

James Henkel
Make/Shift
July 30 - September 11, 2021



Tracey Morgan Gallery is pleased to present *Make/Shift*, an exhibition of new and recent work by photographer James Henkel. This show, Henkel's second with the gallery, builds on explorations of beauty, purpose, and perception. Using unexpected arrangements and reimagined everyday objects, Henkel's whimsical images are both humorous and disarming. Reception for the artist, Friday, July 30, 6-8pm.

The photographs in *Make/Shift* are from two on-going studio projects: *Botanicals* and *Books*, both subjects which have long been focuses of Henkel's work. The botanical pieces combine both real and fabricated elements, disrupting the preciousness of floral still-life imagery. The gravity defying arrangements are playful, with a nod to photography's unique ability to covertly manipulate perception. The book images show a reverence for books as objects, even as the books themselves are made unreadable through Henkel's process: they are cut up, re-arranged, and bound together with elastic bands and other material, adding a layer of tension to these otherwise docile items. We are acutely aware that we've come to these objects in their final resting place, post destruction.

Alongside Henkel's employment of manipulation, his photographs allow us to revel in beauty for the sake of beauty, giving us license to take pleasure in the smallest details of a petal or the stitching on an old book spine. While his dissections are intentionally imprecise, they are perfectly calculated, and his rich colors and careful arrangements show a quiet commitment to aesthetic pleasure.

James Henkel is one of the three featured artists in this year's auction at Penland School of Craft. He is Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota. He has exhibited in over one hundred national and international venues, including shows at the Teheran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran; SFMOMA; and the Minneapolis Institute of Art, among others. His work is in the collections of The Whitney Museum of American Art, The Walker Art Center, SFMOMA, and many others. He has been the recipient of grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Art, the Bush Foundations, the McKnight Foundation and the Minnesota State Arts Board. Henkel lives and works in Asheville and Penland, North Carolina.

For additional information or visuals, please contact info@traceymorgangallery.com

Image: *Botanical - Trim*, 2020, Archival pigment print, 20 x 16, edition of 5

TRACEY MORGAN GALLERY

188 COXE AVENUE ASHEVILLE NC 28801 828.505.7667 TRACEYMORGANGALLERY.COM