



The Boston Printmakers since 1947

QUOTES:

JUROR'S QUOTES/NOTES: *Shelley R. Langdale, National Gallery of Art, Washinton D.C.*

- A surprising number of woodcuts, linocuts, and other works executed using relief printmaking techniques involving traditional approaches as well as those aided by new technologies. This suggests that while printmakers are embracing new tools such as laser-cutting, digitally manipulated imagery, etc., there is still a desire for a more tactile, physical quality to the completed printed image that pure digital printing does not afford.
- Increased focus on divisive social, political, and cultural issues—racism, immigration, climate change, sexism, etc—heightened by escalated tensions in the current political climate
- Greater number of figurative/representative images than purely abstract works overall, likely tied to the increase in political/socially conscious subjects which often incorporate more representative imagery

Q. What were you looking for in your choices?

- I am always interested in work that combines subject with technique in creative, thoughtful ways – so that the choice of technique is integral to the idea the artist is trying to express or the subject that he/she/they is/are trying to describe. For example, Mark Cote exploits the range of gestural and linear linework possible in woodcut to suggest the oppression under which illegal immigrants are forced to live in this country, while Anne Silber employs translucent inks to describe the reflections and movement of the water and the fish who continually emerge and submerge in a koi pond.

Q. Observations on this show of contemporary artists, when you saw it?

- It is heartening to see, as represented here, a growing diversity of cultural references, ethnicity and gender represented in contemporary work that is more reflective of the U.S. population

Q. What are your comments on printmaking generally?

- Printmakers continue to play a vital role as voices of cultural change, following in a long history of dissemination of information and ideas through printed forms. The messages may manifest in overt calls to action, protest, or condemnation, as seen in Justyne Fischer's "Birth of a Nation" or Danqi Cai's "To Be...Or Not to Be...", or more subtle considerations of environmental change such as Allison Bianco's "Winter Flounder" or Gregory Pfarr's "South Sawyer Glacier".
- Dramatically oversize scale, incorporation of multi-dimensional elements, and site-specific installation, along with the adoption of new tools, such as lasers used to cut blocks or plexi plates, are all part of the expanded lexicon of printmaking which has increasingly attracted artists who do not define themselves as printmakers.
- However, inventive printmakers continue to push the inherent qualities of traditional media to new heights, evident in the evocative underwater scenes by Craig Fisher or the exquisitely rendered water/striated granite-cum-profile by Art Werger, who both exploit the subtleties of texture and modulated tone of mezzotint to very different effect.



Gregory Pfarr, Corvallis OR
South Sawyer Glacier, Tracy Arm, Alaska, etching

ARTISTS' QUOTES:

James Boychuk-Hunter:

"I became aware of the Boston Printmakers North American Biennial primarily through other print artists who had exhibited in the biennial. It is an exhibition that is talked about in print circles and has been on my radar for a number of years but this is the first time that I had applied to the exhibition."

"The title of this piece is in reference to the 1935 song *Red Sails on the Sunset* written by Jimmy Kennedy and Wilhelm Grosz, I came to it through Dina Washington's version. I wonder about parallels between the lyrics of the song and the myth of Theseus returning from Crete after having slayed the Minotaur. To recap, Theseus' father, King Aegeus had instructed Theseus to hang white sails if he had survived the journey, or to retain the black sails if he had been killed. I am interested in the clandestine symbology of elements that communicate only to those for whom a message is intended even though the communicating elements exist in plain sight."

"James Boychuk-Hunter is an artist working in printmaking, drawing and sculpture. He has an MFA from The University of Tennessee in Knoxville and a BFA from the University of Alberta. He has exhibited in the United States and Canada as well as in Europe and Asia. He is currently a sessional faculty member in the print media department within the School of Visual Arts at The Alberta University of the Arts, (AU Arts), and is a member of the Board of Directors at Alberta Printmakers (artist run center) in Calgary Alberta."

Art Werger:

Q. This is your thirteenth time exhibiting in The Boston Printmakers North American Print Biennial, what does this competition mean to you?

A. Wow, I hadn't realized how many times I have had work in the exhibit. I believe I first won an award as an undergraduate at RISD in 1978. The Boston Printmakers exhibition has always been one of the top outlets for artists working in print. It is an honor to be included once again.

Q. Do you often experiment with "surreal" subject matter and what does the title mean?

A. "Over the last thirty years, my work in mezzotint has followed a narrative path that has led to superimposed multiple images meant to evoke complex meanings. This may be interpreted as surrealistic in appearance, but it is meant to convey a concrete idea, in this case the struggle to recall information in a fluid manner, rather than an absurd one as is typical of surrealism."

Q. How do you feel about winning this award?

A. "I have often entered the exhibit with my larger color etchings and I suppose that is what I am best known for. So, it is a special honor to have a piece from a different body of work recognized with this award. Many thanks to the Boston Printmakers and the jurors."