

STATEMENT: GESTURES SERIES
Taney Roniger
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What does the body know that the conscious mind doesn't? When I think about the fact that our species is the product of millions of years of evolution, my answer to this question is: probably a lot. Over the last year my interest in this rich trove of unconscious knowledge has led to a new series rooted in the genre of gesture drawing. At once the simplest kind of drawing and perhaps the most enigmatic, gestures require a total surrender of conscious thought to the intuitive forces underneath. One simple stroke, then perhaps more – but never too many, for there is no erasing. Each drawing is unique and captures an instant never to be relived. Essentially a kind of calligraphy of the body, gesture drawing speaks a language we can only know by felt experience.

It also, and not incidentally, speaks the language of nature. By subverting conscious thought and drawing solely on our species-knowledge, gestures put us in touch with all we share with the rest of life. As someone with increasing sympathy for the post-humanist worldview, which has dethroned the human being as the privileged animal, I'm interested in encouraging a more empathic relationship to nature that recovers our forgotten embeddedness in it.

But my Gestures series isn't entirely grounded in the organic. After making the drawings, I scan them, save them as digital files, and etch the images into Lucite panels with a laser cutter. What interests me in this phase of the process is whether that much-touted "aura" ascribed to hand-made work can survive the transmutation into digital form. Is the "presence of the artist's hand" still felt in the final etchings, or does it disappear the moment the drawings become digitized? Ultimately, my sense is that it's not so much the "artist's hand" that matters, but the presence of a certain rhythmic cadence one recognizes in all of nature. When I feel that a piece achieves this vital resonance – which is to say when I feel it somatically – I consider the piece successful.