

#GOSH

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A leylandii. How do I value the original? When it comes to suburbia, does the ubiquitous leylandii in urban development undermine the genuine thing? As a native species to North America, the coniferous evergreen tree has come to represent an admissible boundary of exclusion. The act of turning my back on Oslo's fjord in order to focus my attention on my neighbour's hedge feels out of step; if only to acknowledge an everyday partition demarcating land ownership. I could be anywhere.

A remix. How do I value the original? When it comes to electronic music, does Berlin-based Tale Of Us' remix *Gosh* by Jamie XX undermine the genuine thing? As a standard activity in recording, one track may be remixed as many non-linear re-interpretations. Can I apply the language of music-making to print-making? Remixing in colour, in three beats, in five beats, seven beats, twenty-four beats.

Within the process the visual tempi of the sculptural carving, the plasticity of ink and the re-registration of multiple plates generates perceptual dynamism. When viewed from afar, the colours gently undulate but get upclose and the ink pulsates. The prints interdependence between static and active, veer towards Bridget Riley's control of scaffolding rather than Jackson Pollock's expression of free structure. In which Riley takes direct reference from Georges Seurat's Pointillism, a vivid technique of painting in colour; *the 'solar orange' for sunlight, and its 'complementary' strong blue in the shade: greens and yellows as the 'local colours' of the vexation; fleeting reds and violets as 'ambient complementary colours'.*

Practice-based Artistic Research

This KUF research has expanded my studio-led artistic practice, generating new processes to imbibe into a post-digital methodology. By assigning digital scanning and CNC milling technology, the practice-based research project endeavoured to split a hand-cut reduction into a multi-plate relief print.

In 2012, I exhibited *Training Nature*, a series of reduction relief prints; a process loosely attributed to Pablo Picasso. Four years later as Associate Professor in Print & Drawing at KHIO, KUF research funding enabled me to re-evaluate this process and to re-examine the formal language of print. In addition to this, I drew upon Bridget Riley's collected writings, in which she reflects on her own practice-based knowledge and historical references to painting, giving insight into my own artistic methodology.

Reduction relief printing is composed of repeatedly cutting from one plate to achieve a multi-layered print. The ink is rolled onto the surface and printed in registration over the previous layer of colour before removing further material from the plate. Carving the plate by hand stimulates a haptic activity; from a gestural and spontaneous indentation to a more controlled and deliberate sculptural formation. When applied to reduction relief printing, the process supports multi-colour combinations varying in tone, hue and luminosity. The printer's creative development is activated from within the process, similar to the painter applying paint to canvas.

However, the repeated cutting inevitably destroys the plate on completion and it is impossible to retrace previous steps or explore alternative multi-colour combinations. The edition must be printed in its entirety, reducing both the time and spontaneity to experiment with carving the plate and overlaying colour - and so in turn, limiting the creative potential of print as a medium.

With the advent of Computer Numerical Control (CNC) milling, digital technology can perform similar tasks to traditional hand tools. My intention was to expand on current academic research and apply CNC milling already available at KHIO to the process of reduction relief printing. With an objective of digitally scanning, vectorising and CNC routing a replica plate for each layer of colour; thereby splitting the reduction into a multi-plate printing process.

The one month studio-led research, completed between August 2016 and January 2017, began as five consecutive days in the print studio to achieve a five-colour reduction relief print. Each stage of cutting was printed onto paper and digitally scanned at KHIO's Media Lab. Four digital bitmap files were auto-traced as vector files in VectorMagic and extensively post-edited in Adobe Illustrator. KHIO's Werkmaster in the CNC workshop provided technical expertise to import vector files into RhinoCAM and to CNC router the pre-prepared linoleum plates.

Moving from the known to the unknown, I have been able to retrace the steps within the reduction process to overcome intrinsic limitations and generate new artistic exploration. By printing multi-CNC routed plates and comparing to the original reduction plate, the process is redefining my studio-led practice as a colour investigation into multi-plate relief printing.

My intention is to continue to work with CNC routing technology, to apply tessellating software, to exploit the change of scale and to combine with further hand-cut plates in the development of this innovative process.

An Instagram account chronologically documenting the transformation from reduction to multi-plate reveals visual evidence of the printing process in the studio and the research gathered over the same period: @victoriabrowne_

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