Penny Olson
Artist Statement

> *…I, a machine, show you the world as only I can see it.*
>
> Dziga Vertov

The starting point of the work is digital photography of plants and flowers. Using the computer, I create a matrix through which I randomly extract the smallest possible amounts of information, and from those pixels construct new but still purely photographic work. As my interest is in how the technology processes the information, in how the internal presets of the tools 'see' the information I have gathered from the world, I do not crop, adjust, or otherwise manipulate the files. I simply use the smallest sample I can of the original photo, while including a selection from entire length and width of the original photo-plane.

I am interested in what a digital unit of photographic information looks like; in using that nuance, that trace of my visual experience of the physical world which exists in the form of these pixels, these fragments of light and color that are captured, isolated, put back together and printed.

While the dominant image-reproduction tools are now digital rather than mechanical and chemical, the words of the filmmaker Dziga Vertov, working in the early 20th Century, remain resonant with my interests and intentions:

> …*"Our eyes see very little and very badly - so people dreamed up the microscope to let them see invisible phenomena. They invented the telescope…to penetrate more deeply into the visible world, so that what is happening now, which will have to be taken account of in the future, is not forgotten…"*

The following quote from the artist Hiroshi Sugimoto also speaks to what I am trying to do:

> *"Zero" and*
> *"infinity" were not so much discoveries as human inventions. The notion of length with no width is very curious indeed, the pencil line I draw being only an approximation of an invisible mathematical line. Endeavors in art are also mere approximations, efforts to render visible unseen realms."* — Hiroshi Sugimoto

(http://www.sugimotohiroshi.com/conceptualforms.html)

While the work is conceptually based, with an unchanging linear grid system applied to each original photo, I end up using my subjectivity, my feeling, my sense of taste to select the pieces that most successfully interconnect my photographic eye with the 'eye' of the technology.

For all the pushing of the technology, all the experimentation, and all the restraint regarding esthetic or compositional decisions, I choose for presentation the work I find the most

visually engaging, the most beautiful. In the end it is that work which I find most successful in bridging the gap between the familiar and tangible world and the unseen workings of the computer.