



*Serena Perrone:*  
*Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell*  
**July 19 - August 12, 2012**

Over the past ten years, Serena Perrone (b. 1979, St. Louis) has developed an artistic practice that combines painting, drawing, and printmaking to create intricate and highly stylized works whose subjects range from a poet's travel diaries to modern-day fairytales. Perrone employs a rich visual language to present often autobiographical and imaginative tableaux that also address universal concerns such as home and displacement, intimacy and estrangement.

For her exhibition in the Front Room, Perrone premieres a new twenty-part print series, *Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell* (2012). The project developed out of her previous body of work, *A Volcano Pilgrim in Exchange for Fire* (2010). Printed by the artist at All Along Press in St. Louis, it paired Perrone's drawings of volcanoes from different parts of the world with entries first published on the travel blog of the late poet Craig Arnold (American, 1967-2009), who passed away while hiking volcanoes in Japan. While the *Volcano Pilgrim*

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Cover image: Serena Perrone, *Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell #20*, 2012. Series of 20 lithographs with silkscreen, 11 x 15 inches each; 11 inches x 25 feet total. Edition of 6 + AP. Courtesy of the artist and Cade Tompkins Projects, Providence, RI.

series focused on her imagined take on Arnold's life, *Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell* tells a more personal story. It turns its attention to the artist's own experiences living in suburban St. Louis; Tusa, Sicily; Providence, Rhode Island; and Philadelphia. The series explores these sites from Perrone's position as an itinerant artist in search of inspiration and belonging both at home and elsewhere. To illustrate this state of flux and transition, Perrone superimposes colorful renderings (printed in vibrant Hanco "Flame Red" ink) of various actual buildings and cityscapes onto landscapes depicting natural phenomena, such as sweeping terraces, tornadoes, uprooted trees, and billowing plumes of smoke.

*Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell* is also notable for being the artist's first full project in lithography. In order to create the work, Perrone drew the new cityscapes and landscapes on frosted Mylar and then transferred the imagery to a photosensitive printing plate. She printed the resulting lithographs atop screen-prints of the original volcanoes, aligning the imagery of each finished piece to produce a seamless narrative measuring twenty-five feet in total length. Installed in the form of a panoramic arc in the Front Room gallery, the individual prints in *Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell* together create an immersive landscape that is as fantastical as it is topographical.

**Serena Perrone** (b. 1979, St. Louis, MO) lives and works in Philadelphia. She has had solo exhibitions at Cade Tompkins Projects, Providence, RI (2011); University of Wyoming Museum of Art, Laramie, WY (2011); Ningyo Editions, Boston (2010); and Abington Art Center, Philadelphia (2009), among other venues. Her work has also appeared in numerous group exhibitions including *Ctrl+P*, Arlington Arts Center, Arlington, VA (2012); *Haunting Narratives: Detours from Philadelphia Realism*, Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia (2012); *Here and Now*, Philadelphia Museum of Art (2011); *Philagrafika 2010*, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia (2010); *Biennial Fair for Contemporary Prints and New Editions*, Baltimore Museum of Art (2010); *Fantastical Imaginings*, Delaware Center for Contemporary Art, Wilmington (2009); and *New Prints*, International Print Center New York (2007, 2010-2012). In 2013, her work will be presented in a solo exhibition at the List Gallery, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA. Perrone's work is represented in the collections of The Library of Congress, Washington, DC; The Philadelphia Museum of Art; Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI; Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, MA; and The Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, among others. She received her MFA in Printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2006, and her BFA in Painting from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 2003.

*Serena Perrone: Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell* is organized by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis and curated by Kelly Shindler, Assistant Curator.