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an international association of artists

Summer 2018

The Boston Printmakers

e-newsletter



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Letter from the President

I hope you are all looking forward to a productive, fun-filled summer with lots of time for printing, travel or excursions. In this letter, I am going to give you a look behind the scenes at the faces of some people who do important and essential work for our organization.



Thanks to the two volunteer board members who collaborated on this newsletter.

This e-newsletter was written and prepared by Stephanie Mahan Stigliano (left) and Susan Schmidt (right) as they undergo the transition of *The Quarterly* publication to Susan. I want to thank Stephanie for heading up both this publication and *Member News* since 2014. During the past five years, Stephanie produced more than a dozen quarterly newsletters, taking them from conception to completion. Each quarter she initiated the content for every issue, recruited writers and wrote many articles herself. By my count her name is in the byline of 13 works; five full length artist interviews and eight reports on the happenings of the organization!

If I may stay in my counting mode for one more paragraph, Stephanie also corresponded to us 60 times with *Member News*—our monthly listing of exhibitions, residencies, grants, awards,

equipment sales, etc. I am very glad that Stephanie will continue managing this e-newsletter. Thank you, Stephanie for the quality, consistency and volume of work you have done for our organization. And thank you, Susan for volunteering to take over *The Quarterly*, an in depth investigation of contemporary printmaking and studio practices. All members may contact Susan with ideas for *The Quarterly*.



The next face I would like to reveal is Roberta Feoli (above), the beloved studio manager at the Scuola Internazionale di Grafica, Venice. Roberta will be visiting the United States October 23 through November 21, 2018, and will be in Boston November 1-9. She will attend Zea Mays Printmaking November 13-18, in Florence, MA, where member Liz Chalfin will provide tutorials in Green Intaglio printmaking. Roberta's visit is being organized by longtime member Catherine Kernan and past BP president Liz Shepherd. They have arranged for Roberta to see New York City: the IFPDA Print Fair and museums; the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, VT, and numerous museums, printmaking studios, and study centers in Boston.

The Boston Printmakers plans to host events in Boston and schedule an information session with Roberta on the Visiting Artist Full Fellowship at Scuola Internazionale di Grafica, Venice on Sunday, November 4, at Lesley University. More details on the information session will follow in the *Fall Quarterly*. Scuola provides an annual opportunity exclusively for our members to obtain a six-week fellowship in Venice with seven-day access to the studios and housing. The housing accommodation is a private bedroom in Ca'Dandolo Parisi, a prestigious Palazzo on the Grand Canal that often hosts Venice Biennale exhibitions. The apartment will be shared with an artist from the Royal Society of Painter Printmakers and a third guest selected by the Scuola. The three visiting artists will also share a one-month exhibition in the palazzo after completing the fellowships.

If you haven't already done so, please read about this very prestigious [fellowship](#) offered to a Boston Printmaker. Applications for February through March 2019 are due by June 30, 2018.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter that includes two entries by Stephanie Stigliano, an interview with Kim Gatesman and an article about Eleanor Rubin. Deborah Cornell and I present a photo essay of the Las Vegas SGCI Conference: *Altered Landscapes*. Bob Tomolillo reports on the 2018 Annual Meeting.

I wish you all a very enjoyable summer,
[Renee Covalucci](#), President

Annual Meeting

by Bob Tomolillo

On Sunday, May 6, 2018, The Boston Printmakers held its unofficial 71st annual meeting at the Lunder Arts Center design studio at Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. The tone of this year's meeting was especially optimistic because the organization had just completed a 70th-year celebration and biennial exhibition, which saw a surge in attendance and record print sales. The overwhelming response validated the public's continuing support of printmaking. The group attending the annual meeting consisted of 14 regular board members along with 20 members and guests from the print community. Before getting down to business, members were treated to a brunch buffet consisting of food items

specially prepared by members of the board, guided by Vice President Sharon Hayes.

At midday, the group convened to an adjoining room to conduct The Boston Printmakers' business. Our dedicated president, Renee Covalucci, who has at her fingertips a compendium of Boston Printmakers-related facts, began the meeting with an overview of the organization's accomplishments and then laid out a schedule of future projects. Earlier, a survey had been passed out to members, so the board could receive feedback on how to improve the organization. All the attendees in the audience were asked to introduce themselves and comment on the proceedings. Treasurer Susan Denniston gave an accounting of the organization's financial status, while musing upon the reasons we had had such a successful biennial event in March. Mary Taylor reported on our growing membership (300), answering questions relating to paying dues and member status. Secretary Bob Tomolillo conducted the yearly board election process and, with the votes cast by attending members, elected six board members to another three-year term. The six re-elected members were Christiane Corcelle, Susan Denniston, Alex Gerashev, Sharon Hayes, Ky Ober, and Malgorzata Zurakowska.



Sharon Hayes and Linda Bond examine a portfolio at the annual meeting

The officers of the board will be elected at the next meeting. The four current officers of the board—Renee Covalucci, Susan Denniston, Sharon Hayes, and Bob Tomolillo—have agreed to serve another term. The final event and highlight of every annual meeting is a display of artwork by printmakers in attendance. Presenters share their latest print imagery as members move around the room, listening and marveling at the array of print techniques revealed. The following artists represent a sampling of the diverse portfolios on display.

Longtime member of The Boston Printmakers, Carol FitzSimmons, displayed her polymer plate aquatints. Her subject matter is derived from her formalist nude studies, inspired by the words of Auguste Rodin: "*The body expresses the spirit whose envelope it is. And for him who can see, the nude offers the richest meaning.*" The quote by Rodin is included on the first page of her handmade Japanese-style *suminagashi* book, which she will be showing for the first time at the Providence Art Club from June 23 – July 20, 2018.



Carol FitzSimmons, *Figure Studies II*, w/ Clamshell Box, 13 Polymer Aquatints, 2018

Edvard Munch's *The Scream* exhibits the often repressed—but natural—human response to the frustration felt in the modern world. New member Ben Gross, tenured professor and printmaking fixture from Boston's North Shore, revives the Norwegian artist's concept in his series of prints, *Scream Prints*, which employ a four and five-color silkscreen process.



Ben Gross, *Screamprint*, 11"x17," 2011

New member Peter Cangialosi, a Rhode Island School of Design graduate and former Lego designer from East Hampton MA, showed a diverse range of print formats. His designs typically evolve from architectural studies. He works out the coloring using Photoshop layering techniques and will—on occasion—as shown below, venture away from his preferred subject matter. His woodcut in side profile is a cutout rendering of President Trump's controversial tweeting tirade. Peter creates a clever composite of tweet symbols that represent some of the president's perceived policy failings. The taco represents Trump's immigration stance—a dark cloud with a lightning bolt symbolizes the president's position on global warming, and on it goes!



Peter Cangialosi, *Commander in Tweet*, Reduction linocut, 9"x12," 2018

New member Andrew Stearns, a Massachusetts College of Art and Design graduate, utilizes lithography to compose free-wheeling architectural compositions. A subdued color palette of 4-5 overlays complement his balanced composition and integrated color scheme. His work explores the continuously shifting narratives of time, with a particular interest in the way history is recorded, remembered, or fades.



Andrew Stearns, *Memories from the Camin I*, Lithograph, 7"x7," 20

Kim Gatesman Interview

By Stephanie Stigliano

I met Kim Gatesman at *The Boston Printmakers 2017 North American Print Biennial* and was intrigued by her process. She kindly agreed to answer a few questions for *The Boston Printmakers Summer 2018 Quarterly*. Third Switch Press (*Inspired by Science—Driven by Curiosity—All for the Spark of Life!*) is her private studio in New Bedford, MA.

Stephanie Stigliano: Can you tell us a little about your current work?

Kim Gatesman: So, my current work captures the physical (2D) form of static electric shocks--I call

them "electrostatic monotypes." These are unique prints, and while this imagery may look foreign (yet vaguely familiar), I assure you that this work is not abstract, but rather it is entirely representational, and true to life.

Much like infrared photography, radio telescopes, and x-ray imaging, the process of making these prints works to bring some aspect of the electromagnetic spectrum into the limited range of human perception. Normally, electricity is only experienced as momentary flashes of light, and while its function is ubiquitous, its form can rarely be enjoyed. Electrostatic monotypes allow safe passage to explore this world of hidden beauty.



Left, *At Hand 01*, 2017, 10 x 7"

Right, *Bloom*, 2017, 10 x 7"

Electrostatic monotypes (static electricity, toner, chine colle)

The marks captured in these prints are created by an interaction of static electricity with objects and the surrounding environment. Look at them as a kind of two-dimensional fingerprint left behind by a three-dimensional finger. Objects are subjected to an electric charge, and as the electricity flows, charged particles (called ions, which display either a positive or negative charge) are deposited, like a residue, onto a special surface plate on which the objects sit. And much like a fingerprint, this residue can be made visible when dusted.

SS: This work is about capturing unseen forces around us. Was this focus an aspect of your earlier artwork?

KG: Not really--it was (and, really, still is) more about mark-making and process. In general, I love playing around with and adapting my processes for things other than their intended uses. Early on, I tinkered a lot with photopolymer. Its physical reactions to my tests were what really helped me rediscover my love of science, and invariably led to the physical forces part of my work.



Left, *Ball Chain & Polypropylene Dome*, 2017, 22 x 11"

Right, *Sunflower*, 2017, 10 x 10"

Electrostatic monotypes (static electricity, toner, chine colle)

SS: How do you decide if a print is successful or not?

KG: Being, for all intents and purposes, abstract in nature, I focus primarily on composition in these prints. Did the placement of objects and subsequent marks produce something that is composed technically well? Does the image work both close-up and at a distance? Or just one or the other? Does that matter? Are there any obvious instances where pareidolia (the human ability to see shapes or make pictures out of randomness) may come into play? What could the viewer possibly see in this composition? Is that ok? If the answers to those questions jibe well-enough with my own intentions, then I consider it successful.

I don't like going back into these too much, as they work better when approached with simplicity in mind, but I can sometimes add another layer to adjust the image. More often, though, my primary methods for image adjustment are cropping and/or orientation. Sometimes a larger composition just doesn't work, but it can be broken down into smaller pieces that work wonderfully on their own. Or sometimes all it needs to be turned on its head.



Left, *Ecto One 04 (Spring Forth)*, 2017, 22 x 11"

SS: *Is color a contributing factor in your art?*

KG: Yes, and no. Color is a whole other compositional animal that I honestly have never grasped successfully when it comes to my printmaking; I'm pretty much a black, white, and shades of grey kind of girl. Thankfully, all that fits in really well with this body of work. I feel that sticking with black and white just reinforces the polarity of electromagnetism: positive/negative, north/south, on/off, ones/zeros, black/white. Also, I don't really like how the color toners act in the process of making the monotypes, so I would rather just leave them out. However, as contradictory as this may seem, I've made some successful tests involving color when photographing these marks...it just seems to work better.

SS: *Would you consider yourself a scientist?*

KG: Ha! No. Not at all. I have zero authority or foundation on which to base that claim of title. Do I perceive myself as a mad whackadoo who mashes a bunch of stuff together based solely on the influence of whatever little snippet of something I've just learned, while being prompted merely by the question of, "OOO! What happens when I do this?!"...yes. But, scientist? Far from it.



Left, Gatesman at Third Switch Press
Right, Press disassembled

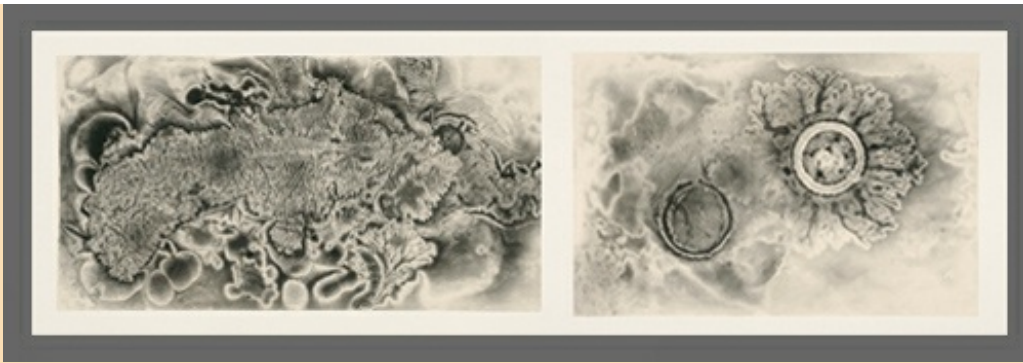
SS: *I was intrigued by the picture on your website of the disassembled press. How did you learn to rebuild a press?*

KG: I should give a little background on it and how/why I have it in my studio. The press is Lois Tarlow's. She gave it to Nancy Diessner. Nancy is a friend of mine and she loaned it to me because it was in need of a new base and an overall rehab. I had the skill set to make the repairs and, in exchange, I have it to use in my shop for a while.

Honestly, I just made A LOT of notes while taking it apart: diagrams, parts lists, written observations. The mechanics of the press actually aren't that complicated, and only a couple of specialized tools were required, outside of a ratchet set, some wrenches, and a mallet. In the end, the press got a new paint job, some fresh grease, stainless steel hardware, and a whole new base. It was a great project!

SS: *Thanks for taking time away from your studio to answer these questions, Kim.*

KG: You're welcome!



Left, *Dragon 01*, 2017, 11 x 21.25"

Right, *Combining Bodies*, 2017, 11 x 17"

Electrostatic monotypes (static electricity, toner, chine colle)

<http://www.kimgatesman.com>

Southern Graphics Council Report

Report from the 2018 SGC International Conference, Bally's Las Vegas

by Renee Covalucci

Vegas was a paradox!

Amid the smoke and bling of an altered environment of endless casinos, shopping malls and theaters, I found some of the most down-to-earth art and artists.

Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, "Jaune Quick-to-See Smith calls herself a cultural arts worker. She uses humor and satire to examine myths, stereotypes and the paradox of American Indian life in contrast to the consumerism of American society. Her work is philosophically centered by her strong traditional beliefs and political activism."



Left, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *40,000 Years of American Art*, 1995

Right, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *Crow*, 2014

At the end of her presentation in the Platinum Ballroom, Juane recited a poem with her son, artist Neal Ambrose Smith. At the closing, she was sung an emotional Native American song by Melanie Yazzie, recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award. The women successfully transported us—the audience—into the earth, environment and souls of all living animals. And, I forgot all about Las Vegas...

Our members were on display during the Programs Fair and Open Portfolio Sessions.



Presenting work at Open Portfolio, Left, Carolyn Muskat Right, new member Racula Iancu



Left, recent mokuhanga woodcut, *Spider Biter* by artist April Vollmer, on the Right.



Left, cover of outstanding portfolio *Contemporary Woodcuts from East to West*
Right, *Master* by Liu Jing, co-curator from Changsha China



Presenting work at Open Portfolio, Left, new member Paul DeRuvo
Right, Michelle Martin and Bob Tomolillo

Eleanor Rubin Closes the Studio Behind the House

By Stephanie Stigliano

Whimsy, charm, and spirit radiate from Eleanor Rubin's prints and paintings. They are expressionistic, abstract, and symbolic; pictures which capture fleeting experience or an emotion. She uses calligraphic marks to show the essence of movement. She explores the interaction of materials such as the bloom of watercolor on absorbent paper or the drag of a drier brush against a more resistant surface.



Right, *Upward Drift; Tapestry of Sky above the Blue*, watercolor
Left Top, *Telling Secrets*, Left Below, *untitled*, monoprints

But Eleanor Rubin is more than a visual artist. An activist in her work, she finds ways to make our world a better place, where all ages can learn through art—she has taught art to children in elementary school and to adults at the Danforth Museum and the DeCordova Museum. To protest the Vietnam War, she joined political forces with Tom Lewis, Daniel Berrigan and Mary Corita Kent; their prints added power and vision to a movement. She became the first Coordinator of Access for Visitors with Disabilities at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston developing and leading this inclusive program to ensure accessibility for all at the MFA from 1978 to 2002. For over a decade, Rubin has donated dozens of artworks to The Art Connection, an organization that gives art to numerous local non-profits. Karen Shafts, Curator at The Boston Public Library, recently acquired Rubin's print *Winter Nights* for the library's collection of Boston artists, a gift made in honor of Sinclair Hitchings, the BPL's Keeper of Prints for 44 years.



Eleanor Rubin in her studio

This past year Rubin made hard decisions about the 40 year accumulation of art in her Studio Behind the House. Throughout April, she put out fresh fruit and lemonade and invited friends, neighbors and colleagues to choose a print to remember her by, one that “spoke to” them. She talked with visitors about how each piece was made, pointing out the marks of different techniques. Rubin estimates that over 500 prints have left the studio over the past month. In place of payment, she suggested visitors donate to The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. She raised well over \$8,000.



Eleanor Rubin and Deb Hemley looking at artwork
Bird stencil for outside studio wall

Eleanor Rubin embodies the collaborative spirit of a classic printmaker: someone who shares space, equipment and knowledge. Often making prints is about getting the word out, sharing information, which in itself is a political act. The studio is a place of support and camaraderie. Each printmaker dances through the sequence: we develop an image through state proofs, we save these as a record of our progress, and then we print multiples. We make variations of that final print, using different colors and papers, or printing overlays of say, a woodcut, or a monoprint. The stacks of prints are evidence of this investigation. They pile up year after year.

Many of us were inspired by The Boston Museum of Fine Arts exhibition, *Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker*, which revealed the artist’s progress through 20+ states of image development. Rubin and I talked about how pivotal that show in 1984 was for both of us, and she found and gave me her copy of the catalog to share with my students, along with a generous donation of her supplies. Present and future students will benefit from use of her much beloved 12” roller and Japanese wood carving tools; specialty materials such as beeswax, rosin, powdered pigments; and printed matter: the oft-consulted bible, *Printmaking*, by Romano and Ross, exhibition catalogues of Kathe Kollwitz and posters of 15th century woodcuts of printers and binders. In the classroom, I will show her woodcuts, etchings, collographs, monoprints and watercolors as inspirational and technical samples.



Eleanor Rubin Talks to Pine Manor College Students
 Photograph credit: Tamar Petler, Pine Manor College

It is surprising that paper can be so heavy. In the space of a few hours, we bundled prints in glassine and filled ten portfolios with as many as possible. As she sorted through stacks of prints, Rubin exclaimed over the great output of work they represented. "Due to my husband David's support," she commented, "I was always able to work in the studio despite caring for three children and working full time." Eleanor and David Rubin have been married since 1962.



Eleanor and David Rubin

As I helped her organize these for storage, I was also struck by the physicality the art represented. Carving wood blocks requires strength; etching and printing 20 x 30" zinc plates requires a physical commitment. All around me stood examples of her energetic response to life. The resulting art is delicate, yet strong, like Rubin herself.



Pregnant with Feathers and Fur, woodcut, Artist's Proof

Now Rubin is focused on the future and what she will bring to her new home. She set aside an unused pack of her favorite papers: rough watercolor, smooth, cloth-like Rives BFK and feather-light, fibrous Mulberry paper. She knows exactly where she will set up her drafting table—in a front room flooded with natural light. Equipped with time, space, and light, she will make art there; it is an artist's way of processing daily events.



The Studio Behind the House

<http://www.ellyrubin.com/>

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