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an international association of artists

Winter
2019/20

The Boston Printmakers

e-newsletter



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Letter from the President

Happy holidays! I'm looking forward to a promising 2020! And, wishing everyone abundance, happiness, and peace in a year filled with hope.

Reflecting on 2019, I am grateful to the executive board members of The Boston Printmakers for their countless hours of volunteerism to keep up with a busier than normal calendar of exhibitions and events. Also, I am delighted with the partners, new friends and members that we encountered along the way in 2019...especially those from Wellesley College, Framingham State University, the Danforth Art Museum; all of the companies, artists and institutions that contributed [Biennial awards](#); and Scoula Internazionale di Grafica and Anderson Ranch!

By the way, the application for the [Anderson Ranch 2020 Member Scholarship](#) is available on our website through January 11th. This is one of the most popular membership benefits, so check out this year's offerings! Plus, member Margo Lemieux is reporting on her scholarship experience at Anderson Ranch in this Quarterly Newsletter.

To start the new year, the executive board is planning a retreat on February 1st in place of two monthly meetings: January and March. The full-day retreat of June 2018 resulted in great camaraderie and the chance to think in depth to tackle pending matters. We are hoping for the same to happen this February as we discuss communications, review of our bi-annual projects, and ways to reach and accommodate young printmakers. As members who receive our communications, participate in our projects, and may have experience with younger artists, please feel free to send me your wisdom, observations and thoughts. I welcome you to share online platforms that you use or may know of, to assist with communications, propose ideas for exhibitions, travel opportunities or projects that may interest our membership! Please email ideas to renee@bostonprintmakers.org.

This December we organized a Student Forum at The 11th Boston Printmakers Student Exhibition to place young, successful printmakers in a room with undergrads seeking paths to continue printmaking.

And we had a proposal accepted to make a portfolio with students from New England and Puerto Rico for *Puertografico*, the 2020 SGCI conference in San Juan. [Perspectiva es 20/20 \(Hindsight is 20/20\)](#), a portfolio of 20 prints created by 20 students from New England and Puerto Rican schools will be exhibited at the conference. Instead of exchanging their prints, the students all have agreed to sell their prints for \$20 to raise funds for printmaking programs in San Juan! As you are reading this, students are working on their prints—a compilation of imagery based on hindsight providing a 20/20 understanding of important issues - asking: *What lessons will we take from the past? What topics can we identify for our future?* 20 students will tackle these questions to explore and discover subjects for the portfolio. The possible topics range from education and commerce, to human rights, climate change and immigration. *Perspectiva es 20/20* will raise student voices on subjects that are imperative to them to best inform **our** future. Please look for us at the SGCI 2020 to congratulate the student artists and buy some prints!

I hope you enjoy the contents of this Winter Quarterly: *Margo Lemieux at Anderson Ranch* and *Janette Brossard: a Cuban Printmaker in Boston*. Along with a photo display of the [2019 North American Print Biennial](#), we have brief comments written by four members who were selected by Shelley Langdale to receive Biennial awards. Thank you heartily, Susan Schmidt, our Quarterly editor.

Wishing each of you a rewarding, joyous year ahead,

Renee

[President](#)

P.S. Annual membership notices will be sent in January. Thank you in advance for your prompt renewal.

Janette Brossard, a Cuban Printmaker in Boston

By Phyllis Ewen

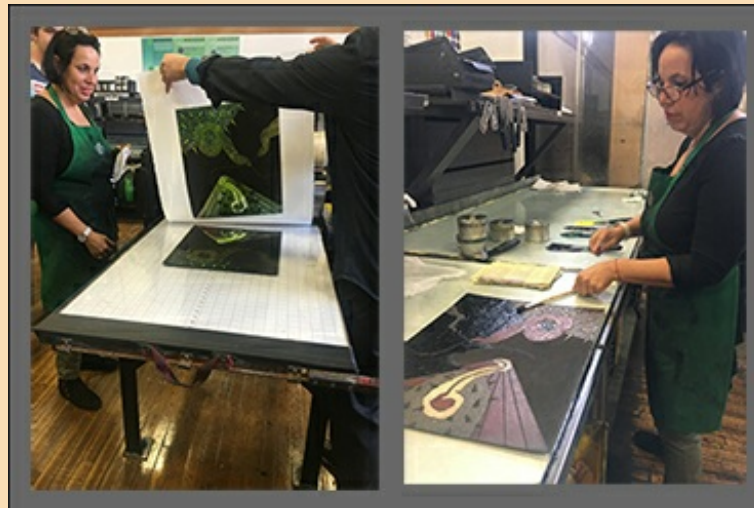
During the first week of November 2019, we had the pleasure of a visit from Cuban artist Janette Brossard Duharte, the president of the Association of Cuban Printmakers. Early in the year she contacted me about the possibility of a print exchange between The Association of Cuban Printmakers and the Boston Printmakers. Along with BP members Ky Ober and Rhoda Rosenberg, and with support of the BP Board, we began to plan two exhibitions for this exciting exchange.

CONEXIONES/CONNECTIONS will show forty-one works by Boston Printmakers at the Taller de Grafica in Havana in April 2020. Following this, in May and June, the Brickbottom Gallery in Somerville will feature forty Cuban printmakers in CONNECTIONS/CONEXIONES.

Janette came to Boston carrying the prints that will be shown at the Brickbottom Gallery. We were extremely impressed with the quality of the work, showing both technical expertise and a wealth of ideas. Later in the week, Janette juried the prints of artists in the Boston Printmakers Traveling Flat File (TFF) selecting from the work of those artists who had indicated their interest in participating in the exchange.

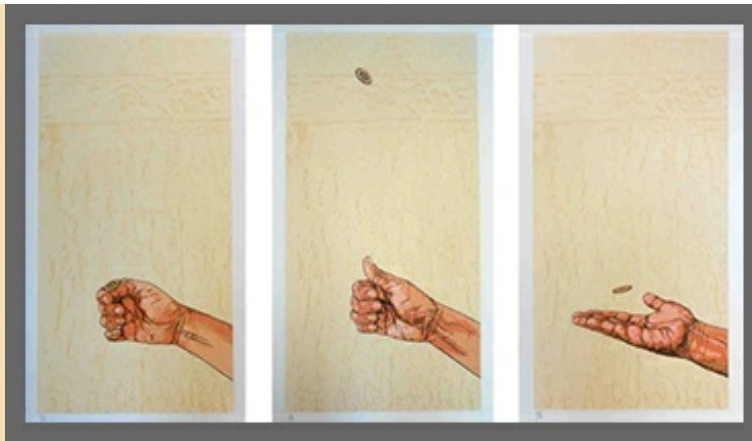


Top, Janette (right) shows a collaborative artist's book to students at the SMFA
 Bottom, collograph demonstration for students at MassArt



During Janette's visit, she was invited to four schools to present her work and talk about the life of artists in Cuba, with a focus on printmakers. She brought prints and artists' books to share with the students of Deborah Cornell at Boston University, Rhoda Rosenberg at SMFA, and Susan Schmidt at College of the Holy Cross. For Fred Liang's class at MassArt, Janette gave a collograph demonstration. Students responded with enthusiasm to her technically accomplished and socially engaged work. Many students were particularly impressed with her three-part Haiku silkscreen prints; visual equivalents to the traditional Japanese style of poetry. Janette explains:

"From the field of Japanese haikus come these visual haikus linked like a trio of verses. They represent a contemplation exercise of everyday life, of evocative moments, and of the environment. These visual haikus have the essential feelings and the condensed structure that the brief poetic Japanese compositions offer us. However, they are also a blend that exposes certain paradoxes and questions about society. These poetic-visuals arise from the necessary return to nature and from the understanding that we should make the universe (objectual or not) our partner."



Janette Brossard, *Haiku del Peregrino (Haiku of the Pilgrim)*, screen prints, 2014

In earlier work, Janette used etching and collography to look at everyday life in Cuba, evoking the ingenuity and humor with which Cubans face economic constraints. For instance, in her series *Mente Sano en Cuerpo Sano (Sound Mind in a Sound Body)* she ridiculed the government's sports programs by showing the reality in which people live. Always resourceful, she often used PVC matrices themselves as three-dimensional works of art.



Janette Brossard, *Mente Sano en Cuerpo Sano (Sound Mind in a Sound Body)*
group of 7 etchings, 2003

I met Janette in 2003 in Havana and the following year we collaborated on an exhibition *Azul y Blue*. We have been good friends ever since and I have followed her career over sixteen years as she developed as an artist and activist on behalf of printmaking in Cuba. Janette and her husband, Norberto Marrero, live with their daughter in Guanabo to the east of the city proper. They travel by bus into Havana to print. Norberto often prints woodcuts at the Taller de Grafica and Janette works at a small silkscreen studio.



Janette Brossard, *Sin Que Nadie Discrepe (Without Anyone Disagreeing)*,
etching and collograph, 1999

Most artists in Cuba have eight to twelve years of formal and very rigorous education. A child with interest and aptitude will be identified early and will go to one of the few regional art high schools across Cuba, which are equivalent to undergraduate college training in the US. Many successful artists finish their education at this level, but a small elite are accepted into the University of the Arts (ISA) in Havana equivalent to our graduate level. These students are already very skilled technically and have the opportunity to develop their unique styles, study theory and history, and participate in the art scene in Havana.

Janette is both a typical and atypical representative of artists who grew up within the Cuban Revolution. She studied industrial design at the graduate level before finding her true calling in art. She studied at the Academy S. Alejandro, the art college in Havana, where she met her husband who was teaching printmaking there. She then was accepted at ISA and graduated in 2001 with a major in printmaking. She has taught at both institutions.



Janette Brossard, *Negocio Propio*, etching 2003

Printmaking, unlike many disciplines where artists work in isolation in their studios, is a community enterprise. Cuban printmakers have formed connections and developed projects with each other and with artists outside of the island. Between 1996 and 2006 a group of printmakers, including Janette and Norberto, produced four portfolios *La Huela Mutiple (Multiple Trace)*. The first two were original prints on cheap paper, but as they gained visibility outside of Cuba and money became available, they used

mechanical reproduction and better-quality paper. Many of these artists have become well-known across the globe. Recently Janette coordinated a project called *Haciendo Presion (Making Pressure)* that promoted a younger generation of printmakers who had been less well-known. This group shows in the Havana Biennial and has created artist books with Red Trillium Press, run by BP member Steve Daiber. This kind of cultural exchange is vital to contemporary printmaking.

[Janette Brossard, LatinArt SpaceCuba](#)

Biennial Spotlight

These spotlight prints represent four of the prize-winners at The Boston Printmakers North American Print Biennial. During the prize jury process, it took the better part of a day to present the numerous works from the exhibition to Shelly Langdale, our juror, who carefully narrowed down her selections. The Ture Bengtz Memorial Prize, established to honor a founder of BP, is given to a BP member who has had their work selected into the Biennial. A purchase award, this print is placed into the collection of The Art Complex Museum, Duxbury MA.

Materials Awards are awarded by the juror in recognition of other outstanding prints in the exhibition. Sixteen companies provided nineteen Materials Awards for the 2019 exhibition. Gamblin Artists Colors and Legion Paper/Moab Paper prizes were awarded to two of the spotlight prints featured below. The Constellation Studio award, awarded to a BP member, is a self-directed Printmaking Residency at Constellation Studio in Lincoln, Nebraska and was generously provided by emeritus member Karen Kunc. Below, four prize-winners comment on their prints.



Marc Cote, *No Human Being is Illegal*, woodcut, 30 x 22"

Ture Bengtz Memorial Award

By Marc Cote

In my woodcut, *No Human Being Is Illegal*, I attempt to describe the plight of undocumented migrants as they navigate their precarious status in a new environment. Figures huddle beneath a roof that is at once sheltering and temporary, as it is lacking the physical structure of "house." I selected "roof" as a metaphor in the image, as many immigrants who come the US, eagerly willing to work, contribute, and belong, find opportunity in the trades, including the roofing industry. The print projects both fear and hope, as the figures hide together en masse, while they also serve as pillars of support for the finely constructed refuge.



Barbara Duval, *Tracking*, woodcut, 46 x 56"
Gamblin Artists Colors Award

By Barbara Duval

The human figure has always been a central focus in my work, and groupings of figures are of particular importance to me. Figure configurations provide me with ways in which to question human nature in a broad context. Many of the images in my work are loosely based on war images or historical human conflicts. I don't portray specific confrontations or situations. Of greater interest to me is the idea of the individual versus the group in the human drama. For me, a successful image can be interpreted in many ways, on many levels, and in a universal context.

The large woodcuts are reminiscent of a feeling or recollection that we all have experienced, whether it is a moment of triumph, fear, loneliness, desperation, unity, etc. Specific narrative is avoided in the work in order to articulate a deep emotional sensation in our individual and collective memories.



Linda Whitney, *Red Fancy Shawl Dancer*, mezzotint, 18 x 12"
LegionPaper/MoabPaper Award

By Linda Whitney

The celebration of the Powwow is one public declaration of the strength and tenacity of the indigenous cultures of this continent. The beautiful regalia is a testament to the history and creativity of the people. The dance itself whether traditional, fancy, or jingle is a demonstration of athleticism and the dancers' indomitable spirit. Women have long been the sinews that hold their people together. Today they celebrate their strength, their wisdom, and their spirit in the powwow. They dance the subtle traditional dance with slow deliberate steps, the jingle dress dance with its active movement and story of healing and rebirth and the fancy shawl dance demonstrating freedom and joy. The mezzotint image, printed from hand rocked copper on to sensitive Hahnemulhe paper, captures the movement of the dancers and the texture and detail of the regalia they wear.



Brooke Stewart, *Cheated*, woodcut, handmade paper,
75 x 40" Constellation Studios Award

By Brooke Stewart

My print was inspired by my time as a student-athlete. I was interested in the roles materials played in both sports culture and art. When you play for a division one program, part of your scholarship includes sports gear. These "materials" were given to us if we passed certain fitness tests; for example, if you made your mile time, or benched the amount of weight you were supposed to, then you would be given your gear for the year. This would include things like training sneakers, sweat suits, shirts, sports bras, etc. If you didn't pass the test, you wouldn't get the team gear until you did - I found this type of motivation to be degrading. When I thought about this print, I wanted to make a life-size portrait of myself sitting in my college locker. My locker had a cubby in the bottom where I would store my clothes. Through shredding my jerseys and T-shirt's given to me by the coaching staff and using them to make my paper for this print, I found a way to free the athlete from that space of degradation. I wanted to make a piece that included all the materials I was thinking of at the time and tie into the space where the materials originated.

Biennial Reception

Photos from The Boston Printmakers 2019 North American Print Biennial.



Left, BP member Joshua Brennan, Brookline, MA, with his print *Sweat Test*
 Right, BP member Carolyn Webb, Williamsburg, MA, with her drypoint *What Was Scattered Gathers*
 at the top, and Chad Nelson's print *Nine Nights II Arboreal Requiem*, below



Left, BP Member Rozanne Hermelyn Di Silvestro, Sunnyvale, CA, with her print
Facts are Stubborn Things, Right Jen Beirola, Boston, MA with her large-scale
 woodcut *Students Cross*, Materials Award



BP member Leslie Eliet, Gloucester, MA, with her print *Solstice*. Also visible are top,

pandora's earthe hemourage by koreloy wilderkinde-mcwhirter and right,
Church Interior with Fan by Edward Steffani



BP member Yuemai Zhang, Avon, CT, with her etching *Crossing I*.
Visible at top *Phylum Ossium* by member Craig Fischer, Toledo OH



Clifford S. Ackley, Ruth and Carl J. Shapiro Curator of Prints and Drawings,
Boston MFA, examines the print *Sweat Test*



A proud moment in the gallery with Deborah Cornell, Shelly Langdale and Sharon Hayes



Mj Vaino Crowe, Belfast, ME, with her large-scale print *Ancestral Voices*

Margo Lemieux at Anderson Ranch

by Margo Lemieux

I was really overwhelmed when I found I had won the scholarship to the Anderson Ranch. It had been a dream of mine for many years and it was a fabulous experience.

I flew in a day early hoping to acclimate myself to the altitude (haha – I was told later, it sometimes takes months). I never really did, but my first evening there, I went for a walk through Snowmass Village. The mountains around were so beautiful. As I headed back, I took a quick detour to the end of the parking lot. Lo and behold, I was treated to a rainbow – a sign that it was going to be an excellent week – and it was.



Rainbow over Snowmass Village

I was there for "The Color Woodblock: simple to complex", with Katie Baldwin. Katie had studied in Japan with a master printer and has an impressive record. On Sunday evening we checked in and met our fellow workshoppers. It was a friendly and accomplished group.

The studio space was light and airy with ample room to spread out (and I did). I had come prepared. For the last few years I have been trying to make a good image of my kousa dogwood. It has special meaning to me and in recent years has been like a cloud of snow white in the spring. My goal was to pay homage to that beautiful tree. I was armed with photos and preliminary sketches.

I set myself to work on my kousa. I really wanted it to be beautiful since none of my previous versions had satisfied me. The opportunity to focus without distraction was so welcome. I found myself immersed in the soothing repetition of carving small areas of wood. To rest my eyes, I could gaze out over the mountains that rolled away in the distance, some capped with snow even in July. There was plenty of opportunity to experiment with colors and papers. We used the press so the printing went quickly.



My print in progress

One of the highlights was when we were treated to the director Brian Shure's personal collection. He brought in reproductions of the 18th century Ten Bamboo Scrolls (reprinted in the 50s). The technique was so incredible as to be invisible. The colors, the grace, the flow and dance of the line, it was such a delight to see. When you saw the skill and possibilities, it really was inspirational.



Examining the 18th Century *Ten Bamboo Scrolls*

Perhaps one of the most important things I took away was – after years of doing wood and linocuts, I found I had been holding one of the tools upside down. No one had ever pointed that out to me before. No wonder I never used that tool! And to discover its proper use was a revelation.

It was a very intense week of work with few distractions. The meals were delicious and I had awesome suitemates. Katie was a knowledgeable and discerning teacher. And I managed an edition of my kousa in three colors. Plus, I began a new print which is in process now. My creative well was replenished and I have been inspired with new ideas.



The instructor Katie Baldwin and me in the print studio

I am very grateful for the opportunity provided to me by Boston Printmakers and the Anderson Ranch. Without their support, this never would have happened. I would highly recommend it to all members – put your name in, go, be inspired!

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