

CIVILLIAN

ART PROJECTS

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Noelle K. Tan: *Part II Volume 2*



EXHIBITION ON VIEW:

April 6 – May 2, 2019

OPENING RECEPTION:

Saturday, April 6, 6:30-8:30 pm

ARTIST TALK:

Saturday, April 27, 2:00 pm

Civilian Art Projects presents *Noelle K. Tan: Part II Volume 2*, opening April 6, on view until May 2nd at Studio 1469 (1469R Harvard St NW Rear) in Columbia Heights. Civilian Art Projects is in residence at Studio 1469 for the spring season.

Part II Volume 2 is an exhibition that combines two projects: *An Excerpt From The Ongoing Anthology Of Abandoned Photographs: Part One*, 2013; and *Expedition Journals: United States of America, Vol. 1*, 2015. In each, Tan presented a series of new black and white, darkroom-produced photographs based on ideas of personal and collective memory, ways of thinking and reasoning, and America and American history.

Expedition Journals is inspired by the *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (*Encyclopaedia, or a Systematic Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Crafts*), edited by Denis Diderot and co-edited by Jean le Rond d'Alembert. The *Encyclopédie* was first published in France in the mid-eighteenth century, and took over twenty years to complete. Comprising twenty-eight volumes and containing 71,818 articles and 3,129 illustrations, The *Encyclopédie* was the major achievement of the French Enlightenment; its aim, in Diderot's words, was to "change the common way of thinking" through the expansion of knowledge and the development of critical modes of thought. The project sought to contain all the world's knowledge of the time, and encapsulate the shift from nature and theology to human reason. Consequently, it was highly controversial, and shunned by the church and other leaders.

Tan exhibits new work in the *Expedition Journals* series, contemplating layers of American history through sites traveled to by the artist. Depicted in her photographic collages are American sites of infamy: places of intense human rights violations, suffering, and environmental disasters that paved the way for new ways of living: new protections and rules from our government, brought forth by protest and public demand. For example, a work that combines the Tar Creek Superfund site, the Centralia mine fire, the Donora Smog of 1948, and the Jonestown Flood reminds us of industrial environmental catastrophes that can never be made right. Tan's works are historic markers, with imagery recorded and assembled by the artist, that signify the struggle for human rights and recognize justice as a constant fight. According to Tan, "Geography holds memory. It's significant that these things happened here." Exhibited at a time when we are actively seeing protections, achievements, and rules rolled back, this work is particularly relevant today.

An Excerpt From The Ongoing Anthology Of Abandoned Photographs: Part Two is Tan's ongoing series from intentionally unfinished projects. In her signature deep black or ethereal white photographic style, Tan will exhibit imagery that she loves, exceptional photographs, that do not have a home in any series. "This is their home," she says. And like the *Expedition* series, they hold memory, the way it repeats the past back to us in the present. Just as the physical sites hold significance, so too do the ideas and stories captured in photographic distillations of presence and reflection, where new directions can begin, and the ways of the past become cautionary tales and folklore.

Noelle K. Tan earned her BFA from New York University and her MFA from California Institute of the Arts. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Asian American Artis Centre, The Center for Photography at Woodstock, the Corcoran Legacy Collection at American University, Creative Artist Agency, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, New York Public Library, Norton Museum of Art, the Orlando Museum of Art, and many private collections. Most recent exhibitions include *Living on the Land*, at Salisbury University and St. Mary's College of Maryland; *State of the Art* at Crystal Bridges Museum, Bentonville, AR; and *Isolation* at Carroll Square Gallery in Washington, DC. She received a Creative Capital grant in 2005.

Image credit: Both images are "Untitled," 2019.

Additional images can be found at www.civilianartprojects.com. High-resolution images are available upon request. Exhibition hours are Saturday 1-5pm and by appointment. Appointments must be set up 24 hours in advance. Thank you. Civilian is located inside Studio 1469, 1469R Harvard St NW Rear, Washington, DC 20008.