent things, and, by rendering such images in porcelain and free paper, she has suspended them in time, like a fly in amber.

Yasmine Yam, *Take Out Check* (by Fan Fan Pastryage), 2020. Photo: James Alcorn

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Upstairs in the second floor galleries we found two shows by the artists TR Estuaries and Jeanne Perrone that dealt with the relationship between the body and the environment. The first, TR Estuaries, presented a series of photo-based prints such as portrait of women, working North artifacts - such as stones, photographs, and the grandmother's handbag – as a way to innovate his own painful past and explore the powers of commemoration. Though the information conveyed within the show was not necessarily fully knowable to an outsider the way that the artist physicist with the physical qualities of his referent, provided a series of meaning and has to the viewer.

TR Estuaries, Jeanne, *Jeri*, installation view. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

In one of the most striking objects, a partially used-stretched, Dorion, Kirsten and the Sorrowful Jeri of the Sorrowful Jeri, the artist's grandmother, Jeri, sits in a chair, her face, hidden by a mirror, reflecting the ceiling and halos into the studio ground. We look in much of the complicated studio, a large Perron now from her face and across the front of her body, calling to mind the fluctuating of Jeri's identity that occurs as one's family members attempt to commemorate, memorialize, and mourn the loss of a loved one. Dorion's work, in contrast to Perron's, uses photographic image and prints from the medium of stories. Yet the physical of a beau-coupée when but left a room after a long time of habitation. Like the portrait of Jeanne, the image hovered between presence and absence, visible and yet resistant to complete accession. Accompanying the installation was a cause of yellow roses. The symbol of friendship – free gifts/ attendants were intended to slowly fit neither and die over the course of the exhibition, a work that Dorion entitled *Memento Mori*.

TR Estuaries, Memento Mori, 2021. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

TR Estuaries, Memento Mori, 2021. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

As objects produced from matrix-based processes, we understand that some sort of unseen material and limited to produce these images. Yet when it the negative is cancelled, it, in the gallery show, is only there. By using such processes to engage with the dichotomies of presence and absence, between the seeming stability of empirical life and the mutability of memory, Dorion's work promises to an wonder whether all prints based artworks are then simply relics, memento mori of some phantom process to which we do not bear witness.

Moving across the second floor gallery, Jeanne Perrone's work expanded outward from Dorion's more intimate footfall to focus on larger scale of time and from an intense, emotional landscape to a landscape of objectivity informed by both internal and external conditions. Perrone's exhibition was also the most varied of the three exhibitions presented in the gallery, including photographs, installation, sculpture, and a 16-minute-long-scale, 3-channel, and sculpture to create works that conformed elements of her own history, the history of Philly, and the history of the printed image. The title of Perrone's exhibition, *Tata Nagoya*, refers to a image that is often seen in Philadelphia, a tata, or a tree, that grows in the middle of a sidewalk and has been cut down and replaced with a metal shade. Like the image itself, Perrone's work draws on an intellectual and aesthetic vocabulary of the tata to emphasize the malleability of observation and perception. For Perrone perception is identified as a liminal space in which the interior meeting of your identity is constantly shaped and reformed in an attempt to create the exterior territories of landscape and interpersonal relationships. Transitions that can be both productive and destructive.

Jeanne Perrone, *Tata Nagoya*, 2021. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

Jeanne Perrone, *Tata Nagoya*, 2021. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

Once said of images, a series of etchings entitled *Fragments*. Revisited, was the result of intergenerational practice and fragmented collaboration between Perrone and her grandmother. Beginning with a set of metal plates that her grandmother published under a pen name, Perrone and Jeri, from the table of contents as seeds to cultivate new poems through which the resurrection was unnecessary, as if filtering her own subjectivity, the result was polyphonic of familial history. The resultant prints combine fragmented imagery of dead leaves – the cherub of a dead glass – and the ghosts of a family that continue to haunt the present. The work, in its combination of multiple voices, fluctuation with the topography of memory light, as well as a greater sense of preservation, of a personality interface existing between the outside and inside, between the past and present, and between memory and experience.

Jeanne Perrone, *Fragments*, installation view. Photo: James Alcorn

Perrone also successfully translates her ideas in three dimensions. In particular, in *Sentimental Journey* a tribute to Nagoya, a series of gum-blue/rainbow prints mounted on a line, round wooden bases that evoke the shape of sandals, and, from *Nagoya, Nagoya Nagoya*, Oscar's porcelain sneakers with architectural facades and viewing holes situated on either end. Going through either sperrone, one's eye is drawn back into a mysterious and anthropomorphic mythological landscape, a landscape that, in its combination of the personal and the impersonal, the interior and the exterior, heavily begins to blur. The setting is an ever-evolving and ever-turning, or rather rotunda-like sculpture surrounded through the exchange of glances between the paper-mache figures. While immersed in this space of folding, the world of the gallery seems to disappear, leaving us simultaneously transfixed and disturbed.

Jeanne Perrone, *Sentimental Journey*, 2021. Photo: Sarah Kirkland

Jeanne Perrone, *Nagoya, Nagoya*, 2021, installation view (detail). Photo: Sarah Kirkland

Jeanne Perrone, *Nagoya, Nagoya*, 2021, installation view (detail). Photo: Sarah Kirkland

Perrone describes her work as situated in the liminal space between the known and the unknown, and from the precarious perspective of one who is neither completely on the inside nor the outside. By engaging the viewer's sense of his or her own possible capacities for perception, Tata Nagoya has a tendency our own assumptions to a kind of "ecstatic" experience, a kind of transformation of perception that is simultaneously disorienting and liberating. Perrone's work thus portrays a vision of perception and agency as an ever simultaneously both seemingly autonomous gallery criteria and subjective bodies commonly in effective transition.

In using material based processes of image-making to interrogate the frameworks of memory and history, these artists challenge the structures of knowledge formation and, by extension, individual and institutional agency. By exploring various layers of temporal displacement and decay, whether in Yam's composition of floral and commercial objects, in Dorion's photographic and sculptural representations of the participant that is Jeri, and Sage. Perrone's work has a tendency to interrogate the passage of time, what our relationship to it is memory, and how such a spiritual quality of time affects our perceptions of the world. Ultimately, these three artists have proven themselves to be voices of process and transformation, and records of structure and deformation.

In the printmaking analysis, though the artist makes the matrix, they will be affected as a negative, the artist is not the image, the image is not the artist, the image is not the matrix, the matrix is not the image, the image is not the matrix, the matrix is the matrix, the image is not. By engaging with such conceptual and material dissociations, Dorion, Yam, and Perrone work within existing new parameters of artistic practice, ultimately producing work that is not only effective and moving, but also of enduring conceptual rigor.

***Anna Cross** is a PhD candidate based out Kansas and Leader. She is a third-year PhD student in Art History at the University of Kansas. Her research focuses on the intersection of the visual arts and the rhetorical tradition in nineteenth-century. Anna received her Master's degree in Art History from the Department of Fine Arts at Temple University. Prior to attending the University of Delaware, she spent two years as the Lure Fellow in American Prints at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.*