

# DEPTH OF SURFACE

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PATRICIA GÓMEZ AND MARÍA JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

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Fig. 01





Fig. 02





Fig. 03



Fig. 04

# BORDERLINES

Jennie Hirsh

*"The time of abjection is double: a time of oblivion and thunder, of veiled infinity and the moment when revelation bursts forth."*

*"We may call it a border; abjection is above all ambiguity."*  
—Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*<sup>1</sup>

Patricia Gómez and María Jesús González figure amongst a growing number of contemporary artists whose work self-consciously resuscitates historical sites and artifacts at risk for being forgotten. A cultural reflex linked to the turn of millennium inspiring nostalgia along with anxiety, this creative memorial impulse became popular in the 1990s and can be associated with artists such as Rachel Whiteread and Christian Boltanski, or Krzysztof Wodiczko and James Casebere—artists whose work has addressed fraught histories that, although now invisible, remain associated with specific sites and structures.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, over the past twenty years, a new genre of political monuments, or "countermemuments," has taken shape. A key aspect of such works is the physical incorporation of voids into their designs as a means of making tangible the losses, such as the AIDS crisis and the Holocaust, that marked the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

Gómez + González belong to a younger generation of artists working in this commemorative vein. Their recent projects are notable for their aesthetic beauty as well as for their metaphorical weight. Using a unique form of printmaking and distinctive installation strategies, they highlight social and political issues that are both site-contingent and culturally pervasive, though largely invisible in broader discourse.<sup>4</sup> Gómez + González make interventions in buildings that have been condemned and slated for demolition, literally printing the walls, ceilings, and even floors of structures in anticipation of their disappearance. Their resulting stripped surfaces compress architectural embellishments, trace human marks and decorations, and environmental decay into unique two-dimensional images that evidence a range of histories and experiences.<sup>5</sup> Gómez + González, trained as printmakers equipped with a knowledge of historic preservation, began using their trademark *strappo* process in 2002, gaining public attention for the technique on a grand scale in 2007 with a series of modernist homes in the El Cabanyal district of their native Valencia. Their subsequent projects, however, have departed from the domestic context to center on a different kind of containment: the carceral space of prisons that have fallen into disuse in Valencia, Palma de Mallorca, and, most recently, Philadelphia.

According to the artists, of the three prison sites where they have intervened thus far, Philadelphia's Holmesburg Prison, located at 8215 Torresdale Avenue, adjacent to I-95 in the northeast section of Philadelphia, is the most "harsh," for both its state of advanced decay and the severity of the penitentiary system it housed.<sup>6</sup> Designed by the Wilson Brothers and opened in 1896, Holmesburg features a wheel-and-spoke arrangement with long halls of prisoner cells radiating out from a central surveillance tower, echoing the arrangement of John Haviland's better-known Eastern State Penitentiary (opened in 1829) in the Fairmount section of the city. Like Eastern State, Holmesburg instantiated "panopticon" surveillance—a concept made famous by Jeffrey Bentham in the eighteenth century and later analyzed by Michel Foucault. A means of controlling subservient beings via visual surveillance, panoptical penitentiary design introduced psychological control to the built space of physical confinement.<sup>7</sup>

Working within claustrophobic cells behind closed doors, and rifling through files, photographs, notebooks, logbooks, and photographs in local archives, the artists collected fragments of time passed behind bars, discovering a part of the city usually invisible to the population at large. In turning their attention to those individuals—guards, administrators, and prisoners—whose stories and bodies were deemed unfit for circulation in mainstream society, the artists pursued a side of the urban landscape that is, by design, inaccessible to the population living "on the outside." Their works produced for *Doing Time / Depth of Surface* expand notions of an urban landscape, pushing its matrix in a new direction, permeating historical, social, and cultural barriers erected to keep "undesirables," and the difficult and distasteful treatment of them, out of sight. Pulling their signature prints from the interior of Holmesburg metaphorically resutures the tatters of the city's history as they transfer the unseen and unheard experiences of the penitentiary complex to the spectacular space of the gallery.

To better understand the function and value of the Holmesburg prints and installations, as well as the research that informs them, it is useful to explore the concept of abjection as described by philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva. In her touchstone work *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Kristeva explains that "what is abject...is radically excluded," including, amongst marginalized groups criminal members of society: "the traitor, the liar, the criminal... the shameless rapist, the killer who claims he is a savior..."<sup>8</sup> Whether between society and its rejected members (or as part of a single subject's process of individuation), the healthy body sets up borders to separate out the abject, which "disturbs identity, system, order... [and] does not respect borders, positions, rules." Bodily fluids, such as excrement or sweat, and cadavers are examples of the things that represent undesirable aspects of (or outcomes for) our physical

(Continued on page 11)





Fig. 05



Fig. 06



Fig. 07



Fig. 08



Fig. 09

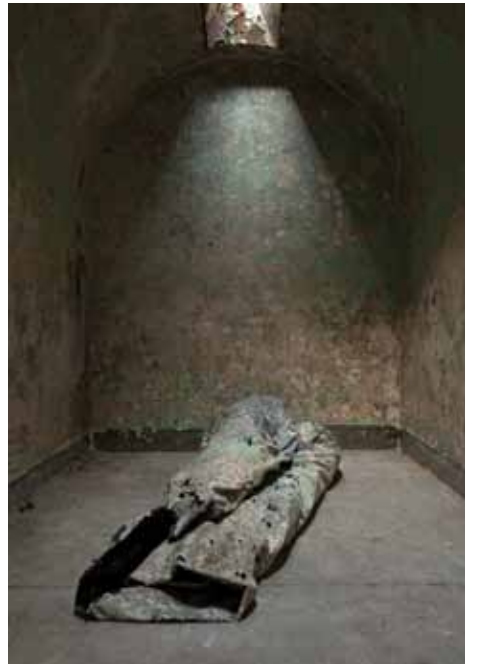


Fig. 10





Fig. 11





Fig. 12





Fig. 13



selves that we instinctively try to avoid. More broadly, societies seek to exile their abject members, i.e., those deemed non-normative—historically, minorities or the poor, relegated to the periphery and kept out of sight; criminals are pushed one step further and removed from circulation (and view) altogether. In a reconciliatory gesture, Gómez + González preserve the indexical marks left by prisoners on the walls of their incarceration, whether in the form of figurative drawings, verbal testaments, or torn sheets of precious newspapers or books (arguably inmates' tenuous connections to the outside world); as such, the artists excavate and expose the erased lives of abject individuals who have been removed from public space and taken *out of time*, a dual cancellation process that underwrites the artists' artistic inquiry here.<sup>9</sup>

At Holmesburg, the artists encountered extreme conditions that forced them to don special suits to protect them from the poor air quality as well as the lead in the painted walls.<sup>10</sup> To return to Kristeva, if abject individuals are identified as something between a subject and an object, then the prisoner considered thus—they are, after all, literally catalogued and contained as things and not individuals—could work to re-establish an identity as a subject, i.e., to renounce this state of abjection by mark-making. In short, enunciating words and images on the surfaces that surrounded them was a means of re-articulating their subjectivity, hence fulfilling Kristeva's notion that it is through art and religion that one can overcome abjection.<sup>11</sup> The fact that these skin-like surfaces are two-dimensional translations of three-dimensional spaces thematizes aspects of abjection as well. "For the space that engrosses the deject, the excluded, is never *one*, nor *homogenous*, nor *totalizable*, but essentially divisible, foldable, and catastrophic."<sup>12</sup>

Gómez + González preserve the complexity of the multiple lives and moments layered one on top of the other and compressed into the linings of these cells, carefully presenting them as *such*. In other words, they recognize that there is no single layer or moment that fully encompasses the history of each cell—in use for a century—or even of a single occupant's experience there. They surveyed surfaces peppered with both intact and incomplete (even illegible) icons and graffiti that at once obscure and expose fractured histories: what they examined in one imperfect layer had already buried another. While the artists saw similarities between traces, linking more than one mark to a single individual, most of the signs they found retain their anonymity. But rather than trying to resolve the unspoken mysteries that they uncover, the artists are faithful to that conundrum and in fact underscore this historical flattening by foregrounding this condition in their installations. When exhibiting *In Memory of a Place* (the aforementioned project executed at El Cabanyal), they sewed together prints of different rooms and houses, erasing the distinctions between

these spaces and reconfiguring them into a colossal sculptural roll that revealed only a miniscule fraction of its contents. And when they showed their works pulled from the prison in Valencia, they "locked up" and stacked prints inside boxes fabricated from cell doors, allowing the viewer visual access to only the top "layer," which covered up those below. This strategy reinforces the fact that even the most adept surveillance cameras and apertures generate only a superficial glimpse of inmates whose real stories stay forever buried below. When they displayed their works from Palma, they carefully folded up the resulting textiles into shallow crates, again providing only a scant sampling of what was stored beneath. These connected fragments of disparate walls and cells expose and abstract the compromised textures of their original cells and hallways. For *Depth of Surface*, the artists have loosely crumpled up a print of a single cell and thus emphasize the ways in which passing time in a dark and gloomy space, behind bars and under watch is a warped experience insofar as time and space are distorted by monotony, inactivity, and solitude.

But what is most striking for the viewer of works by Gómez + González is the artists' ability to translate an utterly distant location into proximate and palpable objects of contemplation. They convert the impenetrable borders that formerly enveloped inmates into delicate, fragile objects to be looked at by the viewer. The walls that witnessed and documented the objectified inmates and their activities are themselves recast as objects to be regarded, heightening the visitors' sense of her own subjectivity and the privileges that affords. Moreover, their present installation combining photos of a guard seated before a logbook with a sound recording lasting several hours gives voice to the log books that recorded non-events with words that, in most cases, would never be seen. With each artistic gesture, whether visual or sonic, the artists conscribe their viewers to bear witness to the past and the formerly invisible, echoing and underscoring earlier acts of witnessing and surveillance, transferring to the viewer the predicament of the walls and the guards.

Gómez + González re-negotiate subject-object relations through their installation practices: mural membranes go awry and the frames of surveillance are overturned as it is now the gallery that contains the traces of activities engaged to pass time and eschew boredom along with the poor conditions under which these expressions of hope, fear, and frustration were expressed. They successfully transfigure the rotting walls and abysmally dark spaces in which toilets, sinks, and beds, arguably signifiers of excrement, purification, and dreams were merely inches apart into lyrical impressions and theatrical photographs (see the process shots featuring the cells cloaked in black drapery). As Kristeva writes,

(Continued on page 17)



Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16



Fig. 17



## INTERVIEW WITH GÓMEZ + GONZÁLEZ

In 2011, Philagrafika (PGKA) invited Spanish artists Patricia Gómez and María Jesús González—an artistic partnership known as Gómez + González—to execute a project at Holmesburg Prison, the results of which would be exhibited at Moore College of Art & Design. The artists' radical understanding of print resonated with PGKA's mission of expanding the conceptual and technical frontiers of printmaking.

**José Roca:** At the start of the residency, your work within the site was delayed due to additional city requirements that PGKA was obliged to provide in order to ensure your safety as well as that of the city employees. Waiting to begin your intervention in the cells, you spent extensive time in libraries and special collections, delving deeper into the prison's complex history.<sup>1</sup> In light of this, what were the main challenges of this project?

**Gómez + González:** First, bureaucratic issues pushed back the start of the project in situ more than two months, forcing us to work against the clock once inside without the option of correcting our outcomes.

Once inside the prison, we faced other problems: the paint used on the walls and the extreme humidity of the site. The lead-based paint on the walls at Holmesburg was extremely hard and resistant to being removed from the wall, which required our use of surfactants to penetrate and soften the paint, making it easier to peel off with a water-based glue. This seems ironic given that in many parts of the building the paint has been peeling off by itself. We ended up experimenting with more than fifteen different types of bought or prepared glues to find a formula that would work equally well for the various surfaces: what worked for one wall failed on another. We did not have time to employ a chemist to understand the results in each case; instead, we had to take chances, knowing that each instance was a one-off process that could not be repeated if it did not work.

**JR:** Did this project change the way you think about your practice? If so, how?

**G + G:** For each project, we work under different conditions, which require us to find new solutions. Our practice was surely enriched by this experience, becoming more flexible and open to circumstances. With *Depth of Surface*, we encountered a decrepit building

with so much of the information on its walls already lost. And yet the site offered other types of unexpected information that we were able to incorporate. We began yet another type of salvaging not centered exclusively on architecture but on other elements that reveal the site's history. For example, we unearthed other voices, like the writings of the guards in their log books. We documented more systematically the site through photography and video via a surveillance camera and sound recordings.

**JR:** Were there paradoxes you encountered regarding the condition of the site and the architecture of incarceration?

**G + G:** Since being decommissioned in 1995, the prison has deteriorated significantly. Comparing the photographs of the cells in the book *In Prison Air* with what we found confirms how much the walls have decayed in only six years.<sup>2</sup> It was very difficult for us to identify the cells that we had previously seen in the book because the walls had lost more than seventy percent of the drawings and other graphic information that they had when the prison closed. Time, humidity, and the general abandonment of the site have produced this rapid deterioration.

**JR:** Did you learn anything unexpected about the prison by interviewing former guards?

**G + G:** We learned that the guards were as much under surveillance as were the inmates, as the log books they kept made clear. Besides registering what happened in each cellblock, the hourly reports written by the guards were also used by their superiors to control them: to check if they had done their jobs properly, especially if there was a complaint from one of the prisoners.

**JR:** This is your third experience working at a prison. Do you have a specific interest in prisons, or was this purely coincidental?

**G + G:** No, this was not an accident; for us, an abandoned prison contains valuable information on its walls. We sought out the first prison in Valencia. In the two subsequent cases, we were invited to perform interventions, once through the Fundació Miró in Mallorca, and the latest through PGKA. Our interest in prisons has grown exponentially each time, as we learn more about the penitentiary system worldwide by comparing different prison sites. Architecture is always different, and the people we encounter and their respective stories are also always different. In turn, we have produced very different types of artworks. This project brought us closer to

the origins of the panoptic system, which was the model used in the two prisons where we worked previously, and allowed us to establish continuity between the three projects.

**JR:** You produced a sound piece inspired by the Holmesburg guards' log books. Can you explain why you resorted to voice for this particular piece?

**G + G:** The voice repeating over and over the same phrase as he reads, is analogous to a state of boredom; the phrases that the guards wrote to document what happened in the prison express the slow and monotonous passage of time that they endured. This orated version of the official written record complements the silent voices of the prisoners captured by making prints of the writings on the walls. This also reminded us of the fraught method for teaching children by forcing them to repeat a phrase ad nauseum; this is more of a punishment than an effective pedagogical strategy. To repeat every day, every fifteen minutes, the phrase "all appears to be normal" could convince someone that this was indeed the case.

**JR:** In the past, the inmates at Holmesburg were involved in dermatological experiments. Is this particular history reflected in some way in the works you did for this project?

**G + G:** For us, the connection between human skin and architecture is as critical as it is obvious, and we have explored it in the past. Moreover, the walls inside a prison where an inmate expresses himself are like a second skin that envelops and protects him, separating him from the exterior but also imprisoning him. When nothing remains of a place and its walls are the sole element left to tell a story, our job is to reclaim and reveal those histories.

We are not interested in denouncing the experiments performed with the inmates—this has already been well documented—but we cannot avoid it completely either insofar as this is part of the history of the prison and the city.<sup>3</sup> Our work resonates with these events naturally because we engage with layers of history as found in the diseased walls that have lost their skin, as they are crumbling from the extreme humidity, and are unhealthy due to their lead content and other environmental issues. What has happened to Holmesburg's walls echoes what happened to the skin of the inmates who participated in medical experiments that had grave health consequences for their health.

Our sound piece *All Appears to be Normal*,

2011, relates to this theme. Here, the phrase "all appears to be normal" is read aloud over and over, making one wonder "what is normal in a prison?" Was it normal to experiment on the skin of the prisoners?

**JR:** Print was always a system of reproduction; with your monoprint technique what does the medium become?

**G+G:** Print never interested us in terms of reproduction. For us the term "print" is more conceptual than procedural; in terms of material and technique, *strappo* is related to the restoration of murals. Technical experimentation has allowed us to expand the concept of printmaking, resulting in a type of work that has a value as an archive of memory that supersedes its formal artistic values. Even while studying traditional printmaking, we never made editions or series, preferring to work directly on the matrix, introducing variations during the printing process. Since we obtain only one image each time, our process is a monotype. After ten years of collaborating, we see what we do as an extension of our early experimental practice. Peeling away a wall allows us to make a unique, large-format print realized without a press, ink or paper. We treat the wall as a matrix just as a copper plate in calcography (or wood in xilography, or stone in lithography) is engraved with a series of signs that are indexical marks to be printed. In this case, the passage of time has rendered these signs on the wall providing historical, social and sentimental information, which is on the verge of being lost forever. We are interested in capturing these magical effects of time or of people on the walls of places that are disappearing by recording them on soft surfaces like fabric or paper. In changing the support, from wall to fabric, our results physically archive places.

1 These institutions include: The Library Company; the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Philadelphia City Archives; Urban Archives, Samuel Paley Library, Temple University; Athenaeum of Philadelphia; Free Library of Philadelphia, Print and Picture Collection; Philadelphia Historical Commission at Philadelphia City Hall; and the Anne and Jerome Fisher Fine Arts Library at the University of Pennsylvania.

2 Thomas Roma, *In Prison Air: the Cells of Holmesburg Prison* (New York: PowerHouse Books, 2005).

3. See Allen M. Hornblum, *Acres of Skin: Human Experiments at Holmesburg Prison* (New York: Routledge, 1998) and Allen M. Hornblum, *Sentenced to Science* (University Park, PA: Penn State U Press, 2007).



Fig. 18



(Continued from page 12)

"[t]he abject from which he does not cease separating is for him, in short, a *land of oblivion* that is constantly remembered. Once upon blotted-out time, the abject must have been a magnetized pole of covetousness. But the ashes of oblivion now serve as a screen and reflect aversion, repugnance. The clean and proper (in the sense of incorporated and incorporable) becomes filthy, the sought-after turns into the banished, fascination into shame. Then, forgotten time crops up suddenly and condenses into a flash of lightening an operation that, if it were thought out, would involve bringing together the two opposite terms...."<sup>13</sup>

In bringing viewers to the edge of this oblivion through poignant prints and poetic photographic gestures, Gómez + González deliver not only a sense of the past buried at Holmesburg but also heightened awareness of the shameful and prejudiced attitudes all too often enacted in the process of incarceration. Their elegant works are truly a form of transubstantiation, converting prison cells into holy chapels, reminding us, as did Kristeva, that "[t]he various means of *purifying* the abject—the various catharses—make up the history of religions, and end up with that catharsis par excellence called art, both on the far and near side of religion."<sup>14</sup>

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1 Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982): 9.

2 Lisa Saltzman, *Making Memory Matter: Strategies of Remembrance in Contemporary Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

3 In *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1993), James E. Young coined the term "countermemorial" to describe a growing number of European monuments whose shapes included absences; he expanded his inquiry of this aesthetic principle in *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000).

4 See Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT P, 2002) on the topic of site-specific art

5 See Patricia S. Robertson, "Printing the Past: Gómez + González' Monoprints," in this publication.

6 Author's conversation with the artists, Philadelphia, October 2011. See also the interview conducted by José Roca in this volume.

7 See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1995): 195-228.

8 Kristeva, 2.

9 Ibid.

10 To work directly with these materials, the artists used a post-production fixant to neutralize any dangerous chemicals and render the works safe for viewers.

11 Kristeva, 17.

12 Ibid., 8.

13 Ibid., 8-9.

14 Ibid., 17.

# PRINTING THE PAST:

## GÓMEZ + GONZÁLEZ' MONOPRINTS

Patricia S. Robertson

*"[T]he fact of removing paint from a wall is, for us, an act of printing; what we obtain from this practice is considered a print...a unique print, done outside the atelier, without a press, inks, or paper; the key concept here is that the wall is the matrix..."*  
—Patricia Gómez and María Jesús González.<sup>1</sup>

Patricia Gómez and María Jesús González use the process of *strappo*, a traditional mural restoration technique, to create large-scale prints in the form of singular impressions taken from the walls of abandoned buildings slated for destruction. With this process of attaching cloth to sections of wall, they discovered that they can capture and collect pieces of the past. Their installations are self-consciously not recreations of their original source spaces; rather, they typically present their large monoprints as deflated mounds on the floor, as large, partially unrolled scrolls, or cut-up and bound as books.

The artists trained as printmakers and hence consider their pieces to be large-scale monoprints: "special, often one-of-a-kind" printings of a plate matrix.<sup>2</sup> Whereas monoprints are not created using any one specific printmaking process, their creation does consistently involve transferring layers of ink/paint from one surface to another, utilizing the pressure of a press or hand. Notably, Holmesburg Prison is a structure whose multiple cells, identical in dimension, are located at regular intervals along ten cellblocks; it is the print matrix employed by these artists that yields up individual and unique prints, pictorial analogs for the singular lives and experiences that unfolded in these, at least originally, uniform spaces.

For this project, Gómez + González printed the walls of prison cells by transferring the layers of paint along with inmates' at times elaborate drawings and markings from the surfaces of the walls to cloth. As with many monoprint techniques, reprinting from the same matrix (or wall section) yields a new print—a 'ghost print'. The small-scale monoprints that Gómez and González created are in some instances ghost prints; each resulting image a snapshot of a point in the past which had been subsequently painted over and forgotten. The larger works are prints of an entire cell; they record both the architectural space and the remnants of the inmates' existence therein.

The printing of an individual cell is extremely labor-intensive. I witnessed this when I was in cell 805 with the artists on October 17, 2011 as they pulled the second of the two full-scale prints. Each

*(Continued on page 25)*



Fig. 19



Fig. 20





Fig. 21



Fig. 22





Fig. 23



Fig. 24



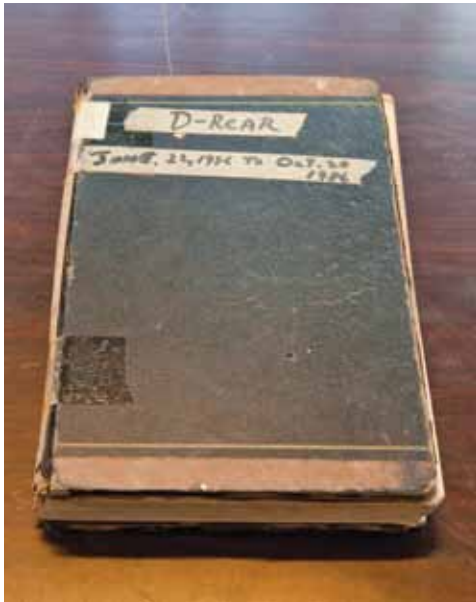


Fig. 25

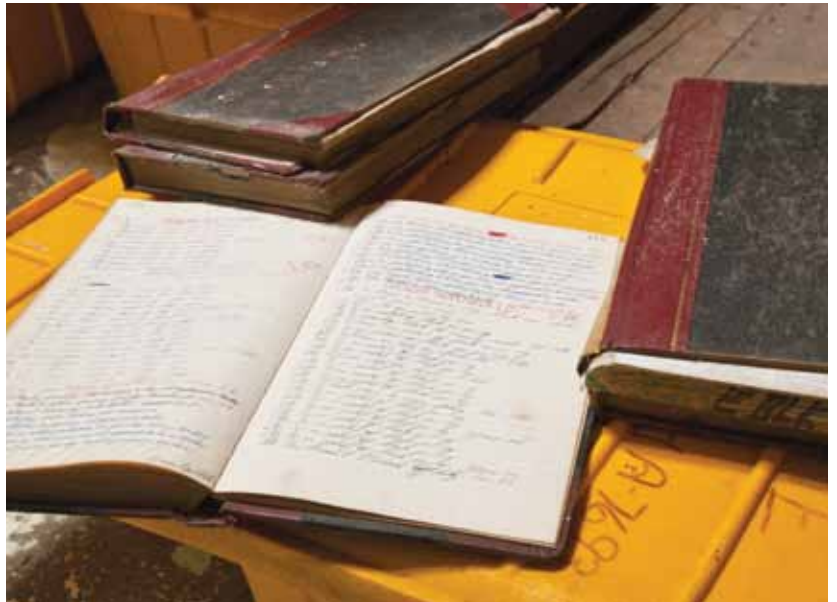


Fig. 26



Fig. 27



Fig. 28



Fig. 29



Fig. 30

*(Continued from page 18)*

of the cells at Holmesburg Prison is quite small: they measure eight by eighteen feet with walls meeting in a sixteen-foot barrel-vaulted ceiling. Using PVA glue, Gómez and González adhered one large piece of black cloth to the walls and the ceiling of one cell. After the glue dried, they removed the cloth as a newly created print, capturing an impression of the walls and ceiling in a resulting monoprint measuring nineteen by thirty feet. The pulling of each print, that is, the removal of the cloth from the walls of the cell was complicated. Gómez and González began this strenuous and visceral process along the edge of one of the three covered walls and pulled the cloth simultaneously downward from the arched ceiling and horizontally along the length of the wall. The thunderous tearing noise of the cloth being peeled away from the walls filled the cell; their printing process produced an unforgettable sound which was hardly the soft "shrrr" sound of wet ink pulling away from a traditional relief printing plate. After more than an hour of yanking, pulling, and rolling, the print was a large bundle of cloth amassed on the floor of the cell. The artists then handed the sixteen-foot rolled print through the low cell door, down the 100-foot-long corridor of the cellblock, and into the large former cafeteria area where, once unrolled, the print's surface could be fixed with a mist of glue.

These prints created by means of such a strenuous process are an unexpected art form that literally archives the remnants of the lives of the many inmates along with the architecture and history of Holmesburg Prison. Capturing on the cloth the graffiti, the traces of weather and effects of time inscribed in the cells of the prison, Gómez and González use the prison walls much like an etching or relief plate from which they print the history of marks scratched and drawn into the paint and plaster. They collaborate with the past in printing the abandoned creations of others while simultaneously recording the passage of time. These large-scale prints are a record of surfaces that put into focus the history of textures which preserve "vital experiences."<sup>3</sup>

1 Patricia Gómez and María Jesús González, email message to José Roca and Caitlin Perkins at *Philagrafika* (January 18, 2011).

2 John Ross, Claire Romano, and Tim Ross: edited and produced by Roundtable Press, Inc, *The Complete Printmaker: Techniques, Traditions, and Innovations. Revised and expanded edition.* (New York: The Free Press: a Division of Simon & Schuster, 1990), 245-46. The distinction between a "monoprint" and a "monotype" is not of real relevance here. The prints are pulled from fixed preexisting matrices (the walls of the prison). However, because the act of printing changes the surface of the wall by removing a layer of paint, it is not possible to pull multiple, identical prints from these matrices. See Kurt Wisneski *Monotype/Monoprint: History and Techniques*, (Bullbrier Press, Ithaca, NY, 1995).

3 Gómez and González, email message (January 18, 2011). "The origin of our practice was an unexpected detachment from a piece of canvas attached to a wall. Instinctively, we thought of this as an act of printmaking, but with the intervention of instruments and elements that were different from those that we were using at the moment: now, the matrix in our work would be walls; their accidental surface (with several overlapping layers of paint, history and signs) would be the surface imprinted by time and vital experiences."



# FIGURES

*All photographs are courtesy the artists.*

**Page 1, fig. 01**

View of Cell in B Block, Holmesburg Prison

**Page 2, fig. 02**

Detail from *Sick Walls*, 2011 a photographic series

**Page 5, fig. 03**

View of Cell 420, D Block, Holmesburg Prison

**Page 5, fig. 04**

View of Cell 504, E Block, Holmesburg Prison

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*Cell 560. Depth of Surface*, 2011  
Photographic sequence showing different stages of the printing process

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*Cell 560. Depth of Surface*, 2011  
View of fabric glued to cell wall surface prior to removal

**Page 8-9, fig. 12**

*Cell 560. Holmesburg Prison*, 2011  
Printed walls on fabric 19.69 x 59 ft./6 x 18 m. Completed print extended in the central yard of Holmesburg Prison

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*Cell 560. Holmesburg Prison*, 2011  
Print extended in the cafeteria of Holmesburg Prison during fixing and sealing process

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Stages of printing process in Cell 805, I Block, Holmesburg Prison

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Artists at work in Holmesburg Prison cafeteria: cleaning and fixing surface of print and preparing to roll print for transport

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View of Cell 805, rolled print after the intervention by artists

**Page 19, fig. 19**

View of Cell 843, I Block, Holmesburg Prison

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View of Cell 844, I Block, Holmesburg Prison

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*Depth of Surface. Written Messages, Marks and Drawings on Holmesburg Walls*, 2011  
18 x 28 in. each/45.72 x 71.12 cm each  
150 prints capturing wall details on transparent voile fabric

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Detail of a portrait drawing on wall of Cell 710, H Block, Holmesburg Prison

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*All Appears to be Normal*, 2011  
Audio recording  
Duration: 4:45 hours

Photo documenting log book reading and audio recording in the Control Center of Holmesburg Prison

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D-REAR Log Book: June 22 to October 20, 1986  
Holmesburg prison guard log book used as the source material for recording of the sound piece *All Appears to be Normal*, 2011

**Page 24, fig. 28**

*Cell 805. Holmesburg Prison*, 2011  
Printed walls on fabric 19.7 x 29.5 ft./6 x 8.9 m.  
View of completed print extended on the floor of the Holmesburg prison cafeteria

**Page 24, fig. 29**

Detail of wall showing multiple layers of paint built up over time on the prison walls

**Page 24, fig. 30**

View of Cell 849, I Block, Holmesburg Prison

**Page 27, fig. 31**

Still image from surveillance video in Cell 805, I Block, Holmesburg Prison

**Page 27, fig. 32**

View of artists at work, E Block Corridor, Holmesburg Prison

**Page 28, fig. 33**

B Block Corridor, Holmesburg Prison



Fig. 31



Fig. 32



Fig. 33



# THANKS

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Philagrafika commissioned Spanish artists Patricia Gómez Villaescusa and María Jesús González Fernández to create *Doing Time / Depth of Surface*, an artist residency and exhibition at Moore College of Art & Design exploring the architecture and stories of Philadelphia's historic Holmesburg Prison.

The artistic partners Gómez + González created large-scale monoprints capturing traces of artwork and graffiti left by former inmates on the walls of the decommissioned prison.

*Doing Time / Depth of Surface* gives voice to the guards, employees and inmates who lived and worked in the prison. The historic penitentiary was built in 1896 and operated for nearly a century until it was decommissioned in 1995. Through this project featuring the work of Gómez + González, Philagrafika continues to bring to light the themes of innovation and collaboration while redefining contemporary printmaking.

*Doing Time / Depth of Surface* has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage through the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative and in collaboration with SPANISH CULTURAL ACTION, AC/E. Exhibition support was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional project support was provided by the Haverford Hurford Humanities Center Internship Program.



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