

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Manifest Absence

Curated by Melissa Joseph

Work from the Dieu Donn  Collection

Opening Reception: November 15, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

"Marks, scars, signs, tokens and inscriptions that form the material traces through which past gestures reside in the present can be assigned meanings, but they cannot fully recover what has already gone – the distance between 'now' and 'then' 'can only be filled by the leap of interpretation." -Michael Sheringham

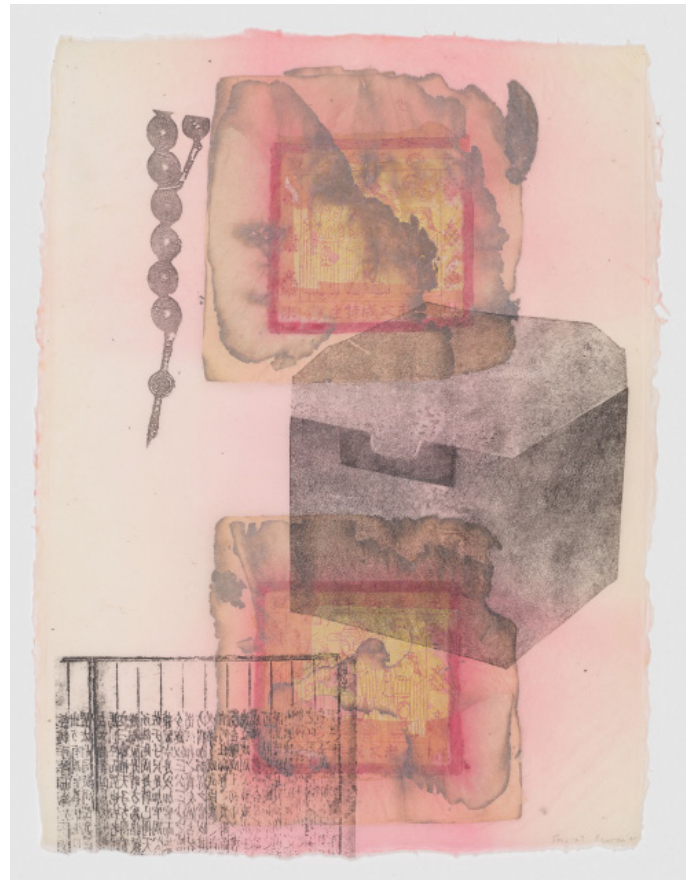
What does it mean to erase? Is it even possible? The act of "erasing" exerts such energy, friction, concentrated focus and attention that it becomes hyper-visible. It's as if the more effort put into the erasure, the more indelible the original mark feels. The opposite of absence, it's an active presence. When confronted with the traces of past actions, what are we responding to? Grief, Loss, Struggle, Failure, Avoidance, Shame, Nostalgia?

I pondered these questions while parsing the Dieu Donn  archives, and I am pleased to present *Manifest Absence*, an exhibition of works from the Dieu Donn  collection. The artists and works on display helped me to visualize feelings I had surrounding the concept of "trace."

Mary Temple's work uses the inherently immaterial nature of light with the goal of invoking a complementary nature of light with the goal of invoking a complementary emotional response from viewers. Brie Ruais and Lina Puerta embed repurposed and natural materials into their works, adding invisible ties to ecological and sociological histories. Elisa D'Arrigo's *Recollection 14* recalls the *Shroud of Turin*, a Biblical, and one of my earliest mystical exposures to presence through absence. Arlene Shechet and Paul Wong nod to the meditative nature of Buddhist architecture, calling on viewers to uncover a deeper invisible consciousness. E.V. Day, Ursula von Rydingsvard, and Michael Schall place and then meticulously displace pigments, unsettling any sense of locality. Chuck Webster loves the hidden nature of watermarks, as well as the way they act as signatures for historical papermakers. Both he and Carl Hazelwood consider the act of making within larger layered historical contexts. Howardena Pindell joins this conversation about palimpsest and what is below the surface. LaKela Brown, Nari Ward, and Matthew Kirk's embossings become physical manifestations of memory.

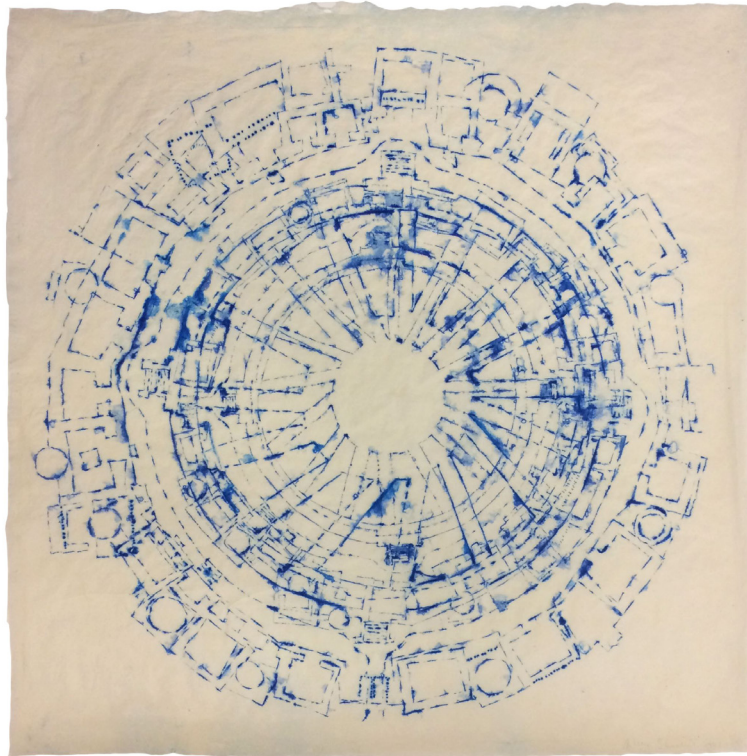
I am a scavenger of nuance and ambiguity, and I am most at peace when faced with open-endedness and pluralities. This show and these works comprise an album from my most recent trip to the edge.

–Melissa Joseph



Paul Wong, *Seal (A)*, 1997.

Electrostatic transfers on partially burned Chinese joss paper embedded in abaca base sheet.



Arlene Shechet, *Dharmajika Near and Far*, 1997. Stenciled pulp on translucent abaca.

"The play of a trace which no longer belongs to the horizon of Being, but whose play transports and encloses the meaning of Being..." Jacques Derrida

About the Curator

Melissa Joseph is a New York based artist and independent curator. Her work considers themes of memory, family history, and the politics of how we occupy spaces. She intentionally alludes to the labors of women as well as experiences as a second generation American and the unique juxtapositions of diasporic life. Her work has been shown at the Delaware Contemporary, Woodmere Art Museum, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, Brattleboro Museum and Art Center, Jeffrey Deitch Projects, MOCA Arlington and List Gallery at Swarthmore College. She has been featured in Hyperallergic, Artnet, New American Paintings, Le Monde, CNN, and Architectural Digest and participated in residencies including Dieu Donn , Fountainhead, the Archie Bray Foundation for Ceramic Arts, the Museum of Arts and Design and upcoming at Greenwich House Pottery in 2024. She is a regular contributor to BOMB magazine.

About Dieu Donn 

Dieu Donn  is a leading cultural institution dedicated to serving established and emerging artists through the collaborative creation of contemporary art using the process of hand papermaking.

Support

The artistic and educational programs at Dieu Donn  are made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and Foundation support including: Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Inc., The New York Community Trust, The John Ben Snow Memorial Trust, IFPDA Foundation, the Jockey Hollow Foundation, West Bay View Foundation, and the Windgate Charitable Foundation, along with major individual support.

