Christina McPhee: A Commonplace Book

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Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.
Christina McPhee’s images move from within a matrix of abstraction, shadowing figures and contingent effects. Her work emulates potential forms of life, in various systems and territories, and in real and imagined ecologies. Her dynamic, performative, physical engagement with drawing is a seduction into surface-skidding calligraphic gestures and mark-making. The tactics of living are in subterfuge, like dazzle ships of camouflage in war. Lines throw down ropes-like bridges, cat’s-cradling figures, or a search for grounding and commons. Her work takes on violence, exuberance, and vitality from within a ‘post-natural’ experience of community.

Museum and public collections of her work include: Whitney Museum of American Art, International Center for Photography, Rhizome Artbase at the New Museum, and Stonewolf for Art and Architecture, in New York City; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; Thresholds New Media Collection, Perth, Scotland; Sheldon Art Museum, Lincoln, Nebraska; Corwin College Fine Art Collection, California; Beach Museum of Art, Kansas; and Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado. Solo museum exhibitions include the American University Museum/Katzen Art Center, Washington, D.C., and Bildmuseet, Umeå, Sweden. She has participated in group exhibitions, notably documenta 12 and Bucharest Biennial 1, as well as with the Museum of Modern Art, Medellín, Colombia; Bildmuseet, Umeå, Sweden; Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive and California Museum of Photography, California; and the Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Together with Pamela Z, she was honored with the NAAF Fund Performance grant and the New Music USA / Commissioning Grant Music USA award in 2012, for their collaborative work, Carbon Song Cycle.

Born in Los Angeles County, Christina McPhee was a student of Philip Guston (MFA, painting, Boston University, 1979). She studied at Kansas City Art Institute (BFA, painting and printmaking, valedictorian, 1976), and Scripps College, Claremont, California, where she was a Lois Langland Alumni-in-Residence in 2000. www.christinamcphee.net