

What are you working on currently?

Right now I am working on some new large paintings. I had taken a bit of a break towards the end of the summer and was drawing and making sculptures. I was also making some functional objects in clay like planters and ashtrays. But now that it's back to colder weather I wanted to start a new series of paintings.

Do you work in different techniques at the same time, or do you separate painting, drawing and printing into separate work phases?

I don't really separate things out so much. Everything is the same. However the way that I work on paintings is very incremental so that I do one thing on it then let it sit for a while. So then I may go draw something or work on one of the handmade books that I make. While I am drawing I may contemplate the painting or in my case live with it. I live and work in the same place. I always have lots of projects working at the same time. Sometimes it's overwhelming with the range of possibilities there are in the studio. I've prioritized my life so that I really have nothing else to do but make art. Sometimes this is not a good thing.

You seem to be working on prints quite regularly. What led you to printmaking?

I am currently not working on any prints. It's been a few years now. I love making prints and in New York one has to be invited. The studios where I work haven't asked me lately but then again it's been the Pandemic and I also haven't asked. That said I love to work on etching the most because it's so close in nature to drawing. If someone handed me a plate every day I would be happy. I think what originally led me to printmaking was a desire to make an etching. So at one point I met the Harlan and Weaver studio and they invited me to work with them. So last week I had this idea to make woodblock prints. I ordered some woodblocks and tools so I'm going to do this on my own and maybe look for a studio to print/edition them for me.

Printmaking seems to come naturally to you, since everything you do is based on drawing, right?

Yes I think it comes naturally because everything I do is based on drawing. So the process feels comfortable. The proofing process is like working on a painting. You know when you have overworked something or underworked something. Also the reveal being the opposite always makes the process a bit of a mystery. You never really know how it's going to look.

You have always collaborated with experienced printers and workshops, like Jennifer Melby, Harlan & Weaver and others. Can you describe this collaborative process?

Each studio is different and they work in different ways and the atmospheres are varied. I usually have an idea about what I want and the studio usually picks that up. Some leave you alone and others want to collaborate more. I'm not a big collaborator in life so the same goes for art making. However in printmaking you must collaborate so I am always open to new processes. I always appreciate feedback when something doesn't look right. When it does look right I know it immediately. I have to say some studios are very active with stuff going around all the time and some are quiet and contemplative. I'm usually ok with whatever is going on.

Working on different plates or screens inhibits working spontaneously, at least to a certain extent. Working towards the „reveal“ you mentioned above is complex and takes time. Is this a bother or do you enjoy this conceptual approach?

Answer:

I usually approach the plate or screen as I do a painting with no preconceived idea or plan. This does make for mistakes but I use the mistakes as part of the process. I try not to be overly precious about the plate or screen. I think some people are afraid of it or afraid of messing it up or wasting the studio's material but I pretty much don't. I like the surprise of the unknown and the only way to get that is to not plan it out. Also a print is a unique artwork not an illustration or replica of one's other work or an illustration of an idea. So I think it's a more conceptual or spontaneous approach to a print. Usually conceptual and spontaneous are thought of as totally separate things but for me they are not. I treat it like anything else.



Does your activity in printmaking feed back into other aspects of your work

The very first prints I made were silkscreens. (for the Lower East Side Printshop) At the time I was painting very minimal paintings with virtually no layering of colors on top of each other. After making these first silkscreens I took the concept of the layering and transparency of the silkscreened colors back into my painting. So that first foray into printmaking really changed my work substantially and it was never the same after that. So yes I think we can carry activity from one media onto another. Introducing a new technique to ones work always changes it. Recently I think the fact that I draw all the time brings something else to the prints and reversely I see that one activity really does influence each other. When I started making sculpture as well it really changed my painting a lot.



You made beautiful etchings, lithographs, linoleum cuts and now this silkscreen - that's part of an impressive portfolio by the way - what's left? Is there a technique you would want to try out?

Not really. I think I can still work within the techniques I like to make new things. I'm not an artist who always craves newness of materials and I don't have a huge curiosity to try out new things. I seem to like working within the confines of the given medium like etching or cutting into a linoleum block. There is a lot of freedom in working within accepted genres. I can get a lot of leeway in reusing and getting really good at a specific type of technique. Sometimes the most traditional and obvious tool is the most basic and the most interesting to work with.

How did you approach your latest print you made for Handsiebdruckerei Editionen in Berlin? It's a silkscreen this time, right?

This silkscreen print I just did for Handsiebdruckerei in Berlin was done remotely. I was in my studio in greenport ny and they are in Berlin. It was my first remote print. It worked out ok despite the huge cost of sending the prints to and from Berlin to be signed. I had a general idea of what I wanted to do so I made up a whole lot of drawings on Mylar and then played around with them. Once I figured it out I sent them to Berlin for proofing with my color ideas. Since they are experts at silkscreens they figured out exactly what I wanted and I chose one combination from their proofs. With the iPhone camera we were able to figure this out really easily. Then I ended up signing them upside down which was my mistake but in the end I just went with the mistake and it ended up looking better upside down. I could have been upset about that but I went along with my decision to leave it. It's a challenge in silkscreen to get a drawing line that I like but I worked with different size markers and they were able to get the quality of line to work. So I think not being in the print studio in person worked this time and like everything for the last few years working remotely has become the norm.

