

Christel Dillbohner: Ice Floe



August 8 - September 20, 2009

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Christel Dillbohner: *Ice Floe*

Like much of Christel Dillbohner's artwork, *Ice Floe* begins with the idea of a journey. Comprised of thousands of suspended cones that have been dipped in white, blue and green pigmented wax, this site-specific installation invites us to navigate an environment reminiscent of a majestic arctic landscape.

An enthusiastic world traveler and dedicated student of cultural practices, Dillbohner's evocative multi-media work draws inspiration from her diverse interests and experiences. She writes, "art has always been visual research and dissemination: investigating events and concepts through uncommon viewpoints and tools, then transforming ideas and material into visual catalysts." Motivated by her research of the melting glaciers and pack ice in the Arctic and in Antarctica, *Ice Floe* is a visual representation of an environment that is both physical and mental. Evoking topographies of extreme climates and thawing landmasses, *Ice Floe* suggests a parallel between the physical landscape, created over millions of years by the movement of earth, wind, and water, and our own inner landscapes, formed by layers of personal experiences gathered over the course of a lifetime. For the artist, the cone shape is a metaphor for the human body and mind, symbolizing an accumulation of experience that is distilled into memory. Transforming these everyday cones into fields of color that represent an imagined arctic topography, Dillbohner considers the installation as a three-dimensional painting and a representation of a mental journey.

Trained in the tradition of German Expressionist painting, Dillbohner's process is guided by her intuition and thirty years of experience as a working artist. The installation, paintings, assemblages and prints are rooted in a focused and meditative practice. For *Arctic Circle*, a nine-panel installation of framed assemblages, Dillbohner considered each panel a chapter in an imagined journey to the extreme arctic landscape. The works are nebulous and dream-like and employ natural residue like wax, seedlings and dried flowers found near the artist's studio in Berkeley, to capture an emotional site more than a geographic one. The work invites us to consider the mental and physical process of a journey and the ongoing search to discover new insights about the world and ourselves.

A native of Cologne, Germany, where she received her MFA in 1984, Dillbohner moved to California in 1987. Her work is held in several public collections including the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, Hawaii, the Institute of Cultural Inquiry in Los Angeles and the Fresno Art Museum. Her work has been exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally. Most recently, she has installed site-specific works in Bremen, Germany and the Cherry Center for the Arts in Carmel. This year she received a fellowship at the prestigious Jentel Artist Residency Program in Wyoming and was an Artist-in-Residence at the ICA's Print Center. Dillbohner currently lives in Berkeley, California.

Polar Journey
Monoprint Installation

This body of work was completed during Christel Dillbohner's two-week printmaking residency at the ICA Print Center this spring. Referencing an imaginary journey to the polar region, the artist created 62 unique monoprints, a stunning accomplishment that entailed a variety of printmaking techniques. Working with ICA Master Printer Fanny Retsek, Dillbohner made 10 different plates using collography, photopolymer intaglio, and chine collé. She printed on five different kinds of paper from the most commonly used Rives BFK to rare handmade mulberry, and she used multiple color combinations.

The ICA Print Center invites four artists a year to make a print project as part of the Artist-in-Residency Program. Prints from the editions are available for purchase; please inquire at the front desk for more information.

Ms. Dillbohner would like to thank Michael Oechsli, Colin King-Bailey, James Linnehan and Paul Van de Carr for their precision, endurance and patience in suspending the hundreds of cones that comprise this installation.

Exhibition Checklist:

Focus Gallery

Arctic Circle, 2008

Mixed media assemblage

Ice Floe, 2008

Industrial filters, wax,
pigment and monofilament

Cardinale Project Room

Terrestrial Markings, 2006

Oil and wax on wood panel

Polar Journey, 2009

Monoprints
15 x 15 inches each

Back Gallery Entrance

Ice Berg, 2007

Oil and wax on wood panel

Pack Ice, 2007

Oil and wax on wood panel

Additional Programs

Monday, August 10, 6pm-8pm

Artist Reception and Talk with Christel Dillbohner at the
Hotel Montgomery, 211 South First Street, downtown San Jose

4:30pm-5:45pm: Special after hours viewing of *Ice Floe*

6pm-7pm: Join us for a drink* on the outdoor patio of Mosaic
Restaurant located in the Hotel Montgomery.

7pm-8pm: Join us in the Montgomery Hotel's historic lobby for an
Artist Talk with Christel Dillbohner.

Sunday, August 16, 4pm-6pm

Conversation and Dinner at the Headlands Center for the Arts:

*Visual Eco-Criticism: Katie Kurtz in conversation with Barry
Underwood, Christel Dillbohner & Christine Lee*

What does the green movement mean for art and vice versa?

Bay Area writer and environmentalist Katie Kurtz considers this
question via a practice she has coined "visual eco-criticism."

\$10 General Admission, free for Headlands and San Jose ICA

Members, Dinner \$20 per person (\$15 for Headlands Members)

Headlands Center for the Arts: 944 Fort Barry, Sausalito, CA

Please RSVP for dinner by visiting www.headlands.org or emailing
info@headlands.org.

Hours

Tues - Fri 10 - 5

Sat 12 - 5

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