

OKTP



ISCA GREENFIELD-SANDERS

07.01.12

Isca Greenfield-Sanders uses discarded slides as her source imagery. They are the evidence of stories, now forgotten, but given another life through her art. The narrative is not prescriptive but wide open. Sometimes she recasts the image as if some of the color had been washed away. Other times she intentionally repeats a flaw because there are treasures to be found in the castoff of the castoff. In the digital age, everyone is a photographer, and the mistakes are deleted before they can even be filed away. In her work, Greenfield-Sanders repurposes the quotidian into something deeply memorable.

Paulson Bott Press: You determine some of the basic images before you come out to Paulson Bott Press, right?

Isca Greenfield-Sanders: Yes. Renee and Pam visited my studio in New York, and we chose a handful of watercolor studies that we thought would translate well as etchings. Each watercolor study was printed onto a plate using a direct-to-plate photogravure technique and that plate serves as the basis for each etching.

Q: Do you know where these images came from?

IG-S: I don't know where these oceans or mountains are located. But that's part of the fun of this process. The images remain open enough so that you can put yourself into them. And if you've been to a mountain ravine like this, with one of those ice-cold wading pools, then that's the one that you visited. Working with sandpaper was in tune with what I do because I can make marks that are kind of ghosts of movement or gestures.



The sweeping, whirling marks that happen are a lot more like what I do.

Q: The original materials were slides?

IG-S: Yes, they're estate sale eBay purchases. The two images of wading in the water appear to be from the late 1950s. The image of the mountain stream is a 1960s image, and the Pikes Peak image I don't have a date for, but based on costuming, I'm going to guess 1960s as well.

PIKES PEAK, 2012

Direct to plate photogravure and aquatint; 32" x 31"; Edition of 50





WADER I (BLUE), 2012

Direct to plate photogravure and aquatint;
32" x 31"; Edition of 40



WADER II (BLUE), 2012

Direct to plate photogravure and aquatint;
32" x 31"; Edition of 40

Q: The Pikes Peak image looks different from the others.

IG-S: It's an example of what I call a "Light Leak" image. What I was going for in this etching is to subtly put forth the inaccuracies that were specific to the medium of film photography—flares, light leaks, color banding, that kind of thing.

It's a very grainy image. This image is really blown out on the right side. It has color flares in it. You're getting exactly the amount of information that you need to make out what's going on there, but it's certainly not as you would see it through a lens.

Q: Almost like a mistake?

IG-S: Right. I see beauty in flaws. I have been working on the "Light Leak" series for a couple of years now. I took as its subject the discards. With digital cameras, people just throw away "bad" photos immediately upon download. When photographers were confined to a 24 or a 36-exposure roll of film they tended to keep any photo they had paid to develop.

All of those accidents, the glitches, were ripe for representation as paintings. There is something about a perfect image that's really unapproachable, whereas a dinged-up piece of furniture is infinitely more valuable.

Q: This series of four prints are called wading images?

IG-S: Yes, they are visually related, because the figures are wading out into water. But there is something a little bit nefarious for me about the way they are paddling out there. Maybe they're not coming back...

Q: Tell me about the pinkish color.

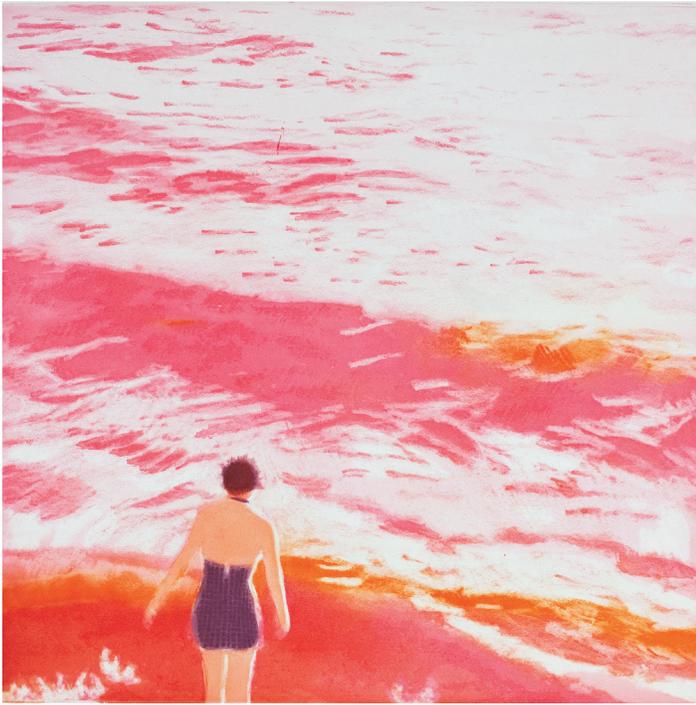
IG-S: Turning full color images pink is something I have been doing since 2004. I am drawn to water and beach imagery and I try to take a fresh-eyes approach to it. To that end, I set out to eliminate the most important color to any beach image, which is blue—blue water, blue sky.

When you remove blue, what you are left with is pink—the peaches and pinks and yellows. So this image, having not a drop of blue in it, is unmistakably water and full color, almost as if you've seen a pink ocean, which you clearly have not.

Q: So in terms of your own narratives, are you drawn to water stories because of your own memories of going to the shore?

IG-S: No, not at all. I did not grow up going to the ocean, in fact I live on a lake, emotionally quite the opposite. But water is breathtaking to me. To achieve anything close to its quality I combine many mediums taking what I consider to be the best traits from each one. In this case, we're making etchings, but remember that the "key" plate for each etching is a direct print of one of my watercolor studies, which is a combination of photography, watercolor and colored pencil.

Standing in front of these etchings, if you were to guess the medium, you might say chalk or a watercolor. I like that confusion, that layering.



WADER I (PINK), 2012

Direct to plate photogravure and aquatint;
32" x 31"; Edition of 40



WADER II (PINK), 2012

Direct to plate photogravure and aquatint;
32" x 31"; Edition of 40



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MOUNTAIN STREAM, 2012

Direct to plate photogravure and aquatint;
31 1/2" x 30 1/2"; Edition of 50

DESIGN: MICHAEL OSBORNE DESIGN