

PUBLIC SERVICE

Lethe

Leonardo Anker Vandal, Linda Carrara, Francesoco Paterlini
& Alexis Zambrano, curated by Erin Kim

08.06.2023—07.07.2023

All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain. – Blade Runner (1982)

You are – besides bone and blood and a little breath – nothing but a collection of your memories. From your past, you construct your perception of the present and your plans for the future. But you can't take them with you. Newly arrived in the Ancient Greek Underworld, the dead drank from the river *Lethe* and became shades, all memory of their past selves consigned to oblivion.

Ephemeral though it is, memory is all we have between the infinite chaos of time on either side of our existence. To the Greeks the goddess *Memory (Mnemosyne)* was the mother of the Nine Muses and the font of art. So she is to the artists in *Lethe*.

Memory is subjective to the point of solipsism. Two people never recall an event or conversation the same way. Alexis Zambrano hints at this with *We are Each at the Center of Our Own Universe*, as does Leonardo Anker Vandal with *I Live Alone in My Heaven, in My Love, in My Song*.

On the other hand, memory can seem shared or subconscious: Francesco Paterlini's temples and tombs radiate mystery but feel familiar, as if they contain a collective cultural memory. But they are monuments to ancestors who never were, just as Zambrano makes antique maps of imagined realms. Memory is never beyond doubt because we create it – or even invent it.

Memory evolves, as we and our world must. Linda Carrara captures fleeting moments like light through the leaves or the ripples of a river, never the same twice. Through frottage, she preserves the surfaces of sites dear to her, studios and sidewalks, recognizable to no one else. But how often have you returned to a place treasured in memory only to find it different than in your mind's eye?

Vandal seems to recognize the futility of grasping memory in *The Silence of Orpheus*. A mist recedes into the void. Is it Eurydice, evaporating at her lover's look as he leads his muse from Hades into sunlight? Unlike Orpheus, we can always look back.

Public Service Gallery presents *Lethe*, a group exhibition curated by Erin Kim that will take place 8 June – 7 July, featuring artists; Leonardo Vandal, born 1988 in Copenhagen, Denmark and lives and works in Brescia, Italy; Linda Carrara, born 1984 in Bergamo, Italy and lives and works between Milan and Brussels; Francesco Paterlini, born 1987 in Brescia, Italy and lives and works between Brescia and Pietrasanta; and Mexican-American artist Alexis Zambrano (b. 1988), who lives and works between New York and Monterrey.

- Mark Blackwell