

## Sidonie Loiseleux \_ Artist statement

at·tempt

–verb

1. to make an effort at; try; undertake; seek: to attempt an impossible task
2. Archaic. to attack; move against in a hostile manner: to attempt a person's life.

At first, I found a book: *Awesome Origami Aircraft Models of The World's Best Fighters* by Tem Boun. I was struck by these origami translations of fighter jets, how marvelous was the displacement of these big dangerous weapons into elegant and extremely complicated paper models, and how ironic to have American fighter jets recreated through a Japanese tradition and authored by a Vietnamese American. I am an international student. These planes give a new meaning to throwing paper airplanes around the classroom when the teacher has her back turned, and also, new meaning to global citizenship and the boundaries of cultural aspirations.

I started to fold these planes and realized that I am unable to actually finish one. This show has all my best attempts. They are only attempts, but they are as good as I can do. They never actually flew, my fighter jets are useless. At the same time, I found in the book the biography of the author. It is specified that "after being medically denied entrance in the Naval Flight Officer training program of the U.S Navy," Tem Boun's desire to become a fighter pilot deflected into designing and building (folding) paper fighter jets. While his actually fly and mine do not, each is a deflection from an original goal.

I attempted 12 different paper fighter jets, photographing each of them. Photography started to be a way to document these unsuccessful tries.

Photographing them created different layers of removal from the actual object and charts a dizzying path of reductions and substitutions: from a 3D object to a sheet of paper (2D), recreating a 3D model of the object and, finally with the photograph, returning it to a 2D version that also cannot fly. Centered in a white sheet of paper, they are small in these large spaces, pointing to the top. They look like they are flying, but also that they are being watched by something much bigger and more powerful than they are.

This idea led me to a thought about how air power and photography have been connected since the advent of mass world wars. Both devices heralded the modernization of war--war planes dropping bombs from the sky and cameras shooting the fallen ground--decimation and documentation. In my three prints of unfolded paper airplanes, I wanted to retrace the idea of war conflicts. Using models of actual fighters jets, I folded and unfolded on the same piece of paper two planes that fought against each other. War conflicts became mapped in the literal territory of folded lines on paper, once again returned to the analytical and reporting indifference of the camera.