

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chance Operations: Monoprints, Make Ready, Test Prints, and Artist Proofs

Location: Signal Return, S-R GALLERY, 9301 Kercheval Ave #1, Detroit, MI 48214

Dates: September 18 – December 19, 2025

Artists: Francisco Ramirez / Bureau Of Print, Angela Davis Fegan / Too Much Press, Daniel MacAdam / Crosshair, Dennis and Christina Jacobs / Arsenal Handicraft, Stacey Malasky, Chris Fritton / The Itinerant Printer, Maddy Underwood, Rachel Delmotte, Melissa Dettloff, Fatherless. Contributions by Elizabeth Isakson-Dado / The Aquarius House and collaborators.

Signal-Return Gallery is pleased to present *Chance Operations: Monoprints, Make Ready, Test Prints, and Artist Proofs*, opening on September 18, 2025.

Chance Operations is a group exhibition of ten printmakers working in letterpress, screenprinting, and risography who create original, one of a kind monoprints. The exhibit is curated by Elizabeth Isakson-Dado, a Michigan based independent artist, who also teaches at Signal-Return.

The practice of chance operations, or aleatorism, is a method of composing art work that leaves a portion of the design decision to chance. Letting go of control in the act of art making can create new connections within an artwork, causing an image to be seen differently or a written work to be read in a new context.

In printmaking, the typical goal of an artist is to create an edition, a certain numbered set of matching, unvaried prints that appear identical to one another. As the printer works, test prints, proofs, and make-ready prints are an expected by-product of preparing a work to be editioned. When the artist chooses a chance operation of purposeful embellishment or overprinting to create a new, one of a kind work, the edition is abandoned and the page becomes a monoprint—a singular, unrepeatable art piece.

Chance Operations features individual artists and collaborators, each with a different relationship to monoprint work, that balances between intentionality and chance. This ranges from making test prints as utilitarian by-products, to a collaboration with the press during the make-ready process, to a purposefully varied artist proof that is completely improvised, to an escape from perfection-driven image making through chance-inspired collages.

“Printmaking is a niche artistic discipline, and I find it fascinating that many of us printers have the same urge to create perfect, impeccable editions, but also save the ‘mistakes’ as unique art pieces,” says curator Isakson-Dado, “For *Chance Operations*, I’ve gathered a group of artists from across the country who work in different areas of printmaking, and engage with test prints in their practice. There’s a palpable overlap of imagery, a common practice of re-use, and fortuitous results when chance enters into a medium that is typically so reliant on control.”

As an exhibition, *Chance Operations* celebrates the anti-edition, an exploration of the range printmaking can take when we eschew the perfect image and honor the parts of the process many artists try to hide - the states, the proofs, the mechanical press malfunctions, the fingerprints- and see the layers as a new composition, greater than a sum of their parts. Though all prints in the exhibition were created by chance, they have elements of color, shape, text, and composition in common. Together, this presentation of randomly connected art prints becomes a kaleidoscope of imagery, a collection of overlaid screens, matrices, and stencils playing against one another, and telling new stories.

Chance Operations is on view from September 18-December 19, 2025 at the Signal-Return Gallery, in the Lantern Building, in Detroit's Little Village. The opening reception will take place September 18, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 pm at 9301 Kercheval Ave #1, Detroit, MI 48214.

For more information, please contact:
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About Signal Return

Signal-Return is a Detroit nonprofit dedicated to preserving and teaching traditional letterpress printing, and building a community center for art, craft, design and collaboration.

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