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Stand Still A Moment

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Artist Statement
Senior Project
Mehla Goodrich
11.28.11

I began senior project with the intention of creating an entirely sculptural body of work. This ambition changed with my summer internship at the Solomon R. Guggenheim museum in New York. It was here within the exquisite architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright's museum that I decided to focus on two-dimensional work. This change came about because I was inspired by the Lee Ufan retrospective: *Marking Infinity*, on view at the time. I was specifically intrigued by Mr. Lee's use of emptiness. The vast empty spaces within his paintings and prints provided the viewer with a moment of meditation. Curator Alexandra Monroe described this phenomenon as "stand still a moment", and I witnessed bustling tourists and city dwellers do exactly that, daily, for an entire summer. I too wanted to encourage the viewer of my work to *Stand Still A Moment*.

By contrast I was mesmerized by the bustling aesthetic of Julie Mehretu. Mehretu's work seemed to convey the constant motion and evolution of the city outside of the museum. The tension between these two artist's works interested me as I began the second semester of my senior project. I was determined to create images both teeming with motion and filled with resonant empty spaces. Yet while I knew my objectives, I had no idea what any of the final pieces in my show would look like. With these objectives in mind I began to experiment with materials immediately.

Material initiates my work. I knew that the sculpture, *cascade*, on view in my senior show, would be made of recycled inner tube tires before I had any idea that it would be a wall sculpture. I knew that *Cascade* would be made of rubber because I was obsessed with the versatility and color variations in the rubber, which I seemed to have an

abundant and free supply of. Once I discovered a way of working with rubber that yielded a result that I liked, I envisioned a composition for the finished piece and executed it with clarity. My printing process was similar in that the accidental discovery of a technique transformed my material explorations with rubber stamps, gampi paper, and cardboard colographs into finished piece.

I was attracted to printmaking because of its process. The act of carving into woodblocks, dry point, and making colograph plates resonated with me as a very physical process, more related to the sculpture-making techniques that I was comfortable with than drawing and painting. Although it is a physical process, printmaking yields a two-dimensional image, which was important to me because my sources of influence were the two-dimensional images of both Julie Mehretu and Lee Ufan. I enjoyed the process of creating a plate, inking the plate, dampening the paper, printing the image, then washing the plate. The repetition of these steps becomes a meditation. The meditative state that I reached while printing reminds me of the state that my work invites the viewer to enter as they *Stand Still A Moment* with each piece.

My hope is that the 10 prints and two sculptures exhibited in my senior thesis show will share a visual language that unifies them into one body of work. The show is hung in a progression from two-dimensional to three-dimensional pieces. I hope that this dimensional shift will encourage the viewer to first experience the prints as a meditation of the mind, then gradually shift to a meditation of the whole body, or vice versa.

