

sharp projects

Mercantile

Addoley Dzegede and Lyndon Barrois Jr.

June 10 - July 8, 2022

Opening, June 10 from 4 - 8 pm

Addoley Dzegede and Lyndon Barrois Jr. present Mercantile, their third joint exhibition. Deviating from their collaborative entity LAB:D, Mercantile explores individual responses to a common subject. For this project, the color blue forms the primary bridge, as each ruminates on different reference points along the hue's spectrum.

Dzegede's primary point of departure is the history of indigo, reimagining forms found while researching the history of the dye's processing and distribution. Working from diagrammatic illustrations and borrowing from the aesthetics of market vendors and textile artisans, Dzegede renders fossilized records of the pigment's cultivation. She explores color and cloth as literal currency, its weight in blue. Materials and objects such as loom parts, spindles, jute, and clay, point to analog production processes that evidence the hand and the labor histories imposed upon them. Dzegede continues to explore the metaphoric potential of materials, textile traditions, and investigates notions of migration and cultural belonging. Her work touches on the infinite historical connections and entanglements to be found behind the decorative artifacts that have shaped our contemporary world.

On the flipside, Barrois Jr. references the contemporary apparatus of the toner printer to offer a dialogue between images and the mechanisms that enable their production and distribution. Here, he focuses on cyan as a chromatic framing device, along with the package design of the Konica Minolta printing company, to reference the biblical magi and their allusions to merchants, trade, and the traversing of goods. Here, he presents small miniature crates containing the fabled artifacts carried by the Three Kings on their journey to witness a miracle. Renderings of oil-slicked hands consider the ambiguity of precious resources—what is extracted from them, and the consequences of their application in the world. This is all complemented by the figure of the donkey, which has traversed time and geography, relegated as a labored body across continents for millennia. Barrois Jr. is enchanted by the donkey as a transnational icon whose image has persisted in the periphery of civilizations around the globe.

Both artists employ mimicry and reproduction to consider the underlying structures and belief systems of a given society. They consider the relationship between raw materials and their use-value, and how forms and ideas evolve over time, all while reminding us of the multitudinal cultural significance that blue weaves through it all.

This exhibition is in partnership with Art Week.

Exhibition images by Bjarke Johansen

Addoley Dzegede is a Ghanaian-American interdisciplinary artist who grew up in South Florida and is based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she is currently a 2020-2022 Tulsa Artist Fellow. She is half of the collaborative duo, LAB:D, with Lyndon Barrois Jr.

Lyndon Barrois Jr. b. New Orleans, is an artist and writer based in Pittsburgh, PA where he is an Assistant Professor of Art at Carnegie Mellon University. He is half of LAB:D, with artist Addoley Dzegede.