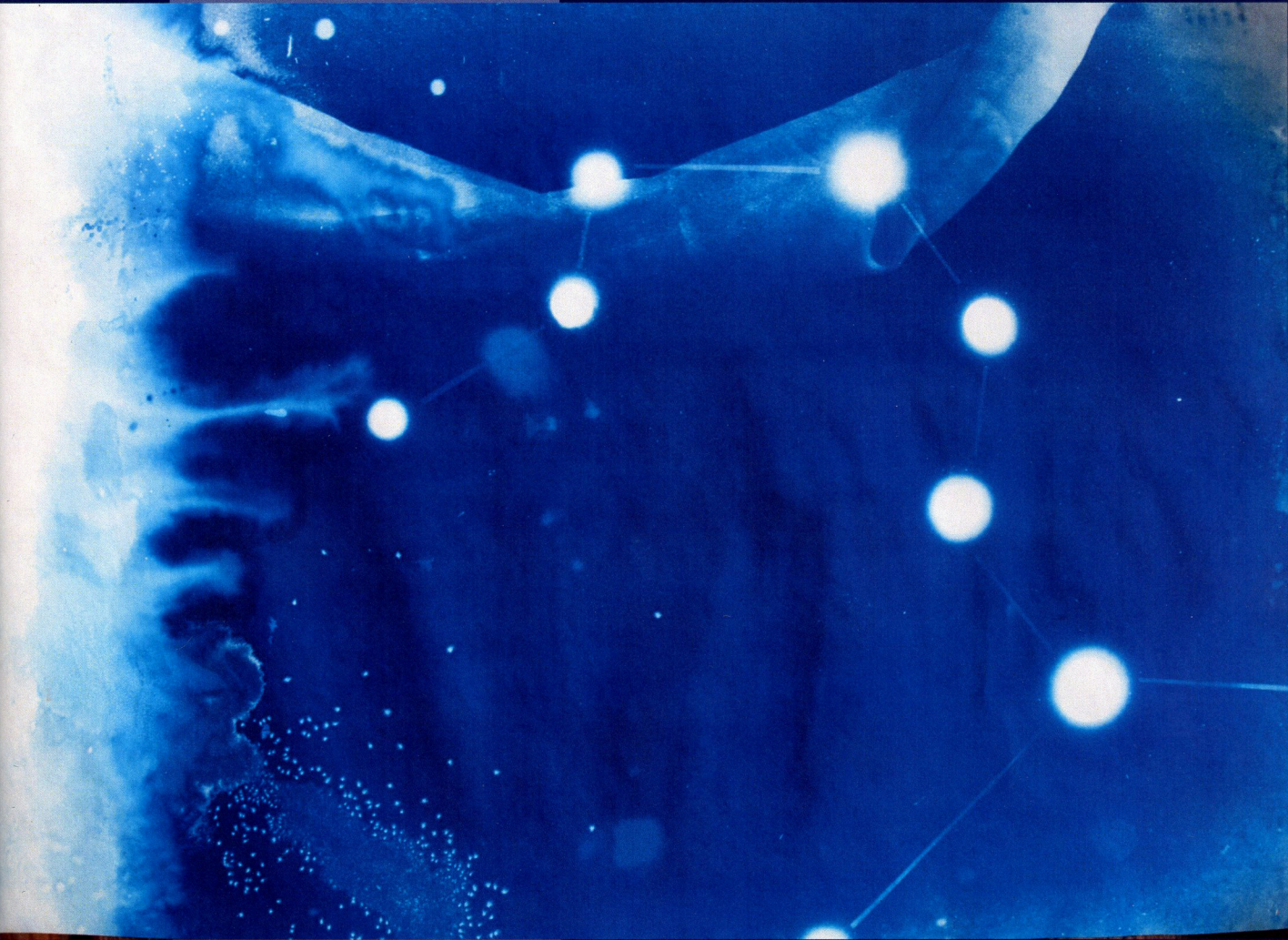


PINHOLE COMPETITION
WINNER INTERVIEW
+ PORTFOLIO



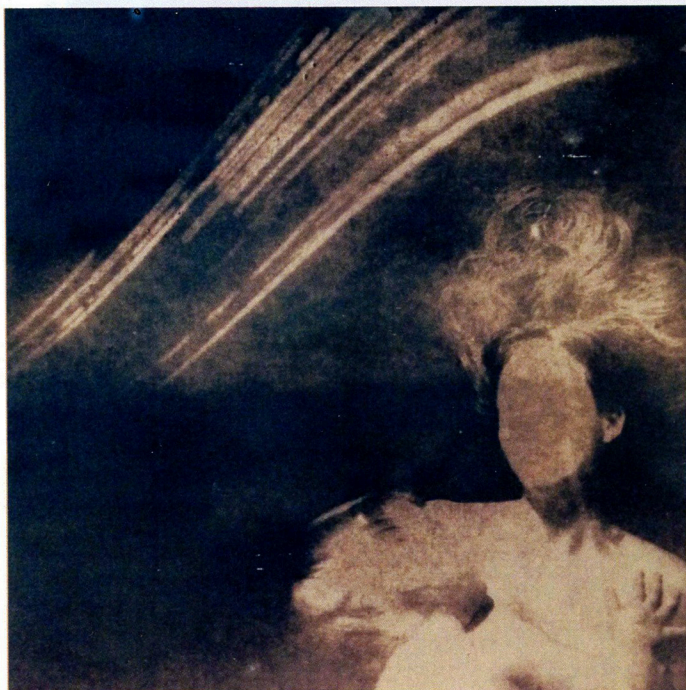
~STEPHANIE SLATE, CYANOTYPE #1

Q: THIS IS SUCH A SIMPLE QUESTION, BUT I'M INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY? WHAT DRAWS YOU TO IT- OR DREW YOU TO IT?

A: WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY IS THE MAGIC OF IT. I KNOW THAT SOUNDS COMPLETELY CORNY AND PERHAPS CLICHÉ, BUT IT IS THE TRUTH. I STILL GET GIDDY IN THE DARKROOM WHEN AN IMAGE STARTS TO APPEAR IN THE DEVELOPER, AND I LOVE THINKING ABOUT MINISCULE SILVER HALIDE CRYSTALS DANCING AROUND ON MY FILM'S EMULSION WHEN IT COMES IN CONTACT WITH LIGHT. I AM REALLY JUST FASCINATED WITH THE SCIENCE OF IT ALL I SUPPOSE. I ACTUALLY LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAYS I RUN OUT OF CHEMISTRY, BECAUSE THAT MEANS I GET TO MIX MORE. HOW AMAZING IS IT THAT FROM SCRATCH, IN YOUR BASEMENT, YOU CAN MIX LIGHT SENSITIVE CHEMISTRY AND CREATE IMAGERY WITH IT? I LOVE IT. FOR ME, THE MAGIC AND SCIENCE OF PHOTOGRAPHY WONDERFULLY GO HAND-IN-HAND AND KEEP ME THOROUGHLY ENGAGED WITH THE MEDIUM.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST ADVICE ANYONE HAS EVER GIVEN YOU AS AN ARTIST? SOMETHING THAT YOU THINK ABOUT A LOT, OR THAT BRINGS YOU BACK WHEN YOU TEND TO FLOAT AWAY OR LOSE SIGHT OF THINGS?

A: DURING A STUDIO VISIT A FEW YEARS AGO A VISITING CRITIC CAME IN, STARTED LOOKING AT MY WORK, AND QUICKLY SAID "WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?" I WAS PRETTY CONFUSED AND A LITTLE MIFFED, BUT AFTER SPEAKING WITH HER FOR A LITTLE WHILE I STARTED TO UNDERSTAND HER QUESTION. I WASN'T LEAVING ANY ROOM IN THE WORK FOR INTERPRETATION. I WAS GIVING THE VIEWER THE WHOLE STORY ALL AT ONCE AND ROBBING THEM OF HAVING THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE. AS AN IMAGE-MAKER MY WORK TENDS TO BE QUITE NARRATIVE, WHICH I LOVE, BUT THERE IS A FINE LINE BETWEEN CREATING AN INTERESTING NARRATIVE THAT SAYS JUST ENOUGH TO GAIN A VIEWER'S ATTENTION AND ALLOWING THEM TO INTERACT WITH THE WORK VS. GIVING AWAY TOO MUCH INFORMATION AND LOSING THE VIEWER'S INTEREST. IT'S LIKE A ONE-LINE PUNCH JOKE: YOU HEAR IT, YOU GET IT, YOU'RE OVER IT. I DON'T WANT MY VIEWERS TO IMMEDIATELY BE OVER IT, I WANT THE WORK TO LINGER A WHILE IN MY VIEWERS MIND AND PROVOKE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS OF THEIR OWN.

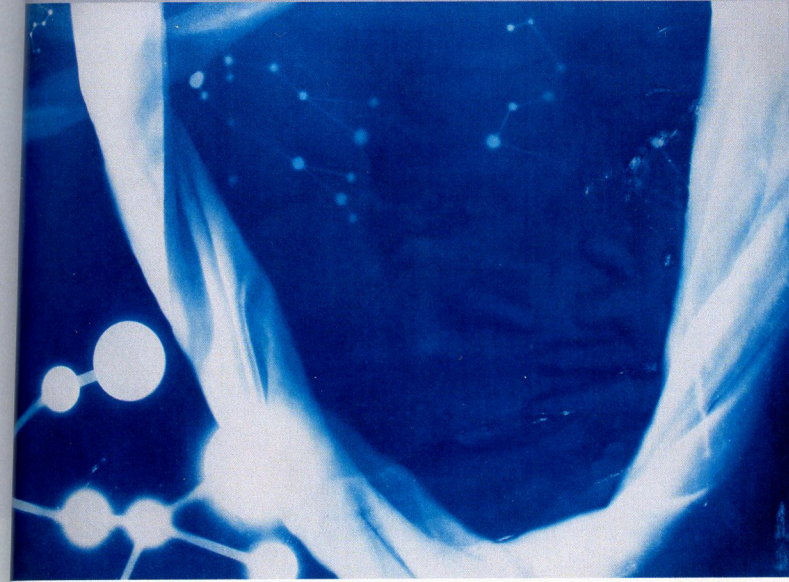


»STEPHANIE SLATE, TO THE MOON. CYANOTYPE.

Vol. 3, CYANOTYPE

STEPHANIE SLATE IS A MIXED MEDIA ARTIST WHO MAINLY WORKS WITH ALTERNATIVE PROCESS PHOTOGRAPHY AND PRINTMAKING. LOSS, BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL, ARE RECURRING THEMES THROUGHOUT THE WORK, WHICH IS OFTEN TIMES DESCRIBED AS UNEARTHLY AND ETHEREAL. IN HER NEWEST WORK SHE TAKES HERSELF AND FAMILY AS SUBJECT MATTER AS SHE COMMENTS ON THE DARKER SIDE OF DOMESTICITY AND ONE'S SUBCONSCIOUS DRIVES.

SLATE HAS EXHIBITED INTERNATIONALLY AND HAS RECEIVED GRANTS AND NUMEROUS AWARDS FOR HER WORK. SHE CURRENTLY LIVES AND WORKS IN PHILADELPHIA, PA WITH HER HUSBAND, DAUGHTER, AND FOUR DOGS.

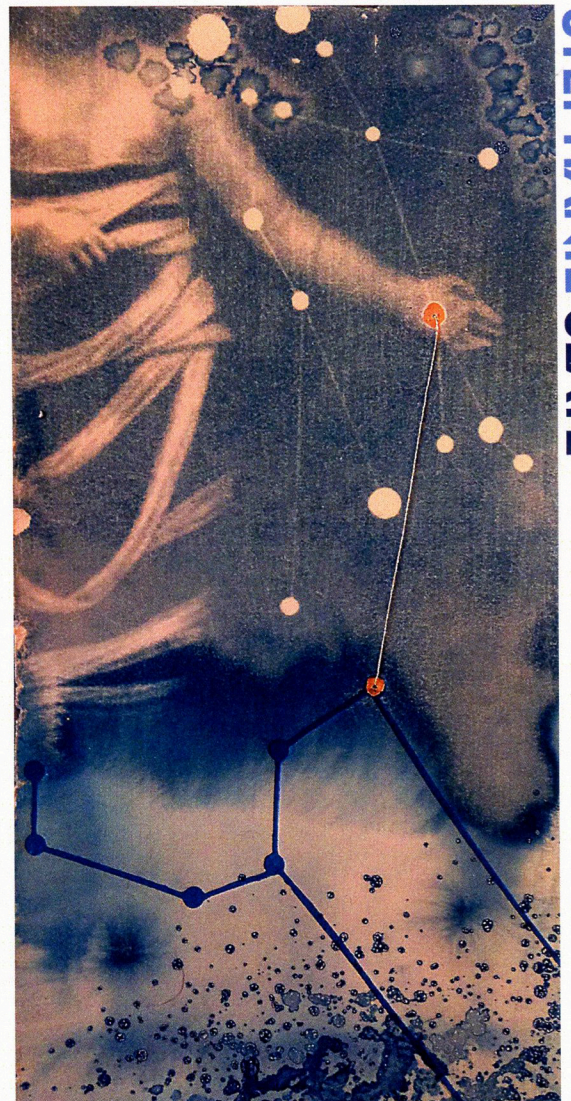


INTERVIEW WITH STEPHANIE SLATE BY JUROR ADAM FINKELSTON

Q: CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT THE PARTICULAR IMAGE THAT WAS SELECTED FOR THIS PUBLICATION? I DIDN'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT IT; I WAS JUST VERY INTRIGUED BY THE COMPOSITION AND THE ASTRONOMICAL SUBJECT MATTER. IT SEEMED LIKE A NARRATIVE ABOUT A CONSTELLATION. I FELT PROMPTED TO INVENT A STORY, WHICH TO ME MAKES AN IMAGE WORTH LOOKING AT LONGER AND THINKING ABOUT LONGER. BUT I'D LIKE TO KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR SIDE OF THE STORY.

A: SURE, I ACTUALLY MADE THIS IMAGE DURING A TRIP TO ITALY THIS PAST WINTER. THE FIGURE IN THE IMAGE IS A PHOTOGRAPH I TOOK OF ONE OF THE RELIEFS ON THE OSPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI, WHICH IS A HISTORIC BUILDING IN FLORENCE THAT USED TO BE A CHILDREN'S ORPHANAGE. MY WORK OFTEN NAVIGATES THE DARKER SIDE OF MOTHERHOOD INCLUDING NOTIONS OF CONNECT AND DISCONNECT WITHIN MY RELATIONSHIP TO MY DAUGHTER, AND SO THIS ORPHANAGE REALLY STRUCK A CHORD WITH ME. TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE TO THE HOSPITAL IS A SMALL SET OF STAIRS THAT LEAD UP TO A WINDOW. IN THE WINDOW IS A HORIZONTAL ROUND STONE THAT ROTATES. THIS IS WHERE MOTHERS WOULD ABANDON THEIR CHILDREN; THEY WOULD LAY THEM ON THE STONE AND TURN IT, WHICH BY DESIGN WOULD ROTATE THE CHILD INTO THE INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING. THEY WOULD THEN RING A BELL SO THE NURSES INSIDE WOULD KNOW.

I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE WHAT THESE MOTHERS WENT THROUGH HAVING TO MAKE THAT DECISION. THE PIECE THAT YOU SELECTED IS ABOUT BEING INFINITELY BOUND OR CONNECTED TO YOUR CHILD NO MATTER WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCE. BECAUSE I WAS IN ITALY AND SO FAR FROM MY DAUGHTER I FELT THAT THE ONE THING THAT KEPT US CONNECTED, SO TO SAY, WAS THE STARS. IN THE IMAGE, GOLD THREAD AND GOLD LEAFING CONNECT MY DAUGHTER'S ASTROLOGICAL SIGN, GEMINI, AND MY ASTROLOGICAL SIGN, LEO. EVEN THE MOTHERS WHO CHOSE TO LEAVE THEIR CHILD WITH THE OSPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI WILL BE SPIRITUALLY AND EMOTIONALLY CONNECTED WITH THEIR CHILD FOREVER.



STEPHANIE SLATE

STEPHANIE SLATE, THE DISTANCE OF BLUE. CYANOTYPE.

Q: YOUR MOVEMENT FROM PHOTOGRAPHY TO PRINTMAKING AND PAINTED MEDIA SEEMS SO FLUID. HOW DO YOU APPROACH MAKING AN IMAGE? DOES IT START WITH THE MEDIUM? FOR EXAMPLE YOU ARE PLAYING WITH A PARTICULAR TECHNIQUE AND THEN FIND A SUBJECT MATTER TO FIT THAT. OR DOES IT START WITH A SUBJECT MATTER AND FINDING A MEDIA TO EXPRESS WHAT YOU WANT? IS THERE A PARTICULAR THOUGHT PROCESS, OR CREATIVE PROCEES, THAT YOU TEND TO FOLLOW?

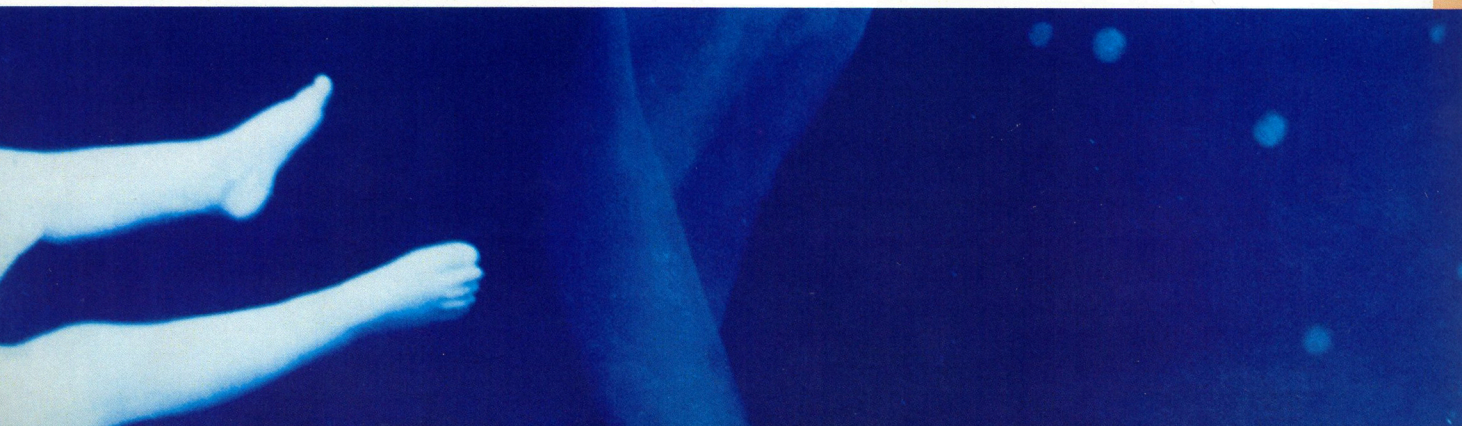
A: THANK YOU. IN MY APPROACH TO MAKING AN IMAGE THE IDEA ALMOST ALWAYS COMES FIRST, FOLLOWED BY FINDING THE BEST MEDIUM TO EXECUTE THE PIECE. MY USUAL CREATIVE PROCESS TENDS TO START WITH MY THOUGHTS MANIFESTING THEMSELVES INTO IMAGES THAT SURFACE IN MY DREAMS AND DAYDREAMS. I'LL THEN TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH TRYING TO MIMIC WHAT I PREVIOUSLY SAW. FROM THERE I'LL DECIDE THE BEST WAY TO PRINT IT- USUALLY CYANOTYPE, PLATINUM/PALLADIUM, OR GELATIN SILVER ARE MY GO-TO PHOTOGRAPHY PROCESSES, AND DEPENDING ON THE SUBJECT I'LL CHOSE ONE.

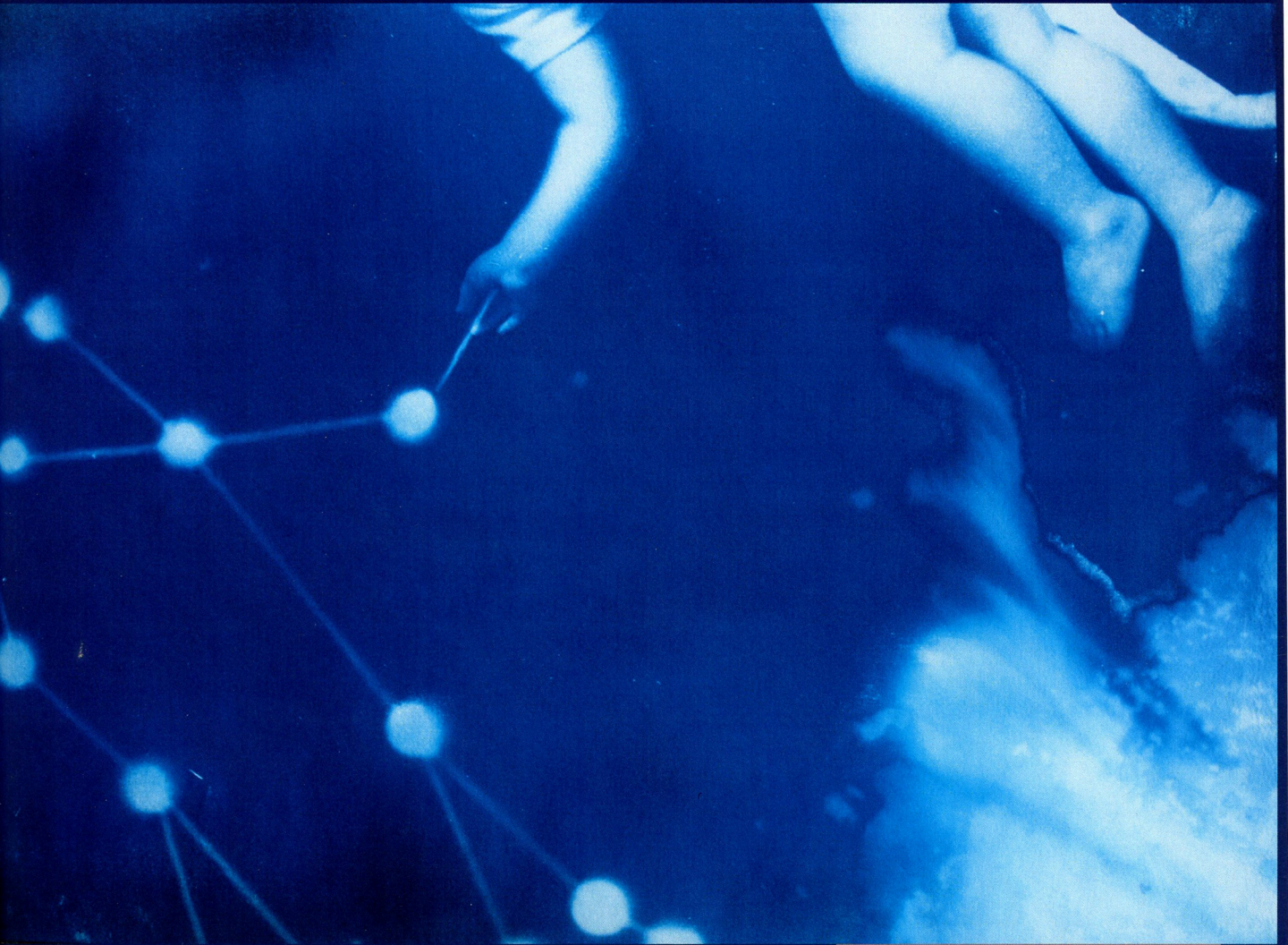
FROM THIS POINT I'LL USUALLY LET THE MEDIUM TAKE OVER- FOR EXAMPLE IF I'M WORKING WITH CYANOTYPE I'LL PRINT A FEW OR MORE COPIES OF THE IMAGE AND EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT THINGS. ON ONE COPY I MAY PLAY WITH BLEACHING AND TONING, ON ANOTHER I'LL TRY SOME PRINTMAKING TECHNIQUES OVER THE PRINT. DURING THIS STAGE I OFTEN FIND THAT THE MEDIUM TAKES CENTER STAGE AND I TRY TO STAY OPEN MINDED TO EMBRACE 'MISTAKES'. FOR EXAMPLE, IF I'M BLEACHING OUT A CERTAIN AREA AND IT GOES LIGHTER THAN I INTENDED, INSTEAD OF STARTING FROM SCRATCH I MAY JUST PRINT ANOTHER LAYER ON TOP, OR INTRODUCE PAINT. THERE WAS ONE PROJECT, HOWEVER, THAT I WORKED ON WHERE THE PROCESS GOVERNED THE IDEA FROM THE START.

I WANTED TO LEARN WET PLATE COLLODION AND NEEDED TO PICK A SUBJECT MATTER THAT WOULD SUCCUMB TO THIS FINICKY PROCESS. I DECIDED ON A SERIES OF PORTRAITS THAT WERE A NOD TO VICTORIAN POST MORTEM IMAGERY. IT REALLY WORKED OUT IN MY FAVOR BECAUSE AS MANY OF YOU MAY KNOW WET PLATE DEMANDS AN EXTREMELY LONG EXPOSURE TIME, AND SO MY SUBJECTS NEEDED TO SIT, OR IN MY CASE LAY ON THE FLOOR, FOR ABOUT 15-20 MINUTES AND FOUND THAT THEY WERE MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE WHEN THEY KEPT THEIR EYES CLOSED DURING THE EXPOSURE.

Q: CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE ABOUT THE GALLERY YOU RUN, GUSH GALLERY IN PHILADELPHIA? HOW AND WHEN DID THAT START, AND HOW DOES RUNNING A GALLERY INFLUENCE OR INFORM YOUR OWN STUDIO PRACTICE?

A: OH YES, GUSH. THAT HAS BEEN A FUN ENDEAVOR! ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO A COLLEAGUE OF MINE FROM UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL MOVED TO PHILADELPHIA AND WE ENDED UP RECONNECTING. ONE EVENING WE WERE DISCUSSING THE LACK OF AN ARTIST COMMUNITY OR ANY GALLERIES IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. ANYTIME WE WANTED TO SEE ART OR ATTEND A GALLERY OPENING WE HAD TO TRAVEL ELSEWHERE. SO WE SAID LET'S DO IT- LETS OPEN A GALLERY AND LEARNING CENTER IN OUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD. AFTER THAT NIGHT WE PUT OUR PLAN TO ACTION AND HAD GUSH GALLERY OPEN WITHIN THE YEAR. GUSH WAS A WORKSPACE FOR ARTISTS, LEARNING CENTER, AND GALLERY CATERING TO BOTH LOCAL AND EMERGING ARTISTS. UNFORTUNATELY, AFTER ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF WE HAD TO CLOSE OUR DOORS DUE TO FINANCIAL REASONS, BUT THANKFULLY THAT WASN'T THE END FOR US. SHORTLY AFTER WE CLOSED A FRIEND OF OURS OPENED A POPULAR VINTAGE STORE, CALLED JINXED, A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM WHERE GUSH HAD BEEN AND HE OFFERED US TO TAKE OVER ONE OF THE LARGE BRICK WALLS IN THE STORE TO USE AS A GALLERY SPACE. WE HAVE BEEN RUNNING GUSH OUT OF THIS SPACE SINCE THE WINTER AND IT HAS BEEN GREAT! RUNNING A GALLERY, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN QUITE TIME CONSUMING AND SOMETIMES INTRUDES ON MY OWN STUDIO PRACTICE, BUT IT HAS BEEN INFINITELY REWARDING. I CONSTANTLY FIND MY SELF INSPIRED AND MOTIVATED BY THE WORK WE SHOW. FOR EXAMPLE, WE ARE CURRENTLY SHOWING AN AMAZING PAPERMAKING ARTIST AND I'M FINDING THAT I CAN'T WAIT TO GET INTO THE STUDIO TO LEARN SOME NEW PAPERMAKING TECHNIQUES TO TRY FOR MYSELF!





STEPHANIE SLATE, CYANOTYPE #4



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» STEPHANIE SLATE. THE BLUE OF DISTANCE. C/MANOTYPE.

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