

HESSE FLATOW

Corkery, Elizabeth. "Interview with Emma Safir." *Print Club LTD*, 2019. Online and Print.

PrintClub^{Ltd.}

An Interview with Emma Safir

We were recently connected with New York-based artist Emma Safir by way of a mutual friend in Holland and were immediately taken with the ways in which she deftly moves between sculptural, relief forms and printed imagery - intertwining the two in a purposeful game of optical interplay.

In the Fall, Emma will join the incoming MFA class at Yale but before then will also exhibit a new body of work at The Java Project in Brooklyn from May 4 - June 2, 2019. The statement for that show is included below because I think it offers an astute introduction to her terrific practice. Our interview with Emma then begins below.

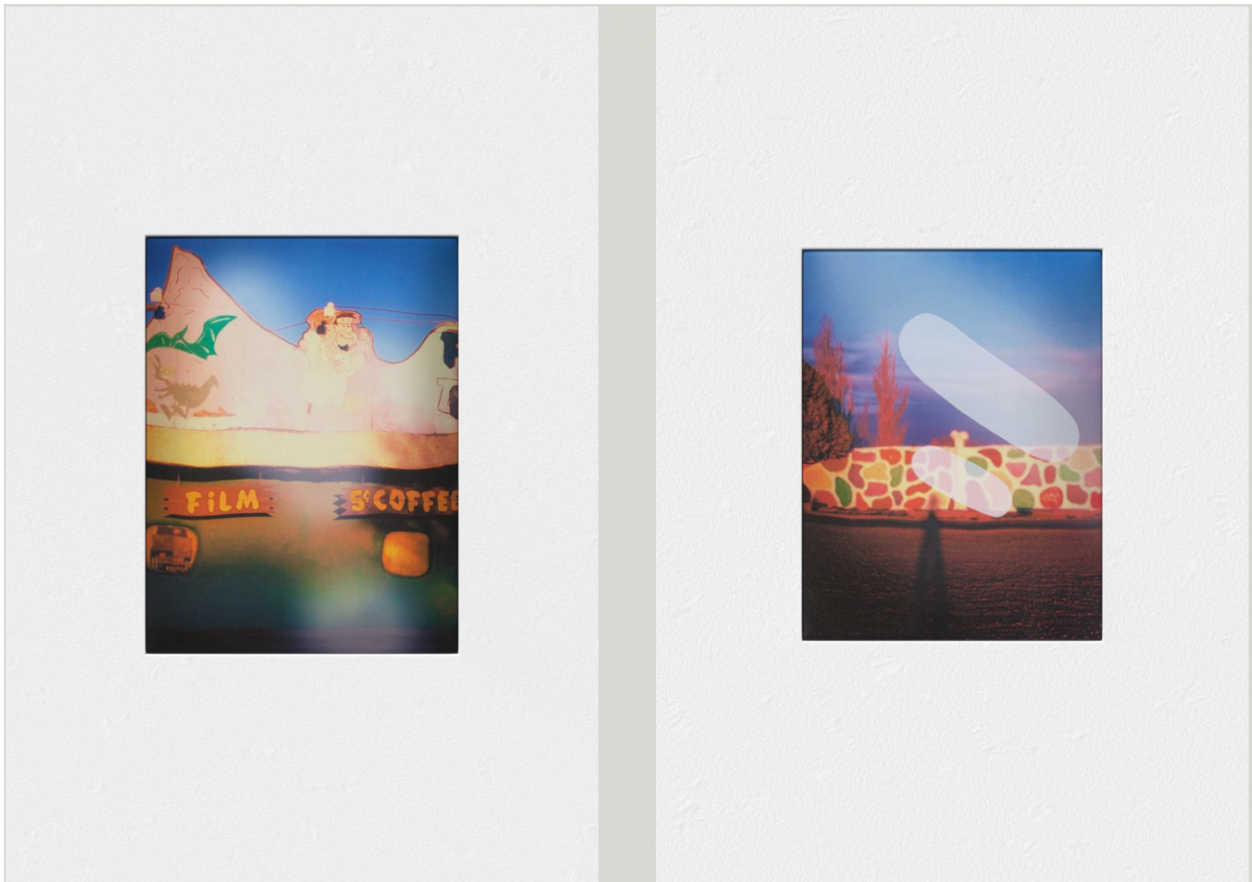


HESSE FLATOW

Corkery, Elizabeth. "Interview with Emma Safir." *Print Club LTD*, 2019. Online and Print.

When did you start printing?

I started printing in high school, over the summer between my sophomore and junior year — I took part in a [Lower Manhattan Cultural Council \(LMCC\)](#) summer course run by [Seth Cameron](#) (formerly of Bruce High Quality). We all became fascinated with the banality of office life from our time around the LMCC office — specifically the kitchen, which seemed to have endless mayo packets, which became a mascot for us. We decided to silkscreen the packet on t-shirts. We used the lo-fi method of drawing fluid/screen filler (which I've recently returned to in my studio practice). I was hooked. I started making various prints on t-shirts from janky handmade screens that I sold to kids in my high school. The following summer I took a silkscreen course at the School of Visual Arts in New York and it solidified my interest. I ended up majoring in printmaking when getting my BFA at RISD.



How do you see your print background informing your more expanded practice?

Although I am not “making prints”, being a trained printmaker affects all of my decision making in the studio. The process-based format of printing roots my connection to printmaking. Although I’ve been referring to this most recent body of work as “relief paintings”, they are

HESSE FLATOW

Corkery, Elizabeth. "Interview with Emma Safir." *Print Club LTD*, 2019. Online and Print.

born out of printmaking. They are built in additive layers that accumulate and can't function without the previous step, which is something I find really compelling about making a print. It's satisfying for me to apply this method when making stand-alone paintings. I've been experimenting with mono-printing silkscreen on my paintings, which at first felt very alien and almost inappropriate given my traditional training — it's been very liberating.



HESSE FLATOW

Corkery, Elizabeth. "Interview with Emma Safir." *Print Club LTD*, 2019. Online and Print.



Who would you love to collaborate with?

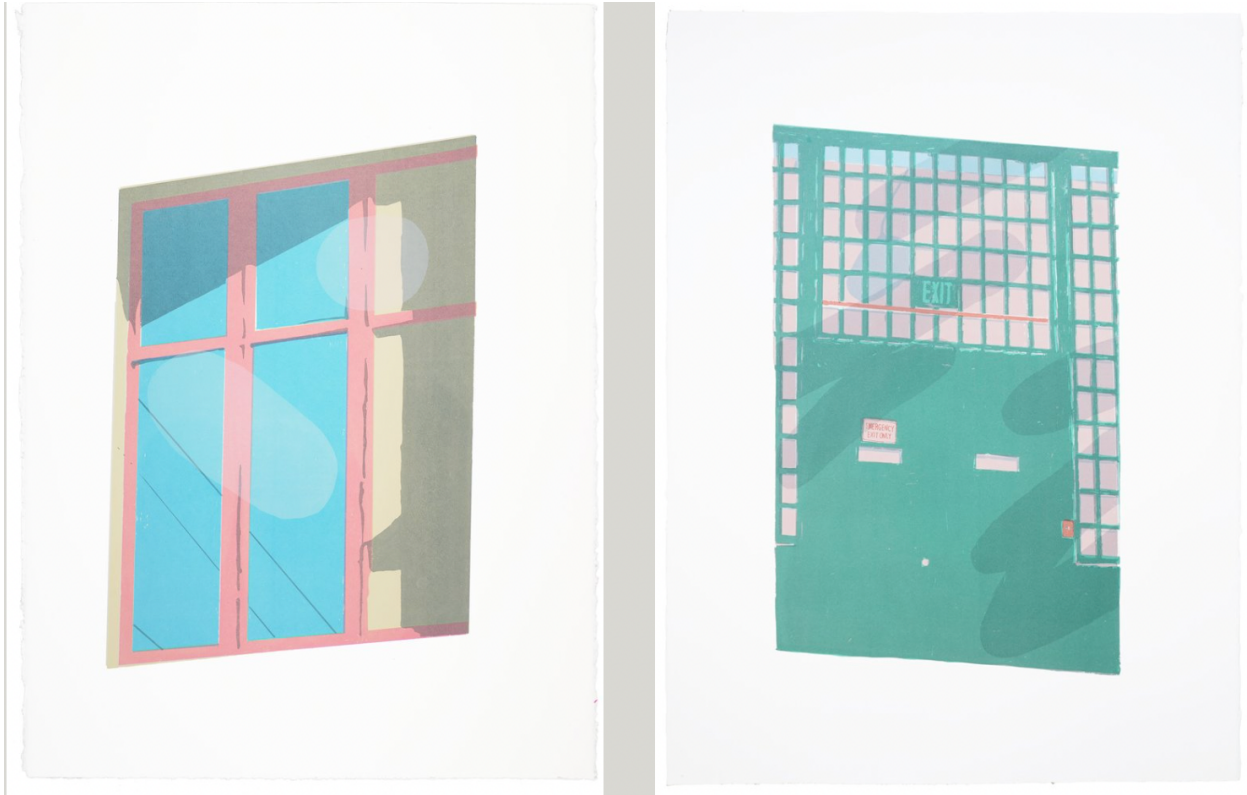
As someone who works almost exclusively with textiles, it's a dream of mine to attend the artist in residence program at [Fabric Workshop & Museum](#) in Philadelphia. I have a formative memory of visiting when I was a child, one of my mom's good friends was a fabricator there. I got to see them working on Jim Hodge's nets of silk flowers and it stuck with me. Last year Julia Bryan-Wilson published [Fray: Art and Textile Politics](#), which discusses fabric's relationship to labor, gender, sexuality and craft. It's helped me find my voice when thinking about why I use textiles.

Where are some of your favorite spaces in New York for contemporary art or design?

I'm always curious to see shows at [Canada](#), [Nicelle Beauchene](#) and [Rachel Uffner](#). I was really taken with the [Strauss Bourque-LaFrance show](#) that was just at Rachel Uffner. Sometimes when I'm in a studio rut, I have a hard time remembering that looking at art will compel me to make art — but it always does. It's not contemporary, but I also love to go to the Met in the summer when you can wander around the air conditioned galleries.

HESSE FLATOW

Corkery, Elizabeth. "Interview with Emma Safir." *Print Club LTD*, 2019. Online and Print.



What are you working on at the moment?

I have a show coming up this May at [Java Project](#) in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. I'm planning on making an entirely new body of work and I am considering what a more immersive installation (that potentially comes off the wall) would mean for my practice. I've been thinking about various viewfinders and ways of obstructing space for several years, and I'm curious what this could mean as a less physical boundary — I'm fascinated by shadows created at night by street lights. What do boundaries in space mean when they are not "physical" but visual illusions? I'm also going to be in a two-person show in Sydney at [KNLUP](#) in May, curated by [Mitchel Cumming](#) with [Jana Hawkins-Andersen](#), that show will most likely have existing work in it.

HESSE FLATOW

Corkery, Elizabeth. "Interview with Emma Safir." *Print Club LTD*, 2019. Online and Print.

