

**FLEST SKY MINNA MIG A ISLAND
MOST CLOUDS REMIND ME OF ICELAND**

FRANCO MARINAI
Photogravures

HúnOgHún
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Artist's statement

Dustgrain photogravure is a process to print a photographic image by means of an etched copper plate. It was devised by William Henry Fox Talbot, the inventor of photography, and perfected by Karl Klic around the mid 1800.

It is a very complex - and costly - process that requires many steps often with unpredictable results. The final product is a print that carries the signs of that demanding process, has an extremely rich and beautiful range of tones, is three-dimensional in nature, and is of archival quality.

Personally involved in all aspects of that process, from plate making to printing, I use photogravure to turn a photograph into an object.

While photography is normally used to represent an object – and an image can just as well be reproduced in a newspaper or on a video or a computer screen - I use photogravure to produce a material object that has a reality of its own that replaces the reality of what is photographed.

STONES FROM ICELAND is a series of photogravures of very small fragments of the vast beauty that is Iceland.

To make things a little more complicated, these prints could also be interpreted as homage to Iceland by way of applying the logic of paradoxes and extreme opposites. Yes, **most clouds remind me of Iceland**. Aren't stones the opposite of light incorporeal mutable clouds?

After seeing some of my prints, an old friend told me they reminded him of the work of Roger Caillois and of his beautiful book on the writing of stones. I didn't know that book. So I purchased it on line and read it with great interest. In her presentation to Caillois' work Marguerite Yourcenar describes him as an author who has achieved the mysticism of matter, associates him with Giordano Bruno for "having raised matter to the dignity of something divine" and refers to the Hermetic books that "tell men to listen to the great voice of things". I like that. I think there is a lot that can be learnt from closely observing animals, plants and stones too.

On a related topic, people do collect stones and it might be a good sign. Still, if someone started a movement advocating that stones be returned where they were found, I would be a strong supporter of that movement. I think I'll let someone else be the first to launch it but, although there are goals arguably more important and hopefully easier to accomplish, next time I am in Iceland I just might do that.

BEING AND EMPTINESS. The hand-colored photogravures derive from frames from "WHY I AM HERE" (Y.I.M.E.R.), an experimental 16mm film I made years ago.

TIGGER TIGGER LOST AND FOUND is a portfolio from negatives I made in 1969, lost, and rediscovered only recently in a box in the cellar of my mother's home.

Artist's bio

Franco Marinai has a doctorate in Political Science from the University of Florence (Italy) and an M.A. in International Relations from the City University of New York. He lives and works in New York City where, besides his occupation for the New York City Department of Education, he produces experimental films, photogravures and artist's books.

He has received several prizes and awards. Most recently, in 2005 he was the recipient of the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship Award in the category of film.