



detail of Axial Auscultation, 2015, aquatint and chine collé

Marnie Blair / *"Terminal Work"*

Exhibition: October 23 - November 25, 2015

Opening Reception: October 23, 2015 8:00pm - 9:00pm

Artist Talk: October 23, 2015 7:00pm - 8:00pm



Alberta Printmakers Gallery
4025 4 Street SE, Calgary AB

Essay by Daniel Cleghorn, Calgary, October 2015

Bloom, Fade, Repeat

As a flower is bound to bloom, it is also bound to fade; coinciding with the promise of one's end is another's creation- a spark in the dark. From the blooming flower comes the promise of honey, a nutrient to other wildlife and ourselves. From this donation of nectar comes the collapse of the petal's peak and the brewing of a renaissance. We have become dependant on the blossom, the bees, and the cycle of fading and rebirth of the flower. As small as the flower is, we are largely unaware of our need for beauty to survive. Much like the flower, our hearts work in a rhythmic sequence; as one cavity blooms, the other fades, cycling through the blood, completing the revolution and transporting nectar to the rest of the body. The beauty of any cycle is not recognized until almost lost.

Marnie Blair experienced a cardiac arrest at the young age of nineteen, which led to her being diagnosed with Long QT Syndrome, a condition that affects the heart's electrical system. As a result, Blair had to have surgery to implant a cardiac defibrillator. Her personal experience with her heart condition and defibrillator led her to become aware of the inherent beauty within the heart's cycle. Now partially dependent on an technological alien force to continue the rhythm of her heartbeat, Blair creates installations and images with print media derived from derelict industrial and medical sites as a reflection on fragility and resilience; the biological and the artificial; the private and public; decay and resuscitation.

A motif and design strategy found throughout her exhibitions is the application of juxtaposition to create a visual cycle and enhance the physical nature of the work. While this can be said about many artists, Blair goes beyond the obvious employment of direct contrast to heighten the

qualities of a pair; she succeeds in creating a conversation between the material, her thematic concepts, and a powerful personal history. The strength of the work lies in understanding the intimate relationship between her and the media; within this same strength, however, exists a possible detriment to the work- the deeply personal meaning can distance the viewer or cause confusion. Once we become intimately familiar with Blair's past, we can truly be immersed in the exhibition and be overwhelmed in the best possible manner, finding abstract and beautiful ways to relate and empathize with her work. Considering the physical nature that Blair's work takes, there is an obviously intentional interplay between the duality of the natural and the controlled/manufactured. This relationship ultimately ties back to her personal story and experiences, but is subtle enough to be open to further interpretation by her audience. Marnie Blair's examination of her personal history, the relationship between the technological and the biological, and her exploration of print media materials engages the viewer and encourages an immersive experience.

Marnie Blair Biography

Marnie Blair has a BFA from Lakehead University and an MFA from the University of Calgary. She studied at the Royal College of Art in London, UK, the Studio Art Centers International in Florence and has interned at Manhattan's Lower East Side Print Shop. She presently teaches Printmaking at Red Deer College.

Daniel Cleghorn Biography

Born in Alberta, and raised between the small towns of Rockyford AB, Powell River BC and the city of Calgary AB. His work reflects the contrast of the two cultures. Small town for its' community based and empathetic value, and city life for it's large scale and minimalist style. Cleghorn recently graduated from the Alberta College of Art + Design with a BFA with distinctions as a sculpture major. His work consists of installation; performance and mix media based work. The undertone of his work is based on ideas of empathy, memory and creates a catalyst for thought and communication between the viewers.

Alberta Printmakers (A/P) is a non-profit, artist-run centre founded in 1989 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The organization's goals are to increase public awareness of print media, to engage a diverse audience, to provide resources for the artistic community and production facilities for printmaking.

A/P has an open membership, and is governed by a board of directors. Management and administration of A/P's activities are the responsibilities of its Directors, who reach out to volunteers in accomplishing A/P's goals. A/P also hosts residency and summer student programs.

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A/P thanks its funders:



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