

NOVEMBER 2016 PLANTHOUSE PARTICIPATES IN PULSE MIAMI BEACH

## *Philip Taaffe: Asterias*

EXHIBITION DATES

PULSE MIAMI BEACH

CONTEMPORARY ART FAIR

DECEMBER 1–4 2016



*No water, no life. No blue, no green.*

– Sylvia Earle

PLANTHOUSE IS PLEASED to present a site-specific installation by Phillip Taaffe at this year's Pulse Miami Beach Contemporary Art Fair, open December 1-4. Taaffe has created more than fifty oil monoprints on paper depicting a variety of starfish species. The framed works will cover three walls of the Planthouse booth, creating an immersive world of sea creatures and spurring reflection on the increasing vulnerability of marine life. Each unique print features a scientific image of a starfish, sometimes only a single spiny arm, awash in a sea of loose brushstrokes and lively color. Similar to his contribution to *The Floral Ghost*, a monoprint series published by Planthouse in 2014, Taaffe investigates natural forms with playful curiosity and knowledge of the history of science and of ornament. Bringing to mind Ernst Haeckel's *Art Forms in Nature* (1899–1904), Taaffe imbues the naturally occurring shapes and colors of starfish with a sense of hypnotic wonder.

Taaffe writes:

“I have chosen as my ‘subject’ an aspect of nature in a mediated, or examined, condition. And although such clarity enables me to bring these natural forms into another frame of reference, at the same time it requires me to abandon or nullify in some way the claims that natural science may have towards them. What I am doing, essentially, is subjecting this material to my memory of art, and to my artistic desires. By imposing this new order of experience, I seek to place the known once again into a category of the unexplained.”

The subject of marine life has particular resonance for the fair's location, as Miami itself is being affected by flooding and other phenomena related to climate change. As marine biologist Sylvia Earle has said, "We need to respect the oceans and take care of them as if our lives depended on it. Because they do."

PHILIP TAAFFE was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, in 1955 and studied at the Cooper Union in New York. He has been showing his work worldwide since his first solo exhibition in New York City in 1982. In 2016 Planthouse published *The Floral Ghost*, a book collaboration between Taaffe and New York Times best-selling author Susan Orlean. Taaffe's work is in numerous public collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art; and the Reina Sofia, Madrid. In 2016, Lund Humphries will publish a monograph on Taaffe that examines his work over the past four decades. Taaffe presently works and lives in New York City and West Cornwall, Connecticut.

*Asterias*, 2016

Silkscreen and oil pigment on paper

Printed by the artist

Variable edition

12½ x 12½ inches

*Planthouse*

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