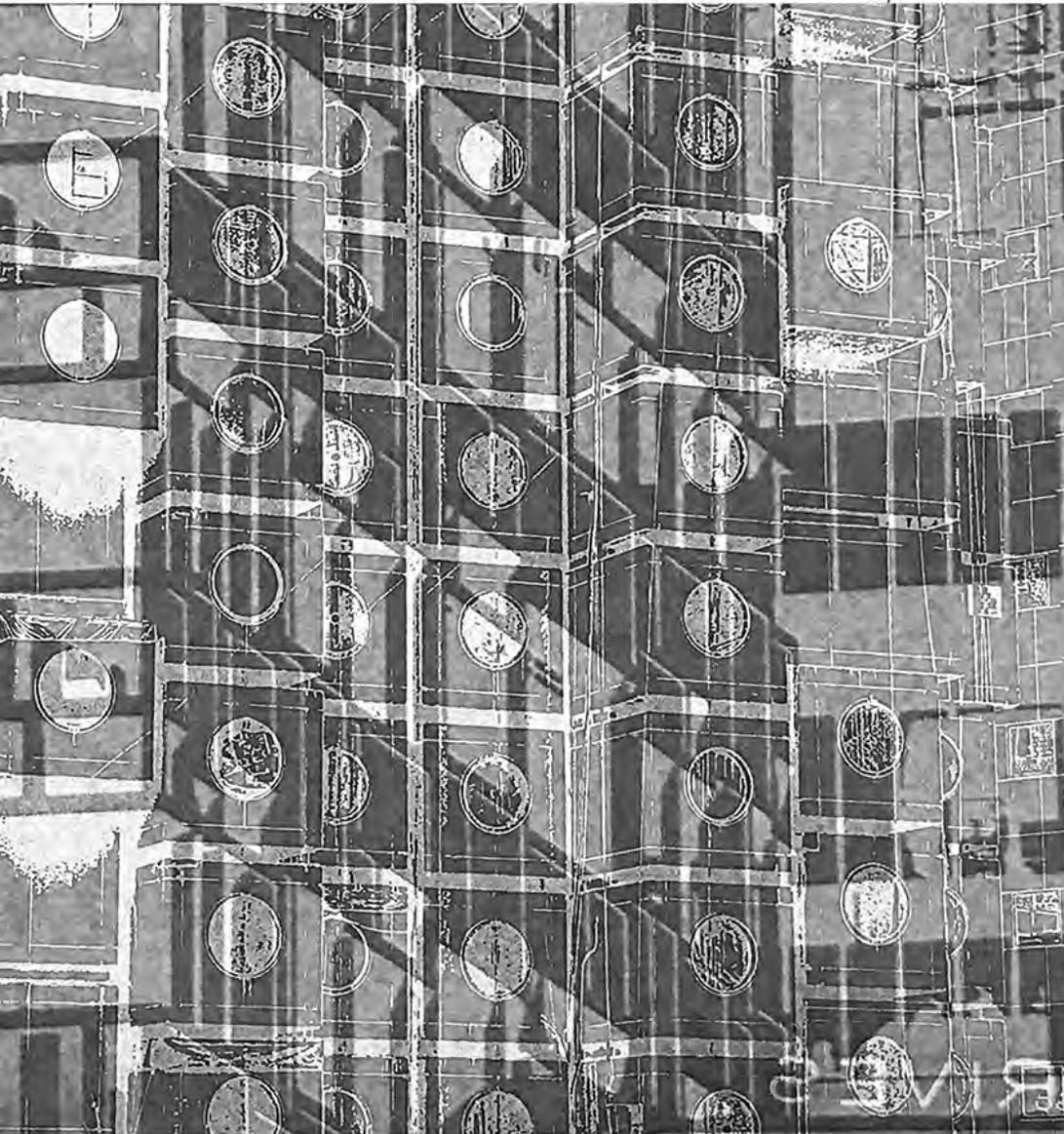


Reflections Within the Transitioning Grid

Merging Structure, Form & Design with Technology

September 15–November 22, 2017



by Merrill
Shatzman &
libi rose

GALLERY GUIDE

Power Plant Gallery • 919-660-3622 • powerplantgallery.org

***Reflections Within the Transitioning Grid:
Merging Structure, Form & Design with Technology***

Merrill Shatzman & libi rose

How we navigate, plan, design and build, and where we live, work and shop, are all dependent on different grid formations. The grid provides us with a sense of security, balance, orientation, boundary, exploration and containment. Psychologically, the concept of a grid is a constant throughout our lives, appearing as constructs in our memories, in our behavior, and in our daily life functions.

Decisions of all types are made in relationship to the grid, yet what emphasis is put on the unpredictable organic forms that visually evolve inside these spaces, counterbalancing our geometric borders?

This exhibit visually and formally examines the relationship between organic form and structure through deciphering images of contemporary curtain-wall architecture found in New York, London, Shanghai and Tokyo. It presents the artists' vision of subjects in multiple ways and formats while fusing traditionally-made imagery with technologically-generated applications. The work was digitally produced, but it is at its root, very much organically constructed.

The prints and installations were generated from photographs capturing abstractions within contained spaces, by focusing on form, layering, contradiction, and beauty. In addition to revealing free-flowing lines, organic shapes and unique patterns made from reflections and shadows, the artists' interests in cartography, urban planning, architecture, typography, calligraphy, archaeology, topography, and symbolism become evident.

Thank you to our sponsors: *Reflections Within the Transitioning Grid: Merging Structure, Form and Design with Technology* has been supported by Duke University Council for the Arts Collaboration Development Grants, and Arts & Sciences Council Committee on Faculty Research Grant. Merrill Shatzman and libi rose would also like to thank The Department of Art, Art History and Visual Studies, and Innovation Co-Lab at Duke University for the use of their laser cutters.

Woodcuts

During the past several years Merrill Shatzman has focused on the integration of digital technologies with traditional art-making methods, specifically addressing the technical and conceptual similarities found among silkscreen and relief printmaking, and laser fabrication. Shatzman was interested in how technology could add - and expand upon - the effects she wants to achieve or have yet to find in her prints. By developing the work using digital imaging and employing laser fabrication as a carving tool, Shatzman could manipulate surfaces in novel ways, resulting in finely drawn, patterned, and textured photographic-like color woodblocks with extremely precise registration. In addition to approaching the imagery in a new way, Shatzman explored directions to manipulate the blocks, printing surfaces and their methods of presentation. Shatzman says, “ I searched for cohesion between the different working methods that could integrate my ideas and imagery technically, conceptually, and visually without appearing mechanical. Layering, and the treatment of my printing surface, became this bridge.”

Reflections Within the Grid is a group of forty multi-color laser cut woodcut prints displayed in a grid format. Within the grid, there are four distinct groups of images, that through order, positioning, and omission of layers, show transition within the series. Different variations of each image occur through layering and omission of specific layers. The same color inks are used throughout all variations, but appear different depending on the color of paper on which the image is printed.

These images are generated from photographs taken of designer store windows and facades, including Corso Como, Shanghai (Reflections Within the Grid #3, Mont Blanc, Shanghai (Reflections Within the Grid #4) and Christian Dior, Tokyo (Reflections Within the Grid #5).

Reflections within the Transitioning Grid: Reliefs

One of the goals of the artists' project is to stretch the viewer's imagination, prompting one to interpret reflected imagery within the gridded areas as abstractions, landscapes, topographic maps, etc. The shapes, details and patterning found within the reflected areas of the digital drawing are used as the visual foundation for the presence-sensor installation, and inspire further collaboration. The artists accentuate the connection between the digital installation and the printed objects, through the use of subjects, grids, lines, and shapes, made physical via laser cutting. With the grid setting fixed, boundaries for multiple abstract compositions are found within, and select sections are pared down to basic structures void of color, patterning and detail. Relief images emphasizing depth were designed and fabricated on the laser cutter using white mat board, simplifying the image's surface, yet when lit becoming a host of linear activity due to the varying heights of the contoured vector-cut planes. Placed on the outside walls of the related installation, the viewer gets a modified preview of what is yet to come.

Reflections within the Transitioning Grid: Projections

The projections are visually the most similar to the source material used as inspiration for the other works on view here. By tying the layers of the image in each projection to presence-sensors, the grid is embodied and responds to those occupying it. Just as a city grid shifts when its occupants move through it, as the lighting changes throughout the day, and even with the changes in weather, the projections in the installation flicker through stages of abstraction and realization in response to movement. The forms seen in the reliefs and in the prints are echoed and amplified as the image is affected by those observing it. The artists chose to illuminate the grid, and to illustrate the changeability of it, in spite of its rigid structure. Shatzman and rose also emphasize the fact that as much as the grid affects those within it, those within it also affect the grid. The relationship is one of more nuance, as the environment, and the consciousness within are in continual flux.

Incised Tapestry

Visually woven together through pattern, shape, texture and an ever present grid found within all thirty-four images, Incised Tapestry presents a unique way of viewing photographs taken in Tokyo, Shanghai and New York. Due to their unique presentation (backlit laser-etched* photographs that are incised into both front and back surfaces of a sheet of paper), emphasis is placed on the patterning and repetition of lines and shapes formed by the inscribed grids consistently found in each piece. Digitally manipulated photographs shown in each box were scrupulously paired with a counterpart piece (shown on the opposite side) to create a dynamic visual relationship emphasizing formal qualities while also highlighting place, narrative, and a sensitivity to the depicted culture. So as to accentuate the carved surfaces and laser etched translucent areas that connect raised lines and shapes, the superimposed photographs are presented as an illuminated work, precisely positioned in the irregular pattern of lit windows seen at night. Aspects of the image are revealed in time, as images on the backside of the sheet emerge slowly, providing detail, context, and additional patterning to the image on the front. Light boxes of different sizes and depths are positioned to accentuate height, proximity and to contradict the structural grids found within the gallery space. Expanding upon the concept of “the grid” and paralleling urban design and planning, electrical wires connecting the units to each other and their power sources remain visible, creating spontaneous, organic lines and shapes that contradict the geometric forms and structure of this uniquely designed grid.

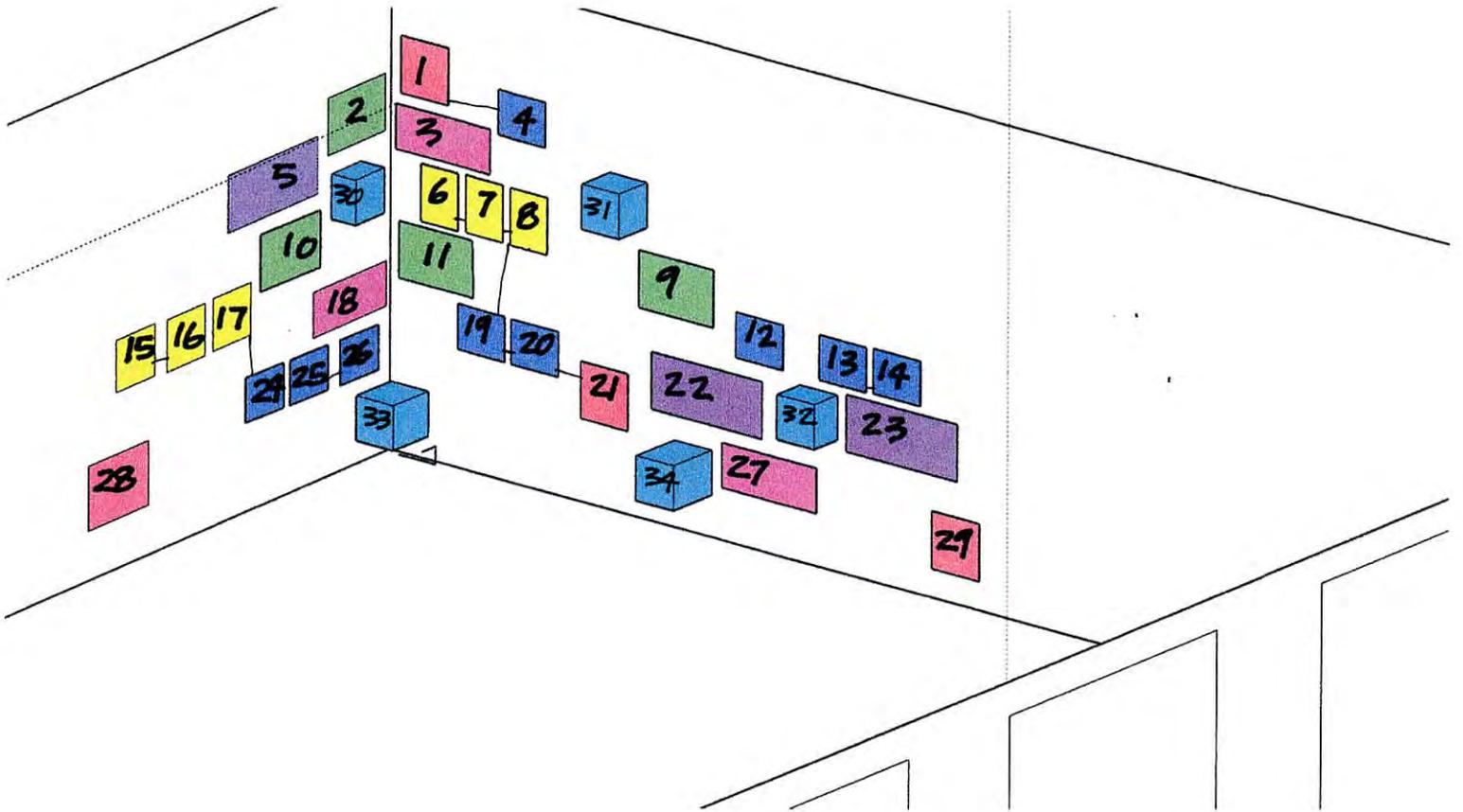
* Laser etching is a process where the laser is configured to only remove the top layer of paper in varying and exactly calculated depths without damaging the reverse side of the paper. The laser incises the image into the paper, changing its tone in the burned areas. When etched with different “designs” on both sides of the paper and illuminated from the back, unpredictable marks and patterns occur, displaying delicate relief of exceptional precision, with variations in value of the paper’s tone.

Incised Tapestry image guide

<u>#</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Location</u>
1	14" x 14" x 2"	Shanghai: Jing'an Temple (back), Tokyo: The Sumida Hokusai Museum, Kazuyo Sejima architect (front)
2	14" x 22" x 2"	Shanghai
3	11" x 30" x 2"	Tokyo: Metropolitan Government Building
4	11" x 14" x 2"	Tokyo
5	14" x 34" x 2"	Tokyo: Shidome Siosite
6	14" x 11" x 2"	Tokyo: Shidome Siosite
7	14" x 11" x 2"	Shanghai
8	14" x 11" x 2"	Tokyo: Hermes, Ginza, Renzo Piano architect
9	14" x 22" x 2"	Tokyo
10	14" x 22" x 2"	Tokyo: Ginza
11	14" x 22" x 2"	Tokyo: Tiffany & Co., Ginza, Kengo Kuma architect) New York: Christian Dior Mid-town, Tokyo: Sumida
12	11" x 14" x 2"	Shanghai (back), Tokyo: Shidome Siosite (front)
13	11" x 14" x 2"	Tokyo: Nakagin Capsule Tower, Ginza
14	11" x 14" x 2"	Shanghai
15	14" x 11" x 2"	Shanghai: Hugo Boss
16	14" x 11" x 2"	Tokyo: Tiffany & Co., Ginza
17	14" x 11" x 2"	Tokyo: Metropolitan Government Building (front), Kappabashi neighborhood (back)
18	11" x 30" x 2"	Tokyo
19	11" x 14" x 2"	Tokyo
20	11" x 14" x 2"	Tokyo
21	14" x 14" x 2"	Shanghai
22	14" x 34" x 2"	Tokyo: Mikimoto, Ginza, Toyo Ito & Assoc., architects New York: Christian Dior Tokyo: Yamaha Ginza Building, Nikken Sekkei

- 23 14" x 34" x 2" Tokyo
- 24 11" x 14" x 2" Tokyo: Watari Museum of Contemporary Art
- 25 11" x 14" x 2" Tokyo: Shibuya (front), Shanghai: Louis Vitton
- 26 11" x 14" x 2" Tokyo: Tiffany & Co., Ginza, Shiseido, Ginza, Klien Dytham architects
- 27 11" x 30" x 2" Shanghai: Hugo Boss
Tokyo: Shidome Siosite
- 28 14" x 14" x 2" Tokyo: Manhole cover
Suzhou: Lingering Garden, stone path
- 29 14" x 14" x 2" Tokyo: Manhole cover
Suzhou: Humble Administrator's Garden, stone path
- 30 (1) 14" h x 11" w x 9" d Squares: Shanghai: Hugo Boss, Shidome Siosite
- 31 (3) 14" h x 11" w x 7" d Circles: Tokyo: Ginza (front),
Shanghai: Corso Como (right side)
Tokyo: Ginza (left side)
Tokyo: Nakagin Capsule Tower, Ginza (bottom)
- 32 (5) 14" h x 11" w x 5" d Diamonds: Shanghai: Science & Technology Museum (front)
Tokyo: Mikimota 1, Ginza (right side)
Tokyo: Ginza (left side)
- 33 (2) 14" h x 11" w x 11" d Grids: Shanghai (front and sides)
Tokyo: Audi Forum (top)
- 34 (4) 14" h x 11" w x 7" d Triangles: Kyoto Station
Tokyo: Mikimoto Building, Ginza
Tokyo: Audi Forum Building, Ginza
Kyoto station

Merrill Shatzman
 Box Diagram 08/08/17 Final



- 6 ■ 14" x 11" vertical
- 9 ■ 11" x 14" horizontal
- 4 ■ 14" x 14" square
- 4 ■ 14" x 22"
- 3 ■ 14" x 34"
- 3 ■ 11" x 30"

connections

- Boxes
- 15 → 16
 - 17 → 24
 - 25 → 26
 - 1 → 4
 - 6 → 7
 - 8 → 19
 - 20 → 21
 - 13 → 14

29

5 cubes to be added later - depths TBA