

Sisavanh Phouthavong Houghton 12/07/23

Short Artist Statement:

This body of work is influenced by digital “noise” and how it embeds itself like slivers into our daily lives. These glitched and map-based landscapes are compiled from widely shared sources that have been artistically altered to represent a theme that often emerges in my work about disruption. I call it: “All Wars are the Same War.” As a Lao refugee and immigrant, my experience during and post-Vietnam War continues to impact my life and art. This project features archival photographs from the Vietnam War combined with the recent Ukrainian War and the ongoing conflict in Syria. I am drawn to the colors, explosions, absurdity, and pathos of the images from bombing zones, drones, and trace missiles. The terrain, conflicts, and disputes may vary, but the human war experience does not. While the idea of war is familiar, modern consumption of war continues to evolve in social media #LiveWar, #LikeWar, and the infodemic practice of spreading misinformation and disinformation via online.

Short Biography:

Sisavanh Phouthavong Houghton is a Lao American interdisciplinary visual artist and Painting Professor at Middle Tennessee State University. Recently exhibited internationally in Italy and Greece and nationally at The Knoxville Museum of Art and Susquehanna Art Museum. She has been featured in The New Art Examiner, The Next-Door Neighbor, and various podcasts. Permanent collections include the Hunter Museum of American Art and the American Embassy, Paramaribo, Suriname. Houghton earned her BFA at the University of Kansas and an MFA at Southern Illinois University of Carbondale, IL. In 2023, she won Best in Show for the 38th Positive/Negative Exhibition, 2022 awarded a Tri-Star Current Art Warhol Foundation Fund and a MTSU's 2022 Distinguished Creative and Teacher of the Year Award, 2020 nominated for the Joan Mitchell Foundation Arts Award, a 2019 Artfields' Painting Award, and 2017 Tennessee Arts Individual Artist Fellowship recipient. She is represented by Tinney Contemporary Gallery in Nashville, TN.