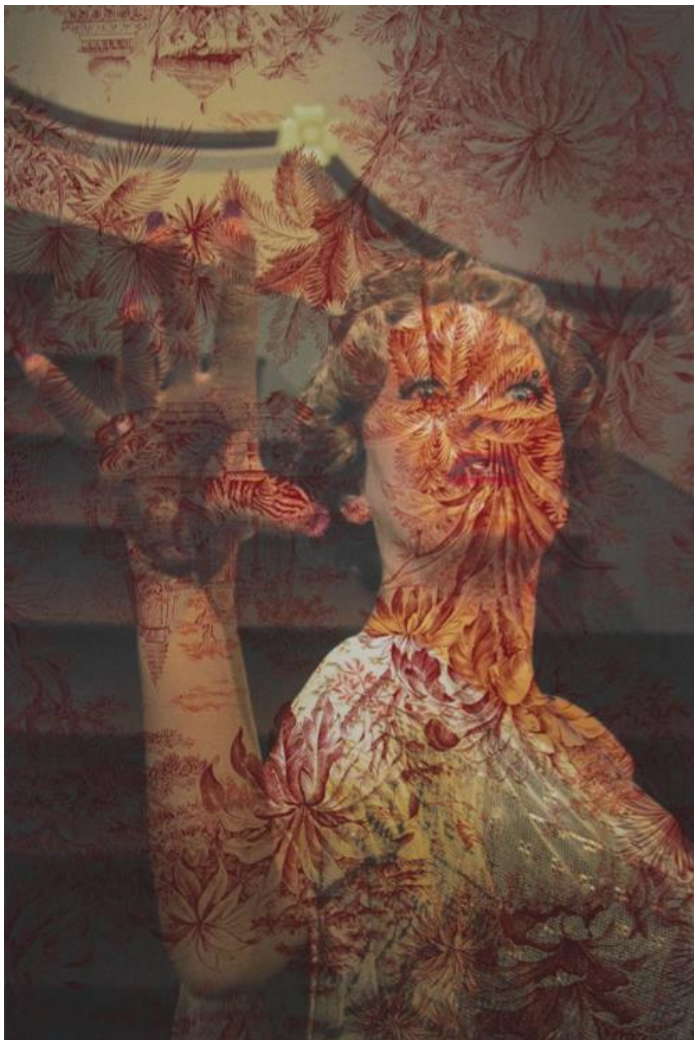


TIM HAILAND, GROUND AND IMAGE

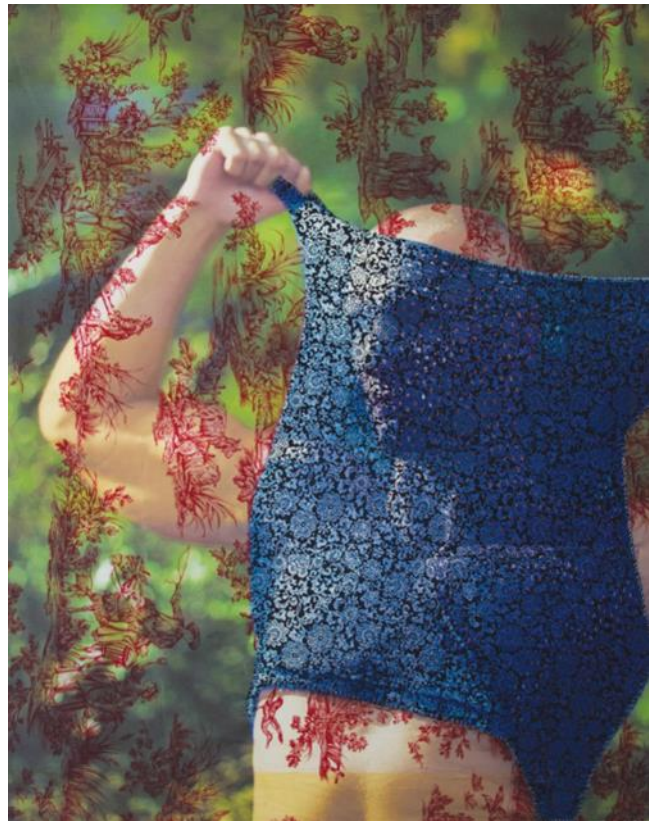
By Edward Cella

There is perhaps no more influential constructed landscape to artists of the last one-hundred years than the gardens established by Claude Monet in Giverny. Since the painter's death, uncountable numbers of artists have come to Giverny on a pilgrimage, searching the property's water garden and flower garden to discover the secrets of light and colour in the famous *Nymphéas*. For the last twenty years, two artists a year are invited by the Versailles Foundation to take residency on Monet's estate. Living and working in and around the property, evolving their creative practice surrounded by the lush yet idealized nature that Monet constructed. Tim Hailand received this residency in 2012 and so began a most unique body of work, which transforms contemporary notions of nature, portraiture, and identity.



Tim Hailand, *Gloria Swanson as Norma Desmond Wax Figure Los Angeles (on Red and White Tiger Toile)*, 2015

Hailand spent six months living in a bedroom adjacent to Monet's home, covered in red and white *toile de Jouy* wallpaper, and during this time, in his own words, became obsessed with toile. The artist's practice of Nichiren Buddhism attuned him to many overlooked features in the world, here specifically the interior of the house. His daily practice involves facing a scroll inscribed by 13th century monk Nichirin Daishonin and chanting the words *Nam Myoho Renge Kyo*. This scroll is a patterned piece of fabric with Japanese characters inscribed down the center. Hailand describes making a conscious decision when he embarked on his residency to immerse only in process, and to not be focused on results or outputs. He realized only later that the new body of work had a formal relationship to the scroll itself. This attention to the property's interiors stands in contrast to the primary source of inspiration: its gardens.



Tim Hailand, *Maciek Mika Stretched Mesh Across Face Berlin*, Red Yellow Striped Water Music Toile, Black and White Abstract Floral Cotton, Gold thread, 2015

Toile de Jouy, a type of decorative pattern consisting of a white or cream background on which a repeated pattern depicting complex yet idyllic pastoral scenes, was created in eighteenth century France and encodes a harmonic relationship between nature, architecture, labour and nascent ideas of leisure. Presenting imaginary woodland scenes peopled by costumed nymphs, farmers, fishermen or laundresses, toile, is an archaic survivor of a pre-modern era, yet has been cherished since as an ever-adaptable visual language that each era recasts in its own reflection.

Working in an intuitive manner, and responding to his environment, Hailand set off exploring the possibility of utilizing toile in his work by purchasing a roll of wallpaper in a similar design. Hailand first explored an intervention of the toile in the landscape, draping it in the garden and making photos of it. Eventually, he brought the wallpaper back inside and began printing his photographs directly on it. Not satisfied with the wallpaper, he then purchased *toile de Jouy* fabric

and began his current body of work, which consists of portraits printed directly on the fabric. In doing so, he created a new body of work encapsulating many of the main concerns of his ongoing practice. An interesting feature of the works is that they are all unique works—not editioned pieces—as was his practice before.

Portraiture is Hailand's primary subject as an artist. Innate to portraiture are its limitations. The face cannot reveal complex emotions, thoughts, or memories in objective, quantifiable ways; nor can the body alone suggest the compound contexts and environments in which we operate and, to a marked degree, create. The hard to define materiality of one of his photographs and the elusive slippage between the artist's selected subjects and the historical patterns create new ways of bridging these limitations. Transcending the capture of the camera, Hailand manipulates his images in a distinct, inventive way. Hailand describes this process as, "letting the photographic image collaborate further with another factor. In the case of these toile works, I'm using the ready-made of another designer's work—the pattern—to inscribe itself on my image. Here I feel that I am intentionally intruding on the work—disrupting it—thereby disrupting my own photographic image and creating something new.



Tim Hailand, *Gymnast on Horse Rouen, Red and White Tiger Toile*, 2015

Hailand is attuned to performance and conceives of his practice as performative in nature. In previous bodies of work, Hailand took existing photographs of his work and placed them in new, physical contexts in the landscape, for instance in the trees in a park or floating underwater in the ocean. He would then photograph these images again in their new context, the new photograph then becoming the piece.

Building on a similar action, Hailand exploits the unique registration of his portraits onto the circumstances that the fabric's pattern, colour and textures prescribe. Composing them as much topographically (thematically) as compositionally, elements of chance and craft collide, reinforcing the open-ended aesthetic pursuit of the artist. Ultimately, for the artist, "the material itself, whether an actual photographic subject, a photo of a subject, or a patterned piece of fabric excites me in some way—I am simply responding to that sensation and creating works that hopefully in turn vibrate with the viewer."

As a gallerist, Hailand's work is particularly of interest. My gallery, Edward Cella Art & Architecture, represents significant established, mid-career and emerging artists, architects, and designers whose practices engage structure and space conceptually, formally, and socially. I am committed to exploring the critical intersections of media and discipline and focusing on the conjunctive nature, and intersecting histories of art, design, and architecture. Ultimately, I seek to foster the creative reciprocity of Art and Design in an experimental and critically engaging way. Hailand's engagement with a rich, historic design vocabulary with his inventive contemporary practice as an artist result in deeply evocative material objects, which captivate me as a collector and dealer.



Tim Hailand, *Self-portrait in Oscar Wilde's Deathbed Paris*, Red Yellow Striped Water Music Toile, 2015

Hailand's intersecting investigations of the two-dimensional landscapes represented in toile and the physical environment that are inhabited by the individuals captured by his camera offer two distinct sets of landscapes and the opportunity to read the correspondences and differences between them. The idealized nature visualized in the toile is but one vision of paradise. In many of Hailand's photographs, his subjects, often male athletes with their remarkable sculptured bodies and chiseled faces, stand in verdant landscapes which suggest primeval forests. In an era where the tattoo is a modern-day marker of tribe, identity, fraternity, and belongingness; the historic patterns float on and off the body of the individual in his photographs. These stand in contrast to the actual tattoo patterns that are inked onto the bodies of his subjects. The images beg into question, what do these patterns represent or are representative of? Hailand allows us to come to our own conclusions, but his investigations underscore our era's acute awareness of the fleetingness of the nature around us and the communities that connect us.

A self-portrait of Hailand, taken in Oscar Wilde's deathbed in a Paris hotel, a room in which Wilde spent the last year of his life after being exiled from the UK, offers an alternative narrative. The yellow and red striped toile falls over Hailand's body enrobed in white (unprinted) sheets. In this very room, Wilde is widely reported to have said, "The wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us has to go." Curiously, for an author so fastidious in the selection and placement of his words, there is no definitive certainty to this one of his most famous quips. Hailand's composition, offers definitive proof that Wilde's extraordinary life and work continues to resonate deeply across time and culture.

Hailand's work, in the words of photographic historian Gordon Baldwin, "in lesser hands might be merely theatrical, or cinematic juxtapositions are instead pictures suffused with vigorous dreamlike visions. Time itself is talking; the thoroughly modern is in present dialogue with art from the past. These conversations, as if overheard or glimpsed in gardens, are not didactic but rather invocations guided by the artist's intuition and chance."