



Christine Shannon Aaron



Front cover:
Whisper, 2013
18 x 18 inches
lithographic monoprint

Christine Shannon Aaron
Liminal States: Beneath the Surface

Silvermine Guild Arts Center
New Canaan, CT
September 15–October 26, 2013

proxies—of families, communities, ancestors and descendants, the living and the dead. Like families, they can seem at once ominous and protective, diligent and attentive, safe and fearsome. In ghostly photographic images printed onto her many different surfaces, the trees are a constant presence.

Beautiful Ruin

Christine Aaron approaches elegiac content through a lush materiality. Using wax, oxidized metal, mirror, wood, paper, and fabric, as well as encaustic, photography and printmaking, Aaron creates works that hint rather than extol. Her varied materials exhibit a delicate physicality, vehicles for meaning through their tangible presence. Playing opaque materials in tension with transparent illusionistic imagery, she manipulates her mediums in insistent ways, revealing content through process. Her method is investigative, exploratory, an act of finding rather than directing the work. Despite the strong, often heavy materials, the work maintains a sense of ethereal vulnerability. Memory, loss, and the beauty of the degraded and timeworn, all feature prominently in Aaron's work.

Trees, for Aaron, are a symbolic language. Acting as metaphors for souls, trees carry the imagistic content of the work and speak of the ineffable. They are representations of time passing, cycles of life hidden in the growth rings. Resembling people in a psychological drama, they stand witness to the private stories held within all our bodies. Silent and watchful, her forests become

Aaron also incorporates text directly onto the surfaces of most of her paintings, prints, and objects. Recognizable as longhand, yet barely readable under the degraded surface, the text acts as both a visual and conceptual form. The words might reference lost letters, words spoken into history, or thoughts parading constantly through our minds. The scripts appear personal, captured words hinting back at the intimacy of the narrative. The text swims in and out of the images, as though one is walking through Aaron's psychological forest while voices murmur all around. Although literally silent, these works seem to have sound emanating from them, of voices or trees rustling. Coming from outside or inside your body, from past, present and even future imaginings, the paintings whisper, as though reaching through time and space.

In the metal pieces, she repeatedly oxidizes the surface until ravaged and timeworn, as though they are discovered artifacts dug up in an abandoned ruin. This ruin reveals a narrative marred by time, its forgotten stories leaving only traces. The oxidation process literally ages the metal in the most direct interpretation of the passage of time, corroding the surface into pitted multicolored rust. The imprinted images of trees and written passages of text are embedded deep into the material so as to seem born up

through it. Although she incorporates wax into the metal pieces, its presence is less felt—the metal's physicality and weight insists on its foregrounded role.

Wax is more explicit in the encaustic works on paper and panel, where time seems represented by veils of smoky haze. An obscuring rather than a reenactment of time's ravages, here images of trees and text are buried in layers of the filmy wax. Covered rather than excavated as in the metal works, they appear more like a memory or dream than a physical relic. The half hidden images reflect the brain's adaptive mechanism of remembering and forgetting. The ethereality of the imagery contrasts with the opaque certainty of the material surfaces, which insist on bringing us back to the corporeal effects of time's depredation. The tension between the mind's remembrances and the undeniability of the tangible body forms a core of content in Aaron's work.

Already a physical artist in her use of metal, wax, wood and other visceral materials, in this exhibition Aaron follows a natural evolution in expanding the work off the wall and away from the strictly two-dimensional. Her first foray into installation seems to have grown organically, as the materiality of the objects grows more assertive in its demand for space. In *Murmur*, she creates a smaller fluid environment within the larger gallery space. This development manages to expand the physicality of the work while maintaining the sense of fragility. The tree images have migrated onto sheer paper panels, hung from floor to ceiling and arranged in a loose grouping. The images shimmer and



Escape II, 2011
12 x 12 inches
lithograph, encaustic, rust printed asian paper,
on patinated copper

sway with the paper's movements as you walk among them, the paper adding another sound element reminiscent of leaves rustling. In another installation, *Echoes*, Aaron brings the tree literally into the work. Using tree trunks and thin wood slabs that stand at human scale, she inscribes the surfaces with text and clusters them around the space. Both installations feel as though one is walking inside the artist's imagined forest memory.

Aaron also incorporates actual sound for the first time, reflecting again the paintings' expansion beyond the two-dimensional by moving into three and four-dimensional space. Barely audible recordings of stories told to her are played quietly—as in the paintings nothing is frontal. Like a hum emanating from the work, this development reflects Aaron's desire, and that of the work itself, to move into real space in a created environment. To actually travel through the work in a more interactive and participatory fashion pulls the viewer into the story in a more experiential way. As though the paintings have come alive, we enter their magic realist space and move through it in physical time, surrounded by the artist's world rather than passively watching.

Christine Aaron's work feels novelistic, not in a linear sense, but in the way a novel unfolds in observed time. At first images of trees and rusted metal may seem simply familiar, beautiful, and seductive in their expression, until they begin to speak, to sway, to invite you into their midst. The theme of materials obscuring while subtly revealing appears throughout Aaron's work, as though her materials are a declarative scrim through which we are encouraged to view the

immaterial. In viewing, we work backwards through them, following the pathway forged by the artist. In the process we find hinted narratives, glimpses of memory, moments lost to time. In the end, if we stay long enough, they may welcome us into a dream-like exploration of time, memory and the nature of being. We cannot know the whole of the story, we see only through a glass darkly. Our own experience is left to fill in the lost parts. Expressed through a love of materials and a kind of ruined beauty, Aaron seduces us into her tactile and quietly haunting world.

Patricia Miranda
July 2013

Patricia Miranda is an artist, curator, educator, and director of **miranda arts project space** in Port Chester, NY. She teaches at Lyme Academy College of Fine Art and New Jersey City University; and is former director of the gallery at Concordia College. Miranda has developed art education programs at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Smithsonian Institute, and has exhibited at Wave Hill, Bronx NY; the Cape Museum of Fine Art, Cape Cod MA; Metaphor Contemporary Art, Brooklyn, NY; and Kenise Barnes Fine Art, Larchmont, NY.



Sulphur Branch II, 2011
24 X 18 inches
lithograph, encaustic on patinated copper



Tree Muse, 2012
24 x 18 inches
lithographic monprint, asian paper,
horsehair, rust print, encaustic on panel



Tree Muse II, 2012
24 x 18 inches
lithographic monprint, asian paper,
rust print, encaustic on panel



Night Trees, 2013
23.25 x 17.25 inches
lithographic monprint



Storm, 2013
23.75 x 17.25 inches
lithographic monprint



Forest Muse, 2012
24 x 24 inches
lithograph, asian paper,
encaustic on patinated copper



Forest Muse II, 2012
24 x 24 inches
lithograph, asian paper,
encaustic on patinated copper



Escape, 2012
12 x 24 inches
lithograph, rusted asian paper, encaustic,
horsehair, on panel



Buried, 2013
18 x 18 inches
lithographic monprint



Presence, 2013
18 x 18 inches
lithographic monprint



Top: *Half Light*, 2013
17 x 15 inches
lithograph on mirror

Bottom: *Aurora*, 2013
16 x 15 inches
lithograph on mirror

Top: *Afterlight*, 2013
16 x 15 inches
lithograph on mirror

Bottom: *Sylvan*, 2013
16 x 15 inches
lithograph on mirror



Evening II, 2012
16 x 24 inches
lithograph on mirror



Eventide, 2013
23 x 42 inches
lithograph on mirror



Eventide II, 2013
23 x 42 inches
lithograph on mirror



Traces, 2013
18 x 26 inches
lithograph on oxidized steel




Collecting, 2013
18 x 18 inches
lithograph, asian paper, encaustic,
on oxidized steel



Vestige, 2013
18 x 18 inches
lithograph, encaustic
on oxidized steel



Vestige II, 2013
18 x 18 inches
lithograph, encaustic
on oxidized steel



Murmur | Echoes: an installation

My work focuses on themes of memory, loss, the inexorable passage of time and the fragility of human connection. The imagery of trees drives these themes. Trees mark time; they serve as a metaphor for the cycle of life, symbols of dormancy, growth, strength and renewal. Trees hold the record of their lives in their rings. These inner marks remain hidden from view, the way that humans hold within the physical, mental and emotional marks of personal experience.

This intellectual and emotional content directly guides my selection of materials, technique and imagery. I choose media where traces of the process remain in the work. Printmaking and encaustic allow me to develop through layering much the way human perception and memories are formed, and convey a visual sense of the archeological act of recollection. I embed, layer, deconstruct and reconstruct images approximating the way in which we revisit, recreate and reevaluate our memories and experiences. I rust and oxidize metal substrates so that time itself becomes an integral part of the completed work.

Derived from the latin word limen, meaning threshold, liminality is a state of being on the threshold of or between two different planes. This body of work investigates that inchoate place between the past and the present.

Left: *Murmur*
multiple 36 x 102 inch lithographic
monoprints on asian paper panels,
with audio (multitrack audio with
continuous recorded vocal memories,
layered with ambient sounds of rain,
wind and trees.)
audio engineer: Brad Langer

Christine Shannon Aaron





From left to right:

Echo I, 2013
63 x 18 x 2.75 inches
lithographic monprint,
asian paper, encaustic on
wood

Echo II, 2013
80 x 12 x 1 inches
lithographic monprint,
asian paper, encaustic on
wood

Echo III, 2013
86 x 10.25 x 1 inches
lithographic monprint,
asian paper, encaustic on
wood

Echo IV, 2013
59.5 x 12 x 2.5 inches
lithographic monprint,
asian paper, encaustic on
wood

Echo VI, 2013
12 x 15 inches
engraving, gouache,
encaustic on found wood



Echo VII, 2013
25 x 18 x 11 inches
lithographic monoprint, asian paper,
encaustic on found wood



Echo V, 2013
21 x 18 x 5 inches
lithographic monoprint, asian paper,
encaustic on found wood



Christine Shannon Aaron

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2013

Liminal States: Beneath the Surface,
Silvermine Guild Arts Center, New Canaan, CT

2009

The Space Between, Mamaroneck Artists Guild,
Larchmont, NY

2002

Dual Impressions, Mamaroneck Artists Guild,
Larchmont, NY

2001

Passages, Harrison Public Library, Harrison, NY

CURATED & INVITATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

2013

Red, A Gallery, Provincetown, MA
(Curators: Marian and Adam Peck)

Natura Viva, ArtCurrent, Provincetown, MA
(Curator: Debra Claffey)

Materiality, Westchester Community College,
Valhalla, NY (Curator: Kenise Barnes)

2012

Rolling in the Deep, Kenise Barnes Fine Art,
Larchmont, NY (Curator: Kenise Barnes)

Wax, A Gallery, Provincetown, MA
(Curator: Marian and Adam Peck)

Good Vibrations, Gallery Ehva, Provincetown, MA
(Curator: Laura Moriarty)

2011

Love Thy Neighbor, Kenise Barnes Fine Art,
Larchmont, NY (Curator: Kenise Barnes)

Artists Make Mirrors, Bendheim Gallery,
Greenwich, CT (Curator: Jeffrey Mueller)

2010

Encaustics: Wax and Image, Westchester
Community College Center for the Arts,
Valhalla, NY (Curators: Abre Chen, Lisa Santalis)

2009

Mettle on Metal, Blue Door Gallery, Yonkers NY
(Curators: Arle Sklar-Weinstein, Luis Perelman)

Fresh Pics: Contemporary Art in Connecticut,
Ridgefield Guild of Artists, Ridgefield, CT

(Curator: Camilla Cook)

Breaking New Ground, Iona College Gallery,
New Rochelle, NY (Curator: Ellyn Murphy)

JURIED EXHIBITIONS

2012

Westchester Biennial, Castle Gallery,
New Rochelle, NY (Jurors: Chana Benjamin,
Mary Birmingham, Ruth Hardinger)

Greenwich Arts Society Juried Exhibition,
Bendheim Gallery, Greenwich, CT

(Juror: Marla Prather)

2010

33rd Annual Juried Exhibition, Ridgefield Guild of
Artists, Ridgefield CT (Juror: Steven Assael)

Juxtapositions, Flinn Gallery, Greenwich CT
(Juror: Neil Watson)

93rd Annual Juried Exhibition, Bendheim Gallery,
Greenwich CT (Juror: Jennifer Gross)

2009

Narrative, Silvermine Guild Arts Center,
New Canaan, CT (Juror: Mary Frank, artist)

*7th Biennial International Miniature Print
Competition and Exhibition*, Center for
Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT

(Jurors: Lisa Hodermarsky and Craig Zammiello)

5th Annual Open Juried Small Works Show,
Mamaroneck Artists Guild, Larchmont, NY

(Juror: Leslie Nolan)

2007

6th Biennial International Print Competition,
Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT
(Juror: David Kiehl)

2005

28th Annual Juried Exhibition, Ridgefield Guild of
Artists, Ridgefield CT (Juror: Dr. Susan Greenberg)

56th Annual Art of the Northeast, Silvermine Guild
Arts Center, New Canaan, CT

(Juror: Elizabeth Smith)

5th Biennial International Print Competition,

Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT
(Juror: Helen Harrison)

Small Works Show, Mamaroneck Artists Guild,
Larchmont, NY (Juror: Benjamin Ortiz)

2004

48th Annual National Juried Print Exhibition,
Hunterdon Museum of Art, Clinton, NJ

(Juror: Sergei Tsvetkov)

Pressing Work, National Association of Women
Artists, Gallery 928, New York, NY

(Juried by a panel)

2003

New Directions '03, The Barrett Art Center,
Poughkeepsie, NY (Juror: Tumelo Mosaka)

24th National Print Exhibition, Silvermine Guild
Arts Center, New Canaan, CT (Juror: Joni Weyl)

26th Annual Juried Exhibition, Ridgefield Guild of
Artists, Ridgefield, CT (Juror: Lisa Paul Streitfeld)

4th International Miniature Print Exhibition,
Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT

(Juror: Reba White Williams)

Pen and Brush Regional Juried Art Exhibition,
The Pen and Brush Galleries, New York, NY

2002

Pen and Brush Regional Juried Art Exhibition,
The Pen and Brush Galleries, New York, NY

53rd Annual Art of the Northeast, Silvermine Guild

Arts Center, New Canaan, CT (Juror: Ann Temkin)
Loosely Landscapes, Pelham Arts Center,
Pelham, NY (Juror: David Fox)

2000

Gone Fishin', Northern Westchester Center for the
Arts, Mt. Kisco, NY (Juror: Harry Philbrick)

AWARDS

2010

Honorable Mention, *33rd Annual Juried Exhibition*,
Ridgefield Guild of Artists, Ridgefield, CT

Greenwich Arts Society Allan Bernard Award,
93rd Annual Juried Exhibition, Bendheim Gallery,
Greenwich, CT

2007

First Prize Mixed Media, *In Free Fall*, Mamaroneck
Artists Guild, Mamaroneck, NY

2005

First Prize, Mixed Media, *Annual Juried
Non-Members' Exhibition*, The Pen & Brush
Galleries, New York, NY

2005

Best in Show, *Cornucopia*, Mamaroneck Artists
Guild, Mamaroneck, NY

Finalist, Experimental Category, *The Artist's
Magazine Annual Art Competition*

2004

Finalist, Experimental Category, *The Artist's
Magazine Annual Art Competition*

2002

Finalist, Experimental Category, *The Artist's
Magazine Annual Art Competition*

2001

Marshal Graphics Award, *53rd Annual Art of the
Northeast*, Silvermine Guild Arts Center,
New Canaan, CT

2001

First Prize, *Annual Juried Show*, Mamaroneck
Artists Guild, Mamaroneck, NY
Finalist, Landscape Category, *The Artist's Magazine*

MEMBERSHIPS

Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT
Mamaroneck Artists Guild, Larchmont, NY
National Association of Women Artists, New York, NY
Silvermine Guild Arts Center, New Canaan, CT

EDUCATION

MSW Hunter College School of Social Work, 1985
BS Education, Cornell University, 1982

REPRESENTATION

Anelle Gandelman Fine Art
Kenise Barnes Fine Art, Larchmont, NY

CONTACT

christine@christineaaron.com
www.christineaaron.com

Catalog design: Peg Patterson
www.pegpatterson.com



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