

SHIFTERPP 

Environmentally Responsible Print Practice

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ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE PRINT PRACTICE EXHIBITION

McMaster Museum of Art
McMaster University / January 14 - April 2, 2016



SHIFT: ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE PRINT PRACTICE

Environmentally responsible printmaking builds on a foundation of existing initiatives that are concerned with environmentalism, educational reform, social consciousness, global citizenship and the regulating of health and safety. Although movements such as earth art and land art in the early 1970's are often cited as a shift in thinking about our relationship with nature, artists have been inspired and informed by connections with the natural environment throughout the ages and across many cultures. Environmentally responsible art is another iteration of that evolution of ideas and practice.

Artists are instinctual alchemists who are deeply invested in material exploration. Their technological experimentation often parallels and sometimes precedes industrial innovations. Because the quest for best practices has no predictable course, individuals and organizations proceed at varying stages in their evolution to environmentally responsible print practice, finding their own solutions.

Today's printmakers stand on the shoulders of past makers who have done pioneering work in studio practice and education to expand and improve options for artists. Even though attitudes were deeply ingrained in an industrialized tradition, they often pursued change with little support or recognition. We recognize their fervent commitment to the cause and the sacrifices they made to get us where we are today, and regret that there is not room here to adequately recognize them all. Building on their early work, largely driven by health and safety concerns, progress on this front now enables us to direct our attention to a holistic approach that not only protects our bodies but also the health of our natural environment.

The Shift exhibition at the McMaster Museum of Art celebrates a selection of artists who are seeking alternative approaches that lighten the footprint of their print practice, safer studio methods that avoid exposure to hazards, and strategies to engage with pressing issues of our times. This exhibition is not a definitive representation but provides an overview and initiates a network for the sharing and dissemination of information that will contribute to an ongoing dialogue and continued advancements in the field of printmaking.

The call for submissions attracted seventy-eight artists from across North America residing in over sixty different cities, eleven states, nine provinces and one territory. Twenty-eight artists were selected for the quality of their work and the relevance of their entries and statements to the theme of the exhibition. They are at all stages of their careers and use a very broad range of approaches to question, activate, inspire, educate and contribute to a critical discourse linked to environmentalism or sustainability. Some are exploring new technologies or products. Others are reviving older approaches. Some have eliminated volatile organic compounds and acids in their studios or are using biodegradable chemicals, DIY practices, or certified products and are embracing the opportunity to reuse, reclaim and recycle.

This exhibition is intended to gauge where we are and share successes that demonstrate our ability to reduce hazards and environmental impacts without a sacrifice in quality or integrity of our work. The setting of the McMaster Museum of Art is a key component of the project. It houses a significant print collection that laid the foundation for one of the most recognized university collections in the country. The institution's mandate for education complements the School of the Arts Studio Program's promotion of environmentally responsible art through teaching and learning. The venue and duration of the exhibition facilitate exposure that will ensure new advancements in printmaking are accessible to students, artists, educators and members of the general public.

The city also provides a unique setting for this project. Hamilton has grown from a heavily industrialized city to include a thriving arts scene with an active community print facility in the heart of the downtown. The Centre 3 facility ensures that printmaking is accessible to graduating students, professional artists, youths and many other community individuals and organizations



Print media have consistently been used to reach a broad audience and introduce new ways of thinking. Despite the advancement of more virtual forms of information, the physicality of print images continues to serve us well to communicate and disseminate information.

Studio environments are accustomed to challenging the status quo. Re-evaluating what we use, how we use it and how we address waste is consistent with the questioning atmosphere of the art studio. Artists understand the material world from a maker's perspective, which places them in an advantageous position for promoting more responsible manufacture, use and disposal of products. Artists are significantly more nimble than big industry to take risks and adopt change and can therefore act as leaders to accelerate a reduction in our reliance on hazardous chemicals. As consumers, artists drive a huge industry of arts and crafts products that will continue to advance in effectiveness and decrease in cost as the demand for safer, environmentally responsible art materials increases. Print images also have a lasting power that may provoke and inspire over time, promoting deep reflection on our place in the world.

We are grateful to the *McMaster Museum of Art* for embracing and providing a venue for this project and to the *School of the Arts* for supporting our ongoing research related to environmentally responsible art practice through access to its studio facilities and teaching opportunities.

McMaster University's *Forward with Integrity* mission defines values that challenge us to cultivate human potential, build on our strengths, collaborate and network to reach further heights of achievement, actively question all we do and serve our community locally, nationally and globally. *Shift* has been recognized through a *Forward with Integrity* grant that is funding a symposium on environmentally responsible print practice, providing further opportunities for discussion, sharing and dissemination of knowledge. Lastly, we thank the artists for lending work to this exhibition and for providing information that will improve conditions for artists and for the planet.

Judy Major-Girardin

FRANCES B. ASHFORTH
FRANCOIS-MATTHIEU BOUCHARD
MARJOLAINE BOURGEOIS
LIZ CHALFIN

JULIE MCINTYRE
NATHAN MELTZ
LIZ MENARD
WOLF MENDRITZKI
SARAH PAISLEY
DUANE PAXSON
LYNN PETERFREUND
JOHNNY PLASTINI
TAMMY RATCLIFF
STEPHANIE RUSS
KYLE TOPPING
MATTHEW TRUEMAN
ROBERT TRUSZKOWSKI

KAREN CORNELIUS
MANNUEL GONZALES
JOHN GRAHAM
MELISSA HARSHMAN
FLORIN HATEGAN
BRECE HONEYCUTT
MARY HOOD
ANITA HUNT
CARRIE PHILLIPS KIESER
JEFF MANN
MONIQUE MARTIN

ARTISTS ERPP



Water Study 17

Water-based monotype (Akua ink)
30" x 30"

FRANCES B. ASHFORTH

Frances B. Ashford has lived on both the east and west coasts, experiencing the varied arid inland and coastal wetland environments. The water issues of the west made an enormous impression on her and continue to influence both her concepts and her decision to use Akua water based inks in her work.

"Water conservation issues are of the moment. My hope is that the Water Study series will continue to speak to the minimal elegance and beauty of our natural environment. Being willing to blend sustainable practices into all aspects of our lives is crucial."

Meanders mini 11

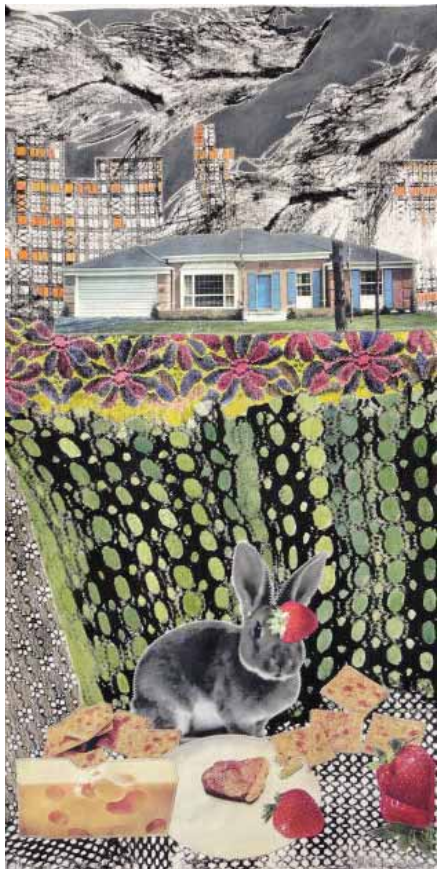
3-D Printed (PLA) bioplastic
24" x 10" x 12"



FRANÇOIS-MATTHIEU BOUCHARD

François-Matthieu Bouchard abandoned synthetic materials to examine polylactic acid (polylactide PLA) as a filament for 3D printing. PLA is a biodegradable thermoplastic aliphatic polyester derived from renewable resources, such as cornstarch or sugarcane.

"Each piece embodies a reflection upon change. Recalling the instant in which an idea is born in the mind all the way to the moment it is brought to life. Meanders can thus be seen as a fossilized representation of creative projects, showing how various decisions and actions affect such change. The path can be pleasant and easy just as much as it can prove to be winding and arduous; sometimes it may even break off. A veritable indicator of time, the pull tab moves along the length of the zipper and connects, however loosely, the events, choices, and trials of the past."



5 à 7

Hand colored collagraph
and sewn transfers on cotton
29" X 14.5 "

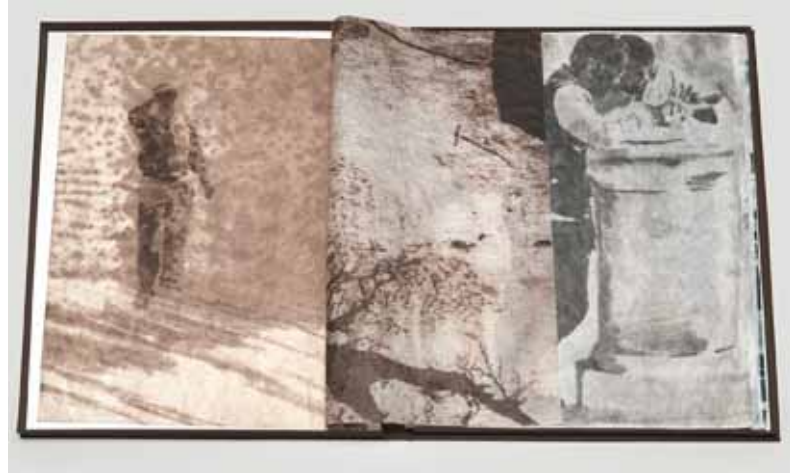
MARJOLAINE BOURGEOIS

Marjolaine Bourgeois creates collagraph plates using found textured fabric that are then printed on unbleached cotton and developed using image transfers and sewing. Her work references traditional hand made women's work relating to time and the labour of making.

"My practice speaks about the environment and about us, living beings in our habitat. It talks about the problems we are facing. Junk mail, virtual images, printed fabrics, food packaging, magazines, newspapers surround me. I am swamped with images, yet attracted by them, by what they mean on their own and the significance they might have when placed in other situations through my manipulation and re-editing. Since they reflect the state of the world we live in, I look at them with criticism, melancholy, poesy or humor while being interested as much by their obsolescence as their omnipresence and overabundance."

Another Day

Photopolymer intaglio print in
book form
22" x 18" (closed) 36" x 18" (open)



Liz Chalfin is Director of Zea Mays Printmaking, a studio, workshop, gallery, educational facility and research centre dedicated to the safest and most sustainable printmaking practices available. Her work uses a photopolymer intaglio process to replace the harsh chemistry of traditional photo-etching techniques. The plate-making process is water-soluble and the inks are cleaned with vegetable oil achieving an environmentally responsible studio approach.

LIZ CHALFIN

"The process moves from digital to analog, back to digital and ends with analog. I begin with a digital photograph and make ink wash drawings based on these using thin papers. I scan the drawings and manipulate the scale and opacity in Photoshop layering the drawings one upon the other. Once I have composed the image, I print a film positive that is exposed to a light sensitive photopolymer intaglio printing plate. The plates are developed in water and hardened in sunlight."



Fancy Dress in the Congo

Electro-etching, Alumigraph (Variable Edition)
11" x 15"

KAREN CORNELIUS

Karen Cornelius is deeply invested in less toxic and environmentally responsible choices in her work. She has studied with Nik Semenoff and followed the published work of Cedric Green and Alfonso Crujera while pursuing her own research and experimentation into greener practices at Martha Street Studio in Winnipeg.

"This image combines a fabric pattern worn by local women in the Congo with a dense patterning based on memory of the aerial view of the Ituri Forest in the Congo where I grew up. The dress is reminiscent of the ones I wore as a child, referencing the innocence of childhood against the background of fear which accompanies political instability."

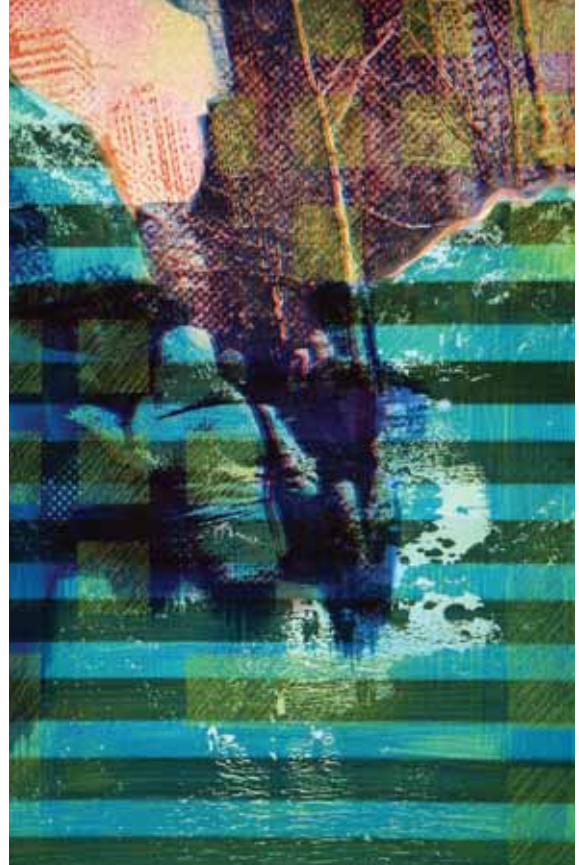
Finding a Way

Mixed media monoprint
24" x 16"

MANUEL GONZALES

Manuel Gonzales teaches printmaking at Texas Tech University. He has been researching and using a monoprint approach for ten years as a low tech, water-based, non-toxic, non-press alternative method that is suitable and safe for printmakers, painters, photographers, ceramicists and general interest audiences of all ages.

"This process utilizes diluted screen-printing emulsion and water-based paint pigment. The approach is appealing in that the printing and photo method is present, as is the painterly approach. Using the technique of light blocking materials lends to endless possibilities. It is also a great way to incorporate mixed media approaches onto a variety of supports such as paper, wood, ceramic, fabric, and canvas. Although editions can be created through this process, I have geared it primarily to one-of-a-kind unique prints."





The Sea Inside

Etching with BIG (Baldwin Intaglio Grounds)
11" x 14.5"



Improvise the Now

Etching with BIG grounds (Baldwin Intaglio Grounds)
11" x 16"

JOHN GRAHAM

John Graham has taught in many programs across Canada and in the USA. He is currently teaching printmaking at the University of Saskatchewan.

"My work in printmaking includes explorations of metaphorical and mythological notions of surrealism and collage thinking. Each of these images synthesizes my ongoing interests in imagery that is borne in the subconscious mind. These prints communicate my concern for the care taking of the collective imagination. These images evoke unpredictable juxtapositions, and the symbolic lyricism of dream life. The images are not intended to satisfy the conscious mind but to open it."

The River

Digital Print and Linocut

36" x 98"

FLORIN HATEGAN

Using the process of linoleum relief printing, Hategan contemporizes this 125-year-old printing process through scale, associations with digital technologies and through a strategy of fragmentation/defragmentation.

"The malaise of our contemporary world has changed the conversation and is producing many different realities that our perception is trying to deal with at every corner. The rhetoric of values, the society as a spectacle and the way we communicate with each other, the search for self-identification in this new model world - have been my sources of inspiration and debates."



MELISSA HARSHMAN

Harshman teaches at the University of Georgia in Athens and this work, inspired by the structure of the chandelier, was generated at an artist residency at Zea Mays Printmaking Studio in Massachusetts.

"The prints are pressure prints made by inking up a slab and placing the paper on top of the slab. Cutout shapes are then placed on top of the paper and run through the press creating the image. In essence they are trace monoprints. Therefore all of the images are made without the use of etching mordents. All clean up is done with vegetable oil eliminating the need for any solvents in clean up."



Strands Galore

Monoprint
54" x 72"



Black Walnut Book

Hand Dyed Ecoprint, thread,
watercolour in oaker
5 ½" x 3 ½" x 1" closed
36" accordion format

BRECE HONEYCUTT

Honeycutt gathers materials from the environment to create paper bundles that are interleaved with vegetation, found metal and other remnants. The bundles are treated using home made dyes and left to dry outdoors.

"The ecoprinting process not only uses plants grown on the land around me, but also returns both the used plant material to the compost bin and the water used (now in the form of a dye) back to the land.

The books take shape over time-the paper is folded, cut and sewn...revealing the traces of leaves, flowers and water forming an alternative text."

MARY HOOD

Hood currently resides in Tempe, Arizona, where she is an Associate Professor of art/printmaking at Arizona State University.

"New forms of expression, knowledge, and creativity emerge by combining both image development and process. I use handmade paper from recycled materials such as cotton and linen (mostly from repurposed clothing) in combination with digital composition and laser engraving to reference some sort of balance: low tech with high tech. The resulting images embrace a unique aesthetic that emphasizes the grain of the wood and the texture of paper, while also using photographic imagery and found collage elements. The laser engraved relief plates are etched into a variety of wood veneers, selected for their grain in consideration of the image."



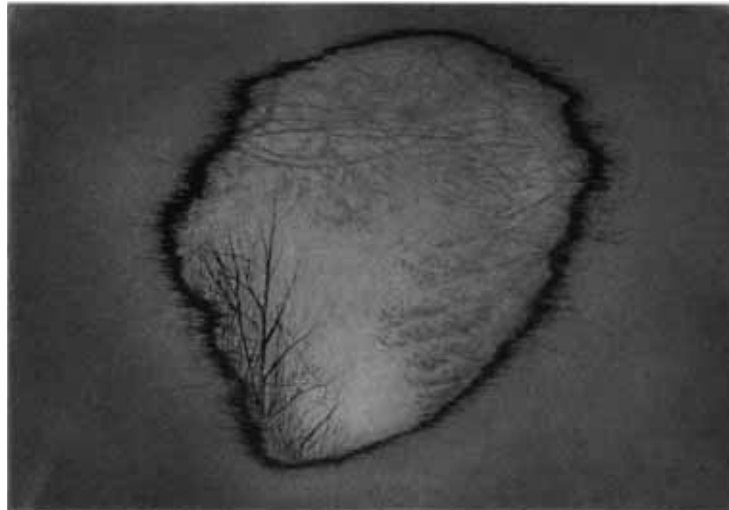
Displace/Replaced

Laser engraved
wood relief printed on
handmade paper with
watercolour
24" x 42" diptych

Hunt is a member of Zea Mays Printmaking where she practices safe and sustainable print methods. She was introduced to BIG grounds through a residency at Edinburgh Printmakers with Andrew Baldwin.

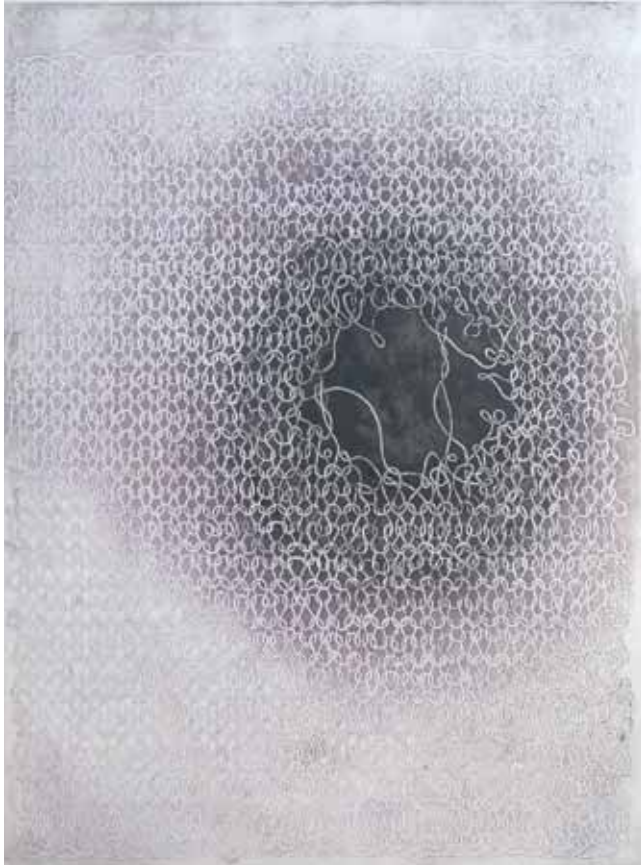
"My process is experimental. The copper plates are made using a combination of direct drypoint methods and etching. I usually print very small editions of certain states and focus instead on the evolving image to produce series and variations. I reuse and recombine plates. I cannibalize parts of older images for collage elements. I frequently employ chine collé to incorporate printed and unprinted gampi layers in the press. Each piece is begun with BIG hardground. I then selectively scrub away portions of the ground before etching the plates in an enclosed vertical tank of ferric chloride. The results of this open-bite method are evident in the central shapes with distinctive edges in each of the prints. For void, hole, island, reflection 3, I created a second tonal plate by roughing up the copper surface with carborundum grit, like graining a litho stone, and worked it reductively with steel wool, scraper and burnisher."

ANITA HUNT



**Void, Hole, Island,
Reflection 3**

Etching, drypoint,
carborundum, aquatint
6" x 9"



Tear

Intaglio with Akua Ink
24 x 18"

CARRIE PHILLIPS KIESER

Keiser has begun to experiment with B.I.G. ground as an alternative to traditional soft and hardground. B.I.G. ground can be applied to plates in her home studio and used immediately as a soft ground and, alternatively, left overnight to harden and use as a hardground without the off gassing that traditional grounds leave. The artist also uses Akua inks and performs clean up and degreasing with soy solv, vinegar and soya sauce.

"The root of my work is in the techniques of printmaking. The medium of printmaking was not chosen simply because I like the process, but because the process helps to describe the messages I aim to speak about. The physical presence or the memory of the marks that were made in the matrix stands as a metaphor to the marks one makes on oneself and on those we mark around us."

Carscape 2

Block printed tires,
enlarged and traced tire strip with text
6' x 6' x 6"

JEFF MANN

Mann is a sculptor who has recently begun to explore print media. He is a recent recipient of an Ontario Arts Council Art Education Project Grant.

"The prints I produce are part of my work trying to make people more aware of cars and how they have affected our lives, our planet and us. I have combined stencils, enlarged tracings, printing and text in large fabric pieces. I use mis-tint paint, junk car parts and tires and usually print on an industrial filter fabric. The paint is low VOC house paint and I reuse rollers by storing them in plastic bags avoiding washing paint down the sink and into our water supply."





Forest Gold #1,3,4 (triptych)

Ink on gold mining maps, linocut, low relief sculptural print, die cut
9" x 9" each

MONIQUE MARTIN

Martin has been recognized for her work in printmaking and in education through numerous awards, exhibitions and residencies.

"During an Artist-in-Residence position in Paris I watched an entire area of forest be cleared. Each day more and more trees were felled. Birds that had so carefully built and planned their nests would have to start again. It was sad for me - I dislike starting over and beginning again. Fortuitously near the same time, a mining company in Saskatoon shut down and donated all of their maps to my art practice. The damage to the bird's environment was inspiration for using the maps to create the pieces. The topographical lines on the maps look like the structural aspects of a bird nest."

Nautical Apron

4 colour lithograph on Kozo paper, assorted paper
and thread
39" x 17"

JULIE MCINTYRE

McIntyre has exhibited print-based work for more than twenty years. The pockets of her paper apron contain restored photographs that invite viewers to interact with the work in an intimate hands-on manner not typically encouraged with prints.

"In 1994 I was hoping to start *Travel Stories*, a series inspired by a box of exquisite slides I inherited. The images were taken by my paternal grandmother, Lucy Mood MacLeod McIntyre (1906 - 2005) during her world travels primarily on cargo ships in the 1960s and 70s. I planned to scan and reprint the photographs as four colour lithographs before manipulating them into aprons, quilts and artist books. Unfortunately photo plate technology was too expensive and toxic, so I postponed the series until I was introduced to George Roberts Polyester Plate Lithography in 2007. Not only were Pronto Plates non-toxic, (using the laser printer's heat on the toner as the "etch"), but they were inexpensive. I hand printed 136 four-colour editioned lithographs ganging two images and both sides on each plate for a totals cost of under \$150. The used plates are now being repurposed as stencils."



NATHAN MELTZ

Meltz explores environmental themes through screen prints and print-based animations. Initially a series of screenprints are created through non-toxic water-based processes. The prints are subsequently used as imagery for video animations.

"Crystal City is a subterranean world composed of a society of robotic humanoids and animals living an idyllic existence. This utopia is interrupted by hydraulic fracturing, which brings on the decay and collapse of their world. My Crystal City narrative explores the beauty of an imagined world, the pain caused by environmental destruction, and the attempts of a brave protagonist to resist an environmental calamity."



Colony Collapse

Screenprint
30" x 22"

Fracture in the Crystal City

Animation Series

Homage to E. Pauline Johnson

Collograph and letterpress
Variable size up to 12' x 120'

LIZ MENARD

Menard is a Board Member of Open Studio in Toronto. She makes collograph plates from renewable materials (cardboard, string and glue) and prints with non-toxic inks on Japanese paper.

"Celebrated poet, E. Pauline Johnson, was one of Canada's first environmentalists. Nature and the environment were two recurring themes. In this unusual, engaging and accessible work, Homage to E. Pauline Johnson celebrates Johnson and her poem "The Song My Paddle Sings" which later inspired the folksong "My Paddle's Keen and Bright". From a distance, Homage resembles a clump of birch trees perhaps as seen for a canoe. Closer examination reveals the text of Johnson's iconic poem strategically printed on the collagraphs that mimic birch bark. Conceptually, Homage combines environmentally responsible print practice with a tribute to Canada's first female environmentalist."



WOLF MENDRITZKI

Mendritzki has been making art for over 25 years. He uses found plates printed in intaglio, hand made plates printed as collagraphs and wood and lino blocks printed in relief. He uses Akua water-based inks, Caligo Safe-Wash Relief inks and water-mixable oils.

"The found plates represent the detritus of the Industrial Age. They've been etched through oxidation and many years of rot. I find them everywhere: washed up on the shore, in the woods, by the side of the road. The textures revealed through printing are quite rich. If additional work is needed, I use the traditional techniques of dry-pint and engraving."



Quietflow

Intaglio and relief
monoprint
14.25" x 19.25"

HNGG

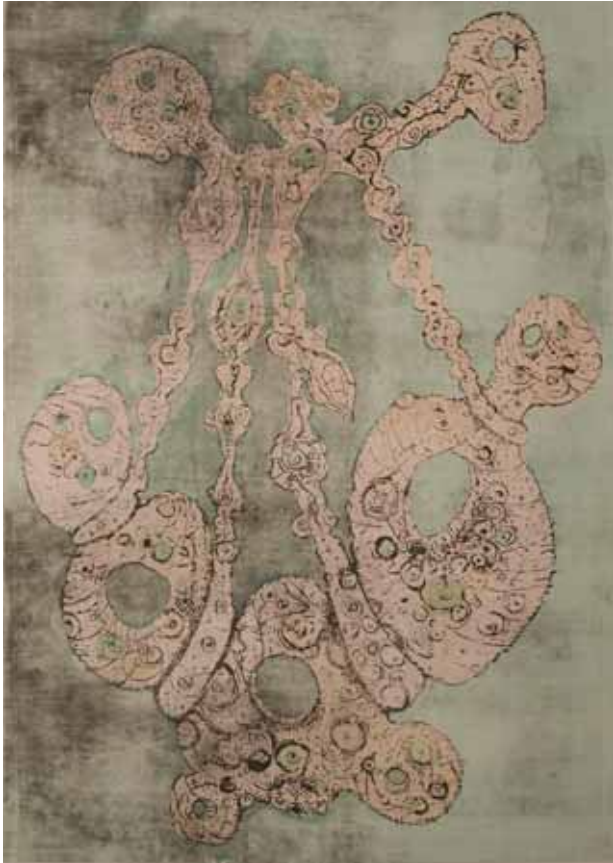
UV Silkscreen
14 x 11"

SARAH PAISLEY

Paisley is an emerging artist and recent graduate from McMaster University. This print was made at the University of Saskatchewan using UV-curing inks that cure by light rather than heat. The curing process does not off-gas harmful chemicals and unused inks can be stored for future use.

"I try to describe the themes of my art through labels of my identity: queer, Canadian, disabled, mental illness. These prints reference feelings of isolation that I experienced while enrolled in an MFA program. Comics, nightmares and fears of the unknown inspire these prints. I use UV silkscreen as a vehicle for my digital drawings to create personal imagery that is dark, and sometimes humorous."





Baroque Amulet

Wood lithography and relief on Arches 88
39" x 28"

DUANE PAXSON

Paxson is a sculptor currently residing Georgia and teaching at Troy University in Alabama. He recently learned wood lithography during a visit to McMaster University. The wood lithography process utilizes thin birch ply as a support matrix that is drawn on with grease crayons and Tusche. The board is processed using a mild Tannic type plate etch and Gum Arabic. It is then printed in a traditional water and oil-based ink method. The wood can later be carved and recycled as a relief matrix.

"This print relates to an ongoing grouping of drawings and sculptures from the Witch Hunt series. The images represent objects that are worn as protective amulets against the weights of guilt and harm."

Peterfreund has been exploring environmentally responsible print practices for many years in her own "green studio" and through her teaching at Zea Mays Printmaking.

"As a printmaker, I consistently make series, as that feels like a natural extension of the process of making prints. One print leads to another by way of the technique and the process of proofing, editing and developing images and concepts. For the past few years, I've taken that a step further, producing animations composed of large series of individual monotypes. For Storm in a Teacup, I used the familiarity with tea cups I developed over a year of daily drawings of whatever tea cup I used each day. The act of taking a meditative sip, in combination with the subject of my larger monotypes depicting physical and metaphorical stormy skies, was the framework for the narrative in which swirling trees, a cameo crow and figures appear and disappear."

LYNN PETERFREUND



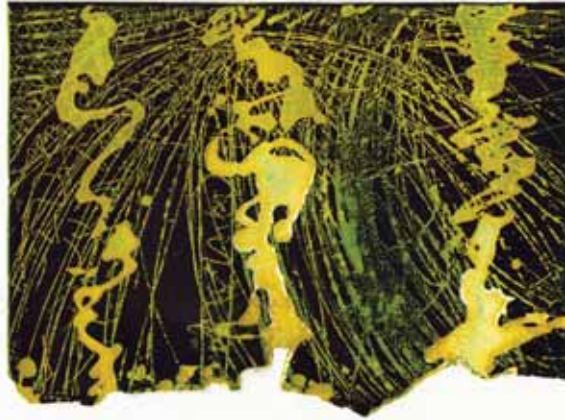
Storm in a Tea Cup no.124

Video animation using monoprints

JOHNNY PLASTINI

Plastini is an Assistant Professor of Printmaking at Colorado State University.

"My most recent body of work demonstrates a unique process called "electro-form" printmaking. Using electricity and a low-toxicity copper sulfate solution, each copper plate actually gains material from an anode that deposits on its surface, rather than material being removed and needing to be disposed of as hazardous waste, as is the case with any form of toxic acid etching. The printing process of these electroformed plates pays homage to the works of Stanley William Hayter, specifically his technique of using various viscosities of ink both wiped into and plate and rolled over as a relief, which when combined in a certain order will either repel or attract another ink layer, yielding dazzling colour field effects."



Beach Week (Night)

Viscosity intaglio with
electro etching
9" x 22"

Red Swirl

mixed print, chine-collé, hand
stitching
22" x 30" (image: 18" x 18")

TAMMY RATCLIFF

Ratcliff employs the Keith Howard technique of a floor wax ground and ferric etch and she uses pronto plates for lithography. She uses papers from small sustainable family operations and every scrap is recycled into new compositions.

"Through my mixed print monotype works I find a means to explore my continued fascination with the natural world - its strength and beauty - while drawing attention to the imperfections and impermanence of all living things. The "perfect" asymmetry in nature, the odd shaped spaces between branches or the awkward curl of one petal of a flower is where my curiosity takes root."



STEPHANIE RUSS

Russ teaches at the University of Concordia where she works with her colleagues to promote health and safety and minimize environmental impacts in the print studio.

"In *Airstream* Canadian weather maps are integrated into cloud formations. These formations show the highs, lows, and patterns of weather systems as well as explore the unseen elements at play in the sky. These works question how we experience our natural environments; how we hope to predict and understand the powers they hold. I am always trying to find alternative ways to avoid using solvents and developers to create my works. The ink Jet allow me to work with photographic imagery without having to use photo litho plates which require developer, gum, as well as oil based inks. The water based screen print allows me to integrate drawing into these works with an aim at using the least amount of solvents and cleaners."



Airstream

Ink jet, water based
screen print
15.75" x 20.5"

Ice Berg Melter

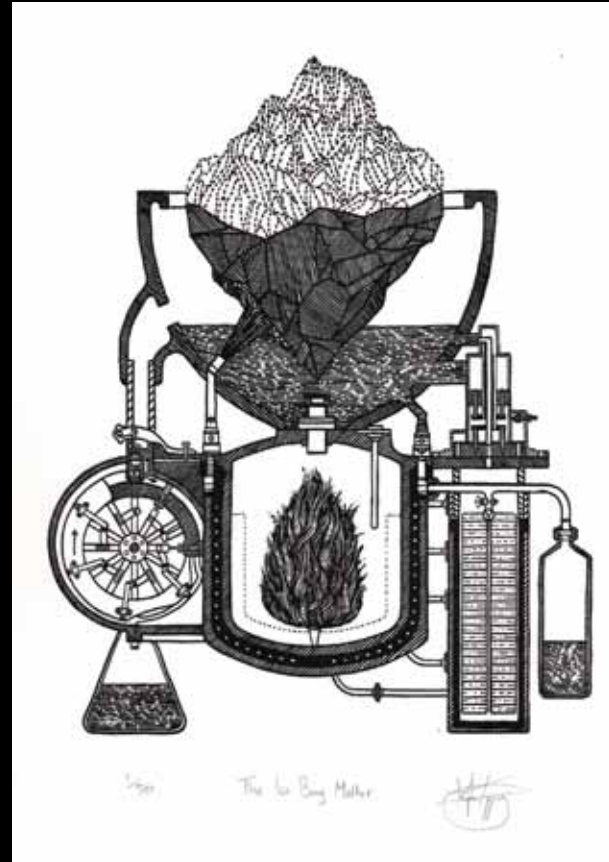
Relief print using polymer plates
11" x 15"

KYLE TOPPING

Topping is Co-owner and founder of Spark Box Studio in Picton, Ontario.

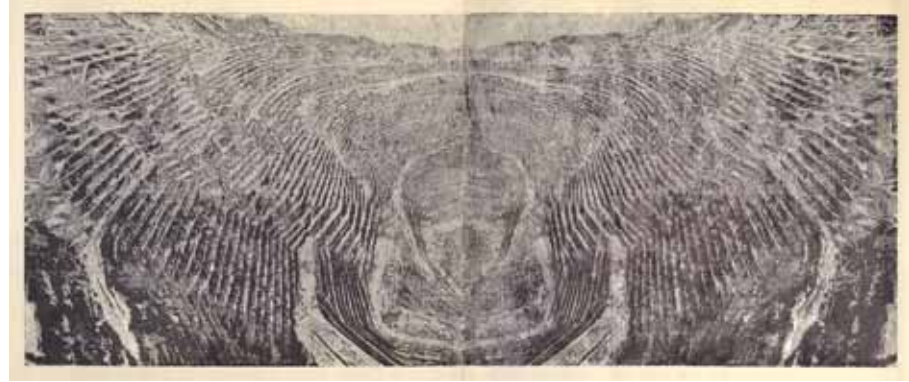
Finding safe and alternative processes to a variety of printmaking practices has been at the forefront of the shop's mandate. Topping has created this image using Toyobo Printight Nylon Printing Plates on a Vandercook SP15. These ready-made plates can be processed with UV light and washed with water rather than using developers and solvents.

"My work is an exploration of the visual narratives that create an idea of science mythology. I combine logical/rational visual aesthetics into illogical/irrational perceptions of scientific phenomena. The goal being to create work that balances an authoritative, authentic, scientific language with absurd explanations of how the universe works. What draws me to this visual language is my interest in the way these images present false authority and truth. I use these constructs to rationalize my own uncertainties of the universe."



And Jill

Woodcut
75" x 30"



MATTHEW TRUEMAN

"As an environmentalist, I believe that climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our generation. In spite of this belief, and as a Canadian, I must answer for one of the world's highest per capita emission levels - an ongoing issue bolstered by a long history of breached environmental treaties. The problem lies, in large part, in the ongoing Western pursuit of a 'good' life that privileges material growth in spite of its environmental repercussions. I am guilty of pursuing this lifestyle myself. Accordingly, this statement is composed using plastic, copper and numerous toxic materials that a computer requires to function. Can one advocate for environmental sustainability when the means one uses to connect to one's reader are in themselves wholly unsustainable?"

This question - about the inherent contradiction in advocating environmental sensitivity - is the primary tension motivating this series. It responds by reframing environmental sustainability not as an analog to harmony, but rather as a negotiated dialogue between artist and nature. After a tree is cut from a forest, it is transformed into a medium for human expression. The wood thereafter assumes a dual role. The first role is wood-as-medium to me as an artist. I use the wood to document a story about humanity's violent incursion into nature. Secondly and perhaps most importantly, is the inverse: wood-as-artifact as nature's medium, which I respond to. The irregular composition of the wood's structure ought to be recognized as nature permitting and resisting, guiding and de-touring my chisel. As I attempt to tell my story on the wood about the politics of man subsuming nature in its image, nature tells its own story as the wood interpolates my mind, hands and intentions as an artist. How you interpret my work is as much about my work on the wood as it is nature's work on the wood. In this way environmental sustainability is not merely a dialogue of words, but a series of negotiated chisel strokes."

ROBERT TRUSZKOWSKI

Truszkowski brings his interest in exploring more environmentally sound print methods to students through his teaching at the University of Regina.

"The main thing that makes the process environmentally responsible has to do with the level of quality attainable with the uv inks. I can expose and almost-fully resolve imagery printed from the highest setting on my professional inkjet printer. I use 355 and 405 mesh count silkscreens. The level of detail is incredible, and far exceeds the capabilities of standard "artist grade" water-based inks. My inks don't dry in the screen. This means that using much finer mesh is possible, resulting in a much finer digital and photographic imagery, not to mention subtle hand-brushed washes and drawings. Standard inks will dry in the screen, so you need courser mesh, which means courser imagery. While the much finer imagery afforded me by my process isn't green or environmentally friendly, it does preclude any need or desire to work with oil-based inks or conventional UV inks (and the associated solvents and cleaners) in order to get the rich, saturated imagery I demand. The real key to finding a better way, environmentally speaking, consists of developing a system that can integrate with conventional ways of working and thinking but exceeds the quality and the user-friendliness of that which came before. Water-based uv silkscreen is for me, the holy grail."



Right Here, Yo

Ultra-violet, water-based
silkscreen ink
15" x 41"

BRIANA PALMER - ADJUDICATOR



Briana Palmer is currently an Assistant Professor in the School of the Arts at McMaster University where she teaches a variety of studio art courses with a focus on printmaking. Her studio practices encompass printmaking, sculpture and installation in which her work reflects biomorphic surrealism, creating a world that floats between a space we understand and the intangible. Her research interests include finding alternative practices to traditional materials that have a sustainable footprint in health and the environment.

Briana received her BFA in 2000 from the Alberta College of Art and Design in Calgary; she received her MFA in 2003 from the University of Alberta in Edmonton. She has exhibited her work in Canada, Europe and the USA. Her prints are in archival collections at the Alberta Foundations of the Arts (Canada), Southern Graphics Print Council (USA), and the University of Alberta (Canada).

She has completed Artist Residencies at Lalit Kala Akademi, Chennai, India and with the Pavilion Lake Research Project. The project involved scientific research teams from the Department of Earth Sciences at McMaster University, other Canadian and International Universities, NASA, and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). Groups conducted research on the microbialite formations under the Pavilion Lake BC.

Squib and Otolith

Mixed Media Print and Sculpture
Installation View

JUDY MAJOR-GIRARDIN - ADJUDICATOR

Judy Major-Girardin is a Canadian artist who received her BFA from the University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada and her MFA from the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, USA. She has been teaching in the Studio Art program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario since 1983.

Her work has been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions throughout Canada and the U.S.A. including shows in New York, Georgia, Alabama, South Dakota, Ohio, Illinois, California, Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, the Yukon and Nunavut. Her work has been included in exhibitions abroad in Japan, Taiwan and is currently exhibited in the Wharepuke International Print Exhibition in New Zealand. Judy has participated in artist residencies in Newfoundland, Quebec and Alabama and will participate in a residency at Zea Mays Print Studio in Massachusetts, USA in April 2016.



Permeable Membrane 1

28" x 39"

(diptych)

Wood lithography
and relief stencil

2015

Forward with Integrity

We gratefully acknowledge the support of McMaster's Forward with Integrity funding that has supported this exhibition catalogue and the Environmentally Responsible Print Symposium. These events, in conjunction with the McMaster Museum of Art exhibition, have enabled us to reach a broad audience of students, artists, educators and the general public promoting questioning of the traditional approach of the discipline and offering more sustainable alternatives for creative research. Through this project the research and teaching of the School of the Arts studio art program has been integrated with the community and learning opportunities for students within the program have been expanded. The contacts that we have made with artists who responded to the call for submissions and the people who have registered for the symposium will provide a base network for the sharing of information in the future.

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School of the Arts



