

zaćmienie i potop.
nieprzewidywalne moce
i utajone zdarzenia
eclipse and deluge.
accidental powers and
oblique contingencies

Deborah Cornell

nasza percepcja oferuje
nam... nieskończenie
złożoną, dynamiczną całość,
na którą składa się świat
i nasza w nim obecność.

— Robert Irwin

Świadomość miejsca człowieka w świecie zmieniła się wraz z pojawieniem się współczesnego rozumienia przestrzeni jako „opakowania świata”. Koncepty ciemnej energii, fal grawitacyjnych oraz wszechobecne implikacje wynikające z odkrycia DNA pogłębiają nasze rozumienie materii, czasu i przestrzeni, jednocześnie podważając je. Granice ludzkiego spojrzenia nie są już jasno określone. Poza stale wzrastającą złożonością materii leży mglista granica egzystencji.

Prace zaprezentowane na wystawie pt. *Zaćmienie i potop* odnoszą się do przestrzeni niedostatecznie zbadanych i znajdujących się poza naszym bezpośrednim poznaniem. Zaćmienie i powódź to naturalne zjawiska wynikające ze zderzenia materii fizycznej i energii — złożonych, interaktywnych systemów zbudowanych z elementów materialnych, grawitacji, temperatury, światła

what our perception presents
us with... is an infinitely complex
dynamic whole envelope of
the world and our being in it.

— Robert Irwin

Awareness of the human position within the world has changed, along with the contemporary understanding of space as the “envelope of the world”. Concepts of dark energy, gravitational waves, and the pervasive implications of DNA intensify our understanding of matter, time, and space; they also undermine it. The perimeter of human vision is no longer clear. Beyond the expanding complexity of matter is the nebulous edge of existence.

The works in *Eclipse and Deluge* reference the indeterminate spaces just beyond our immediate attention. The eclipse and the inundation are environmental phenomena resulting from the interface of tangible matter and intangible energies — complex interactive systems of material, gravity, temperature, light, and time. Such interactions are beyond our control — they are oblique contingencies, and the “accidental powers” of Leonardo’s

observations. Leonardo writes *Force with material motion and weight, with percussion are the four accidental powers on which all the actions of mortals have their being and their death*.

Intellectual and scientific constructs express our awareness of our immediate time and situation — genetic issues, climatic diagramming, aquatic flows, biological boundaries, and cultural experiences such as language. The works in this exhibition suggest this complexity, and the influence of the energies that invisibly surround them. Technology and science have altered familiar concrete reality: the precision of living forms is being transformed through research and genetics. Technological influences leave clear traces in the work of this exhibition, both in its content and in its materiality.

Printmaking, with its history of the communicative image, the layer, and the multiple, is transforming, through the dynamic of technological process. Innovation has been present in this discipline since the origin of prints — especially in the west — and it continues. The print developed from the need for an effective movement of ideas, it advanced technically to carry the message of concept, and its processes involved the elements of time and displacement in space. In its newest form there is a familiar mindset, originating in print, emphasizing the transformative iteration, the remotely transmitted image, and the cultural space colonized by the distributed image.

Although these essential elements of print remain, I use the expansiveness of a hybrid, electronically enabled visual language to refer to our changing perception as the result of technology. Digital prints, in the process

of their creation, move from intangible forms of light and mathematics into the tactile, fragile paper surface with its layered pigment and, with projected video, back again. Technology becomes a transformative practice proceeding from the work's concerns.

Recent cross-disciplinary art forms evoke perspectives that resonate with my work. These include:

① reframing the vision of time, a compression of time/space that has been shaped by the internet, and also an expansion of time/space enabled by digital transformations; ② consciousness of "process" as inescapable the acceptance of large patterns of change occurring simultaneously; ③ reframing the vision of space to represent things unseen, as materiality appears increasingly deceptive; ④ the perception of interdependence and relationship, under the influence of scientific research.

My work employs the porousness and transmutation of new forms, intellectual mapping techniques, and information systems that establish our position in the world. I work in series, because it poses questions of temporal sequencing and it exemplifies the faceted web of realities around emblematic images. My early intaglio series *Blood and Water*[©] evoked the real as seen through a temporally shifting lens, suggesting the paradox of time that is frozen, but is also eroding away. This group of four prints involved ink transfers of photo-simulaic images onto aquatint that became physically degraded by process. This process created a lost/found trajectory, suggested by the images of fossils, archeological burials, satellite views of the ocean, and microscopic life.

A later series *Biogems*[©] centered on the relationship of genetic and environmental mapping systems using images of traditionally decorated hands (mehendi) that represent treasured cultural processes. Shifting between traditional and digital media, the suite suggests resonance and repercussion between environmental responses and cultural responses.

Species Boundaries[©] (using digital methodologies) was a reflection on genetic engineering and our developing ability to blend species and to create unforeseen and perhaps uncontrolled new biologies. *Games of Chance*[©] reflects aspects of human and technological interference, where speculation creates an uncertain future, and questions the roles of chance and inevitability.

Since 2000, my work in print has been conceived simultaneously with expanded forms such as virtual reality, video and installation, which incorporate space, time and print — as in *The Sleep of Reason*[©]. This installation with sound incorporates printed texts on Plexiglas from diverse thinkers and philosophers, sculpture that integrates casts and replicas of original objects, and digital sound (by composer Richard Cornell). Creating objects in space as well as on paper enabled another kind of expansion — that of collaboration, especially in the incorporation of sound that multiplies layers of reality and engages multiple senses. *The Sleep of Reason* thematically revisits Goya's print where the absence of reason creates nightmarish monsters, using current genetic creations and texts (Robert Smithson, IBM, Yeats, Eco). The digital sound in this work incorporates natural sounds that are

granulated, and the recited texts are channeled through the sound structures of crickets.

The expansion of printed images into space and time has also taken the form of virtual reality environments. My interest in this form is best explained by the theorist Claudia Gianetti. She says, *Digital media not only constantly question their own form but also the role of the artist the recipient and the cultural function of the work...*³

I was interested also in the immersive space of virtual reality for its expressive potential and its challenge. Virtual reality uses coded methods of remote image manipulation, familiar to me from their counterparts in printmaking, with technological aspects that focus my content. In their original form, works such as *Tracer*[©] and *Surge* are viewed in a darkened space with a large stereo-projected screen, a headset, and a wand. The viewer navigates through a large and seemingly 3D environment and the motion activates sound and image. (These works were also presented as collaborations — with live performances in concert and choreographic settings).

My recent practice incorporates other time-based forms, including video projected onto digital mural, a method that partially reveals the printed work, and that transforms it. *Reflecting Place*[©], shown at the International Print Triennial in Krakow in 2015 embodies this interest. The iconology of *Reflecting Place* fuses geophysical and cultural mapping systems to create a vision of an expansive present, creating a spatial history of migration, culture, and climate. While evoking traces of place, it expands boundaries to include a global sense of

comparative flows, using layered digital matrices reiterated in the printed substrate, the video projection, and the electronic, dimensional sound.

In the exhibition *Eclipse and Deluge*, the works inhabit a contiguous intellectual space. The diverse textual references in the exhibition (20th century letters of James Cowan, Old Norse saga, the Gilgamesh tablets, genetic codes) suggest multiple means of knowing. The compression of these sources suggests that the temporal and spatial dimensions of culture can experience profound upheavals in the expectation of linearity and consequence.

The suite *Deluge*², based on Leonardo's drawings of vortices is a triptych, involving variations of systems of flow. Together they encompass extended time. The printed transparent films engage not only image, but also dimension, and light. Partially obscured crescents, cells and birds are entangled by eventualities and accidents. The verticality of the *Deluge* works implies a spiraling deep flow, water with gravitational pull, falling rain exacerbated by an alarming severity.

The triptych *Anguish as the Apprehension of Nothing*³ encompasses the intensities of heat, movement and gravity. The trajectory of crescent arcs implies large overlapping spheres in the periphery of one's vision. The text of Sartre pertains to the human perception of absence, an existential disorientation in the presence of a vastly empty place.

In the video work *Eclipse/Phase*⁴ complex forces frame the human scale, invoking the empty spaces that

□ 52-53

□ 62-63

surround the human sphere of action. The work acknowledges the nuclear fusion that is the essential precondition of existence and suggests cataclysmic phases of transformation. Wind, water, and heat are seen as the enduring agents of change. In *Eclipse/Phase*⁵, the properties of matter have become magnified (as in the theory of dark energy) and also microscopic (as in string theory) making it difficult to perceive visually what is occurring in the time frame of the human present. The observable can be clear as crystal and yet its large form remains occluded, beyond our vision.

Clearly none of the traditional sciences concerns itself with the accidental. — Aristotle

□ 76-8

□ 90-93

1 Kenneth D. Keele, *Leonardo Da Vinci's Elements of the Science of Man*, Academic Press, New York 1983, s. 195.

2 Claudia Giannetti, *Aesthetic Paradigms of Media Art*, Media Art Net 1998: http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/aesthetics_of_the_digital/aesthetic_paradigms/ [URL: 1.12.2017]

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2 Claudia Giannetti, *Aesthetic Paradigms of Media Art*, Media Art Net 1998: http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/aesthetics_of_the_digital/ [URL: 28.03.2018]