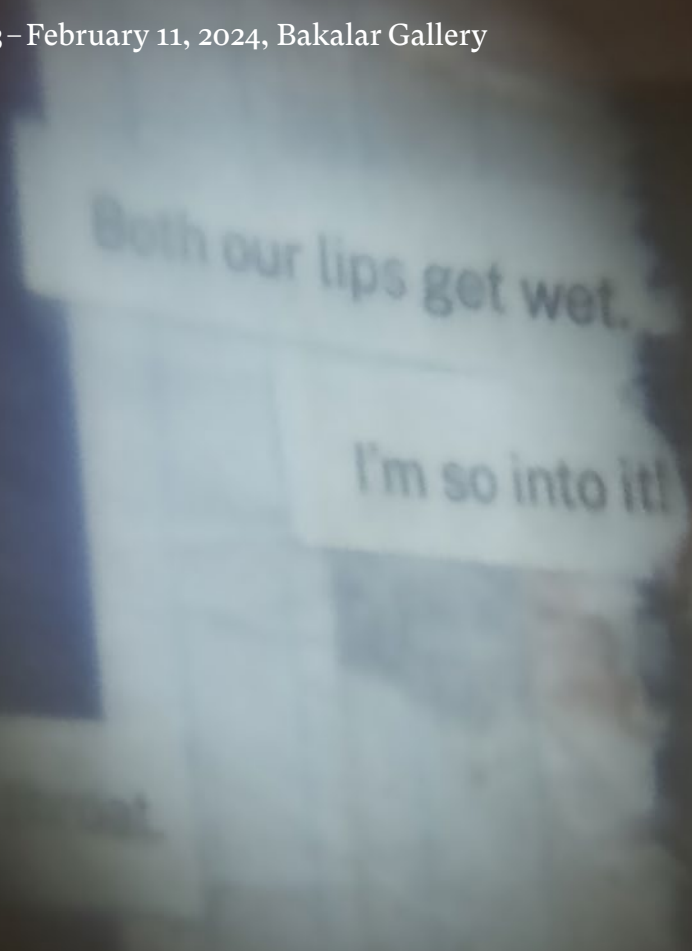


List Projects 28: Sophie Friedman-Pappas and TJ Shin

November 16, 2023 – February 11, 2024, Bakalar Gallery



Both our lips get wet.

I'm so into it!



MIT List Visual
Arts Center

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In their respective practices, Sophie Friedman-Pappas and TJ Shin work across a variety of media, including drawing, printmaking, expanded cinema, sculpture, and installation.

Both artists share an affinity for featuring and animating organic materials in their work. Shin, for example, has spliced, or “transfected,” mugwort leaves with their own DNA, and Friedman-Pappas has incorporated urine-tanned sheep hide and bird excrement in recent pieces. In past works that query ecological, social, and economic entanglements, both Shin and Friedman-Pappas have prioritized literary methods, developing projects that layer history with fiction and speculation.

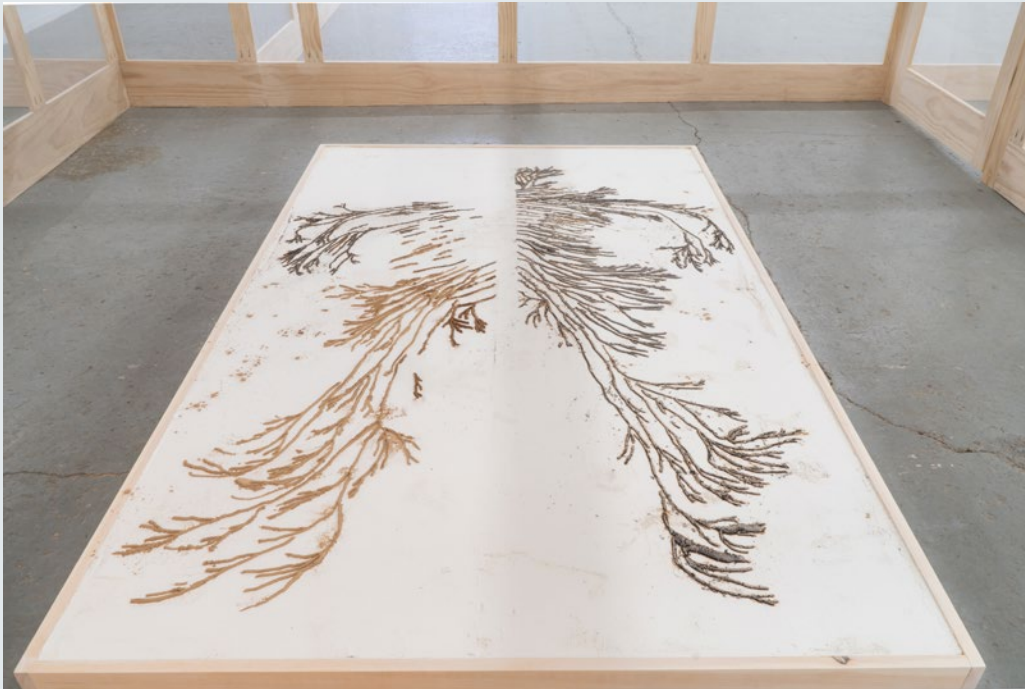
In addition to their kaleidoscopic approaches to narrative, the two share an interest in technical devices for representation and vision—from drawing machines to cameraless photography and filmmaking. On view is a moving-image installation by Friedman-Pappas featuring a homemade projector that functions as an inverted camera obscura (*Deltille-d Wall's Necessary Anachronism 2* [2023])

and an experimental film by Shin for which the artist spliced 16mm film stock with segments of Super 8 footage and phytograms, which employ the internal chemistry of plants as a photographic emulsion (*Duration* [2023]).

The two expanded cinema pieces look at sites of unconventional tourism: Shin's work emerges from their visit to the demilitarized zone spanning the border between North and South Korea, and Friedman-Pappas's centers on dovecotes-turned-Airbnbs on the Greek island of Tinos. Both sites are indicators of the pressures and contradictions of a postindustrial economy caught between climate disaster, conflict, and the principle of growth. A collaboratively authored series of “travelogues,” presented in an artist-designed display structure, record real and imaginary encounters with these locations.

ABOUT THE SEASON

This special series of experimental List Projects programming commemorates the tenth anniversary of the series and is comprised of three exhibitions in the Bakalar Gallery. Each presentation pairs two artists who share a history of conversation and fosters their continued collaboration through a joint commission.



TJ Shin, *Untitled (100 days of solemnity)*, 2022. Transfected mugwort, cinchona, makko, oak, wild cherry, sandalwood, ash, diatomaceous earth, wood. Photo: Nando Alvarez-Perez

Front cover: Sophie Friedman-Pappas, *Deltille-d Wall's Necessary Anachronism 2*, 2023 (detail). Photo: Nik Massey

Sophie Friedman-Pappas and TJ Shin, *Untitled (Travelogue 1-32), 2023*

Friedman-Pappas and Shin's joint commission consists of thirty-two works on paper exhibited in a custom-made structure. The suite of drawings and prints is presented back-to-back in frames that rotate 360 degrees around central axes, forming an unbound, achronological artists' book. The artists conceived the format as a response to "the language of archival conservation and grammar of museological displays."¹ Its destabilized mode of presentation stages the entanglement of visual languages, nonlinear narratives, and institutional frames.

Shin presents a group of cameraless photographs of various flora that grow in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) alongside inkjet prints of propaganda and security papers in both Korean and English. Made with unfixed silver nitrate emulsions, they record Shin's travels in the DMZ, but their referentiality and materiality are deliberately unstable. "The imprinted image is in movement, fading, and degrading," Shin explains.² These elusive photograms, together with prints featuring audio transcripts of a state-made promotional

video for the DMZ and redacted reproductions of documentation granting Shin access to the site, all employ various forms of mediation and translation. The works trace the contours and convergences of ecological, ideological, bureaucratic, and military influences that have shaped the DMZ.

Executed in graphite, colored pencil, and oil paint, Friedman-Pappas's suite of drawings is the artist's proposal for turning the buildings of Manhattan's Financial District into kilns. The artist describes the works as "instructional drawings" that merge the language of anarchist zines with art-historical traditions of *vedute* (topographical views) and *capricci* (architectural fantasies)—both sold as souvenirs in the nineteenth century.³ Their layered forms of shading and mark-making reflect these disparate influences, creating pastiches of both source imagery and histories of image-making. They also include references to the formal conventions and precise linear perspective typical of mechanically aided drafting used by artists producing landscapes for tourists.

Sophie Friedman-Pappas, *Deltille-d Wall's Necessary Anachronism 2, 2023*

This installation features an artist-made projector devised from simple, readily available materials, including cardboard tubing, an LED lightbulb, a mirror, a small motor, and a magnifying lens. Instead of celluloid film, the work shines light through a moving strip of collaged materials, including notebook paper, printed text, and a Bloomingdale's nylon shopping bag. Both the "projector" and the "film" are willfully makeshift, their seams emphasized rather than effaced.

The wavering, orb-like projection features the artist's text narrating an impressionistic

tale of two lovers on holiday in Greece staying in an Airbnb that was formerly a dovecote. (These whitewashed stone buildings with intricate geometric facades were erected in the eighteenth century by farmers seeking to rear pigeons for their eggs, meat, and guano, a potent fertilizer. In recent years, dovecotes have been repackaged as temporary residences that appeal to a so-called "heritage" tourism economy due to their folkloric designs.) As night falls, in the story, the dovecote heats to over 2350 degrees Fahrenheit, becoming a kind of kiln. After a failed attempt at intimacy, the lovers, consumed



Sophie Friedman-Pappas, *Deltille-d Wall's Necessary Anachronism 2, 2023* (detail). Photo: Nik Massey

by heat and flame, become a glaze on the wall of the dwelling—as white as the guano that previously graced the space. This accretion of ash suggests both the climax (of the lovers' story) and the ending

to the long history of dovecotes as sites of value production for property owners. The installation's patio furniture is drawn from the story's setting, implicating the viewer in its surreal erotics of incineration.

TJ Shin, *Duration (It takes 22,000 minutes or 367 hours to project 150 miles of film at 24 frames per second, which is the equivalent of walking an average pace of 0.41 miles per hour or 47 minutes per mile for 150 miles.)*, 2023

This expanded cinema work is based on observational footage Shin recorded when visiting a number of observatories in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and while shadowing researchers affiliated with the DMZ Ecology Research Institute. The DMZ marks the 150-mile-long border between North and South Korea—two countries that are still technically at war, seventy years after an armistice put into force a ceasefire. In the decades since, the DMZ has become an ecotourism destination and a haven for endangered species,⁴ while industrialization and neoliberal development have rapidly transformed life in South Korea. Shin has observed

that time in the DMZ is "out of joint,"⁵ and the territory's jostling temporalities of war, ecological conservation (and ecotourism), state censorship, and historical amnesia are indexed in the artist's reflexive approach to time-based media.

Drawing on the conventions of expanded cinema, *Duration* is spliced together from a variety of materials: 16mm and Super 8 film stocks and phytograms (a photographic technique that uses the internal chemistry of plants for emulsion). Repetition is a central motif in the work, and the artist constructs and echoes sequences to induce dreamlike states, *déjà vu*, and



TJ Shin, *Breath of Preservation (Standard Colored Barracks)*, 2023. Herbarium sheet with specimens from the Asteraceae and Rubiaceae family, fungicides, pesticides, smoke, linen, envelope.
Photo: Nando Alvarez-Perez

nostalgia. "I like to think of history as a membrane, a boundary that is always being reworked and adapted," Shin has said.⁶ In *Duration*, sequences of researchers conducting fieldwork and greenery

are disrupted by more indeterminate landscapes and abstract compositions of light and chemistry. Its materiality might also be conceived as a membrane: labored, layered, obscured, and still moving.

1 TJ Shin, email exchange with the author, August 4, 2023.
2 TJ Shin, written exchange with the author, September 21, 2023.
3 Sophie Friedman-Pappas, written exchange with the author, September 27, 2023.
4 See Kim Young-ihm, "DMZ View: Land of Nature, Free from Human Intrusion," KOCIS, last modified June 2018, <https://www.kocis.go.kr/eng/webzine/201806/sub02.html>.
5 TJ Shin, September 21, 2023.
6 Shin, September 21, 2023.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

Sophie Friedman-Pappas
Deltille-d Wall's Necessary Anachronism 2, 2023
Inverted camera obscura (homemade projector), mixed media, table, folding chairs, 10:00 min.

Sophie Friedman-Pappas and TJ Shin
Untitled (Travelogue 1-32), 2023
Thirty-two mixed media works on paper
17 × 11 in. (43.2 × 27.9 cm) each
Commissioned by MIT List Visual Arts Center

TJ Shin
Duration (It takes 22,000 minutes or 367 hours to project 150 miles of film at 24 frames per second, which is the equivalent of walking an average pace of 0.41 miles per hour or 47 minutes per mile for 150 miles.), 2023
16mm and Super 8 transferred to digital, 7:00 min.
All works courtesy the artists

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sophie Friedman-Pappas (b. 1995, New York) lives and works in Los Angeles. Friedman-Pappas has held a solo exhibition at Alyssa Davis Gallery, New York (organized by Octagon), and participated in group and two-person exhibitions at Meredith Rosen, New York; Simone Subal, New York; Cuchifritos Gallery and Project Space, New York; and In Lieu, Los Angeles; among others.

TJ Shin (b. 1993, Seoul) lives and works in Los Angeles. Shin has exhibited at the Queens Museum, New York; Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art, New York; Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University, New Jersey; Roots and Culture Contemporary Art Center, Chicago; The Bows, Mohkinstsis (Calgary, Alberta); Cuchifritos Gallery and Project Space, New York; and Knockdown Center, Queens, New York; among others.

List Projects 28: Sophie Friedman-Pappas and TJ Shin is organized by Selby Nimrod, Assistant Curator.

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PUBLIC PROGRAMS



Curator Tour: Selby Nimrod

Friday, February 2, 2024, 12:30–1:30 PM

In-person program



Graduate Student Talk: Gaby Carucci

Thursday, February 8, 2024, 5:30–6:30 PM

Hybrid program (in-person with virtual available)

All List Visual Arts Center programs are free and open to the public. Registration is required.

For more information about events and programs related to this exhibition, please visit:

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20 Ames Street, Bldg. E15
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