

h a u n t

finding it again by
Kim Zumpfe

for P

these words don't belong to me. i am an overgrowth. a contusion. i inherited this scene of imitation, handed over, not as a failed symbol of nationalist zeal, a flag, but a lineage split open and engorged with mouthfuls of fresh blue meat from the packing plants and libraries of white ants doing routine duties of devotion and preservation. i am not free to share those words, words veiled in a series of colors that conceals the discomfort, so i hint at events, unable to be speak when flesh is split. and we all suckle the blood from the blue drains and white channels built to make the death of my real brothers and sisters an hygienic affair, heavy cleft feet, driven through narrow streets lashed forward from behind with words called gentle and kind. a hand gently caresses my shoulder, i feel it warm and strong and wet and i turn and smell the stains of my own history under her wet nails. and there. settled into fissures spread across the skin. on her thumb is a small growth. i fixate on that perfectly round bump that looks like the rest just slightly larger, the supple skin stretched out over a color that is the same as the rest. i reach over and touch knowing that it is a source and strength. a contusion. the same as the rest. i hold back. i hold her back. Hold her in and away so that i won't puncture the swell with a gentle mumble and those sounds push up in the space that separates us. i hold back. i reach in and pull apart the skin with words i call my own to look for the color underneath.

† Kim Zumpfe is an artist and educator who lives and works in Los Angeles. She is an interdisciplinary artist that interrogates encounters where there is a collapse of identity, intimacy, architectures, and power structures. She can be seen walking around streets or escaping around corners. Her work has shown at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), Human Resources Los Angeles, the Hammer Museum, and Diverseworks in Texas.

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Address:

Haunt Journal of Art

Department of Art

Claire Trevor School of the Arts

University of California, Irvine

3229 Art Culture and Technology

Irvine, CA 92697-2775

Email:

hauntjournal@uci.edu

Website:

www.hauntjournal.org

http://escholarship.org/uc/uciart_hauntjournal

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