

CHEYMORE GALLERY

Philip Taaffe: *Asterias*

May 20 - July 29, 2017

opening reception:

Saturday, May 20th, 5-7pm

Image:
Asterias, 2016
Silkscreen and oil pigment on paper
Printed by the artist
Variable edition
12 1/2 x 12 1/2 inches, each



In collaboration with Planthouse, Cheymore Gallery is happy to present *Philip Taaffe: Asterias* on view from May 20 until July 29, 2017 with an opening reception Saturday, May 20th from 5-7pm. Taaffe has created more than fifty oil monoprints on paper featuring a variety of starfish species. Installed in an immersive world of sea creatures spurring reflection on the increasing vulnerability of marine life. Each unique print features a scientific image of a starfish, sometimes only a single spiny arm, awash in a sea of loose brushstrokes and lively color. Taaffe investigates natural forms with playful curiosity and knowledge of the history of science and of ornament. Bringing to mind Ernst Haeckel's *Art Forms in Nature* (1899-1904), Taaffe imbues the naturally occurring shapes and colors of starfish with a sense of hypnotic wonder.

Taaffe writes:

"I have chosen as my 'subject' an aspect of nature in a mediated, or examined, condition. And although such clarity enables me to bring these natural forms into another frame of reference, at the same time it requires me to abandon or nullify in some way the claims that natural science may have towards them. What I am doing, essentially, is subjecting this material to my memory of art, and to my artistic desires. By imposing the new order of experience, I seek to place the known once again into the category of the unexplained."

Philip Taaffe was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1955 and studied at the Cooper Union in New York. He has been showing his work worldwide since his first solo exhibition in New York City in 1982. In 2016 Planthouse published *The Floral Ghost*, a book collaboration between Taaffe and New York Times best-selling author Susan Orlean. Taaffe's work is in numerous public collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Philadelphia Museum of Art; The Whitney Museum of American Art; and The Reina Sofia, Madrid. Taaffe currently lives in New York City and West Cornwall, Connecticut.