

Mizin Shin, *World Network Models*

September 23—November 4, 2022



World Network Models, 2021, screenprint on polyester film (photo by Aitina Fareed-Cooke)

Micro and Macro, Curatorial essay by Shirley Verrico

Mizin Shin's new project, *World Network Models*, visualizes transportation data to expose the interdependent travel systems that function as networks of migratory movement. Developed since the onset of COVID-19, Shin's prints, drawings, and installations map data from historical trends in international mass ground and air transportation, including various travel technologies. The work not only portrays the stages of technological evolution, but also illustrates the continual expansion of interconnectivity and complexity within the travel patterns and anthropological networks developed through war, trade, and commerce.

Shin's process is rooted in data collection. The data comes largely from public domain sources that include municipal, national, and international transportation statistics. Shin also researches historical texts and archives, reorganizing and digitizing the information to

fit her needs. Shin then enlists a team of friends who work in quantitative research fields, providing data analysis and visualization. The researchers guide Shin as she cleans and organizes the data into formatted spreadsheets. Her team also assists in translating the technical terminology and sharing their expertise throughout the visualization process. Although there are a number of software packages that allow the user to adjust specific parameters, it is difficult to predict the aesthetic outcome. Creating the optimal visualization requires persistence as it is often trial-and-error.

Once the computer visualization is complete, Shin reinterprets the data yet again. She redraws the forms as vector data, hand-tracing each of the nodes and the connections. The final network model compositions are qualitative interpretations combined with quantitative information. The transparency of the polyester film and acrylic sheets of the *World Network*



Small World Newtwork Models, 2021, stencil drawing on paper 20"x20" (photo by Aitina Fareed-Cooke)

Models allow viewers to see the multiple networks simultaneously. It also allows for a site-specific version of the visualization to exist in the shadows that appear behind and through the final artworks. This expansion and repetitions of the images deepen the metaphor embedded in Shin's work.

Locating and articulating connection is central to all of Shin's artwork. Earlier series revealed the interdependency of manufacturing and production systems as well as and the interrelationships of economical and social systems. "By showing intrinsic connections among simple objects, [this] work can shine light on the idea that all elements of our systems are of significance from the individual, to the larger construct," Shin said.

In addition to the data maps, the hanging work in the gallery entrance references actual travel technology rather than travel data. The shapes from the hanging installation are based on historical tracks for different kinds of trains. Both track design and material has changed over time due to technological improvements as well as the increasing speed of the trains. Shin has flattened and simplified the rail structures, varying the shape and scale. Although these rails have been available at different times and installed in different geographic locations, all connect and intertwine through historical migration, exploratory travel, and cultural trade.

Major support provided by: The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation, Community Foundation, Erie County Cultural Funding, M&T Bank, National Endowment for the Arts, John R. Oishei Foundation, Western New York Foundation, and New York State Council on the Arts. Additional exhibition support provided by Marketing Tech and individual donors.

Like the other transparent installations, the shadow is a visual example of how we can see this experience through both micro and macro perspectives and across multiple dimensions. As one moves in and around the installations, the movement activates the hanging film and the viewer's shadows float into the forms on the wall. Shin has left space for the viewer to join the network, connecting both the micro and the macro, the personal and the universal.



World Network Models, 2021, polyester film cut (photo by Aitina Fareed-Cooke)

Artist Biography

Born and raised in South Korea, Mizin Shin is a US-based visual artist. Mizin Shin graduated from Hong-ik University with a B.F.A in Printmaking and received her M.F.A from SUNY at Buffalo.

Shin's work has been shown nationally and internationally at institutions across the United States, Belgium, Spain, the UK, India, and South Korea in exhibitions including Multiple Ones: Contemporary Perspectives in Printmedia, International Print Center New York: New Prints, Wheaton Biennial: Printmaking Reimagined, and Screenprint Biennial. She is a 2022 fellow of the Civitella Ranieri artist residency in Italy. Shin is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Art & Art History at University of Rochester. She is also a co-founder of Mirabo Press in Buffalo, NY, and a board member of Mid America Print Council.

Projects for this exhibition were completed with funding from the AHL – Andrew & Barbara Choi Family Foundation Project Grant.