

Graphic Impressions

The Newsletter of SGC International

Summer 2011



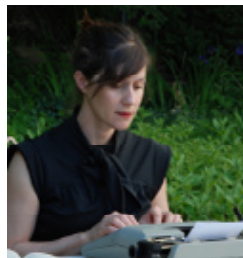
meow.

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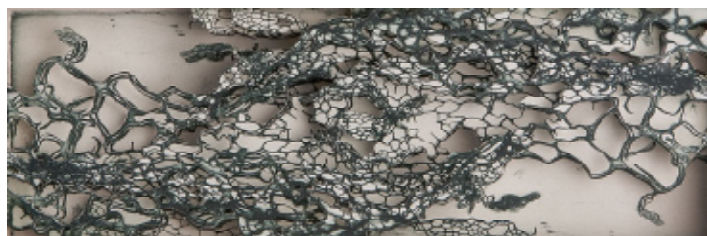
Letter from Editor Erika Adams

When I heard that Nathan Oliveira has passed last November, I remembered the wonder I felt when I first saw the monotypes from his series of 'sites.' Twenty years ago, Oliveira's work sowed the seeds of my print making curiosity as I asked, "how was that done?" I was living in the East bay of San Francisco, trying to keep up an art practice after college, and I gave myself an assignment: figure out how to make an Oliveira monotype. Taught by fairly traditional faculty as an undergraduate, copying a master was one of many exercises I had experienced - and I was interested in the challenge. Through my cursing, I discovered the magic of layers, strategies of tight and loose registration, how hand coloring can change everything and, most importantly, the forethought of light - saving the white of the paper. The Stanford Report kindly gave permission to reprint excerpts from their obituary of Oliveira (he taught printmaking there for 25 years) and I decided to include two of my prints - homage to this man who has been so important to this artist as a young woman.

I realized two years ago that the MFA in Boston has one of Nathan Oliveira's monotypes. Patrick Murphy, who pulls prints at the Morse Study Room at the MFA, and I have very different tastes in prints (for example, I'm into 20th century regionalism and he is into Bauhaus.) Before I knew this, he mentioned the MFA had an Oliveira monotype, but not one of his favorites. I didn't ask him to pull it out for my visiting class since there was so much else to choose from. When one of my students asked about Oliveira, Patrick offered to pull it out, and when he did, the students flocked to one of the few 'sites' I have seen in person. A real beauty. Pointing to a particular texture, one student asked, "how did he do that?" And they were hooked. Just like me.

This letter is my last as editor of Graphic Impressions. Some of you know I have accepted a position at Concordia in Montreal and as I reflect on the role of print making and teaching in my life - it has brought me from California to New Mexico, Georgia, Massachusetts and now to Canada - I realize that it has, and continues to have, a way of leading me on all sorts of adventures. I look forward to what the future holds- and to seeing you all in New Orleans next spring!

Erika Adams



Jeanne Luthi, XII. *Along the Ranch Road*, 8.75x 13x 3", 2011.

cover image: Jessica Robles, *Cat Shoes*, Lithograph, 15" X 20", 2010. For more information about Jessica's work, go to <http://jessica-robles.blogspot.com/>

Letter from the President
Eun Lee



First of all, a sincere and well-deserved thank you is in order for Conference Coordinator, Lisa Bulawsky, along with the Steering Committee, Chairs/Coordinators and countless volunteers. The 2011 SGC International Conference, hosted by Washington University in St. Louis, was a great success. Thank you so much to everyone for a fantastic and thought-provoking conference. I especially enjoyed the excellence and variety of awardees and presentations. With over sixty exhibitions, thirteen panels, eleven *Printa Kucha* presentations and sixteen demonstrations, there was never a lack of exciting things to do. Great job everyone!

After meeting with the board and New Orleans Steering Committee late this June, I am very excited about the progress being made towards another fabulous conference in 2012. Everyday produces newly confirmed involvement and developments that are now starting to shape the programming. It sounds like the steering committee has a thrilling mix of proposals to select from. Please check in to the website regularly for new information posted. If you have not already done so, follow "Navigating Currents" on Inkteraction and Facebook. Stay up to date on exciting new developments as they crop up!

Did you hear? SGC International is looking to update our logo. I hope that everyone received the call for entries notification through our constant contact account. If not... no worries, you can get all the information for the logo contest on our website under "Opportunities". Additionally, you will also find all the information for the 2012-2015 Member's Traveling Exhibition. This year's juror is renowned artist Frances Myers. I am looking forward to another wonderful exhibition that shows the vast range of our membership.

Other exciting news includes the formation of our 2012-2014 Executive Board Nominations Committee. I would like to extend my greatest gratitude to April Katz, Joe Lupo and Erika Adams for volunteering for this very important undertaking. This is certainly no easy task and I wish you great strength and patience. Thanks to all those members who have expressed interest in serving. I have directed all your names to the committee and look forward to the formation of a final slate of nominees.

A special thank you is also in order for our out-going newsletter editor, Erika Adams. For the last few years, Erika has done an excellent job of simultaneously generating better content and imagery for our newsletter and beginning the push towards the publication of a journal. We greatly appreciate the work she has done, and wish her the best in all future endeavors.

Have a great summer and see you again this fall,

Eun



Jessie Horning, *Feastwreath* 11" x 9", woodblock and etching, 2011.

2011 Conference Wrap-Up

from Lisa Bulawsky



Opening Party – March 16, 2011 on the plaza at the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, Washington University.



Zinery exhibition, organized by Nancy Palmeri and Paul Windle and Winners! Press.

On behalf of the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis and my colleagues who worked on the 2011 SGC International Conference, I would like to thank our conference attendees and participants. It was gratifying to collaborate with so many St. Louis institutions and colleagues, making this year's gathering an exciting and meaningful reflection on the current field of printmaking. We welcomed over 1300 guests - members of the printmaking community - to St. Louis this spring. In keeping with recent history, about 60 percent of attendees were students. We are fortunate to share a passion for this creative and intellectual pursuit that continually fosters critical engagement and development. As chair of the conference, I was personally overjoyed at the opportunity to share our hard work and our vision, our campus and our city, with the SGCI printmaking family.

The theme of this year's conference, *Equilibrium*, was chosen to reflect the pluralism of activities, platforms, and approaches to printmaking that are in balance with each other, and with contemporary art and culture. The multiplicity of forces at play in the field and the inventiveness of printmakers in responding to those forces were exemplified by our honorees, panels, projects, demos, exhibitions, and events. The Sam Fox School as well as the city of St. Louis were fitting backdrops for these activities. Appropriately, *Equilibrium* also seemed to capture the overall mood - the conference was calm and balanced, yet diverse and varied, with just the right amount of agitation. Equilibrium is not stasis, to be sure!

From March 16-19, the Sam Fox School hosted and

presented a range of activities, some common to the annual conference program, others featuring new formats. We presented awards in seven categories including *Printmaker Emeritus*, *Lifetime Achievement*, and *Excellence in Teaching*. We also created two new awards, *Community Engagement* and *Mentorship*, that helped us to further express our values and theme. Luis Camnitzer, Hung Liu, and Swoon each gave inspiring and thoughtful talks in acceptance of their awards. Camnitzer, the *Printmaker Emeritus* awardee, took us along the path of his career and thinking as an artist, boldly and captivantly, showing not a single image. Though he titled his talk, *The Earning of an Exit*, (a tongue-in-cheek nod to the implications of the emeritus title), he framed his remarks in reference to colonialism, highlighting his resistance to both political and intellectual imperialism, which is a strong impetus for his work. Hung Liu, upon receiving the *Lifetime Achievement in Printmaking Award*, regaled us with her poeticism, humor, drive, and spirit while demonstrating the prolific and innovative nature of her practice. Caledonia Curry, aka Swoon, accepted the *Community Engagement Award* in front of a full house in the Khorassan Ballroom at The Chase Park Plaza. Her talk inspired everyone in attendance. Through the projects that she shared, Swoon revealed the generosity, vision, and empathy that is the hallmark of her work, and the very reason she was honored. She advised the crowd to "find your tribe," and we're glad that she's a part of ours! We also had the opportunity and distinct pleasure of honoring Peter Marcus for his *Excellence in Teaching Printmaking*, Don Taylor for his *Mentorship in Printmaking*, and Francesca Herndon-Consagra and Dan Gualdoni as Honorary Members of the Council. The SGCI student



Soundlines project, Shannon Collis, a participatory project demonstrating drawing as input, ink as sound.

Firecracker Press, Friday, March 18. Firecracker hosted Manual Feed, a musical group combining the noises of antique printing presses with the traditional sounds of musical instruments, and an exhibition on St. Louis type foundries.

Joan Hall's demo, Make It Big and Pulp Paint It, part of the 11 artist project focused on papermaking techniques.

fellowship winners, Taryn McMahon and Andrew Pisacane, nominated by their faculty and vetted by the Awards Committee, were present to receive their awards as well, representing the robust practices and upcoming talents of the field today.

With almost 100 SGCI members participating in the conference through panels, demos, and projects, we were treated to valuable insights into current innovation in print practice and theory. Thirteen panels presented topics ranging from animation to rock 'n' roll posters, from the synthesizing nature of print to the role prints play in activating the public sphere. Demonstrations took on a new form this year, as we strove to highlight print as a cultural activity, not merely a set of techniques. Projects were ongoing and generally yielded some kind of output or product. The activity in the demos and projects generated a great deal of energy and involvement from conference-goers. New ideas were shared, participation was high, and the print multiple was in wide and generous circulation.

Juried for the first time this year, 247 SGCI members created an edition of prints for the Membership Exchange. Elizabeth Wycoff, print curator at the Saint Louis Art Museum, served as the juror, and over \$1,500 was awarded by SGCI in the categories of *Student*, *Emerging*, and *Professional*. The following awards were given, reflecting the ratio of participants in the categories: one first-place *Student* award, three second-place *Student* awards, three third-place *Student* awards, one *Professional* award, one *Emerging* award, and one *Best of Exchange* award. Congratulations to the winners!

More than 600 people participated in this year's Open Portfolio in the grand (but slightly underlit) Khorasan Ballroom. As always, it was a time to meet new people, catch up on fellow printmakers' new work, and show off your own. This year's *Open Portfolio* event was divided into three sessions and overlapped with the *Product and Publisher Fairs*, as well as the *Membership Exchange* print display. There was no shortage of prints to look at and admire.

While panels, projects, and demos took place during the day on the campus of Washington University, in the evenings, shuttles took attendees to different parts of St. Louis for special events and visits to some of the 60-plus exhibitions mounted in conjunction with the conference. On Thursday, conference-goers visited the Delmar Loop, beginning with a keynote presentation by researcher Ellen Dissanayake, who addressed why humans innately make marks and how this in turn affects our minds. Her cross-disciplinary approach to thinking about art provided a deep-time perspective that contextualizes our practice in significant and profound ways. During our night out in the Loop, conference attendees saw several exhibitions, including *Everybody's Autobiography*, curated by Jessica Baran. The exhibition featured a surprising visual and intellectual play on the eccentricities of the everyday through the display of four prints by Kerry James Marshall hung directly on the wallpaper of Robert Gober. The exhibitions *Past Present*, (curated by Printeresting), and Chido Johnson's *Love Library* (organized by local Love Librarian, Jana Harper), along with *Washington University Graduate Art Open House*, were also big hits that night. Another highlight of the conference was the trip to Cherokee Street on



Courier (a workshop production), a mobile project by Avery Lawrence and Robin McDowell focused on the act of giving. Attendees sent custom prints and packages to one another during the conference.



Conference goers were treated to a surprise parade on Cherokee Street, Friday night, March 18th

Friday night for the inaugural *Printa Kucha* presentations, printed taco meals, a parade, a wedding, and more fabulous and innovative print projects and exhibitions. The burgeoning Cherokee neighborhood and community of artists went all out for us! During Saturday afternoon and evening, the culminating special events of the conference included numerous exhibition openings that took place in Grand Center, where Swoon installed a new work on the exterior of the Bruno David Gallery, and in downtown St. Louis, where *Tempting Equilibrium*, juried by Mark Pascale, was celebrated at a closing reception. Finally, about 400 people attended the Closing Party and Awards Ceremony at the City Museum. Overall, SGCI members were able to experience the variety and vibrancy of printmaking at Washington University and throughout St. Louis.

As we wrap up the loose ends from two years of planning and hosting the 2011 SGCI Conference, we look forward to next year's conference in New Orleans where we'll celebrate the 40th anniversary of SGC International. Laissez le bon temps rouler! See you there!

Lisa Bulawsky

Equilibrium Project

Cherokee Street: a Collaboratory for Edible Ideas



The Printmakers' Special – three tacos for five dollars – at the food cart outside of Latino Americana.

In January, 2011, I started a project with Eric Woods (of The Firecracker Press) and Carlos Dominguez (of Latino Americana Restaurant) in an effort to generate cross-community convergence on Cherokee Street, a diverse street of local businesses and artists in south St. Louis, Missouri. Together, we organized *Cherokee Street: a Collaboratory for Edible Ideas*, a project to screen print tortillas at a food cart in front of Latino Americana and serve them in the Printmakers' Special – three tacos for five dollars – during the SGC International conference, *Equilibrium*.

The project began with the people of Cherokee Street, primarily local business owners and printmakers. To prepare for the project, a series of interview/conversations provided the primary source of content from which we drew inspiration for imagery and the direction of the overall project. Topics of discussion included the development of the neighborhood, language and social barriers, the role of family in local business, and the cultivation of community. Eric Woods printed selected portions of the interviews on tissue paper, which we used to wrap the tacos. He also designed the images we printed on the tortillas based on some of the quotes and prominent themes. A zine was also produced with the help of Paper Boat Studios (Amy Thompson) and All Along Press (Elysia Mann and Steven Brian) and included with the first 200 orders of the Printmakers' Special. It contained full transcripts of the interviews, a map indicating where they took place, sticker versions of the tortilla prints, and a tear-out, letterpress postcard. Finally, we printed the tortillas and served the tacos with the help of Dominguez's crew at a food cart in front of Latino Americana.

Stacks of tortilla prints began to pile up around 4:00 PM on Saturday, in preparation for the arrival of conference goers. At 5:00, when the first hungry printmakers arrived, I began printing as quickly as I could, trying to keep up with the line of people amassing and stretching down the block. The evening was intensely exciting and even emotional. Practically shaking with adrenaline, I could not help but feel overwhelmed with joy as I tried to take in all the prints, projects, and parade costumes, but especially as we managed to pacify a less-than-enthusiastic food inspector about edible ink and proceeded to print 1,500 tortillas by 11:00 PM. It was hard to tell whether it was more exciting to see printmaking fill every nook and cranny and spill out into the streets of the neighborhood, or to introduce the out-of-towners to St. Louis' best street and its people. Either way, I was proud of what we all accomplished that night and joined St. Louis print community in letting out a collective sigh of delighted relief (and a hint of sadness) when it was over.

As the 2011 conference gets farther behind us, we can step back and evaluate some of the outcomes of our efforts and projects. Many people pointed out during and after *Equilibrium* that community seemed to be the unofficial theme of the weekend. This was definitely the case for the effect it had on Cherokee Street. Not surprisingly, it is also what led me to co-facilitate *Cherokee Street: a Collaboratory for Edible Ideas* with Eric Woods and Carlos Dominguez in the first place. A realization that my artwork embraced and expressed community and participation broadly but had not tangibly engaged a literal community in a meaningful way, motivated me to intentionally build new



Printed Tortillas on the grill!

relationships through the project. I interviewed some printmakers and artists with whom I was already acquainted, but I specifically sought out new individuals with whom I did not have immediate social connections — owners of barber shops, restaurants, and urban fashion boutiques. In spite of their different backgrounds, occupations, and perspectives, the interviewees shared expressed enthusiasm for the idea of community and creative progress in local business and art.

For example, Leticia Rivera and her daughter, Ana, are two of the first people I met and talked with on Cherokee Street. Together with their family they own El Chico Bakery (and make the best apple empanadas!). Each time I visit the bakery or join them for family dinner, I am reminded that my connection to the history, practice, and contemporary culture of printmaking has deepened my appreciation for community, both in and out of artistic circles.

Relative to the weekend of *Equilibrium*, things on Cherokee Street are a bit quieter now, but in my opinion, we have only started to see its potential. New relationships and opportunities for creative collaboration continue to take shape, and, as indicated by the undeniable presence of printmaking at last weekend's Cinco de Mayo celebration on Cherokee Street, the momentum is not about to slow down.

Cherokee Street: a Collaboratory for Edible Ideas was made possible with funding from the January SLOUP artists grant, St. Louis' monthly Sunday soup grant for creative ideas. Facilitators were Kim Wardenburg, Eric Woods, and Carlos Dominguez. Collaborators included Ana Rivera, Amy Thompson, Elysia Mann and Steven Brien. Additional photographs and links to articles about the project can be found on Kim's blog www.thepapernest.blogspot.com and the blog of The Firecracker Press www.firecrackerpress.com/blog.

Photo credits: Sylva Johnson.

Kim Wardenburg earned her BFA in Printmaking & Drawing from Washington University in St. Louis, where she was encouraged to push the boundaries of traditional printmaking. Bringing together a range of traditional techniques (primarily woodcut, silkscreen, and collagraph) with other media including food, sculpture, book arts, and installation, Kim investigates the meaning and relevance of covenants in political, communal, and spiritual bonds.

Alternate Activities

Can I get a witness; John Hancock on DPA and Evil Prints

St. Louis in the spring, as meaningful as a pack of feral dogs running over the hill with a wailing baby.

Yet another grand time at the Southern Graphics conference - the all-you-can-eat buffet of printmaking. My recollections of the affair might be a tad bit veiled by the spirits and the barley flu, but nonetheless my memory never fails.

I always hit the streets running every godamn day at the conference between seeing this and that, hanging a show, getting detained by some insignificant conversation or some esoteric panel that I couldn't understand, that at best made me feel imbecilic. A gross generalization but now I interject my apology for creating a hostile work environment.

First grand ordeal was *The DPA's Carnival of INK* hosted by Evil Prints. This event was well attended, a pleasant, frenetic, wild-pig circus of print madness. I personally was tending to the Wheel of Misfortune,

Everybody Spins
Everybody's a Winner
And Everybody's a LOSER
A big print
A little print
Or hit the bricks
Or (my personal favorite)
DRINKIN FROM THE BOTTLE
MARKED HEART ACHE
(Due my sympathetic nature, everybody drank, I didn't want to take that rotgut home)

We gave away a shit ton of prints (that's French for we got rid of lots of prints) Did I mention that it was hot as Satan's anus up there, Damnation, it was hot.

At the zenith of the event I would say that over 700 people stood, sweated, bumped and/or grinded through the space - I'd even say that half of those mouths graced my bottle of hooch.

Among the dignitaries was Drive By Press holding center court printing shirts and handing out prints like there was no tomorrow. The hybrid art mechanics from University of Northern Illinois were operating their modern day Rube Goldberg litho/seesaw, and the engineers were

festooned in leather, not that it mattered, but worth noting. We also had good clean fun with Cannonball Press with the ever-popular dart and balloon bust, a family friendly all American activity. How can we forget the finely printed unmentionables by the belles of the ball Emily Arthur Douglass and Katy Seals, always a treat. Did I mention the prints? Yes the prints all shapes and sizes all levels all shown, no child left behind.

This event provided an opportunity for everybody to be a star, get their shit on the wall, take a picture and send it to mama. Everyone's a winner!

Well entrenched into the evening was a vast array of bands and Pabst Blue Ribbon - the delicacy of hipster - sweaty people and mild debauchery, all fun and no trouble.

As the days waned, the shouting diminished and the rains came... the final night brought the *INK BANGERS BALL* to the Atomic Cowboy, a mere gunshot away from Evil Prints. The quarters were tight and getting tighter. The crowds swelled more when Dennis McNett's Wolf Bat Battle Wagon rolled up after their triumphant march in the rain. The masked revelers from the parade turned the event into a James Ensor painting, *Christ Entry into St Louis*, with



Mac Bydalek, *Sure you wanna do this*, etching, 8 3/8" x 7", 2011

paper mache battle-axes and scimitars. I found myself pinned against the smelt-wrestling ring along with enfant terrible Kirkpatrick Seals.

The concept of the event was to sell prints at affordable prices, nothing over 50 bucks. I have no idea how everybody fared but all I could see was people pawing our table like wild baboons - did we make money? Maybe.

Aside from the commerce there were bands playing in the other room, but, alas, I was not able to witness the visage. Did I mention the burlesque dancers? There were scantily clad ladies doing what they do to Highway to Hell with their blinkers down heading for the off ramp, from what I understand. The evening dribbled to an end with "Voyage of Slaves" tearing up the stage. We packed up our pitiful affects and slithered away into the rainy night. As we pulled away from the Atomic Cowboy the sounds of breaking glass, hollering and an ape house in full rut emanated. I'm just glad I didn't have to clean up that mess.

JSH



Jessica Robles *Fare Thee Well*, Lithograph, 22"x30", 2010

Equilibrium Project

The (Dysfunctional?) Marriage of Reason and Squalor



by Andrea Ferber and
Monika Meler

This excerpted dialogue imagines the relationship between Theory and Praxis, as these phenomena are personified through distinct sets of characteristics: Theory is pretentious, self-absorbed, vain, timid, cool, and intellectual (an ISTJ), while Praxis is intuitive, emotional,

spontaneous, excitable, and flippant (an ENFP). Though their tastes in dress and music differ, both are co-dependent and highly fascinated by one another. Referencing an array of sources from Sigmund Freud, Clement Greenberg, Ruth Weisberg, Walter Benjamin, Sol LeWitt, Kiki Smith, Pierre Bourdieu, and Henri Matisse, their interaction underscores the fact that they are actually two sides of one personality. This performance premiered in 2010 at a theory conference in Lodz, Poland and was reprised during the 2011 SGC conference in St. Louis, Missouri.

Praxis: We need to talk.

Theory: ...what is it now?

P: Our relationship has been ambivalent for years now. You never seem to notice me. I've been working since the sixth century, yet there has been no solid print theory discourse.

T: Must theory be medium-specific?

P: Of course not, but consider the fact that most modern and contemporary art theory debates intensified in the 1940s when Greenberg reified hierarchies of medium instituted by the academies in the 17th century. To him, painting and sculpture were the only mediums, the purest and most serious.

He called for each art to focus on the nature of its medium.

His formalist approach may have fallen apart or changed, depending on one's view, but critics and theorists since then have paid little attention to printmaking or drawing. Even photography and film, relatively recent newcomers, have a plethora of theoretical discourse showered upon them!

T: So, you are looking for your Greenbergian moment?

P: No!

...or, quite possibly. I'm not sure! I want to be with you, I just don't feel that you feel the same about me as I feel about you! With few but notable exceptions, critics and curators with powerful venues and easy access to publication have failed to provide printmaking with a theoretical framework. Instead, recent literature of printmaking leans toward the technical, the historical, and, especially, the socio-economic. This is understandable, given the print's function as consumer goods and as a mass medium which serves as transmitter of motifs, images, and ideas. The history of printmaking encompasses great contradictions; prints are at once intimate and political, private and public.

T: It's quite possible ...that printmaking, as such, does not exist...

P: What? How can you say such a thing? Where were you centuries ago? I existed without you for so long! Through most of history, the people who made art never thought of themselves as making art. Any time we touch someone or something, we leave fingerprints, traces of our presence and absence. Rock walls still bear handprints of ancient humans. Hands coated with earth pigments were pressed against rock. Pigments were blown over and around hands used as stencils. With mythic overtones, this is the origin of printmaking. For millennia, these rituals using a human matrix were the only forms of printmaking.

T: I was there. We just hadn't met yet. As you suggest, there were motivations beyond the utilitarian for ancient cultures to embellish objects and mimic their visual observations in representational imagery.

P: The product of my labor stands for itself. It contains all the information my audience needs. They do not need external interpretation or explanation. Is translation of the visual into the verbal even necessary?

T: Perhaps not but dialogue is a goal. I mediate between viewer and producer.

P: Since when have you been the pragmatic one? Besides, most readers find you terribly disconnected and dry. Derrida gives me a headache. You stifle originality. Too often you have prevented experimentation. You make me think myself into a corner. When we

spend too much time together I disconnect from my intuition. And anytime I disconnect from my intuition, nothing makes sense!

T: Practice has never been untheoretical! Intuition and theory are not mutually exclusive. The basis of your identity is an idea.

P: The basis of my identity is a verb, very much in contrast to you.

T: Perhaps we can agree both of us are both, if not all the time then to greater or lesser degrees from artist to artist and project to project.

P: The medium gives the work its identity; therefore, a self-critical stance in dealing with the medium is a crucial factor in defining one's aesthetic.

The irreducible essence of printmaking is an embrace, one body pressed against the other.

Whether the image is mechanically or chemically produced on the matrix, it is always once removed from the final work of art.

T: But is this really what makes a print a print? Many sculptors use matrices — think of Rodin.

P: But not all sculptors use matrices. All printmakers use matrices. All prints are created from an embrace. The printmaker's approach is shaped by the possibility of successive proofs, as well as in the reversal of the image's direction. So while the engagement with the materials of printmaking may be immediate and visceral, much of the process is temporal and cerebral.

T: Right, the matrix makes a print a print. Which parallels its primary function as a medium to disseminate information on a mass scale. In its potentially infinite reproducibility, the print is the original consumer object.

Katherine Horvat, *Stay*, Etching, watercolor, 3" x 2.5", 2011.

At the same time, the most well-known and oft-cited theory related to printmaking argues that this reproducibility takes away the aura of originality.

Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space. Its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence. This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years as well as the various changes in its ownership.

The traces of the first can be revealed only by chemical or physical analyses which is impossible to perform on a reproduction. Changes of ownership are subject to a tradition which must be traced from the situation of the original. The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity.

P: Benjamin should be relegated to the beautiful ruins in the philosophical landscape.

One usually understands the art of the [present] by applying the conventions of the [past] thus misunderstanding the art of the [present].

Reproducibility does not go hand in hand with the use of a matrix. Many contemporary printmakers do not edition, with the result that each work is unique. Conventional techniques of registration and matrix





Adrienne Rozzi, *Untitled*, screenprint, glitter on *Stonehenge Rising*, 2011

are irrelevant in this work, which aligns it closer to painting.

T: Other than its uniqueness, how is this in any way comparable to painting? It is an ink impression created from a matrix on a paper surface. As you have shown, “The conventions of art are altered by works of art.”

P: Your point illustrates how prints are constantly devalued in relation to painting. Theory is obsessed with painting, museums only want to acquire paintings — or prints by painters! — historians write only about painters. Painters are still under the impression that printmakers’ work will be derivative of theirs!

T: Clearly painting is the phallus by which you feel judged.

P: If by phallus you mean innumerable publications about theories of painting versus none for print theory then yes. Prints are judged by the same criteria as painting but even the processes are beyond comparison: painters are seen as solitary geniuses, while most prints are produced in a collaborative environment.

T: Which means all printmaking is inherently Marxist...

P: Yet the limited edition and the monotype counter this perspective.

T: ...True, these approaches challenge the idea of printmaking as a Marxist endeavor.

Nancy Spero, for one, moved away from painting on canvas early in her career because she saw these materials as representative of the patriarchal establishments she sought to undercut. Compared to a more archivally-sound and highly-valued medium such as oil on canvas, Spero’s chosen materials were deliberately fragile, transient, and undervalued: she worked on paper and her installations were usually temporary.

P: And Spero’s wall installations are one example of how printmaking has expanded beyond traditional forms. She retains the use of a matrix but did not always print on paper; printing on walls had the effect of creating environments that verged on the sculptural.

...

P: Well, this conversation has been difficult for me, but I do feel it has been constructive.

T: Agreed, this marriage is a symbiotic one and I feel we are both committed to working on it together.

P: After all, we are both made of everything we’ve seen.

*Originally from Brodnica, Poland, **Monika Meler** earned her B.F.A. from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, M.A. from Purdue University, and an M.F.A from the Tyler school of art, Temple University. Monika is an Assistant Professor of Art at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. She has completed residencies at the Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Connecticut, the Frans Masereel Center in Belgium, and the Cork Printmakers in Ireland. Solo Exhibits include *The Distance Between* at the Limerick Printmakers Gallery in Ireland and *Contain/Retain* at the Cocoon Gallery in Kansas City.*

***Andrea Ferber** is a Ph.D. candidate in Art History at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has written on artist Jill Downen for Bruno David Gallery in St. Louis, and her article on Andrea Fraser appeared in volume 18 of *Critical Matrix: the Princeton Journal of Women, Gender, and Culture*. She is writing a dissertation on Nancy Spero.*

Equilibrium Exhibition

*Anyway Autobiography Is Easy Like It or Not
Autobiography Is Easy for Any One And So This Is
to Be Everybody's Autobiography*

It is not our eccentricities, pointedly marking our imagined singularity, that make us unique, but how we stake a claim on what is shared and relentlessly sharable. This is what Gertrude Stein coyly asserts in her recurrent account of herself and, consequently, everyone, in her 1937 book *Everybody's Autobiography* – her “sequel” to the unexpectedly popular and complexly parroted (and non-autobiographical) account of her lover, the *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. In both works, as in all of her poetry, the fabric of common life – food, objects, rooms – takes precedence over the altering life event or agonized utterance of an I. And, as food, objects and rooms are iterated in the circuitous and

incantatory repetition that characterizes Stein’s writing, we see these familiar things anew, like a phrase made strange if said again and again, regardless of its content. In that repetition, an equilibrium is reached – a plateau on which any person can stand and feel the absolute strangeness of the fabled common lot, as both a figurative state of mind and real place to assume firm footing.



Like Stein, Robert Gober has focused in acute detail on the otherwise unexceptional stuff that populates and quietly dominates our daily lives. Sinks, drains, twin beds, cat litter – the rectangular slab of uncut butter – are recreated in hand-wrought detail, yielding objects that are at once ersatz ready-mades and exquisitely mundane art. Dwelling on a single form for several years, a sink, for example, is made to exist in every possible scale and variety – hanging fixtureless and upright, or angled, dramatically split, or halved and submerged, like a grave marker. In extracting this single, common object from the cacophony of nameless things, its significance swells, evoking its emblematic meaning, magnifying its unsettling formality, and transforming it both into a noun in a new, personal grammar and a fluidly poetic symbol.

That Gober would produce wallpaper, then, is no surprise, as wallpaper itself inhabits the same lowly status as other seemingly banal domestic accents and is, furthermore, characterized by repeated design motifs. The two images in *Highway*, depicting a two-lane road splitting a forest, create an insistent pattern of snap-shot familiarity much like the encapsulating flash of a vivid memory. Drawn in wavering, child-like lines, the imagery bears all the freight of childhood itself – overwhelmed by the unknowable, awestruck by what may soon come to be known as dull, and glassy-eyed in the face of the eerily portentous. The scene could go anywhere: the Great American Road trip, the tragic Noir get-away, the idyllic or Gothic road to the rural unknown.

Kerry James Marshall’s prints dedicate themselves to similarly common forms, objects and scenes, but as a way of redressing precisely what the dominant tradition has inconspicuously excluded. That the history of art proliferates with portraits of persons of both modest and noble status is a kind of truth. Marshall sees the significance of revising this tradition as well as the conception of what is deemed “common” by creating portraits and scenes of black subjects; in doing so, he emphasizes the significant failure of the dominant strain of assumed reason. What has been shared has in fact not been shared in full; it is the very existence of a banality that includes a black identity that, in Marshall’s work, becomes radical.

But to see Marshall’s work as a purely political gesture is to stray from its full complexity and primary import.



Opposite and this page, Image from Everybody's Autobiography, Robert Gober, *Highway*, 1979-2007, Hand screen printed wallpaper, Dimensions variable Courtesy the artist and Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, etchings by Kerry James Marshall, Courtesy Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

The experience of his portraits and vignettes speaks to the fundamental qualities of the art historical movements they quote – reflective of beauty, the human form, the tragic and the romantic. Their appeal is, essentially, a transcendent one – not bound by race or history – and in such bears a resemblance to Gober's practice: they transmogrify the everyday, and render traditional practices into ones of startling conceptual rigor.

The art of the everyday has not been a creative strain quickly admitted into institutional acceptance. Lumped into the Civil Rights movement and the flotsam of assorted mid-Century uprisings long preceding and following it, printmaking has been a medium closely associated with the distraught and quotidian, the news-bearing, and social unrest. At its heart is the ability to produce multiples – a quality reflective of Stein's verse, Gober's hand-made Americana, and Marshall's historical reprisals. Multiples, like wallpaper patterns, have the ability to create ubiquity; what was once novel suddenly becomes a new norm. And as Marshall's work attests, "normal" is never to be dismissed. This additional dimension of these artists' practices – that is, their use of printmaking – adds a subtle texture to their work, an unspoken comment on their material identities and affinity with alternative histories.

"Cloudiness what is cloudiness, it is a lining, it is a roll, it is a melting." Cloudiness can even out an image, make it appear balanced. Breezy and almost glib, the peripheral roads, bundles of newspapers, bags of donuts, and carpeted living rooms unscroll as the backdrops to our grander narratives, all the while moving a strong hand in dictating our even grander perception of baseline experience. Perhaps with a finer trained eye – one schooled on patterns – the subtler marks can be seen in a given face, as if suddenly primed for a portrait, and certain invisibilities can be unmasked as the monstrous, deficient, or sublime truths that they are.

End notes: Essay title from Everybody's Autobiography, 1937, by Gertrude Stein. Quote in last paragraph from *Tender Buttons*, 1914, by Gertrude Stein.

Jessica Baran is the Assistant Director at White Flag Projects, a non-profit contemporary art space, and the art writer for St. Louis's alternative weekly, The Riverfront Times. Her first book of poetry, Remains to be Used, was published this winter by Apostrophe Books.

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Save the Date

2012 SGC Conference - Navigating Currents



As the mighty Mississippi River flows southward, so too will the 2012 SGC International Conference. Returning to New Orleans, the membership is invited to come together to celebrate the 40th anniversary of our beloved organization. Events will showcase how our organization has evolved, and through provocative panels, exhibitions and discussion, serve to chart a course for future development and growth of the printmaking discipline.

This year's theme, "Navigating Currents," seeks to marry the past, present, and future of not only SGC International, but printmaking as a whole. Whether guided by instruments or celestial means, navigation can become the measure by which we take stock in where we have been and where we are headed. It is the determination of a position, a direction, and a movement, making New Orleans the perfect place to simultaneously celebrate our history and chart our progress as artists, educators, and an organization.

New Orleans holds a unique cultural history rich in food, music and architecture, each a constant presence in the city. According to Ned Sublette author of the **History that Made New Orleans, From Spanish Silver to Congo Square,** "by the time Louisiana became the 18th State in 1812 most elements that make New Orleans so visibly, and audibly different from the rest of the country were already in place".

With our 'alternative American history' we have

mapped and charted an existence that still holds unique from the rest of the nation. Geographically influenced, strong cultural ties to Havana and Haiti are still apparent with such traditions as Sunday dancing in Congo Square. This paired with the city's adoption of Carnival in the late 1800s means the people of New Orleans are no strangers to merriment.

But festivity is not the only thing energizing the city. "To get around in New Orleans, you drive through history," says Sublette. When navigating the dense web of references embedded in the street names - La-Salle, Iberville, Bienville, Orleans, Chartres, Poydras, Galvez, Miro, Carondelet, Claiborne - one can sense the currents that shaped the city. The history is right there.

SCG International's history began here as well. In a hotel room during the Southeastern Colleges of Art Conference, a group of printmakers decided to make their needs, techniques, and ideas heard. They met each year forming what is now SGC International. Our growth to almost 1500 members across the country and around the world is not only a testament to a great vision but also to all of those who have followed in our founders' spirit. It is with such gumption that we are enabled to be a force for educating and disseminating our craft, skills and concepts.

With 40 year under our belt, a celebration at the site of inception seems a natural course. 2012, an auspicious

year, will enable us to present new programming as well as focus on our history. Expect popular favorites such as the open portfolio, vendor fair, and the membership exchange portfolio with spectacular printing events sprinkled in. Returning to the line-up will be: lectures, panels, exhibitions and demonstrations. One of our spotlights for the coming year will be *Master Printer Panels and Projects*. We encourage members to submit events and panels that include, promote, and focus on master printers in hopes of achieving higher visibility for this under-served constituency of the organization.

The site of our fete is the Sheraton Hotel on Canal Street, situated only steps away from the French Quarter and both the St. Charles and Canal streetcar lines. A short walk into the Quarter opens up a world of great food, live music, historical architecture, and pervasive art just waiting to be experienced. A mere streetcar ride away brings you to either the city's famous cemeteries, the New Orleans Museum of Art in City Park, or the sites of our demonstrations. Located in the Uptown district, Tulane and Loyola Universities will feature full-afternoon on-going demonstrations as well as several esteemed exhibitions.

Since the site of New Orleans encompasses a number of small universities, demonstrations will be limited. In order to keep the dialogue and technical juices flowing we have added *Video Demonstrations* and *Small Press Demonstrations* that will occur at the hotel. In a society immersed in social media, what better time to merge old and new technologies? Video demonstrations will give new, close-up views of demonstrations while keeping the presentations personal with question and answer sessions at their conclusion. Demonstrators will be available after the viewing of their video for clarifications and further insights.

Along with video demonstrations and hotel demonstrations, *Mentorship* will be making its debut at the New Orleans conference. In an effort to help empower our young professionals, mentoring sessions will be designed to link mentees with established members of our organization. Mentors from a wide variety of art professions will be given the opportunity to impart advice and ideas concerning anything from portfolio development to graduate school and job placement. SGC International is excited to boast such a strong and active contingency of students and young, emerging artists and looks forward to

developing programming designed specifically for their growth and success.

The evening events will highlight the great diversity of New Orleans' art institutions and communities. Throughout the conference, the nights' programming will survey what the city has to offer. Walking distance from the hotel, the established arts warehouse district combines works from galleries, the Contemporary Arts Center, and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art's collection. Another evening will feature the St. Claude arts district, an emanating art scene that has more recently developed in the 7th and 9th wards.

To cap it all off, the conference will conclude Saturday night with a big birthday blowout because SGC International's 40 year anniversary wouldn't be complete with a party! Immediately following the banquet will be an open dance party. Free to all participants, the official SGC International birthday bash will be chock full of great New Orleans music, dancing, and of course, cake! Be sure to check it out.

For more information, visit the Navigating Currents web page on the SGC International website (<http://sgcinternational.org/2012>). Remember, proposals are due June 15th, 2011.

Mark your calendars now for the Celebration! Navigating Currents, March 14-17, 2012, New Orleans



Sean Morrissey *Façade #2*, digital ink jet, collage on panel, 40" x 30", 2011

Profile

Busy Hands: Kiki Smith



Kiki Smith, *Come Away With Her After Lewis Carroll*, 2003, 52 inches x 78 ¾ inches, Published by Universal Limited Art Editions, Copyright Kiki Smith/Universal Limited Art Editions

"You are only partially in control of your creativity, it has its own agenda." Kiki Smith¹

When speaking with Kiki Smith about her work and her career one thing becomes perfectly clear: she is very candid and open about what she does – even self-deprecating about her work. She has said that much of it is a mystery even to her, since she relies on her instincts. Everything that has been written about Kiki, or studied about her work would make one think he knew her and what she is about. Although she is open and speaks to her insatiable curiosity and need to learn, she is intensely private. She can be exposed in public, and have various narratives surround her work, but the private knowledge remains.

Some critics called Smith's work too crafty, too sentimental, too gruesome, too feminist, too uneven. Her first full scale American Museum survey, *A Gathering: 1980-2005*, was a showcase that traversed her creative output for the past 25 years. The exhibition began at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and traveled to the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis; the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston; and ended in October 2007 at the *Le Coleccion Jumex* in Mexico City. The exhibition gathered together some of her most sympathetic pieces along with the artists more provocative subjects such as intestines and references to the residue of the body machine. Smith is known for not shying away from bodily functions; functions that most people do not wish to bring into daily conversation, let alone a museum or gallery. There is no shame, nor embarrassment or apology in her focusing on things that make us who we are.

Her interests are deep and far reaching, and although one would think there is no connection between the Virgin Mary and Alice in Wonderland, or the Big Bad Wolf and glass cats, Kiki Smith has a way of revisiting these historical icons in a curious way that somehow is connected. A cast of characters appears and reappears

¹ Interview with author 2008

in various mediums, as if she is constantly revisiting the same issues that lie deeply in each.

Kiki Smith is never idle and works across every medium imaginable, from prints on paper to silk scarves, and monumental sculpture to small glass works. In speaking about her work it is not possible to separate one medium from the other because she is heavily invested in them and they are interconnected. She has said that becoming an artist was the only thing she could do. Smith had numerous jobs before taking up her craft seriously, including as an electrician's assistant, studying to become an Emergency Medical Technician, a short order cook, baker, bartender and demolition expert, among others. Each job seems to have given her some skill or viewpoint that makes its way into her art practice. Working with clay brings out the baker, the EMT work allowed her to really look at the human body as a working machine, and there is just a little of the demolition expert in printmaking.

Her background includes creative parents (her mother an opera star, her father was sculptor Tony Smith) and a grandfather who was an alter carver. Working solely with the figure for most of her career, including tracing her own body on etching plates, she continues to explore human strength by highlighting its vulnerability. Her early years in New Jersey, with her parents' artist's friends talking over dinner and people coming and going, undoubtedly had some impression on her. Asked if she and her twin sisters were pushed to do well, Smith responded "Not at all. We were more like wild weeds."² In another conversation with Chuck Close, he asked if she had gone to summer camp. Smith replied, "No, we did yard work."³ These telling comments expose her stable sense of humor. One's memory of childhood is often the catalyst for what we do in later years.

Smith made her first prints with a friend, painting on Plexiglas, in the 70's. From there she learned silkscreen so she could print t-shirts, but they all came out badly because the ink bled under the screen. She took courses at the Fashion Institute of Technology in order to get better results. She also discovered the clothing of Vivien Westwood who used rejected silkscreen prints. "I thought that was really good. Not to be stopped, using the [mistakes] to your advantage."⁴ After nearly 150 editions printed with workshops such as Harlan & Weaver, United Limited Artists Editions (ULAE), Pace Editions, Inc and Columbia University, New York; Crown Point Press, CA; The Brodsky Center for Innovative Editions (BCIE), NJ, The Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia and Carpe Diem Press in Oaxaca, Mexico, Kiki Smith's work has expanded the medium of print art. What is interesting is her own admission that she was not a very good drawer, something that is hard to disguise in graphic mediums.

Craig Zammiello, a master printer who worked at ULAE on *My Blue Lake* and other Kiki Smith editions, has said that Kiki thrives best in the atelier atmosphere. She "finds her space with the person/situation that she is collaborating with and then tapers the work, or at least her part, to fit it."⁵ He goes on to say, "I also would not hesitate to say that this [working in a traditional manner at Harlan & Weaver] shaped her wanting to become more of a draftsman, to perfect her drawing abilities because she was basically laying it on the line in her work. No fancy-smancy gimmicks, just straight ahead, really fine quality traditional etching. And she got damn good at it."⁶ Smith has said she responds to the give and take (away) that is possible in printmaking and sculpture. Carol Weaver and Felix Harlan believe that Kiki "likes the etching process and the way the plate accepts many layers of mark making while retaining a great deal of clarity to the line. Copperplates also allow the possibility of erasure and re-working. Kiki became very adept at changing the surface of the metal; for instance, scraping away parts of the drawing and then bringing the surface back to a high polish."⁷ Over the course of several years Harlan & Weaver introduced Kiki to more complex techniques, including aquatint and she began to work on more complex color prints utilizing multiple plates. "In spite of the many challenges imposed by color prints, such as registering color separated plates, calculating depth of etch to compensate for offsetting and variable ink saturation, and so forth, Kiki seems to have accepted color printing as a satisfying and interesting addition to her work in etching."⁸ Always hungry for technical knowledge, she demands to know how

2 Interview with the author 2008

3 Bomb Magazine, Issue 49 Fall, 1994

4 interview with author 2008

5 email with author 8/28/2008

6 email with author, 9/28/2008

7 email with author, 9/28/2008

8 email with author 2008.

things are done and what other things she could be trying. She is happiest when working with people who know more about it than she does. With Harlan and Weaver, Smith can proof as many as 30 versions of a plate before it is ready to be editioned. "To me that's the real pleasure, you have to work hard at it to get it there. I like that I have no aptitude and I have to struggle with it."

Smith's early drawing brings a nervous line quality that seems to jolt the subjects to attention. Blank faces looking straight at the viewer are open and vulnerable, both in the stare but also in the quality of the craftsmanship. The *Blue Print Series*, 1999, published by ULAE, along with the *Riding Hood Series*, contains some good examples of the earlier drawing style. The print *Josephine*, 1999, is a mournful and distressed head-on confrontation with a young woman with a huge red tear held in her strangely primal hands. The same line quality and directness used in the *Riding Hood* series can be seen in this print, the attention to hair, veins, wrinkles, creases and frowns are accented. The plate is marked up on purpose and adds static electricity to the narrative.

Wendy Weitman, independent curator and former curator of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, at The Museum of Modern Art, says: "Kiki Smith is among the most prolific and committed artists to use the printed medium as a creative outlet. Her passion for and facility with paper, a material she has explored extensively in sculpture, has fueled her innovative endeavors in prints and books, resulting in intricately folded and layered compositions of delicate handmade sheets."⁹ This is clear in one of my personal favorites, *Blue Feet*, 2003, a piece that touches on many of the anomalies of Kiki Smith-- Catholicism, starry skies and blue tattoos, creative use of paper with French folds, and the mystery of disappearing feet. These feet are not unlike the early medieval painting the *Disappearing Christ*¹⁰, which portrays Christ at the very moment he vanishes into heaven, his upper body hidden in clouds, leaving only his feet visible. These feet appear again in a series of etching done at Crown Point Press. Two colored aquatints, *Home and Still*, 2006, inspired by the San Francisco homeless, depict a pair of boots in one and a bare pair of woman's feet emerging from beneath a dress in the other. Both are drawn in black and white and rest on a colored background made from pressing fabric into soft ground. They leave us wondering if they, too, have arisen or had just been mugged. The same can be said of *Jewel*, 2004, which transfers the same sensation to the animal world -- very detailed drawing of the feet of a wolf. The paradox of Smith's work is that you cannot tell if her characters are being dragged into existence or dragged out of it. Fortunately there is enough space for several narratives, something Smith seems to prefer in her work.

Collaboration has played a huge role in her career, not just in prints, but in sculpture and glass as well. She is not one to shy away from something based on whether she thought it would work or not, but pushes until it pulls together. When asked what she has an aptitude for, Kiki modestly says "Nothing. I have gotten better over time. In print-



Kiki Smith, *Josephine*, 1999 (detail) aquatint and etching on Hahnemühle bright white paper, paper size: 20 x 16 inches/image size: 12 7/16 x 8 7/8 inches, Published by Harlan & Weaver, New York, New York



Kiki Smith, *Alice I (Feet Crossed)*, 2005 Porcelain, Published by 13 Moons 10 1/2" high x 11 1/2" wide x 7 1/2" deep, Photo courtesy of Pace Wildenstein, New York



Kiki Smith working at Pace Editions, 2007. Photo credit: Lynne Allen

9 "Kiki Smith: Prints, Books & Things", The Museum of Modern Art, 2003

10 Attributed to Isabella of Castile's Book of Hours

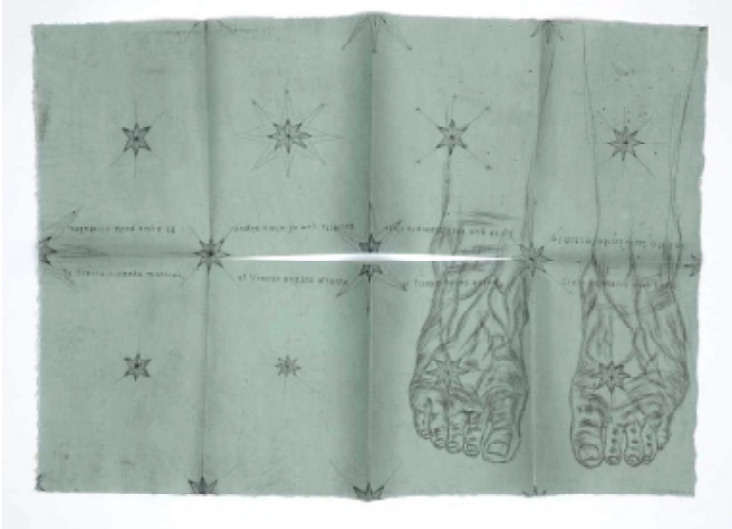
making and drawing I am much better. If I can get better, anybody can get better! It happens by practice.”¹¹ Contrary to her own opinion, those she has worked with in sculpture beg to differ. Ellen Babcock worked with Kiki on the sculpture *Standing*, 1998, commissioned for the Stuart Collection at the University of California San Diego and one of her first public sculptures. When asked what was it like to work with Kiki, Babcock says “inspiring and challenging...she is certainly not telling the truth about her sculpture skills...she was one of the most hands-on of all of the artists I worked for, naturally adept at coaxing a rich variety of effects from a wide range of materials. With wax, for instance, she would incise drawn lines into flat panel cutouts with as much apparent ease as she would stipple textures onto modeled soft wax forms. She worked quickly and energetically and was rarely slowed down or frustrated by the technical.”¹² Ellen remarks that the best word to describe Kiki’s work force is “torrential,” a lot of it, moving fast, determined while making myriad paths. “She seemed to have an almost hungry touch and a need to be constantly making...her versatility and speed and abundance of ideas were inspiring.”¹³

Kiki’s work, both in print and sculpture, is bound to the history of the body through religion, art history and literature. An early interest in Victorian fairy tales, often ending badly unlike modern Disney versions, is rendered in sculptures and prints that are very reminiscent of early Christian sculpture. The kneeling *Magdalena* by Antonio Canova (1757-1822), a Venetian sculptor famous for delicately rendered nude flesh in marble, has similarities to *Alice* (with feet crossed) 2005, from Lewis Carroll’s “*Alice’s Adventures Underground*” (1895) whose body language reads as submission while remaining stoic.

Her prints from “*Alice’s Adventures Underground*” are perhaps some of her most striking. *Come Away From Her After Lewis Carroll* is a case in point, as mysterious as a Gabriel Garcia Márquez novel with floating figures, dreamy washed colors and a demur Alice poised prettily on a hill top. These prints narrate a fantastic tale that leaves all the action off the page.

In Smith’s identifiable drawing style, a seated girl as still as porcelain somehow combines still air with animal hair standing on end. These themes and images resurface, which is evidence that Smith’s curiosity continues to explore how things hold meaning.

Whether its body parts- missing arms, or arms and legs amid a pile of chains, or hearts and intestines and ribs and other gruesome stuff – or references to grim fairy tales, dead flowers and pussy cats, all of Kiki Smith’s work is inextricably linked and challenges tradition. Although she says she does not read much, the bible, Art History and liturgical imagery all seem to be subjects that interest her and which she undoubtedly looks at. She takes bits and pieces from various places. Whether arranging collage material or breathing life into bronze,



Kiki Smith, *Blue Feet*, With adapted text by Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz., 2003. Book of cut-and-folded etching and drypoint on handmade colored Japanese paper. Unfolded: 18 7/16 "x 25 1/4" (46.8 x 64.1 cm). Publisher: Carpe Diem Press, Oaxaca, Mexico. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art, New York



Kiki Smith, *Jewel*, 2004, aquatint and etching, Hahnemühle bright white paper, paper size: 14 x 17 inches/image size: 8 1/2 x 11 inches, Published by Harlan & Weaver, New York, New York

11 Interview with author 2008

12 email with author 11/28/2008

13 email with the author 11/28/08

Smith is always working according to her inner voice. Her interest in the body is very pragmatic. She knows the skin is just this barrier that separates our insides from the rest of the world. We don't think about what's underneath, yet every second of your life, your bone marrow produces 100 trillion molecules of hemoglobin, the stuff that carries oxygen from your lungs to the rest of you. Some of her work explores this fragility, this paradox of the body machine as life support while not being infallible. It is so easily pierced. She remembers this; it's the rest of us that may not.



Kiki Smith, *Still*, 2006. Color spit bite aquatint with flat bite and hard ground and soft ground etching printed on gampi paper chine collé. 26-1/2 x 31", edition 20. Published by Crown Point Press.

Printmaking holds a special place in her oeuvre. She holds no prejudice with regard to mediums and will use whatever works for the project- whether traditional intaglio or rubber stamps. She has said that she "could just make prints and be satisfied."¹⁴ This admission goes a long way in describing what is most surprising about Kiki Smith, that she is not privy to the hierarchy of mediums. "I like making things, but I think it's not about being ambitious, it is just about enjoying doing things and not looking at it like its in your self-interest to do them. It is interesting that there are always weird hierarchical levels but you don't have to participate in that."¹⁵

Kiki Smith's prints have been a major focus throughout her career and she has remained faithful to it throughout. Working thirty years has given her the strength of a practice she can rely on. "Your practice cannot rely on external things, other people. What you do have control over is showing up, for your work." Kiki truly believes that you are better off letting your work go where it wants to go and not try to control it. You always hear of writers who say they invent a character, and then that character just takes over the entire story and goes places that were never expected. It sounds as if Kiki Smith has the same demon inside herself that urges her work in directions she unconsciously finds fascinating. As Thomas Mann said "Artists are like hunters. They're shooting in the dark and not sure they hit the target." Not many artists can be as candid about their own work, whether it is good or bad, or pointing out flaws and deficiencies, as Kiki Smith. We are thankful she continues to explore new territory, retraces her steps to revisit old themes and to feast on her insatiable hunger for learning. And keeping those hands busy.

Lynne Allen, formerly Master Print and Educational Director of Tamarind Institute and Professor of Art at Rutgers University, is Director and Professor of Art at the School of Visual Arts at Boston University. Her work is in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Library of Congress, among others. For more information about her work, visit www.lynneallen.com.

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¹⁴ "Kiki Smith: Prints, Books & Things", The Museum of Modern Art, 2003

¹⁵ Interview with author 2008

Essay

Grotesque Zippo – Engraving War

By Michael Krueger

From the details of war came the beloved and enduring print media - intaglio. The common belief is that intaglio grew out of the craft of engraving and etching designs on armor. In ancient wars men had their armor engraved to tell a story, and to decorate their bodies with the scrolls of magic ornament. The armor provided shielding and also through the design and decoration - it provided purpose and courage.

In the Vietnam conflict, the engraved Zippos became the ideological armor of the soldier, more like a talisman than a shield, but nonetheless a tool of protection - and like the ancient armor the designs on the Zippos bolstered the grit to carry on. Oddly enough the engraved Zippo was usually strapped to the soldier's helmet, the helmet being the longest lasting functional piece of armor since the invention of armor.

Durer's, *The Knight, Death and the Devil*, of 1513, one of the earliest known master engravings, depicts an armored Christian soldier steadfast in the face of evil, he dons three quarter armor and weaponry. It is fitting and no coincidence that many of these early engravings depict armor. The engraving - *Coat of Arms* of Hieronymus Baumgartner, of 1530 - depicts imagery often associated with armor, such as the decorative plums and the coat of arms. Created by the artist Bartel Beham - who was known to have engraved and etched armor.

Daniel Hopfer is another artist who did both, (active between 1470 - 1536), he is considered to be the father of the etching process. He was a renowned graphic artist of his time and also known for having etched armor for such royalty as the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. In Daniel Hopfer's, *Ornament with Grotesque Patterns*, he is depicting fanciful and grotesque patterning inspired by the discovery of the Roman ruins and the painted patterns found in those early excavations.

Historically, the decoration of armor and weapons has served to manifest the culture that produced them. Indeed, as symbols of abstract concepts such as authority, power and justice, in this sense arms came to convey ideas that far surpassed their original function.

These concepts are true for the decoration of the Zippos as well as they too served an ideological function. However the order of things is flipped- to express anti-authority, powerlessness and injustice along with a deferred social order, and a devotional preoccupation with morbidity and sex. It is also true that in some instances the Zippos did stop a bullet or a piece of shrapnel from killing a soldier - so in some small way or rather a significant way for the survivor, the Zippo did function as armor.

The interplay between print and armor spread to ceramic arts, metal arts, books arts, and really all aspects of a culture of decorative arts. The 'grotesques', became a go-to motif. The 'grotesques' so called because they were found in Roman ruins below ground in what were thought to be grottoes- the imagery consisted of interwoven human, animal and



The Knight, Death and the Devil, Albrecht Durer (1471 – 1528), German, Nuremberg, 1513 (Spencer Museum of Art Collection, Lawrence, KS)



Ornament with Grotesque Patterns, Daniel Hopfer (active 1470 – 1536), German, Augsburg, (The Art Institute of Chicago Collection, Chicago, IL)



Coat of Arms of Hieronymus Baumgartner (1498 – 1565), Bartel Beham (1502 – 1540), German, Nuremberg, 1530/40, (The Art Institute of Chicago Collection, Chicago, IL)

plant forms. The widespread dissemination of this imagery was largely due to pattern books that contained loose bound ornamental prints, much like the Daniel Hopper's *Ornament with Grotesque Patterns*. These prints could be copied for use on whatever surface beckoned ornamentation.

This breastplate, with an etched figure kneeling before the crucifixion, (German c. 1550) represents an artist using the breastplate more like a canvas for composing a pictorial scene. This is a unique example of the interplay between artist and armorer and the back and forth influences.

In this portrait of Henry II, king of France by Niccolo Della Casa (active between 1543 – 1547), -we see a depiction of the high point in decorative armor and also the end of the functionality of armor. Eventually armor evolved into essentially expensive man body jewelry and its' function dissipated considerable - the function became subservient to the ideological patterning, imagery and ultimately to the demarcation of social class.

The Zippo lighters where like amulets, bringing the keeper good luck and protection against evil. They also become a source of personal expression and a form of rebellion. Zippos were part Pop Art, part military artifact and for my purposes part printmaking. They were bought for \$1.80 at army base Post Exchange stores, and then personalized at sidewalk kiosks usually in Vietnam. They used a machine called pantographic machine, it was basically an electric engraving machine that could reduce and copy a design, engraving it on the Zippo. U.S. soldiers created most of the designs, as the Vietnamese could not make sense of American pop culture and the vernacular language of the time. The sidewalk engravers kept a book brimming with these loose-leaf designs much like the pattern books of the Renaissance.

Little Frag – is short for fragmentation or hand grenade, frag had a sinister meaning during the Vietnam war. The verb 'to frag' meant to assassinate an unpopular member of one's fighting unit, sometimes using fragmentation grenades, it usually happened at night in their tent or by intentional friendly fire.

The Peanuts strip comic was regularly featured in the army issue newspaper – *The Stars and Stripes* and in 1965, Charles Shulz revealed Snoopy's fantasy of being a fighter pilot and his eternal conflict with the Red Baron, that same year Lyndon Johnson increased US combat troops from 3500 marines to 200,000. In 1967, the pop song "Snoopy vs. the Red Baron" came out and the soldiers serving in Vietnam latched on to the imagery as a symbol of endurance and steadfastness in the face of an elusive enemy. *God is Alive and Well in Mexico City* – was a jokey comeback to the famous Friederich Nietzsche's existentialist utterance- 'God is Dead'. Mexico City was a destination for draft dodgers. Many soldiers felt betrayed by liberal politicians and celebrities who turned against the war. *Fuck Communism, Fuck Ho Chi Minn, Fuck De Gaulle*- refers to Charles De Gaulle, French president from 1958-1969, who refused to support the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, *Fuck Berkeley, Fuck Joan Baez, Fuck RFK* –Robert Kennedy was an early support of the war but switched sides during his bid for the California Primary, *Fuck Jackie, Fuck Topaz Trays* –means 'Topaz betrays' a reference to a fictional character in a novel about a French Pro-Soviet spy, and is a further reiteration of the betrayal of France to the U.S., and finally *Fuck You Too*, which of course pretty much covers all of the bases.



Breastplate with Etched Figure Kneeling before the Crucifixion, Germany, Nuremberg, C. 1550 (Cleveland Museum of Art Collection, Cleveland, OH)



Portrait of Henry II, King of France at the Age of 28, Niccolo Della Casa, French, Active in Rome 1543 – 47, (Cleveland Museum of Art Collection, Cleveland, OH)



Zippo Lighters from the collection of Bradford Edwards. Photography: Misha Anikst, Anikst Design. London

'Bert the Turtle' was an animated character from a 1950's U.S. government film that taught children to 'duck and cover' in case of a Soviet atomic attack. 'Bert' humping the Military Police helmet expressed soldier's feelings towards military discipline in Vietnam. These kinds of images represented a hacking away at the skullduggery and blunders of commanding officers, and of the war itself.

In 2006, a small design company, FUCT, started creating faux Vietnam War era Zippos. The product pitch for this item reads – "Engraved with FUCT images reminiscent of the Vietnam War period, each lighter is tarnished and "worsted" by hand to give it the appearance of just getting out of a firefight in the jungles of South East Asia." Zippo has been flipped just like the ornamentation on the armor, striped of meaning and function and transposed to signify 'cool'. The Zippo has been co-opted and counterfeited, changing the meaning of the imagery and text, and ultimately changing it's function.

The most bizarre appropriation of this imagery is the recent Nike Air Jordan designed by the artist Mark Ong. High dollar designer shoes made for a subset of youth culture adored with what is actually very cryptic imagery. The Vietnam Era Zippo is officially – fashion. Or like armor has become -man jewelry.

This essay was first presented at the 2010 MAPC panel Old War, New War, co-chaired by Michael Krueger & Stephen Goddard with contributions by Adriane Herman and Tim Dooley. Part 1 – Grotesque Zippo – Engraving War is published here for the first time. Part 2 – South Dakota Chopper, will be published in 2012 by A. B. Press in the publication, Michael Krueger, Abandoned Allegories. The panel included an investigation into the relevance of print lore generated by past wars and contemporary responses to conflict and war. Special attention was given to the relationships between historical and contemporary printed art and the complex relationships between the making of images of war and their use and miss-use in various social contexts.

Michael Krueger was born on January 5, 1967 in Kenosha Wisconsin. His family moved to South Dakota in 1970 and he spent his childhood years in Sioux Falls. He has recently had solo shows at Sunday L.E.S., New York, NY, Steven Zevitas Gallery, Boston, MA, Bennington College, Bennington, VT and Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. Recent group exhibitions include, KRETS Gallery, Malmo, Sweden, Baer Ridgeway, San Francisco, CA, Ambacher Contemporary, Munich, Germany, Glasgow Print Studio, Scotland, UK and the Kala Art Institute, Berkeley, CA. www.michaelkrueger.us

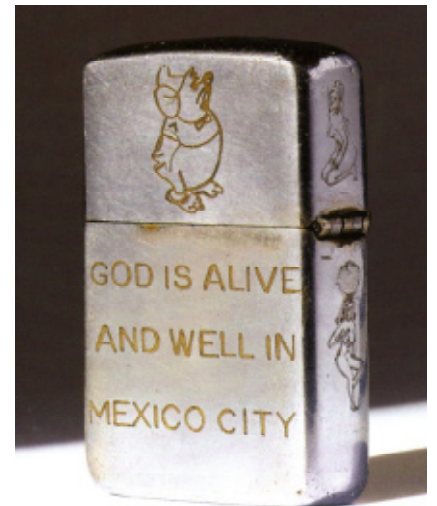
Selected Bibliography:

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Arms and Armor, in the Art institute of Chicago, Walter J. Karcheski, Jr. Bulfinch Press, New York, 1995

Arms and Armor, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Stephen N. Fliegel, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, 1998

Vietnam Zippos, American Soldiers' Engravings and Stories 1965 – 1973, Sherry Buchanan, The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, 2007



Zippo Lighters from the collection of Bradford Edwards. Photography: Misha Anikst, Anikst Design. London



Zippo Lighters from the collection of Bradford Edwards. Photography: Misha Anikst, Anikst Design. London



FUCT Zippo lighter, 2006, FUCT product company, USA



Nike Air Jordan designed by the artist Mark Ong, 2009, USA

News and Announcements

SGC International Members' Traveling Exhibition

SGC International is currently accepting submissions for the next traveling exhibit; the deadline is July 20, 2011 at midnight (EST). The submission process is now completely digital, the prospectus and payment information can be found on SGC International's website.

In an attempt to better represent the work of SGCI's membership, the parameters for the exhibition have been expanded to include two dimensional prints and drawings and also three dimensional, sculptural and installation based prints and graphic material. While there are some restrictions, these have been implemented solely to make the exhibit travel-able.

The exhibit will launch in New Orleans as part of the 2012 40th Anniversary conference and continue to travel until December 2015. A few venues have been scheduled but there are still plenty of spaces available. Members interested in hosting the exhibit at their institution or university should contact Stephanie Standish, Vice President of Internal Affairs at internalaffairs@SGCInternational.org

Prospectus- <http://sgcinternational.org/exhibition/sgci-traveling-exhibition/>

Payment- <http://sgcinternational.org/join/why-join/>

Exhibitions

Sean Caulfield
Darkfire and The Waiting Room
Brookhaven College
3939 Valley View Ln., Farmers Branch, TX
Art Department
Forum Gallery July 5 - 29, 2011

East Meets West:

An exhibit sponsored by Print Arts Northwest featuring Janette Hopper and Ralph Steeds, Oct. 20 - Nov. 12, 2011
Opening Reception, October 20th, from 5:30 to 8:00 PM
PAN Gallery, Washington County Museum, Portland, OR
Open: Mon-Sat from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

Janette K. Hopper's (www.janettekhopper.com.) work is painterly, layered and explores experimental combinations of media and techniques. Her imagery is inspired by her experiences in nature. Hopper's prints instill a sense of deep meditation, integrating the artist's love of printing and painting. Ralph Steeds's work includes self-portraits, acrobats, animals, nudes and tornado swirls. Steeds develops layers of space and imagery through experimentation with materials resulting in a puzzle of imagery and mark making in the work that brings the viewer to confront the idea that there really are no certain answers.



Connie Zamorano, *Kidney Stones*, 20.75"x 30" lithograph, 2010

New Books

Creating Books and Boxes ISBN-10: 1592532918

By Benjamin D. Rinehart
Published by Quarry Books
(a division of Rockport Publishers)

Whether you're new to book making or an experienced paper artist looking for new ideas, *Creating Books & Boxes* covers all the basics of book and box construction, such as tools, adhesives, archival properties, cutting, and terminology, but then adds twists to make the book's 11 projects surprising, fun, and dimensional. In addition to making paper wrap-around covers and simple stitches, this book also includes detailed instructions for finishing touches and decorative elements like paper dyeing, copy transfers, stamping, and paste papers.

- Step-by-step instruction, full-color project photos, diagrams, and tips with over 350 illustrations
- A complete basic technique book for beginners
- New ideas for more experienced book artists

On the Road Again!

Drive by Press is now booking for the fall of 2011, and Spring of 2012. We have a brand new collection of prints, wood-cut designs, and stories from the road.

We began with an etching press in the back of a truck and a collection of 200 contemporary American prints but has evolved to over 260 schools visited and 250,000 miles traveled. We now boast one of the largest contemporary collections at well over 2000 prints and growing. Our goal is to demonstrate the power of the multiple, educating students in various techniques, and shedding light on current trends in printmaking - the things that are happening right now across America.

We would like to share the Drive-By Press experience with your students. A typical visit includes various lectures, including the history of Drive-By, print demonstrations include relief, screen print, lithography and intaglio processes, viewing of works from our collection, and printing our hand-cut woodblocks on t-shirts for purchase. We also offer critiques and smaller, more intimate discussions about graduate school, having visited many of the top programs in the country. We're able to coordinate our operation to fit the curriculum of every school. Email us for pricing more info and booking - drivebypress@yahoo.com!

Introducing

The Print Studio

We are professional print studio in the UK. We've just relaunched our web site which contains a lot of information and images. With best wishes from a sunny England,

Kip Gresham

<http://www.theprintstudio.co.uk/>

Smokey Road Press

Smokey Road Press is proud to announce the launch of our new website on August 15th: www.smokey-roadpress.com. In our Winterville, Georgia print shop, we create unique letterpress wedding invitations and broadsides using presses built in the first half of the 20th century. We combine the magic of these machines with the finest papers and inks, a contemporary design sensibility, and patience and love for the craft. Check out our website or find us on Etsy.

Printing and Teaching in the Streets

On July 8th, 2011 unsuspecting pedestrians on the busiest street of Northampton, MA will be introduced to Intaglio printmaking. The outdoor event Interactive Intaglio plans to generate public awareness of printmaking and encourage an appreciation of the history of fine art printing with demonstrations, discussion, and a children's activity table. Throughout the evening three master printers will print plates in a tented temporary printmaking studio. The images were created by local artists, and will showcase those who currently practice intaglio printmaking.

This is the first public demonstration arranged by Lyell Castonguay, who brainstorms progressive ideas to promote the arts. Interactive Intaglio's primary goal, as Castonguay commented, "is to make the general public aware that Intaglio printmaking is a vital part of our art community and part of a thriving subculture throughout the arts world." Many organizations and individuals generously supported



Teréz Iacovino, *Little Houses*, Varied Dimensions, Cut paper with serigraphy and artificial turf 2009.

event director Lyell Castonguay in making Interactive Intaglio a reality, including the Northampton Arts Council, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Valley F.E.A.S.T. and Graphic Chemical.

There are several studios involved with the interactive Intaglio including Zea Mays Printmaking in Florence, MA, Wingate studio, Pettengill's studio and Red Horse Etching Studio.

The event will occur in front of the First Churches ABC, at 128 Main St., Northampton, MA between the entrance stairs and main sidewalk on July 8th 2011 from 5-9pm, coinciding with Northampton's Art Night Out. Additional information is available through the event's blog: <http://interactiveintaglio.blogspot.com>

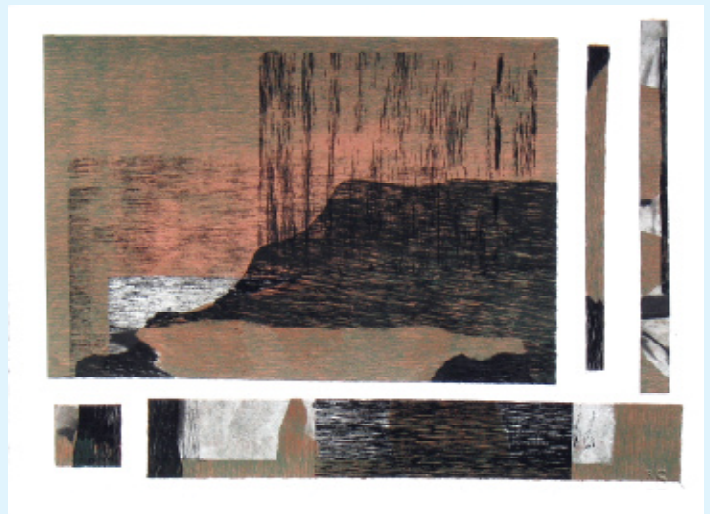
Carand Burnet, is a poet, construction artist, and correspondent for Art New England Magazine. Her website is: www.carand-burnet.com

Call for Papers

imprint 2012 will be published in March 2012 in time for the SGCI Conference in New Orleans. We welcome contributions in form of manuscripts not previously published that discuss:

- * Current developments in the field of printmaking, multiple and book art
- * Concepts and strategies in printmaking and related artistic practice
- * New techniques that allow artists to publish original artwork
- * The history of printmaking and art intended for publication
- * The international dialog about printmaking

We accept submissions in German and English for peer-review. The text should not exceed 5.000 words. Articles may be written in a range of forms (scholarly articles, inter



Jannette Hopper, Columbia River Gorge, 11" x 14", Woodgrain and chin colle

views, conversations, forums, speculations, working notes, pedagogical essays and artists projects). We do not plan to reproduce images within the publication, but offer publication of audiovisual material through the website www.im-print.org. Manuscripts should not arrive later than October 31st 2011. Please include a short biography. Open Office or Word formats are supported.

Peers of the im:print are: Assoc. Prof. Scott Betz (USA), Prof. Beauvais Lyons (USA), Assoc. Prof. Miida Seiichiro (Japan), Prof. Josef Muhovi (Slovenia), Prof. Sigbert Schenk (Austria)

Please send manuscripts to:
University of Applied Arts Vienna
Department of Graphics and Printmaking
c/o Michael Schneider
Expositur Henslerstr. 3
1030 Vienna, Austria
or by email to: grafik@uni-ak.ac.at



John Pusateri *Dead Blue Roller*, 8-color stone lithograph, 13.75" x 19.75" 2011.



Peter Scott, *Stop for Keith*, hand colored wood engraving, 5"x7", 2010.

Unofficial Award: Mary Jones

Mary,

If I were to get to make awards at the St. Louis SGC International conference you would get one from me. So consider yourself an award recipient.

You did what I, for one, have wanted for portfolio organizers to do for years: you provided a way to identify the artists who contributed prints to your exchange portfolio. The digital thumbnails on your front page did this in a very nice way. Thank you!

You must have noticed, as I have, that artist signatures are most often impossible to read, and not only for being on the back of prints. I know that I am not the only one who likes to know who did which print when I look at the portfolios displayed at the conference.

Thank you,
Juergen Strunck



Bryan Hilley, *Men and monsters*, 11"x14" screen print, 2010.

International Focus

Kinngait Studios

Da Boys and Cape Fear

The hamlet of Cape Dorset, named in 1631, is located on an island lying off the southwest tip of the Baffin Peninsula in the Nunavut Province of Canada. The little town is nestled in a rocky landscape and blanketed most of the year by a heavy snow, and is the site of one of the true printmaking “jewels” of the North American continent. The Kinngait Studios, as the print studios the West Baffin Co-operative have become to be called, are one of the longest continually operating publisher of original prints in Canada, and possibly the world.

It was through the will and vision of James Houston, combined with the sponsorship of the government of Canada that, beginning in the 50’s Cape Dorset began to develop as the model Inuit art-producing community. Since it’s beginning, Kinngait Studios have worked with three Tamarind printers. The first printer, Wallace Brannen, ventured to Cape Dorset in the summer of 1974 and remained until 1984. William (Bill) Ritchie (1988-present) continues to play an active and important role. And finally, Rob Harmer was an advisor for lithography from 2000-2003. Bill and Rob studied under my supervision as Tamarind’s Education Director during 1993 and 1996 respectively. There is a legacy of many other master printers at Kinngait Studios, including veteran master printer of twenty-five years, Pitseolak Niviaqsine, master printer

Niviaksie Quvianaqtuliak, his devoted press assistant and brother NQ, and new “rookie” TatuZIA.

The Co-op and the community of Cape Dorset have grown up together and each has shaped the other’s future. The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative Limited, WBEC, has emerged as one of the strongest and most successful of the Arctic associations, and the extent to which it has remained focused on the arts is unprecedented.

One of the most known, respected, and recognized Inuit artists, Kenojuak Ashevak, works at the studio. Her work as well as the work of other artists including, Tim Pitsiulak, Shuvina Ashoona, Itee Pootook, and Jutai Toono are highly accomplished and speak from the heart. Many of printers such as stone-cutting master, Kavavow Mannomee, are recognized artists themselves!

Plans are underway, with major support and funding, to build a new complex just up the hill from the present print studio. With continued support from the government of Canada, this art “jewel” of the north will prosper as a tourist and cultural attraction, and provide a source of inspiration for young and old artists of Cape Dorset.

For more information about Kinngait Studios or Cape Dorset Prints, look at, Cape Dorset Prints: A Retrospective. Edited by Leslie Boyd Ryan, it is the first book to tell the full story of the historic printmaking community.



Tim Pitsiulak drawing, photo by William Ritchie

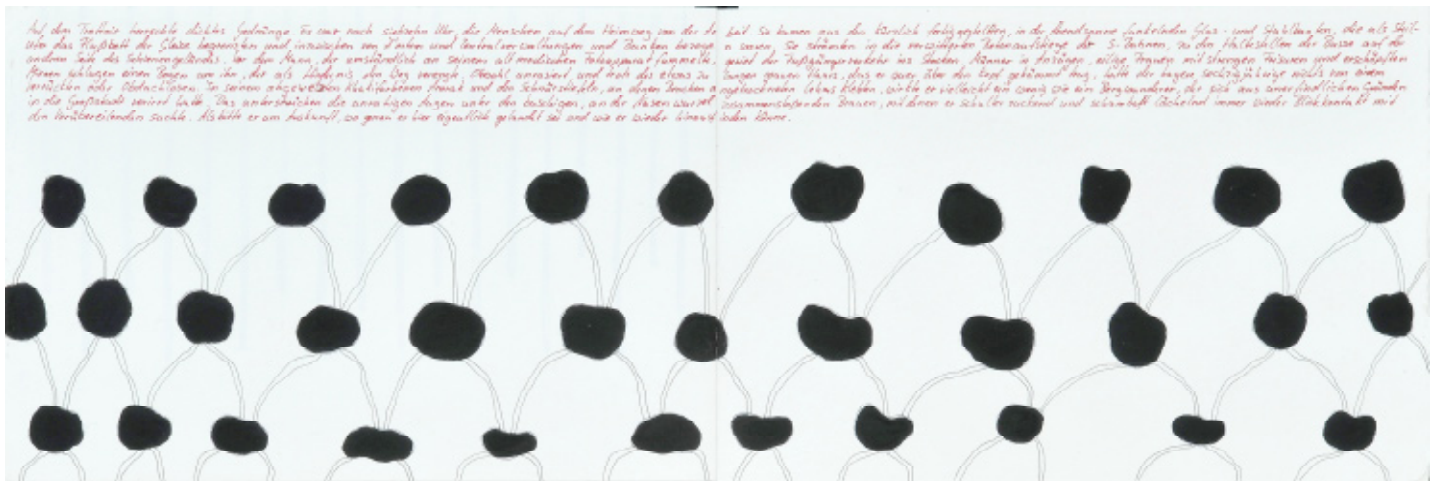
Jeff Sippel has served appointments at Druckhaus Quensen, Germany, Ocean Works LEL, The Ohio State University, Tamarind Institute, and is presently Professor and BFA Coordinator for Studio Art at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. His artwork and teaching has taken him to almost every continent in the world. His work is primarily represented by Belloc Lowndes Fine Art in Chicago.



International Focus

Artist Profile: Bodo Korsig

Artists' Books as Aesthetic Intervals of Time and Space



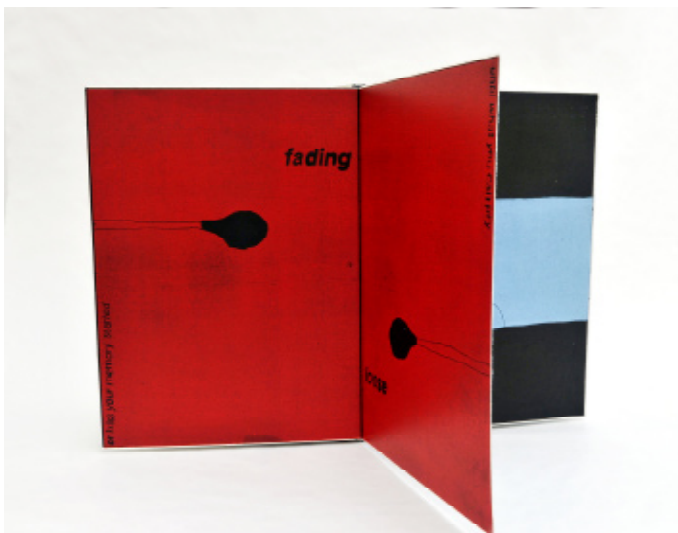
Himweg, painting on handmade paper, handwritten, 34 x 51 cm, text by Norbert Niemann 21 pages, unique copy, 2004.

Why this love of artists' books, of savouring browsing, now so very unfashionable, through difficulty upon difficulty? Maybe because, beyond the panoramas of disaster and the practices of procrastination, certain counterbalances are needed to examine the precipices of progress? The answer which Bodo Korsig provides for himself is simply that art can only be imagined as a Sisyphean task. His artist's books are varied and surprising.

With regard to the texts, Korsig is not an illustrator. Texts and images speak for themselves on different stages of ignition. Korsig does not embellish texts, he turns them into a visual experience, using an abbreviated, archaic symbolism. The artists' book is transformed into a bouquet of visual parallels. Bodo

Korsig reflects, evaluates, and designs layers of text that are aesthetic intervals of time and space. Most of his books have a convenient format. But there are also portfolios, slipcases and substantial folios. The largest ones command their own space as entertainingly as awkwardly, and resemble folding screens.

Bodo Korsig does not care whether these objects, in the sense of a static reading laboratory, can be interpreted as advanced forms of communicating literature or as room-divider art. For him, the process of lively exchange with authors is at least as important as the result squeezed between the book covers. He is interested in inverting the relationship between the author and the reader, in replacing the natural distance between creator and recipient with personal proximity and dialogical exchange. Spatio-temporal distance is turned into a new kind of simultaneity. An artists' book can constitute an approach to a text, an examination, an interpretation, an alienation; what we are dealing with is a broadening of the sphere of influence of the text, the graphics, the book. Sometimes it is hard to tell who is talking to whom – the artist to the author (or vice versa) or both of them crosswise, talking to the reader, the viewer? There is no plain language. Korsig's artist's books make do without introductions and epilogues. Reflection of the means is part of the picture-oriented cognitive work. Goodbye sovereignty of terms and concepts; the poetic riches of the world are autonomous! No meta-discourses. The more adventurous and ethno-psychologically charged the marks denoting the pathways, the more liberating. With his repertoire of symbols, Bodo Korsig operates on a romantic level and without a historically sepa-



Letter from Marina, woodcut on handmade Rives paper 53 x 39 cm text by John Yau, edition of 25 signed, 1999.

rating memory. For him, every single one of the texts implanted in his artists' books is genuinely contemporary. Endowed with the confidence of being a director of dark currents who knows no boundaries, whether in painting, graphics, drawings, photographs, in sculptures, wall objects and installations, Korsig likes to drop anchor in areas which promise him the possibility of a lively blend of emotions, daringness and a heightening of the imaginary.

To date around 30 artists' books have been created. Korsig attaches great importance to the right of primary publication of the texts he has requested. All the authors have ceded a handwritten manuscript to the artist in exchange for a picture equivalent. Some books have the character of an object like, for example, "Magnolia" from 2008, featuring the German and Chinese version of a text by Zhang Zao, who lived in Tübingen for 18 years and whom Korsig, however, met in Beijing. Bodo Korsig has designed "Magnolia" as a 80cm high and 10 metres long Leporello fold, consisting of wooden panels painted with acrylic paint, and, on a large scale, incorporates his experience of having found one's place between the time zones as well as Zhang Zao's linguistic ability of finding the right words for beauty at the brink of the abyss. "History Sisters" boasts similar dimensions – created in 2009 in collaboration with Japanese poet, art historian and curator Akira Tatehata. Both "Magnolia" and "History Sisters" feature "peepholes" which encourage a change of perspective and facili-

tate the immersion in the stream of images and text from both sides. For Korsig, his authors are conversation and sparring partners in a world which is flooded with information and less and less ready to pause. Be it John Yau ("Letter from Marina", 2000), John Ashby ("Closer", 2001), Norbert Niemann ("Hinweg", 2004) or Paul Auster ("Pulse", 2007) – they all delimit a context above which Korsig's pictorial fabric extends which, freely and without predictable solutions reacts both fittingly and unfittingly to the essence of the respective text.

An artist's book is a strange hybrid product. And yet, when one compares the elements which create the pictures in the diverse books of an artist, there is one thing common to them all: the artist's handwriting. Korsig's pictures are marks to make us think. They call for quiet and concentration. And they are elusive enough to frame a text, to keep its feet on the ground rather than sinking it. Korsig conceives his signs as bodies of still water without a deepest point, only increasing grades of densification. Underlying this is a particular expectation of happiness – the visually charged text, visual poetry fed by language, well-thought-out book design, graphics which stem from the text, words which perform the power of the images.

Christoph Tannert is a curator and art critic. He was born in Leipzig, 1955, studied archeology and history of art in Berlin, Humboldt University. He is Director of Künstlerhaus Bethanien in Berlin.



Magnolia 2008 acrylic on wood 80 x 80 x 980 cm text by Zao Zhang Unikart, unique copy, Chinese/German

Student Focus

Outgoing/Incoming Representatives

Tony Garbarini - Outgoing

Its summer again, and it never ceases to amaze me how busy everything stays when school is out. Between summer internships, trying to be productive in the studio, and hoping to make a little money; the break is never as relaxing as one would hope. I always see it as a brief opportunity to function outside of the herd, and to reflect upon the year's decisions. I have been thinking a lot about the panel that I chaired at the conference in St. Louis. I had aimed to compare the specialized studio practice to a multidisciplinary approach. My argument proposed that acquiring new skills would develop new conceptual methodologies, and I admit, it showed a bias towards interdisciplinary practices, because I believe that it is essential to learn and try everything; but in the end, I hope it just read like this: Printmaking students = good artists.

I recently read an interview with Swiss artist and this year's Venice Biennale representative, Thomas Hirschhorn. He talked about his practice as a crystalline formation/growth, a multifaceted object, not one alike, but composed of the same elements: philosophy, aesthetics, politics, and love. This is what printmaking is for me. It is a medium that has different platforms for beliefs and thinking, endless possibilities of how the work will act and what it will look like, and a continuous effort for it to achieve, as Hirschhorn defined, the absolute (the universal). I liked this metaphor. It gave me a more complete framework to view printmaking. In the panel I separated printmaking into cliques that all share the same history, and I don't think that is exactly right. It is a transitional medium that changes and grows, and as a student it forces you to react, and change, quickly. I know that is a bit dramatic, but in the end it goes fast. The medium stays progressive, and we continue to build upon history. The panel showed a great appreciation for printmaking, and how it opens doors. So now that I am done with school, with MFA in hand, I have choices, and I'm excited.



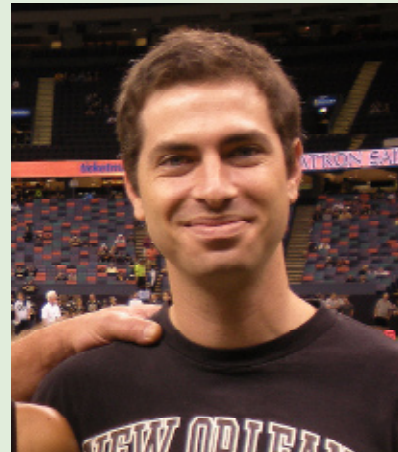
Silas Breaux - Incoming

After a brief hiatus from the SSCI community I was able to attend this past conference in St. Louis. It did not take long for me to be reminded of the strong sense of community that has been formed by printmakers over the last forty years. We may be a bit of a motley crew, but I have to say that it certainly is good to be back.

As my first year of graduate school comes to a close I am starting to turn my attention toward my final year as a student and all of the opportunities that come along with the culmination of my formal education. The conference is returning to its birthplace, New Orleans, Louisiana, in 2012 to celebrate our fortieth anniversary as an organization. This anniversary celebration is rapidly becoming an intrinsic component of the conclusion of my career as a student and I could not be happier about it. As a member of the steering committee it has been exciting to watch the pieces fall in to place for what will prove to be another great conference.

But I have to say that I'm most excited about being able to expose my students to our organization. They are an integral part of our community, but aren't all that aware of it yet. After all, I'm getting older and, for me, the best part of these gatherings is the chance to see the next generation in printmaking stepping up to take their place. In addition to this constant flow of new members in to our community there are several new ideas in the works for this upcoming conference that aim to expand on what has already been accomplished.

The initiation of a mentorship program designed to assist emerging and mid-career artists via portfolio reviews and career development is crucial progress concerning the student membership. These mentorship sessions will allow participants the opportunity to meet one-on-one with an established professional regarding their advancement as an artist and is yet another way to ensure our growth as a whole, as well as individuals. That is what these conferences are about to me: catching a glimpse of what is still to come in the world of print, as it is constantly evolving, and encouraging that evolution.



Manifesto

Defined By Print

How should an artist define themselves? Should I reach out my hand and introduce myself as an artist who makes prints (aka printmaker) or just explain to them, I am an artist? I've heard apologetic murmurs from artists who skirt around this typecasting issue as well as watched artists conduct full-blown offensives defending their inky turf as only Deniro's Travis Bickle could deliver. Printmaking is a sect, a club that wants new members. It has its own built-in limitations to the print pedagogy. Many printmakers have entrenched themselves, bunkered deeply in a craft and technique trance which further isolates them in their ateliers.

During the Southern Graphics Conference this theme presented itself, as if on a loop and seems to occur at panels and presentations at this ink-fests every year. Printmakers won't pull themselves away from the twelve-step program of technique and discipline for the sake of their idea-parades. When someone calls me an "Artist", it can be the equivalent to calling me "Mam". It triggers a vague, jump-to-conclusions (depending on what I am wearing) judgment that is usually off base and, at best, fuzzy. This even happens with the more specific label "printmaker". More times than not, a derogatory blend of old-school, dusty canons are conjured up with the accompanying twenty minute soliloquy that centers around romantic engravers who died of Iron Lung who really kicked some aquatinting bootie around the old Kerosene sawdust box. Sometimes, the image people have of me is a polo-shirt uniform-wearing gal with a name tag that knows her way around copy machines.

I like to think like an anthologist-assembling my little concept units, arranging them so they make the most sense with whatever discipline-drum is most beneficial for these brainchild nuggets to march onward. I tend to hang out mostly in the print shop because it seems to be my soft spot, my tongue and groove, my ying-yang. I draw, install, paint, public-art and find other little playgrounds for concepts to gestate. Most of the time, they are directed through these print media channels because I love company.

Printmaking is my dialect, my tongue. A friend of mine from Chile told me that she dreams in Spanish, but thinks in English. I dream in printmaking and think in art. I don't deny my romance with black ink products and toxic substances or the affinity I have to sturdy machinery and the Brian Wilson 'pet sounds' of viscosity printing. I do have this predilection, I admit it! But there is also this tremendous foghorn in my head that constantly alerts me to printmaking's straight-jacket limitations- the incessant technobabble where new generations of students are writing thesis



Crystal Wagner, *Hybrid II*, intaglio etching, relief print, fabric paint, 22" x 30", 2011.

papers on new washout methods for lithography using shoe polish and peach Jello!

Percentage-wise, I can prostitute, spread my seeds and communicate these funny and sad moments though printmaking much more astutely than welding or basket-weaving them. More often than not, things work BEST for ME- through these print channels and filters. So my argument for calling myself a printmaker, one who thinks in art and dreams in print possibilities, allows me to narrow in on my own professions definition more concisely. The other bonus about printmaking is one can usually find a foursome for a quick hand of Euchre while the silk-screens are drying.

Liz Maugans is the co-founder and managing director of Zygote Press.

Remembrance

Nathan Oliveira

Excerpted with permission from the Stanford Report, November 17, 2010, "Stanford's acclaimed artist, Nathan Oliveira, dies at 81" by Cynthia Haven

Nathan Oliveira was born in Oakland on Dec. 19, 1928, the child of poor Portuguese immigrants.

He took his first art lessons in high school from a painter who made seascapes for San Francisco tourists, but a chance visit to the Palace of the Legion of Honor changed his life's direction. He encountered Rembrandt's 1632 *Joris de Caullerij* and, face-to-face with the great work of art, he decided that he, too, wanted to paint people.

After George Washington High School in San Francisco, Oliveira began his college experience at Mills College, where he studied one summer with the German expressionist Max Beckmann, who disliked abstract painting, calling it "nail polish." Although he spoke little English, Beckmann was a compelling teacher and a connecting link to European painting traditions. Oliveira later said, "He seemed like a very fundamental man, whose only interest was in painting – that's all he wanted to do. Still, I think from our encounters he communicated, indirectly, what artistic values were about."

Oliveira earned his bachelor's degree in fine arts in 1951 and his master's in fine arts in 1952 at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland (later the California College of the Arts.)

Oliveira became a leader in the Bay Area Figurative movement in the late 1950s – an informal movement that rebelled against the hegemony of abstract expressionism and reintroduced the human figure. In the group he met Stanford alumnus and modernist artist Richard Diebenkorn, who became a lifelong friend.

The late Lorenz Eitner recruited him to the Stanford faculty in 1964. He was already acquiring a national reputation as a cutting-edge artist.

"I always felt he was a painter of extreme talent and ingenuity, right to the end of his life," said Peter Selz, the renowned art historian and author who curated an Oliveira retrospective in 2002, calling him "a brilliant, brilliant lithographer" and "the most original figurative painter of his time."

According to Selz, Oliveira revived printmaking, which had gone into decline in the 1960s and 1970s. A superb printmaker, painter and sculptor, he was also one of the leaders in a movement half-a-century ago that rebelled against the dominant trend of abstraction.

Selz said that Oliveira described his artwork with the Portuguese word *saudade*, a feeling of yearning and nostalgia.



Erika Adams, *After Nathan Oliveira*, monotype, watercolor, 20" x 24", 1998.



Erika Adams, *Nissan pick-up, after Nathan Oliveira*, monotype, 18" x 22", 1998



Josh Dannin, * !!!*, Linocut, 12" x 11", 2010

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