



Jesse Ly and Millicent Kennedy: *Permeable Images*
January 16 – March 1, 2026

Opening Reception: Friday, January 16, 6 - 9pm
Open Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11am – 3pm, and by appointment
ACRE Projects
2921 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL

ACRE Projects is pleased to present *Permeable Images*, a two-person exhibition with work by Jesse Ly and Millicent Kennedy. This exhibition captures the interconnection between the artists' respective practices, which both situate similar concerns in the relationships between material and representative re-creation. Ly and Kennedy's processes engage shifting perceptions while being tethered to reality – *notating both what falls between as well as their individual relationships with the liminal*.

What is present? – What shows through? – What is held behind? – What is not?

These in-betweens play into the absurdities and ambiguities of collective forms of seeing and the capabilities of peering deeper into these barriers and contradictions. In *Permeable Images*, Ly and Kennedy highlight the commonality within their distinctive approaches, engaging thresholds of world-building through modals of comprehension and connection.

In Kennedy's work, shadows, rusty nails, architectural details, and stones from their time at ACRE are drawn, and screen-printed in natural dyes. They are then transformed into assemblages and installations that allow the viewer to look both at and through them; the imposed image and action of looking through the veil become part of the experience of looking.

Ly contrasts this with photographic rooted works that draw a tension between directness and ambiguity. Grounded in the perceptible and expanded in the emotive, they partner, group and connect their works through visual consistency and framing approaches to create an interplay between each work to expand the tethers to what they allow through. The pictorial indexes – occurred, made, and compiled create variance in what can be seen through and their reflexive properties.

We invite you to join us for the opening reception of *Permeable Images* on Friday, January 16 from 6-9 pm or during gallery open hours on Mondays and Wednesdays, 11am–3pm and by appointment.

Jesse Ly is an Asian-American photographic and image-based artist. They hold a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts with a minor in Art History and a certificate in Critical Visions from the University of Cincinnati's college of DAAP. They currently are the Graphic Design and Photography Media Facilities Coordinator for Art & Design at the University of Dayton.

Ly has exhibited work both nationally across the US and internationally. They have had solo exhibitions at spaces including RoyGBiv Gallery - Columbus, OH; Foster Gallery - Dedham, MA; The Neon Heater - Findlay, OH; and Gallery Photoland - Olympia, WA. They have participated in group exhibitions in spaces including The Contemporary Arts Center - Cincinnati, OH; FotoFilmic - Vancouver, BC; and The PH Museum - Bologna, Italy, among others. They have been a recipient of CultureWorks Artist Opportunity Grants, an *Individual Excellence Award* from the Ohio Arts Council, a *Regional Artist Renewal Grant* via the National Endowment for the Arts, and was named a finalist for the *Aperture Portfolio Prize* in 2023.

Millicent Kennedy's (they/them) practice is interested in how we archive a physical world in flux. Through hand skills including book and box making, natural dyeing, and hand stitching, Kennedy connects to the knowledge of generations of unknown hands who worked to hold their world together. Their work as a whole is interested in connecting two or more things that could seem separate or worn away from one another. Like dyeing and mending, the alchemy is in the labor and material itself, leading to transformation. They received a Bachelor's Degree from Northeastern Illinois University and MFA from Northern Illinois University where they were awarded the Helen Merritt Fellowship.

Kennedy has had solo exhibitions at Belong Gallery, SXU Art Gallery, Roman Susan, and Parlour and Ramp, as well as site specific installations at Charles Allis Art Museum, STNRD Exhibitions, the Terrain Biennial, and Purple Window Gallery. They have participated in artist residencies at ACRE, Ragdale, Roman Susan, Terrain Exhibitions, Awakenings, Lillstreet Art Center, and the Center Program and Bridge Program at Hyde Park Art Center. They currently serve as the Director at NEIU's Fine Art Center Gallery and teach at Northern Illinois University, their studio is based out of Chicago.

ACRE is supported in part by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Field Foundation, Good Chaos, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Arts Work Fund, and Illinois Arts Council Agency.

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Accessibility Information:

ACRE Projects is on the ground level with a 4-inch step to enter the building. The bathroom is wheelchair accessible. Masks are not required to enter the space but we do have masks available upon request. For additional information, please contact the gallery's accessibility coordinator Lauren Leving at exhibitions@acreresidency.org.