Annyen Lam: Wayfinding
Don Phillips Scholarship Exhibition

The role of paper and printed matter has become a shifting and dubious thing in contemporary society, faced to play a central role in our understanding of the divide between handmade processes and digital technologies—from recordkeeping and note making, to art and commercial production. Paper in its current form can be traced to China as early as 105 CE, and quickly came to play critical roles in the advancement of art and communication within each society that adopted it. Today, we navigate working and living between paper and the paperless on a daily basis. Although we attempt to digitize and minimize, it seems that the quantity of paper in our lives continues to multiply, as physical and economic access to print technology increases. Paper is also central to debates around skill and deskilling, making and production—evident from the revival of letterpress printing, to the ubiquity of home inkjet printouts and online print-to-order services.

The work of artists Hazel Eckert and Annyen Lam revolves around paper and its capabilities, albeit in very different ways. The printed element in their work is often subtle and sometimes found, each artist preferring to use print as a means rather than a medium (in the strictest sense). Both Eckert and Lam approach paper as a curiosity, exploring its inherent qualities and how we might highlight or transform them. Lam makes paper sculptural by printing on it, molding it, dying it, and cutting it—all while never seeking to disguise her medium. Eckert on the other hand selects, arranges, and frames discarded paper, seeking to disguise her medium. Both aim at creating a meditative device, Portent and Passage tap into a rich history of pre-photographic devices intended to theatrically transform viewers’ spatial experience, including painted panoramas, trompe l’oeil and the diorama in particular. Dioramas, with their rich history as modes of scientific and museological display, in its most familiar incarnation, the diorama is credited to Louis-Jacques Daguerre who patented the form in 1822—deriving it’s name from the Greek di meaning “through” and horama meaning “to see.” Dioramas possess a powerful ability to transform space and manipulate perception by shifting our bodily relationships to scale and materiality.

In Portent the viewer looks out (up) upon a shadowy graveyard surrounding an oblong pond—the depth of which is revealed and concealed by atmospheric fluctuations in light. Passage, on the other hand, presents us with a more abstract scenario. The viewer seems to be located in the darkened foreground of a scene. From a dense thicket, we can see a distant light illuminating an expanse of sky or space just beyond our view. Lam’s boldly coloured scenes are curious and draw the viewer in through their diminutive scale. The diorama and its particular brand of illusion generates a “dream-bodied perspective” in viewers as a result of the miniaturizing of environmental objects and in objects to the ordinary experience.

Many contemporary artists have adopted the diorama as a tool for three-dimensional story telling, because it allows for a visceral exploration of invented space, through direct bodily experience. Curator Toby Kamps observes, “what you see in [dioramas] may be fabrication, but it may also be the thing itself. Whether factually accurate or fantastically imaginary, dioramas have the ability to combine representation and material reality, fiction and fact, and art and science.” In the case of Portent and Passage we attempt to digitize and minimize, it seems that the quantity of paper in our lives continues to multiply, as physical and economic access to print technology increases. Paper is also central to debates around skill and deskilling, making and production—evident from the revival of letterpress printing, to the ubiquity of home inkjet printouts and online print-to-order services.

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Cuts / Offcuts
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Hazel Eckert: Traces

Eckert plays with alternate notions of making—employing tactics such as
manipulation of context. “5

Susan Stewart describes collections as “… a form of art as play, a form of
art that engages with curiosity as a product and result of their work, by obscuring
and revealing details and materiality. By encapsulating an object in a frame
and suspending such fragments within the space of a traditional picture frame,
making them highly amelioristic objects for the viewer to contemplate on a
formal, but also almost anthropological level. Across the room in Present
Tension (2014), her material studies become points of departure for an instal-
lation of layered prints, which reference their silhouettes and tonal qualities
infinitely capable of expansion, often based on subjective, incongruous and
expandable mandates or passions. And, that collectors are prone to “taste for
the strange” and “unusual”53. In Eckert’s body of work there will always be more
options, more possibilities to salvage and arrange these traces of provenance.

Conclusions

The works in Traces and Wayfinding create and compile curiosities. Each art-
ist engages with curiosity as a product and result of their work, by obscuring
and revealing details and materiality. By encapsulating an object in a frame
or a contained viewing area it becomes elevated, transformed through these
tactics, both artists dialogue with cultures of musicological display. By isolating the ephemera she collects, Eckert gives it a rarified status, while
Emphasizing the shapes, stains and the inherent line within her collected
fragments, Eckert highlights tone and form as elements of both purpose and
contemporary cultural context. In addition to his unique personal and film
and transparency are elusive of

Eckert’s body of work there will always be more
options, more possibilities to salvage and arrange these traces of provenance.

Eckert explores the found object

This exhibition has been shaped by hours logged and materials collected at Lunar
Casino. Press and the insightful critiques provided by the Y2CAL community. Eckert would like to thank her family and friends for their constant love and
encouragement, especially Daniel Reid, Colin Rogers, Kate MacFarland and

Writer’s Biography

Kristen MacDonald is a visual artist and writer who lives and works in Toronto. She
holds a BFA from York University specializing in Visual Arts (2008), and an ML from the University of Toronto specializing in Archives (2011). MacDonald has recently
exhibited her work at the International Print Centre (NYC), Galaxy 44 (Toronto), and Xpace Cultural Centre (Toronto).

Open Studio Scholarships and Fellowships are awarded annually to artists of merit
to develop their professional practice and artistic excellence. There are no age
restrictions, duration and provide print media-based artists with free access to Open Studio’s facilities to produce new work and engage and collaborate with the community.

The Don Phillips Scholarship is awarded annually based on artistic promise.

The Nick Novak Fellowship is awarded to an outstanding Open Studio Artist Member with a commitment to a long-term project.

The Janis Karpick scholarship is awarded to an outstanding Open Studio Artist Member with a commitment to a long-term project.

From OCAD University in 2012 and is currently based in Toronto. Her practice
includes lithography, screenprinting, book arts, and cut paper works. She has
exhibited throughout Canada and has participated in shows and print exchanges
in Japan, Russia and Venezuela.

Annyn Lam’s (Don Phillips Scholarship recipient) received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from OCAD University in 2012 and is currently based in Toronto. Her practice
includes lithography, screenprinting, book arts, and cut paper works. She has
exhibited throughout Canada and has participated in shows and print exchanges
in Japan, Russia and Venezuela.

Annyn extends her deepest gratitude to Flora Dum and Emily Cook of Paperhouse Studios for their valuable help; to Jackie Aslak at her previous gallery for
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Write a short paragraph on the writer’s background.

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The Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition’s Best in Printmaking award and admission to
Aslar Graff’s Insertion Project in Montreal, Quebec, which was funded in part by
an Ontario-Quebec Residency Grant from the Ontario Arts Council.

Eckert extends this

This approach seems very much in

Altered state, the writer, the editor, 2014

ART OF THE EVERYDAY. Annyen Lam

Hazel Eckert: Traces

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