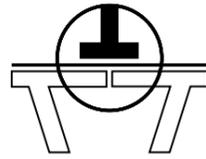




*Judy Pfaff:
End of the Rain*

Judy Pfaff: End of the Rain



Curated by J Myszka Lewis and Sona Pastel-Daneshgar for Tandem Press



at **The Gallery at Saint Kate - The Arts Hotel**

139 East Kilbourn Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

Reception: Thursday, August 19, 2021 5-7pm

On View: August 14 - November 14, 2021

For more information or purchase inquiries, please contact curators
J Myszka Lewis or Sona Pastel-Daneshgar.

608.263.3437 | info@tandempress.wisc.edu

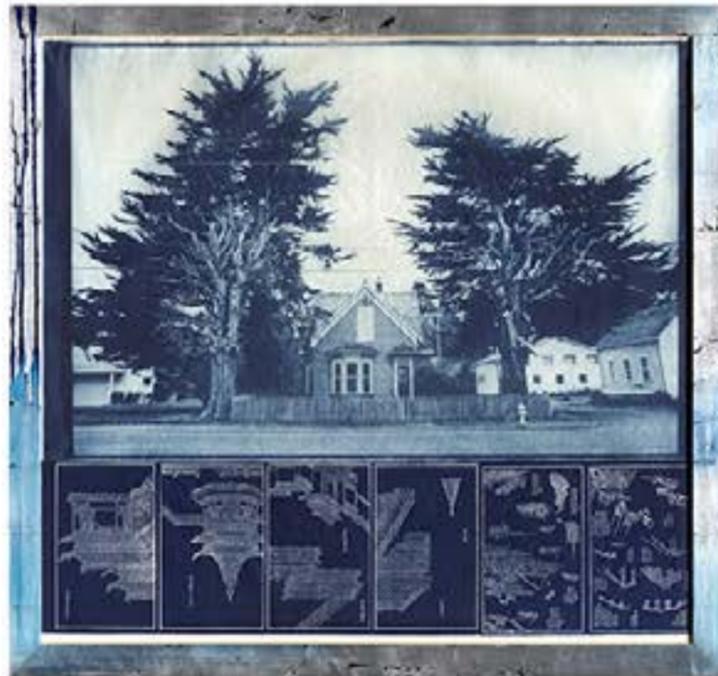
tandempress.wisc.edu | Instagram @UWTandemPress | Facebook @TandemPress

In a recent interview, Judy Pfaff said “I don’t trust language. I don’t trust words.” It is clear in her profound work, however, that she trusts materials and colors. Her work sways back and forth between representation and abstraction as she harnesses images found in her surroundings—trees, homes, textiles found in a market, illustrations of fish and birds—holds them in her hands, and recreates their likenesses in colorful and airy sculptures, installations, paintings, and prints. She moves between two- and three-dimensional work with a fluidity that feels natural and balanced, but also results in unexpected and delightfully surprising visual experiences.

Judy Pfaff: End of the Rain highlights a selection of the prints that Judy Pfaff created with Tandem Press from 2000 to 2017. The prints included in this exhibition reveal some of the long-standing aspects of her aesthetic, as well as her experimental application of multiple printing techniques and materials in each work. The exhibition’s titular artwork anchors the show in the idea of “the end of the rain”: this white and blue triptych implies a moment that marks both a change and a continuation. The rain is ending, leaving a sense of newness in its wake, and yet nothing is all that different, just wet. Pfaff often imbues her work with an atmospheric feeling like that of a freshly fallen rain through which we experience the imagery as familiar yet refreshed and new.

Judy Pfaff achieves unique atmospheric or spatial qualities in her artwork through an intuitive working process as she makes an image or form, adds to it, subtracts from it, builds upon it, and adjusts materials. Each step involves both physical layers of images or materials and intellectual layers of meaning and insight. Just as one can read the history of a tree’s lifespan from its rings, the viewer can read Pfaff’s work through the layers that she builds up and leaves accessible to them.

The trust Judy Pfaff places in her hands, her materials, and her audience saturates her work with wonder and sincerity. She has a unique ability to tease a profound warmth out of her materials, inject deep spatial qualities into two-dimensional artworks, and visualize abstract ideas through recognizable images in a way that elicits personal connections within viewers. Although often eluding categorization, Pfaff’s artwork is approachable, inventive, genuine, and generous.



Judy Pfaff, *End of the Rain (A)*, 2000
Judy Pfaff, *End of the Rain (B)*, 2000
Judy Pfaff, *End of the Rain (C)*, 2000

Both a beacon and an anchor, *End of the Rain* stands as a point of unification for the exhibition. With a deep blue cast reminiscent of a cyanotype, Judy Pfaff linked three distinct images together within this triptych to touch upon the concepts of the microcosm and macrocosm. *End of the Rain (A)* and *(C)* focus on specific homes and their surroundings. Situated between the two, *End of the Rain (B)* induces a feeling of the cosmos; its size along with its etched swirling lines evoke ideas of the grandeur of nature. The *End of the Rain's* simultaneous specificity and generality is characteristic of Pfaff's work.



The flowing and swirling elements within this many-layered print *...wind-deer and the honey-grass...* reflect Pfaff's distinctive way of approaching works on paper with the mindset of a sculptor and installation artist. Pfaff physically layered images over each other to create an environment teeming with fish and plant life, organic lines, and patterns reminiscent of textiles. Each separately printed layer is stacked to create a spatial effect that ebbs and flows along with the imagery. The Tandem Press Collaborative Printmakers carved Judy Pfaff's imagery into woodblocks with a laser engraver and printed these blocks onto kozo (Japanese mulberry paper). Pfaff then hand-painted washes of fabric dye over the printed image, and this sheet became the background for this artwork. Lastly, Pfaff created the top sheet by digitally printing additional images onto a transparent plastic film and painting opaque white ink on the film's reverse behind certain areas to highlight specific details and patterns in the design. When these two layers of the artwork combine, the painted opaque areas visually rise and protrude away from the rest of the overall image. The background and foreground beautifully meld together where the printed plastic film remains transparent.

Judy Pfaff, *...wind-deer and the honey-grass...*, 2017.



Judy Pfaff's *"Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"* was inspired by a short story of the same title by the 20th-century Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges. The story is a work of speculative fiction steeped in philosophical questions such as whether a thing exists if it is not perceived and whether ideas can influence reality. Pfaff is particularly intrigued by Borges' explorations into abstraction, and his writing has had a lasting influence on her artwork. Although fifteen years separate *Tlön* from the other prints installed in this grouping, the works each share an ambiguity that speaks to philosophical considerations of the edges of reality or the possibility for multiple realizations of the same thing.

Judy Pfaff, *"Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"*, 2002
Judy Pfaff, *Foreseeable Future*, 2017
Judy Pfaff, *Unforeseeable Future*, 2017
Judy Pfaff, *Spin*, 2017

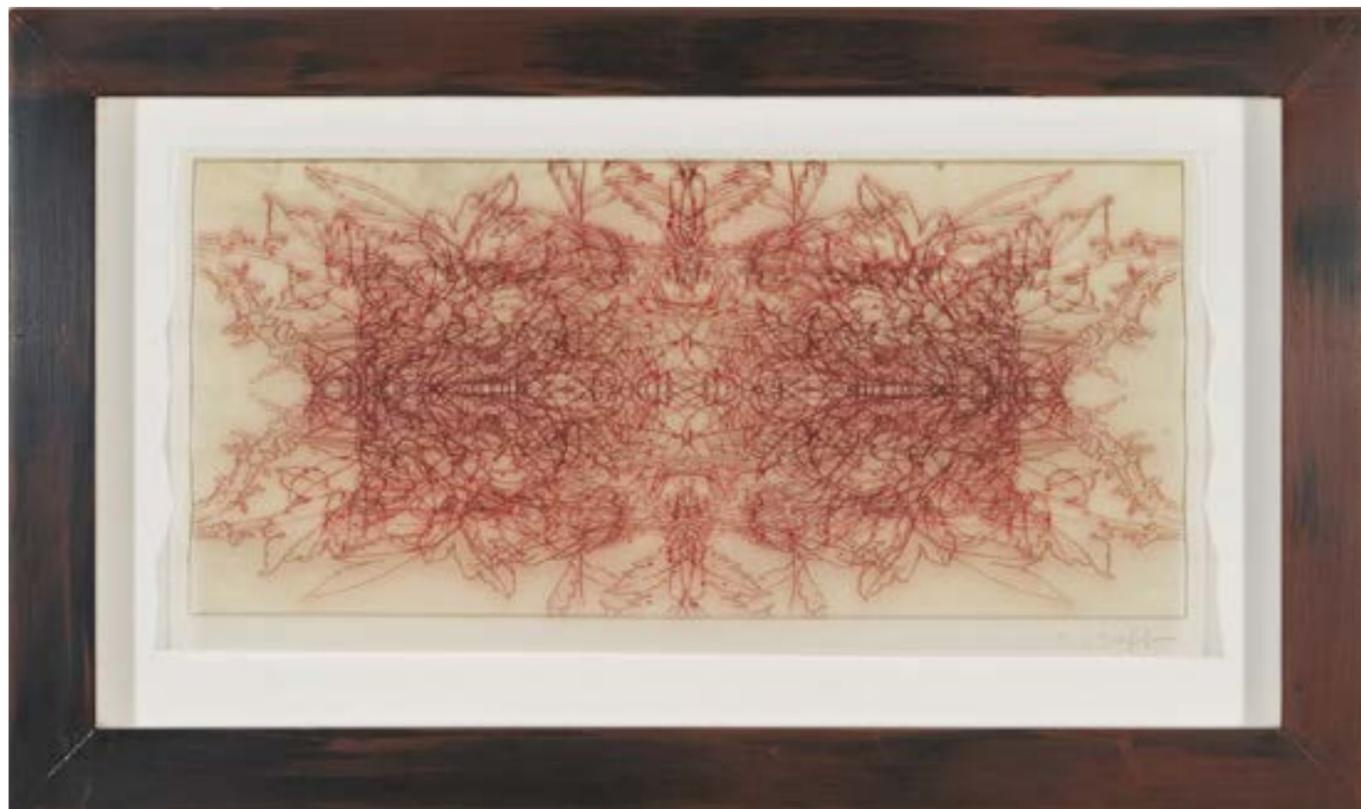
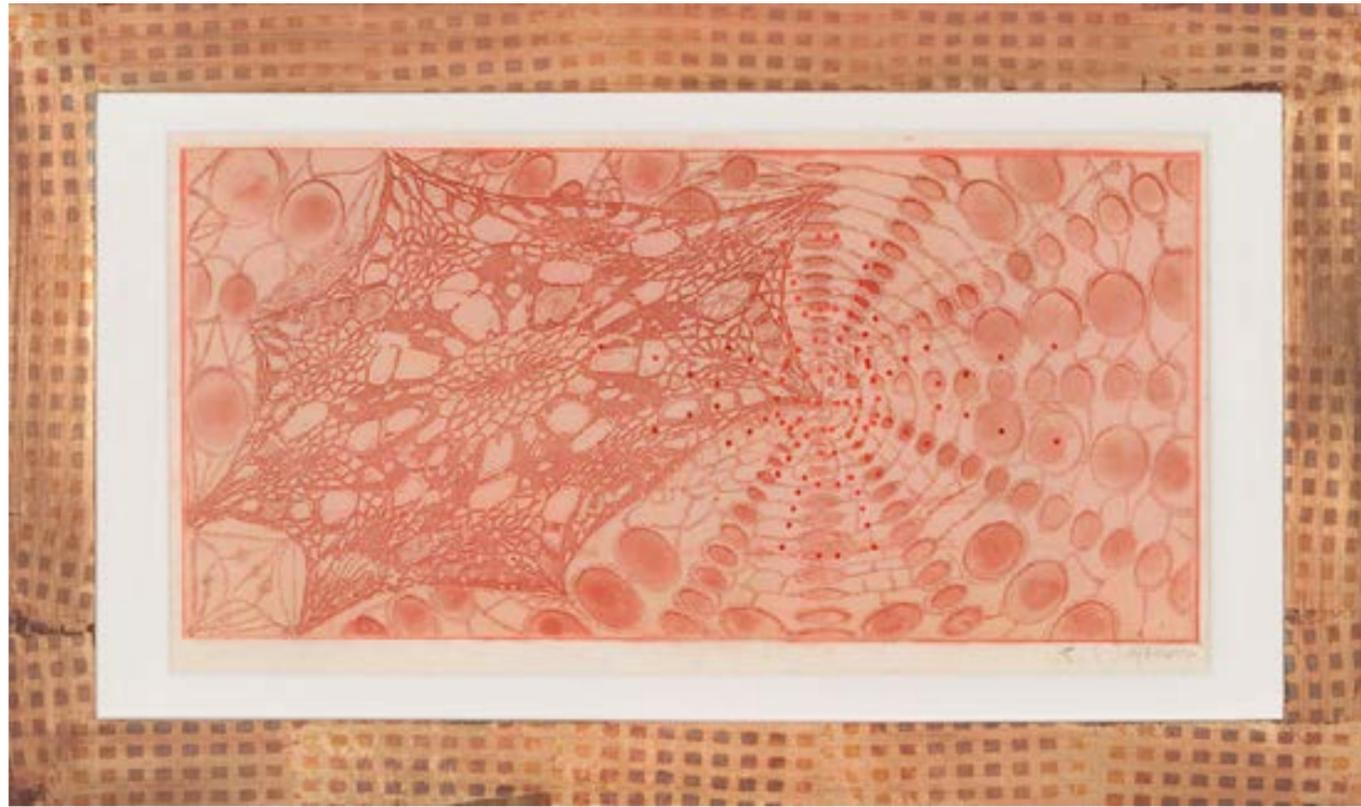


Like many of Judy Pfaff's prints, *Origami* is composed of multiple overlapping sheets of paper. Both of these sheets are kozo paper, and the top sheet was treated with wax, giving it a translucent quality. Pfaff created the background image for this print by adhering handpicked lily pads to a board and creating a collagraph plate to print the image. A collagraph plate is a highly textured printmaking plate created by adhering various materials to a rigid substrate. Depending on how they choose to ink and print the collagraph plate, the artist can achieve different tonal effects in the printed image.

Towering over the other prints on display, *Origami* presents opposing but concurrent viewpoints that suspend viewers in space, making it possible to simultaneously look down upon the surface of a pond and up into a vast network of stars above. The red line work appears to illustrate constellations of stars or delineate the webbed connections of veins.

In *Origami*, Pfaff juxtaposes particularities to unfold an expansive view: she acknowledges the visual similarity between these two natural phenomena, and simultaneously establishes the vast difference in scale through the proximity of each form on paper.

Judy Pfaff, *Origami*, 2005



Pfaff created the image for *OXO-XOX* by repeating a line drawing of a branch with leaves several times on a sheet of paper, flipping it either horizontally or vertically with each repetition. This repeated image, printed on a sheet of kozo, which was treated with wax and folded like an accordion to achieve dimensionality, overlaps another iteration of the image. The resulting composition resides between representation and abstraction, a common point for Pfaff's work to land.

The pattern created in *OXO-XOX* has a synthetic quality, although it depicts a natural object. *Untitled (colored lace)* reads as both delicate lacework and spider webs. When viewed as a pair, these two artworks expose various types of pattern that appear throughout Pfaff's work, both human-made and naturally occurring.

Judy Pfaff, *OXO-XOX*, 2005

Judy Pfaff, *Untitled (colored lace)*, 2005



By limiting the representation of tree trunks, branches, and their resident birds to silhouettes in her *Untitled* series, Pfaff draws attention to the drama of natural forms. The tree branches' posture, gesture, and grace take center stage in these small, layered prints. The brightly colored backgrounds seem to backlight the darkened figures, and the limited details give the compositions the feeling of a theatrical stage set ripe with potential energy.

Top Row:
Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #5*, 2008
Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #6*, 2008

Bottom Row:
Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #1*, 2008
Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #7*, 2008
Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #8*, 2008

About Judy Pfaff:

Judy Pfaff (b. 1946) was born in London and emigrated to the US at thirteen. She received her BFA from Washington University and her MFA from Yale University. From the beginning of her career in the 1970s, Pfaff has worked with a wide and unusual range of materials and moves back and forth easily between two- and three-dimensional work, creating complex, profuse, and unique artwork. Her dynamic, exuberant, large-scale works incorporate many different media. Like her installations, Pfaff's prints have a three-dimensional presence and flowing quality, with layered circles, lines, and organic shapes echoing throughout the images. She often completes her prints and unites the overall compositions by adding hand-applied paints, fabric dyes, and collaged elements. Her innovative work has brought her wide acclaim from museums and galleries throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. Her work resides in prestigious collections such as the Detroit Institute of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Among many other awards and accolades, Pfaff was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2004 and was featured in PBS's Art 21 in 2007. She received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Sculpture Center in 2014 and a National Academy Award for Excellence in Sculpture in 2015. Judy Pfaff lives and works in Tivoli, New York.

About Tandem Press:

Tandem Press is a self-funded professional printmaking studio and gallery affiliated with the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Tandem Press hosts internationally renowned artists in its studio space, assisting them in creating original fine art editions. As a gallery, Tandem Press also represents, promotes, and sells the artworks created in the studio both locally through exhibitions and events in Madison, WI and nationally through participation in affiliated exhibitions and several internationally-renowned annual art fairs.

Tandem Press is located at 1743 Commercial Avenue in Madison, Wisconsin.

Artworks in the order they appear on the previous pages:

[Judy Pfaff, *End of the Rain \(A\)*, 2000](#)

Photogravure, woodcut; Edition of 30; 34 3/4 x 38 1/2 inches framed
\$4,350 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *End of the Rain \(B\)*, 2000](#)

Etching, dye; Edition of 30; 111 x 39 inches framed
\$9,350 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *End of the Rain \(C\)*, 2000](#)

Photogravure, dye; Edition of 30; 39 1/2 x 60 inches framed
\$5,725 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *...wind-deer and the honey-grass...*, 2017](#)

Woodcut, hand painted dye and ink, archival inkjet, clear plastic film;
Varied edition of 12; 49 1/4 x 105 inches framed
\$18,850 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *"Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"*, 2002](#)

Etching, relief roll; Edition of 45; 18 3/4 x 102 1/2 inches framed
\$6,600 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Foreseeable Future*, 2017](#)

Intaglio, blend rolled aluminum, chine collé; Edition of 18; 16 x 76 inches framed
\$7,560 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Unforeseeable Future*, 2017](#)

Intaglio, blend rolled aluminum, chine collé; Edition of 18; 16 x 76 inches framed
\$7,560 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Spin*, 2017](#)

Photogravure; Edition of 30; 17 x 73 inches framed
\$5,135 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Origami*, 2005](#)

Etching, collagraph, encaustic, wax; Edition of 20; 101 x 41 inches framed
\$17,000 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *OXO-XOX*, 2005](#)

Letterpress, wax; Edition of 30; 17 x 27 1/2 inches framed
\$2,975 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Untitled \(colored lace\)*, 2005](#)

Etching, surface roll, lithography, wax; Edition of 30; 17 x 27 1/2 inches framed
\$3,000 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #5*, 2008](#)

Etching, relief, archival inkjet, hole punching; Edition of 30; 18 1/2 x 23 inches framed
\$2,650 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #6*, 2008](#)

Etching, relief, archival inkjet, collage, hole punching; Edition of 50; 18 1/2 x 23 inches framed
\$2,650 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #1*, 2008](#)

Etching, relief, archival inkjet, hole punching; Edition of 40; 18 1/2 x 23 inches framed
\$2,650 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #7*, 2008](#)

Etching, relief, archival inkjet, hole punching; Edition of 40;; 18 1/2 x 23 inches framed
\$2,650 framed

[Judy Pfaff, *Untitled #8*, 2008](#)

Etching, relief, archival inkjet, hole punching; Edition of 40; 18 1/2 x 23 inches framed
\$2,650 framed