

Faraway from Where

New works on paper by Christel Dillbohner presented at
Don Soker Contemporary Art, San Francisco,
November 12 – December 31, 2022

*It is not that the shadow speaks,
it is that the shadow knows.*

During the winter solstices of 2020 and 2021 I observed a curious phenomenon in my studio. With the days growing shorter, the sun setting lower, peculiar shadows danced wildly on my studio walls. I began to watch more closely, saw how the sun beams were passing through the boughs of the vibrant redwood trees bordering our garden. Sudden wind gusts added movement, and the double paned windows added their reflections, casting suggestive shadows.

There they were - a sort of other worldly illuminations. Handwritings on the wall, predictions of - what? Harbingers of dark forces pointing towards - where? The observer decides if the photographically captured visions or the ink drawn tendrils simply reflect the natural world. Can you find your place in this multiverse? Or do you feel a foreboding, even a threat? Do the images conjure up memories? Could they be remainders of past dreams?

For more than 30 years now, my studio practice has circled around the recording of fleeting impressions and visions in the world at large, capturing and translating notions that arise from the dark crevices in my brain. We know that past experiences are stored in the hippocampus, and that "the process of remembering can't easily be controlled. It occurs without warning, brought up by a shadowy figure, an odor or flash of light. Only the mind lends substance to the rising sensations" as I wrote for my first solo show with Don Soker in 1998 called *Beyond the Visible*.

Consciously paying attention to how streaks of light can suddenly illuminate the unobserved that is hidden among shadows is an inspiring activity. The conversion of my observations into visual poetry is a forever evolving process. The resulting paintings, drawings and objects can take me by surprise and often reveal new insights. May the recent works presented in *Faraway from Where* provide a source of inspiration, likely different for every viewer, inducing echoes of recognition and a sense of hope for human kind. As long we stay creative we can serve a common good.

Quote by Sylvia Brownrigg from "Simultaneity" published in
In which the obvious path leads the other way, 2022.