

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Michele Bregande, 215.735.6090 x5 | mbregande@printcenter.org



Rochelle Toner, *Tease*, 2010, Watercolor

Rochelle Toner: Tying a Knot in a Cherry Stem

Also on view:

Lauren Pakradooni: Static Slip

September 14 — November 10, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, September 13, 6:00 – 7:30pm

Gallery Talk with the Artists and Curator: Thursday, September 13, 5:30pm

PHILADELPHIA, PA - (July 30, 2018) The Print Center is pleased to present two new solo exhibitions featuring work by Philadelphia artists Rochelle Toner and Lauren Pakradooni, curated by John Caperton, formerly The Print Center's Jensen Bryan Curator. Both Toner and Pakradooni consider printmaking to be the core of their artistic practice, and together these two exhibitions illustrate the ways that the processes and central themes of printmaking can fruitfully expand into other media and forms.

Rochelle Toner: Tying a Knot in a Cherry Stem is an exhibition of recent, abstract, watercolor drawings and collages by the highly regarded printmaker. Her newer works are complemented by a selection of early prints, as well as items from the artist's idiosyncratic collections of objects from which she draws



Lauren Pakradooni, *Surest Bask*, 2018,
Screenprint on acrylic and paper pulp

artistic inspiration. A commissioned essay published in the exhibition brochure, written by independent curator Judith Tannenbaum, discusses Toner's latest projects in respect to her earlier works, exploring themes that reoccur over the decades. ***Lauren Pakradooni: Static Slip*** highlights the work of this emerging artist, whose practice begins with printmaking and expands into sculpture.

Though **Rochelle Toner**'s work has been included in numerous group exhibitions in the Philadelphia area over the last 40 years, it has not received the critical attention that it merits. Having spent 30 years dedicated to academic service, coupled with the lack of support which women (especially queer women) of her generation received in the art world, much of Toner's extensive body of work remains unexhibited and unknown. While Toner identifies as a printmaker, her most current works are watercolors, collages and drawings. The watercolors are diverse, vibrantly-colored organic abstractions, many with linear repeating forms. After many years of making watercolors, the artist has produced two series of collages made from magazine pages. While many of the collages relate visually to the abstracted organic forms of the watercolor drawings, the most recent are composed of the cut-up and reassembled body parts of fashion models. A third body of work included is a series of drawings rendered directly onto plate pages of a 19th century natural history book. The show features more than 40 works from these 3 series, as well as a selection of the artist's previous works, including ambitiously-scaled Surrealist etchings from the early 1970s.

"These watercolor drawings, prints and collages, as well as the other work that I have made over the years, I think of collectively as 'nature, pleasure and innuendo'. I like the way the phrase sounds and I like the sort of sexy allusion. I am fascinated by the way abstraction can evolve from a process of observing, distilling and internalizing information, conscious and subconscious interactions."

To provide deeper insight into Toner's work, several installations of objects and ephemera drawn from her idiosyncratic personal collections are presented. Ranging from a selection of roughly crafted iron shears to groupings of shells and fossils, these objects illuminate many of the underlying ideas with which Toner is concerned. They reflect an ongoing interest in the simultaneous violence and beauty embodied by tools, the ways that some types of labor lead to objects being imbued with a sense of gender, and, her unabashed love for the wonders of the natural world.

"Without planning or specific intention I came to notice that the single most important theme or common denominator in my work was/is the concept of dynamics.

...forces and their relation primarily to motion but sometimes also to equilibrium...
a process of change, growth, or activity...
variation and contrast in force or intensity"

The exhibition and its accompanying essay by Judith Tannenbaum, who has been familiar with Toner's oeuvre since the 1990s, contextualizes Toner's work within the larger field. Additionally, coinciding with The Print Center's exhibition, a book on Toner's drawings will be published by Temple Contemporary, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, authored by Director Robert Blackson.

While **Lauren Pakradooni** is primarily an object maker, printmaking is core to her practice. The artist utilizes etching, monotype and screenprinting to make works that sometimes exist as traditional prints, but also are used as components of her sculptural work. Pakradooni applies prints to the surface of constructed forms made from materials such as papier-mâché, wood, foam, acrylic, glass, plastic, plaster and fabric.

“I am consistently expanding and inventing new ways of using print techniques that experiment with implied dimension, low-relief, and sculptural applications of print media” says Pakradooni.

“Imagery is screenprinted and then seamlessly applied to sculpted forms, to create trompe l'oeil or faux surface texture. Traditional intaglio and relief prints are embossed, giving the paper a sculptural quality that becomes visible in raking light.”

The content of Pakradooni's work is derived from architecture and industrial design to create what she calls “a tenuous fantasy of half-constructed and half-collapsed forms and fragments.” Many of her works resemble studies, models or debris, and appear to be fragments of larger built structures that are either coming into existence or crumbling away. The imagery of the prints adhered to the surface of these constructions often refers to building materials such as brick or stucco, further complicating the pieces while often obscuring what they are actually built from. Many of the core concerns of printmaking, including repetition, image construction through layering, and the use of mediated processes rather than direct mark making, are critical to her works.

About the Artists

Rochelle Toner is an artist and educator based in Philadelphia. She earned a BA at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls in 1962, received an MA in Art and Art Education in 1967 and an MFA in Painting and Printmaking in 1970, both from the University of Illinois, Urbana. Toner was the Dean of Tyler School of Art, Temple University from 1989 – 2002, and has had the distinguished title of Professor Emeritus since 2002. In 2010 she was awarded the National Printmaker Emeritus Award by the Southern Graphics Council International.

Toner's work has been included in over 100 national and regional group and solo exhibitions including the James A. Michener Art Museum, Doylestown, PA; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art and Woodmere Art Museum, all Philadelphia. She has participated in national and international artist residencies including Dundee Art Centre, Scotland, 2004 and Ballinglen Arts Foundation, Ballycastle, Ireland, 2009. Her work is held in numerous public collections including Yale University, New Haven, CT; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art and Philadelphia Museum of Art. Toner's work has been featured in the publications *A Primary Form of Expression*, Eldon L. Cunningham, University Press of Colorado, 1992; as well as *A Survey of Contemporary Printmaking*, Matthew Egan, Michael Ehlbeck and Heather Muise, Lazymuse Productions, 2012.

Lauren Pakradooni is an artist and educator based in Philadelphia. She earned a BA from Hampshire College, Amherst, MA in 2007 and an MFA in Printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence in 2011. Pakradooni is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Art at Ursinus College, Collegetown, PA. Her artwork has been exhibited in a variety of US venues including Leisure, Denver; Planthouse Gallery, New York; Vox Populi, Philadelphia; and internationally in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Antwerp, Belgium; and Doha, Qatar. She has been awarded fellowships and residencies at the University of Texas, Austin; AS220, Providence, RI; Wassaic Project, Wassaic, NY; and internationally at Beisinghoff Printmaking Residency, Diemelstadt-Rhoden, Germany and Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts, Doha. She records and performs experimental electronic music, layering and manipulating handmade cassette tape loops into compositions, under the moniker Tether.

About the Curator

John Caperton received his BA in Art History at the University of Chicago. He was The Print Center's Jensen Bryan Curator from 2007 – 2018, and curated more than sixty exhibitions for the institution including: *Streets of Philadelphia: Photography 1970-1985*; *Isaac Tin Wei Lin: One of Us*; *Philagrafika 2010: The Graphic Unconscious*; *Tracings / Transfers / Copies / Forgeries: Bill Walton*; *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*; *Jesse Burke and Nils Ericson: Sweet Meat*; *William Earle Williams: Party Pictures*; *To Scale*; *Color Motion: Edna Andrade Prints*; *Ephemeral Sprawl*; *Demetrius Oliver: Canicular*; *Gabriel Martinez: Bayside Revisited*; and, *By the Book: New Photography Publications*. He is currently Communications Manager for the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design.

About the Essayist

Judith Tannenbaum is known locally for her extensive curatorial work in her position as Curator, Associate Director and Interim Director at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia from 1986 – 2000 and as Richard Brown Baker Curator of Contemporary Art at the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), Providence from 2000 - 2013. When she retired from RISD in 2013 she was happy to return to her adopted home, Philadelphia, where she works as an independent curator.

About The Print Center

For more than a century, The Print Center has encouraged the growth and understanding of photography and printmaking as vital contemporary arts through exhibitions, publications and educational programs. The Print Center has an international voice and a strong sense of local purpose. Free and open to the public, it presents changing exhibitions which highlight established and emerging, local, national and international contemporary artists. It mounts one of the oldest art competitions in the country, now in its 93rd year and the Gallery Store offers the largest selection of contemporary prints and photographs available for sale in Philadelphia.

For information on events and programs visit www.printcenter.org

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The Print Center

1614 Latimer Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

p: 215.735.6090 info@printcenter.org

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Tuesday through Saturday: 11:00am - 6:00pm

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