

“From Here On Out”

Toby Millman and Andrew Thompson

29 September –27 October 2012

Toby Millman’s current project, “From Here on Out”, (from which the exhibition draws its name) is based on observations and experiences in and around Hamtramck with a view eastward, from where many Hamtramck residents have emigrated. As she states:

“After having lived in Hamtramck for close to four years, and frequenting it for much longer, I have noticed striking similarities between my city and life in Palestine, which has been the geographic center of my work for several years. Not only is there a large Arab-American population in Hamtramck (predominantly from Yemen) but the Detroit area as a whole holds many populations who experience struggle, corruption, social division and exemplify endurance. In this series – consisting of screenprints, photographs, and textual vignettes - I take quotes from the everyday to show that struggle and endurance, as well as the cultural shifts that make up the city.

I am attracted to the resilience of the human condition and, perhaps not inadvertently, continue to situate myself in places where I can bear witness to it. My work reflects this act of bearing witness, but from a personal point of view as one who straddles the line between an invested insider and an often-naïve outsider. My work does not wave flags, nor does it bear unyielding allegiances. Rather, it tries to uncover histories and testimonies from people and communities long marginalized or ignored. As I share my observations, I also reveal my own story.”

Andrew Thompson also takes a close look at the local to explore broader themes, transcribing an aerial view of Hamtramck from the 1940’s and using the duration of the show to trace the modifications that have occurred since that date. The laborious, but time-condensed process is a meditation on post-war urban development, change and emotional connection to place. Gallery goers will be invited to contribute their perspectives and stories about the changing urban landscape to enrich the portrayal of the city on the gallery wall.