



Cade Tompkins Projects

Art in Print

Serena Perrone

by Sarah Kirk Hanley
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Edition Review

Serena Perrone, Alberi: Site Specific
(2014–16)



Serena Perrone, Alberi: Site Specific (2014–16). Image courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects.

Suite of 12 line etchings with letterpress title page and colophon, in gray linen clamshell box with embossed title, images 3 x 5 inches each, sheets 8 x 10 inches each. Edition of 7. Printed and published by the artist, Kutztown, PA. Available through Cade Tompkins Projects, Providence, RI. \$5,000.

Lightforms: Venice I–VII (2016)

Suite of seven cyanotypes in a blue linen clamshell box, images variable, sheets 8 x 10 inches each. Edition of 5. Printed and published by the artist, Kutztown, PA. Available through Cade Tompkins Projects, Providence, RI. \$4,000.

In a departure from the fictionalized, narrative landscapes of her prior works, Serena Perrone's most recent print editions delight in facts of the natural world, albeit unexpected and dreamlike ones. Her abiding interest in the psychological aspects of landscape remains central; these are works "about memory," she says, developed across carefully considered stages of distance in time and geography. Both suites were initiated during an extended stay in Italy in 2014, but Perrone intentionally allowed months or years to pass, waiting to formalize the images after her return to the US.

Alberi: Site Specific recreates a journey through the Tuscan countryside. Back in Pennsylvania, reviewing her photographs, Perrone realized how strongly she had been drawn to distinctively

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Italian trees; she chose 12 to be the subjects of jewel-like etchings that invite ruminative inspection. Though highly detailed, they have a somewhat blurred and distorted aspect, as if viewed through a filtered lens.



Serena Perrone, detail from *Alberi: Site Specific* (2014–16). Image courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects.

After completing the etchings, Perrone hunted each tree down on Google Earth. “I was an Internet tree-stalker,” she quips. The eventual reward for this time-intensive research, which involved retracing her steps digitally and recalling exactly where she had stood when she snapped each photo, was the feeling of “embracing an old friend.” The set’s colophon names each location—from Cortona to Urbino—and provides the geographical coordinates of each individual tree.

The cyanotype set *Lightforms: Venice I–VII* was also culled from snapshots. Fascinated, like so many artists before her, with the singular quality of Venetian light, she selected seven images for translation into cyanotype, a technique new to her. The casual photographic images of indiscernible locations converge with the fuzzy edges of the

technique to produce enigmatic images of the city. The individual titles are nouns that meander between Italian and English: Scarpa, Giardini, Kites, Cone, Treeline, Arch, Sliver. These ambiguities are compounded by cyanotype’s association with early photography, making it difficult to place the images in time. As with *Alberi: Site Specific*, the viewer is afforded a glimpse of a recalled moment with all of its affect and foibles. In a 2013 interview with *Printeresting.org*, the artist expressed her desire to convey “a sense of place, a sense of location, an overall sense of a mood or a state of mind, a state of consciousness that was happening in that location.” With these two portfolios she has hit the mark.



Serena Perrone, *Lightforms: Venice VII* (2016). Image courtesy of Cade Tompkins Projects.