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GALLERIES

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If you haven't seen "Serena Perrone: Reverie" at Swarthmore College's List Gallery, make time to see this lovely exhibition on its final day. A presentation of Perrone's prints spanning 2005 - a year before she received an MFA in printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design - to the present, it encompasses works from several series, all of which demonstrate her exquisite drawing and poetic sensibility.



Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell
(detail) 2012, photolithography and screen print

Perrone's most ambitious series, "In the Realm of Reverie" (2006-2008), comprising six 4-foot-high- by-6-foot-wide woodcut prints incorporating goldpoint and silverpoint drawing, has most of the front gallery to itself, allowing a narrative flow among her images of children in exotic tableaux. Gauguin's Tahitian paintings seem to be touchstones for Perrone in this series, seen most clearly in the children's staged postures and her anthropomorphic trees, from which tapered fingers and human heads occasionally protrude. The rich, glowing, gold-and-silver surfaces of these prints, reminiscent of mercury glass, give them a look of antiquity.

Children are also the protagonists in two much smaller prints in this room, both of which strain too hard to be odd. In one, *In Our Cinematic Lives* (2002), a naked little girl with pigtails and a real tail stands on a table aiming an old-fashioned movie projector at a pair of Siamese twins standing in front of a palazzo.

The three series that comprise Perrone's most recent work in this show continue her exploration of exotic sites as natural landscape for daydreaming, but children are absent from these images. Where her earlier prints seem to draw on her childhood memories, two of these series reflect Perrone's affinity for the writings of the poet and "Volcano Pilgrim" Craig Arnold, who explored volcanoes all over the world and disappeared on the island of Kuchinoerabu-jima, Japan, in 2009.

In the series, "A Volcano Pilgrim in Exchange for Fire" (2010), Perrone depicts active volcanoes with selections from Arnold's blog entries, written as if erupting from the volcanoes in clouds. Prints from a companion series, "Maintaining a Safe Distance and Living to Tell" (2012), are displayed side-by-side on a curved wall that bridges a corner of the room, giving a cinematic effect to Perrone's images of houses and other signs of human habitation under siege by various kinds of volcanic activity.