



The Print Center 92nd ANNUAL honorees: Daniel W. Coburn, Julie Anne Greenberg, Jacob Koestler

Paper cuts

Pamela J. Forsythe

May 24, 2018 in [Art](#)

Three artists with unexpected takes on the family album, memory, and the weather are featured in the Print Center's ANNUAL International Competition Solo Exhibitions. The trio, chosen from among 420 entrants for intriguing use of photography and printmaking, are photographer Daniel W. Coburn, paper artist Julie Anne Greenberg, and multimedia artist Jacob Koestler.



Daniel W. Coburn's photography -- here, it's "Untitled," work from 'Becoming a Specter' (2018) -- captures moments frozen with tension. (Photo courtesy of the Print Center.)

Daniel W. Coburn: Anxious Images

Archival pigment prints from the 2018 series *Becoming a Specter* assay what Coburn calls the “anxiety and psychological estrangement” of unsettled times. Several of the dozen untitled photographs look like the shutter closed too early or late -- the classic error of family photographers.

Amateur misfires, however, don't offer the uncertainty, the tension, of Coburn's images. Such as: We're in a swimming pool, watching a v-shaped splash rise. What just happened? Does someone need rescuing? Do we?

Or this: A child's ball hovers in midair on a deserted beach. The only thing in sight is a jagged line of seaweed from the long-gone tide.

One more: there's a galley kitchen and a sink full of dirty dishes. A man stands at center, obscured by a puff of smoke extending from waist to head. His arms are raised in what could be triumph or panic. Is he practicing magic, or just destroying dinner?

Two photos feature the same tattooed man. In one, it's evening and he squirts a hose at the camera, a look of wonder on his face. Catching the light, the sprayed droplets form a constellation around him. In the other, he lies on a creek bed, barely submerged and appearing relaxed. Water covers his face. The midday sun illuminates his torso and makes the wavy surface sparkle. But the tattooed man can't breathe, and as long as we look, neither can we.

Coburn provides one stress-free image that is exquisite. A woman lies on her stomach, naked, beneath a palm tree. Sunlight filtering through the fronds paints a shimmering spine of light along her back.

Jacob Koestler: Perception vs. memory



Jacob Koestler's "Two Seconds, Saint Petersburg, Russia" (2014). Two archival pigment prints mounted on aluminum. (Photo courtesy of the Print Center.)

In *Copy of a Copy*, Koestler distinguishes between making and looking at photographs, actions which have become almost simultaneous but once were separated by developing. In 2017 on the art and music archive *My Idea of Fun*, he described how time changes perception: "Often times after waiting for film processing and scanning, these actions can be remembered differently . . . simultaneously obscuring history through subjectivity and also presenting new, clearer connections."

In addition to archival pigment prints, the exhibit includes handmade books describing a challenging nature hike similar to the Appalachian Trail. Notes preserve experience differently from pictures, but even they are read differently by new eyes.

For Koestler's series *Walking to Mexico* (2017), viewers bring more to the table than ever, thanks to our superheated political climate. Four photographs depict how we imagine the southern border. Two depict walls: A chain link fence with a human-sized hole, and towering posts of reinforcing steel, waiting for concrete. Another shows the stump of what was a magnificently gnarled tree, perhaps leveled to improve border security. Finally, a sad landscape as seen from the trail is divided into smoggy skyline, brushy middle ground and closest, a pipe spilling noxious liquid on the ground.

Several images come from the series *Everybody Wants Somewhere* (2017). The most absorbing are twins, "West Coast View (Overexposed)" and "West Coast View (Underexposed)." Seen across a gallery, the former seems an empty canvas while its sibling appears a black hole. Details emerge on approach, but it never feels like everything is visible. This is Koestler's point: from a distance, things tend to look black or white. To understand, you have to get closer.

Julie Anne Greenberg: Reinventing weather

The wall-mounted works of *Considerable Uncertainty Remains* reimagine the illustrations so loved by weather forecasters. You know the ones: swirling bands that loop endlessly whenever there's a tropical disturbance, no matter where.

Greenberg is fascinated by human attempts to control and predict overwhelming forces. Yet her art conveys none of the sense of impending doom cultivated by TV meteorologists: "Stay tuned -- there's a change coming!" Rather, she distills wonder from the weather, recreating the color and motion with hundreds of specially printed and cut cloud-shaped papers.



Greenberg's cut-paper "System IX Hermine: Labor Day Weekend Worry" (2017) doesn't seem likely to disperse. (Photo courtesy of the Print Center.)

These storms allow viewers to sidestep concern for life and property, and offer sweet relief from yammering teams of weathercasters. Based on actual storms, the works are titled with familiar phrases, like “System V Don: ‘Not Expected to Survive for Long,’” (2018). If only real forecasters were that succinct.

“System XV Nicole: ‘Defied Forecasts by Steadily Organizing,’” (2018) is a box-framed rainbow swirl, save for a scary black hole in the northwest. Meanwhile, “System X Irma: ‘The Worst Case Scenario Looks Likely,’” (2018) defies her title: A widening swirl of silvery white and gray, she doesn’t look so bad.

Though the media and source material are familiar, the work presented in the 2018 ANNUAL is unexpected and thought-provoking. In their use of camera and silkscreen, ink, paint, and type, Coburn, Koestler, and Greenberg endow new possibilities upon simple pieces of paper.



Broad Street Review is a 501c3 non-profit organization

<http://www.broadstreetreview.com/art/print-center-92nd-annual-daniel-coburn-julie-anne-greenberg-jacob-koestler#>