

HAND PAPERMAKING



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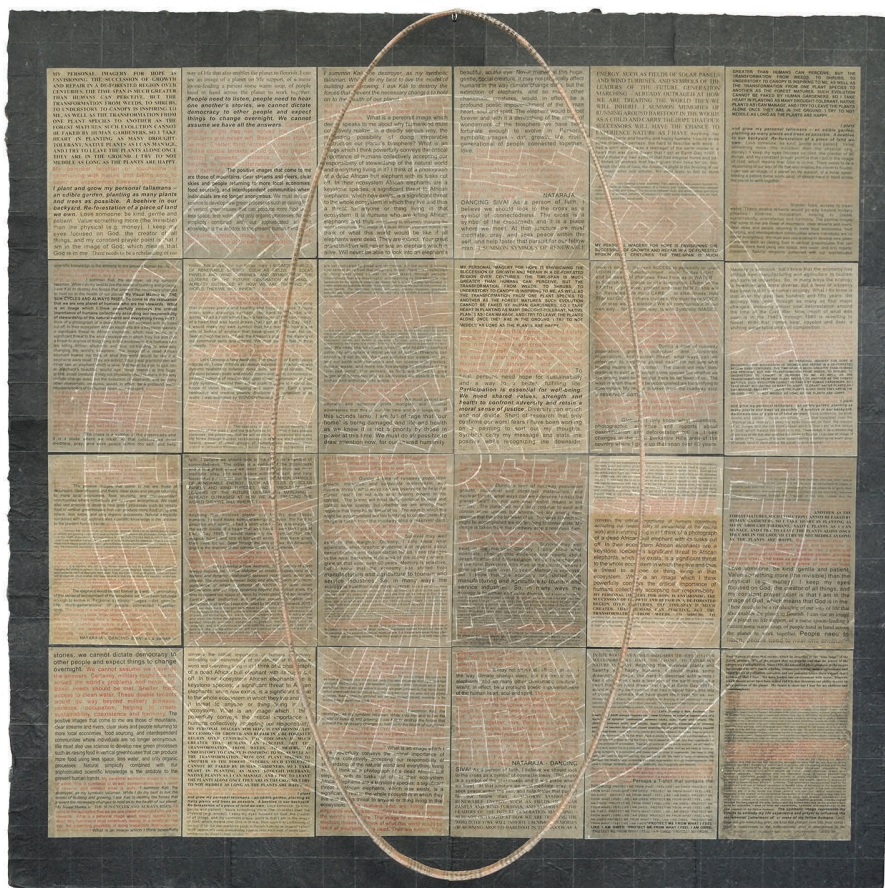
WINTER 2020

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FRONT COVER: Li Songsong, *Swordsmanship (V)*, 2018, 75 x 85½ x 3 inches, monoprint with handmade cast paper. Collaborators: Justin Israels, Ruth Lingen, Akemi Martin, Emily Chaplain, Katsumi Suzuki, Sarah Carpenter. Interns: Clare Altman, Shemuel Phillip-Peters, Isabel Rower. Courtesy of the artist and Pace Prints, New York. BACK COVER: Beth Sheehan, *Borrowed*, 2019, 16¾ x 10¾ inches, laser-printed photographs embedded between linen and abaca paper with blowout; text excerpted from *How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe* by Charles Yu; edition of 24. Courtesy of the artist.



The Expansive Helen Frederick

LYNN SURES

Helen Frederick, Paradox 1, 2020, 48 x 48 x 2 inches, artist-made flax paper, digitally printed with a scored drawing, and wrapped word ellipse. Photo: Greg Staley. All photos courtesy of Helen Frederick. BELOW: Helen Frederick in the mountain town of Manalli, India during her first visit, circa 1976.



Helen Frederick is in her Reading Road studio describing to me an exhibition project, the latest in an extensive series spanning her significant career. She is just as excitedly relating a purge of past documents of her history, everything but family memories, which have become emphatic in her life and her art. She feels that she is at the point where it is no longer necessary to describe the titles she has held. “I’m not a printmaker, I’m not a graduate of RISD, I’m not a founder of Pyramid, I’m not a professor at GMU, I’m this individual, heartfully trying to give exposure to concerns...”¹

Recently asked to curate the 2021 forty-year show for Pyramid Atlantic Art Center in Hyattsville, Maryland, Helen is struck by the time elapsed since she founded Pyramid Prints and Paperworks—its original name—in Baltimore, and amazed where the organization is now. Of her own longtime practice Helen recounts, “I started as a four-year-old, knowing I was going to be an artist...I saw my grandfather growing all these crops, and I realized the idea that plants were very important in life.”

Helen attended the Rhode Island School of Design at a time when David Bowie, and particularly painters, were there; it was an era of parties but Helen chose to remain very focused on her studies. On scholarship with three jobs, Helen was a diligent student; she warily observed that many students were being dropped from school. She made it through, though not as a painter, the overarching expectation of the time. She found a place making prints. “I like to struggle, I like to anticipate that things could go wrong...and RISD really taught me that,” she offers. Helen’s history from this point is studded with examples of her independent thought. She notes that “if I’d fallen inside the box of being a painter at RISD, none of [the creative life in prints and paper] would have happened.” Dissatisfied with printmaking papers, she recalls “I didn’t know what to do about it, and I didn’t learn the answer in art school. I learned

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