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SERENA PERRONE at
Cade Tompkins Projects
The Phoenix, October 11, 2011
by Greg Cook



A Volcano Pilgrim in Exchange for Fire 2011

St. Louis artist Serena Perrone's exhibit "Volcanoes and Voyages" at Cade Tompkins Projects (198 Hope Street, Providence, through October 29) is a series of dreamy visions. Drypoint etchings with chine collé and hand coloring depict a naked girl with her hair braided into pigtails and an actual pig tail curling from her behind wandering a strange landscape of woods and jungles, stage set buildings, potted plants, and a smoking volcano.

Often Perrone's draftsmanship is just okay, and her symbolism is interestingly mysterious but doesn't seem to add up. *27 Views of Shangri-La* is a group of circular slices of logs burned with drawings of places named Shangri-La — a café, a campground, a cocktail lounge, and many sad, modernist hotels. The drawings feel like selections from a Google image search — like somewhat random copies of images rather than something lived — but the parade of motels hints at dreams of paradise turned into commercial one-night stands.