

Reading fiction is a very important part of the way I visualize my work. Though I do not literally illustrate stories or characters, creating subtle visual narratives is part of my process. I create the stories myself but the imaginative muscle and my toolbox for understanding stories comes from all of my reading. The main focus of my thesis work is iterating how the images I make can be tied together into a continuous narrative with various different chapters.

I am taking the template from fiction of the traveler's journey, often a hero or heroine traversing some great stretch of land and encountering varieties of different landscapes along the way. I imagine this template in its most classic form as it appears in *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien. I am also inspired by scenes in Ursula Le Guin's *Left Hand of Darkness* and *Wizard of Earthsea* as well as CS Lewis' *Out of the Silent Planet* and *Perelandra*. *The Hobbit* is a classic tale on a fictional continent of earth called Middle-Earth about an unsuspecting hero being called to action and taking on a treacherous journey through forests, caves and mountains. In *The Left Hand of Darkness* there is a great journey made across a glacial landscape of pure cold and ice on a fictional planet called Gethen. In *Out of the Silent Planet* a fictional version of Mars called Malacandra is a place where all bodies of water are warm, gravity is lower than on Earth, and the plants and mountains are all extremely tall and thin. *Perelandra* is a fictional version of Venus, it is a water planet where all land masses are thin crusts that lie on top of the water and are subject to movement from waves.

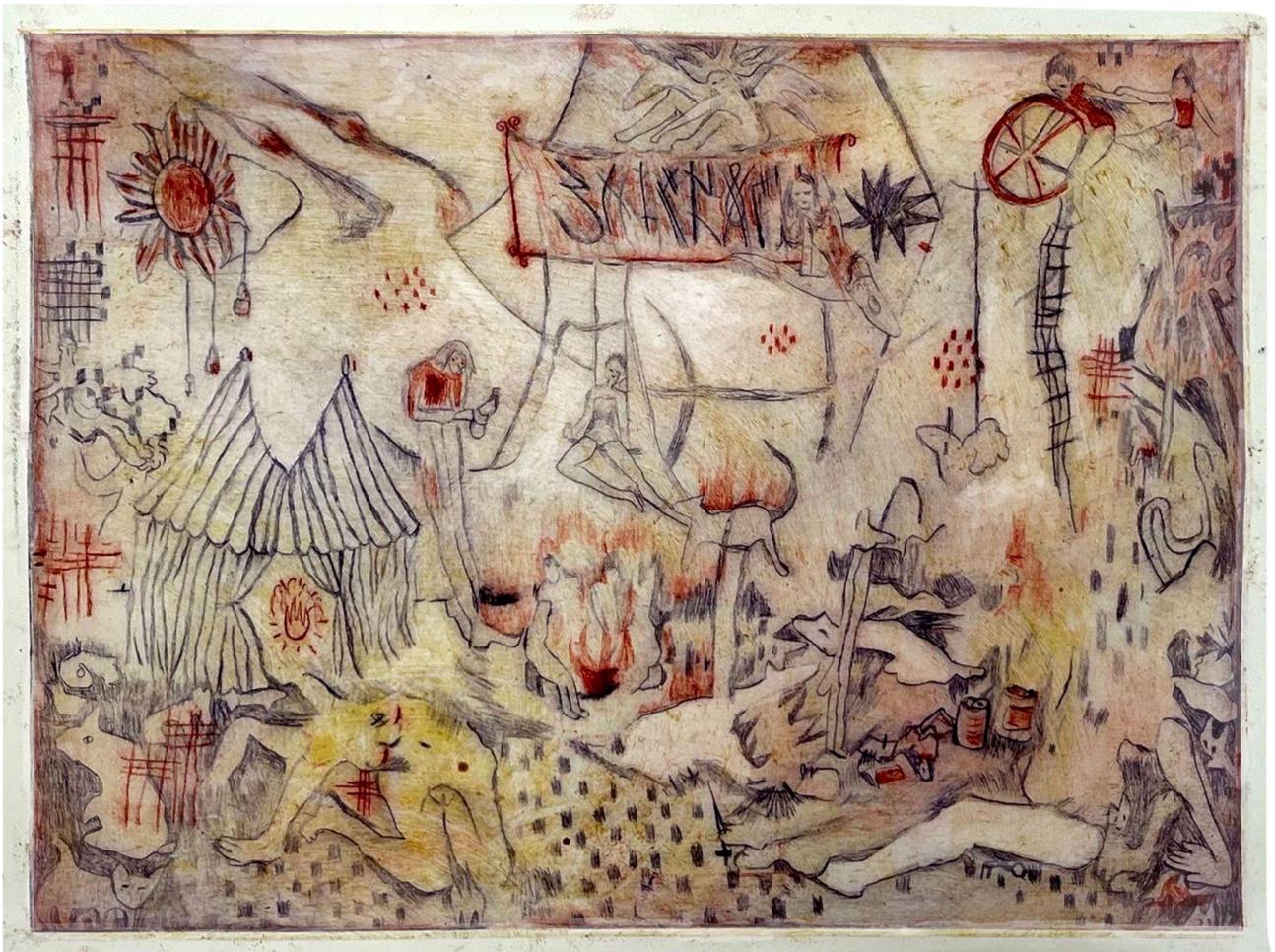
For the current body of work that I am presenting there are three main worlds. Urban, Oceanic, and Mountainous and there are two perspectives, microscopic and macroscopic.



Fever Dance on Unwatched City

URBAN SERIES

Fever Dance on Unwatched City depicts scenery inspired by the novel *Perdido Street Station* by China Meville. This novel offers a lot of aerial views of an overpopulated and extremely polluted futuristic city that is modeled after London. There are four main symbols in this piece. The scorpion, the chorus of angels, the three characters conferring on the bottom right corner and the character on the left who is solitary. The group of three is supposed to indicate an interaction of betrayal and mischief. One character is blind while the other two are crouched and hiding. The blind character is still implicit in evil but some type of treachery is happening. The solitary character is in luxury, peace, their stillness indicates the alwaysness of things. There will always be someone resting alone in their apartment while there will always be some interaction on the street. The Urban Series depicts activity that is cyclical, the individuals leave but the actions will always be the same.



Horse Face Ethyl and Her Marvelous Plgs In Satin

This world is set to the tone of Tom Waits' albums *Real Gone* and *Rain Dogs* and the title is taken directly from a song on *Real Gone* called "Circus". A makeshift world, people living on top of each other, a community created out of momentary pleasure and necessity. A world where nothing stays long enough for anything other than a fleeting daydream of jovial playfulness and waxing and waning sadness to wander in and out of the scene. This circus moment is urban but peripheral. I associate this scene with loss and multiple versions of loneliness, as well as the kind of fun that comes together when nothing is at stake.



Victoria In the House of Eight

This is the first part of a diptych paired with *Fever Dance on Unwatched City*. It depicts a character looking down on some precursor of a dreaded fate, it can be in the form of a letter, a text message, tarot cards, playing cards, a flier found on the ground. Towering behind her is a

large empty house, an abandoned past. On the left, falling off the page, is a hint to the viewer at what might be on the card she is holding. A parade of lungs exits and enters the image (entering from the left entering out the right behind her) and a series of characters on the top left corner presents three possibilities to be made for the future. Maybe this character will be one of the four interacting in *Fever Dance* or maybe it will become one of the angels overlooking.



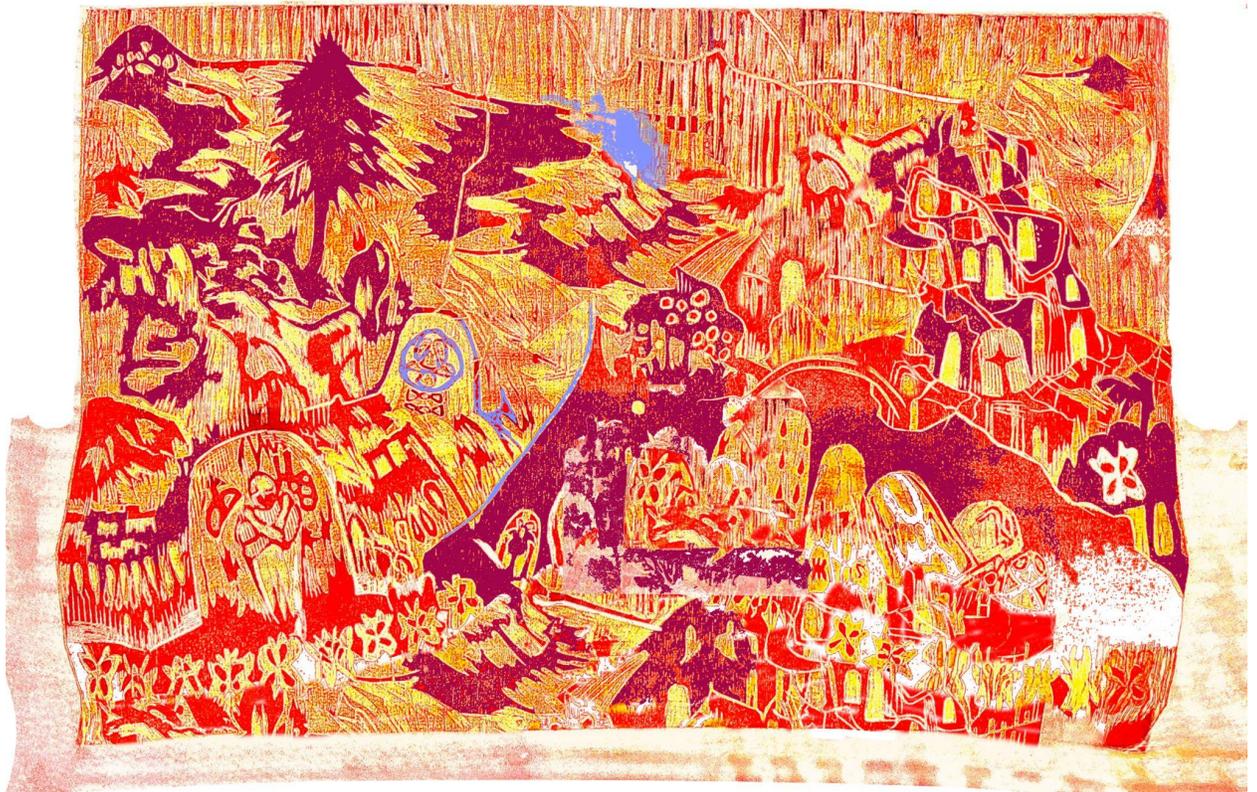
MOUNTAIN SERIES

There are no human characters present. The symbolic structure of this image is similar to *Fever Dance*. The symbol in the upper right corner this time is an orchid, a symbol of thoughtfulness and fertility. This vision is seen from afar, and depicts harmony. In the sky is a collusion of symbols, meeting in playful unison. A crown appears on the left below the orchid. A crown is a rich symbol that reappears for me in various ways. I think of it in this case as a symbol of ascension. I think sitting under the crown in this image would evoke a perfect state of comfort and clarity.

Aerial views of all kinds, vertiginous flights into abysses. Modest and even abject objects are hieroglyphs in whose dark prisms social relations lay congealed and in fragments.



Fishing on the Erewhon Plateau . The word Erewhon is an anagram of "nowhere", invented by Samuel Butler as the title for a novel that depicts a utopia in which individuals are responsible for their own health. It is also the name for a popular overpriced health food store.



titled *Malo Celo*. It depicts a village seen from far away through a graveyard. It is inspired by a scene in the novel *Blue Fox* and some research I was doing on my own family heritage. *Blue Fox* takes place in a small Icelandic village and there is a scene in which a flooded graveyard unearths teeth, coccyx fingers and toes. The image of a graveyard as a central part of a small ancient village as well as my experiences visiting my grandmother and grandfathers grave in an extremely overgrown grave site in Serbia resonated with me and gave me the notion of tombstones being part of a natural landscape and a symbol of time worn generations of human knowing and connections.

OCEANIC SERIES

The Oceanic series goes both underwater and underground and has the most cohesive color scheme and visual language of perhaps all the series. This is because this world is depicted through cataloging microscopic beings and organisms and also the consistent presence of the colors blue and brown for ground and water. This creates a single form that is central to the image as opposed to a sprawling or towering landscape. This series consists of a handmade paper pulp painting and two books. This series is depicted in mediums outside of print because of its more tactile nature.



This is a 22x20 inch microscopic image titled *Pincers* of some myofibril underwater being moving forward, creating sound waves and waves of motion in the air or the atmosphere.

RadioTelemeter, EchoSounder, Refraction

This book is a collection of descriptions taken out of a textbook on the deep sea composed and edited in various ways to evoke imagination and images to go along with it.

Chthonic Languages

Is a series of lithograph drawings overlaid with lists, abstract monotypes and citrasolved photographs taken at the aquarium in Lisbon.

All this work ties together a world that spans over various locations and time periods and the future I see for it lies in a combination of ancient mythology and also a deeper understanding of the fleeting cross pollinated mythologies invented in our postmodern and consumerist culture. I look towards Carl Jung's research on symbolism and alchemy for a deeper story in the symbolism I am confronted with.

In the work I have presented here I depict both connection and alienation expressed and populated with invented and borrowed symbols. On the most macro level the landscape itself is symbolic. I explore the changes made by an urban environment, a landscape panorama, the psychological metaphor of a leering mountaintop, an empty building in the distance, an open space dominated by atmosphere and sky or an environment in which all encounters are close and brief.

The medium of printmaking has been a driving force behind this project. A print requires a lot of work and meditation on certain spatial and material problems that require focus to resolve. When a drawing is created to be made into a print the drawing becomes a map of an

idea that will be brought to life by time, care and process. The care, alchemy and skill that goes into printmaking brings new life to ideas and works well with my method of patterning and organizing that goes into my artmaking process.

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