

## New Editions 2016

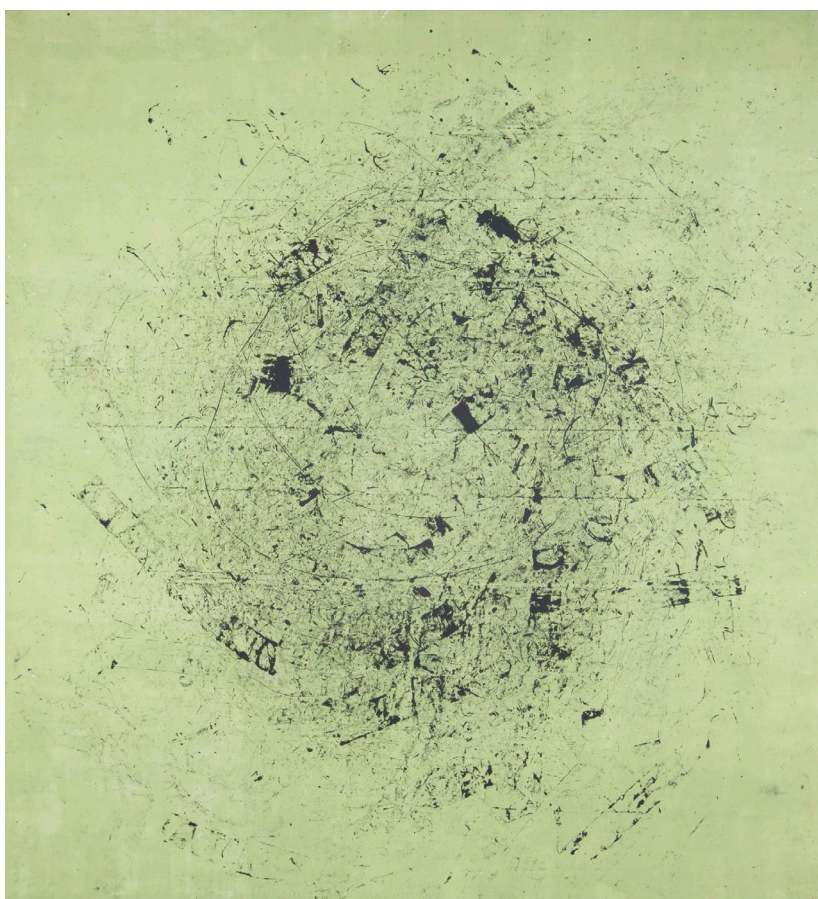
### Alexa Horochowski

#### *Vortex Drawings* (2016)

Series of unique works, various sizes from 6 x 6 feet to 12 x 12 feet. Produced with Highpoint Center for Printmaking, Minneapolis. Prices from \$3,500 to \$5,500.

Though prints are usually thought of as the product of a fixed matrix—carved woodblocks, engraved plates—the history of printmaking is also littered with malleable matrices: the smooth glass of Degas' monoprints, the hand of Henri-Charles Guérard's monkey, the body of David Hammons, among thousands of others. Alexa Horochowski's *Vortex Drawings* operate within that tradition, but with a cacophonous twist.

Put simply, these wall-size works are composed of marks made by bits of pigment-shrouded garbage, picked up and dropped by wind. Working with Highpoint Editions in Minneapolis, Horochowski set up eight barrel fans in a wide circle around a large sheet of paper, or vellum, or Tyvek. In the center she piled man-made detritus—polystyrene cups, packing peanuts, aluminum cans and plastic bottles—that had been coated with transferrable materials such as graphite, ink and oil. Then she switched on the fans. Together they created a localized gyre of moving air that lifted the inked-up garbage into a cloud of erratically spinning junk. As pieces fell and rose again, they deposited traces on the surface below. (A video of the making of one of the drawings can be seen at <https://vimeo.com/160134446>).



Alexa Horochowski, *Vortex Drawing #8* (2016). Photo: David Kern.

Sometimes, when the objects were large, the marks left behind are distinctive enough to act as an indexical representation of its maker. Most often, the printed vestiges are like dust—too fragmentary and incomplete to be assigned an identity. In some cases the tracked motion appears stochastic or oddly gestural. In others, it produced a clearly defined, if diaphanous, torus. The silver-on-black circular cloud of *Vortex Drawing 13*, which dominated the Highpoint Booth at the E/AB Fair in November, has a Hubble Telescope galactic sublimity about it.

Horochowski's interest in whirlwinds, however, arises out of something

much closer and far less benign: the spreading oceanic "garbage patches" in the Atlantic and Pacific—gyres, hundred of miles in diameter and many feet deep, in which fragmentary manmade junk accumulates and circulates.

Like the garbage patches, the *Vortex Drawings* are the products of natural forces and of unnatural elements set in motion, then abandoned. Unlike the garbage patches, Horochowski's works are visually compelling—pleasing, even—which raises provocative questions about ethics and aesthetics: does transforming tragedy into beauty dull its edge? But if we don't, will anyone look? ■ —Susan Tallman