

Mono Variations

January 13–February 17, 2024

Arc Gallery

Artists Reception Saturday January 13, 7-9pm

Closing Reception Saturday, February 17, 12:00-3pm

Viewing hours 1-6PM on Wednesdays & Thursdays and 12-3PM on Saturdays

arc-sf.com | 1246 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103



The Monoprint technique offers print artists one of the most basic ways to make an impression with a repeating template, stencil, or stamp, that can be loaded with infinite variation. A monoprint series pressed from a static matrix has a repeating, and yet always morphing theme.

California-based printmakers and members of the California Society of Printmakers were invited to submit up to 3 prints from a series of monoprints. The submissions chosen by the juror—to show in pairs—explore image making serially through the use of the same template, or marked plate over the course of many prints. The artwork produced for this call is wildly inventive. Artists came to their own interpretations of the prospectus, and process, in ways the organizers could never have anticipated. Ultimately, the singular print became varied. The multiple impressions of each collection of prints tell a story, connected by its own origin and trajectory.

Juror Statement

Michelle Edelman | thetintgallery.com

The exhibition **Mono Variations** explores the ways in which printmakers can create a continuum between works. We've chosen 2 monoprints by each artist to highlight ways in which a monoprint can be re-invented. The result is a series of works that elicit a call and response. The method and manner of the re-invention takes many shapes, forms, techniques, and colors. Each artist uses their own method of printmaking. Some of the many types in this exhibition include printing from: woodblocks, copper plates, stencils, plexiglass, phototransfer, wax paper, laser cut birch, one artist even uses plastic packaging as the foundation for their prints. Some works reuse a marked plate, only changing the colors in the next work. Some artists use multiple plates that they then rearrange, creating a completely new composition. Some works are enhanced with additional imagery. In some works, multiple plates are layered on top of each other, with new colors and new physical placement of the plates, creating a work that is almost unrecognizable from the first monoprint. In such cases, the continuity between the two works is visible through the techniques employed rather than in a strict visual comparison with the first monoprint. What remains constant throughout all the works is an exploration of the concept of serialization in printmaking.

Artist Statements

Beгите Andersen

"OceanGhosts" are monoprints composed on paper. An imprint of one plastic fruit netting, used plastic packaging from our household, on which I have included crocheted elements to create the shape of a jellyfish. A ghost print is the last print you make in a printing process, most often to clean the printing plate; thus not the print being exhibited, but the serving practical print with another function. In the "OceanGhost" collection I have included the ghost prints and thereby included the process as part of the series of works, as a reference for the long life of the plastic. The use of packaging has references to our abundance of plastic, garbage ocean-scapes, and human-made sea creatures.

Karen Baden Thapa

I love seeing the salt flats from the plane as I land at SFO. The salt water landscape looks different depending on the time of year, the time of day and the light. My images were made using a collagraph as the template. I am presenting a blue variation and a monochromatic sepia interpretation of the theme.

Eva Bernstein

The monoprint series, "All that is left are bones and memories" consists of 5 Solarplate etchings, each printed atop a monotype. Though the etching component remains the same throughout, each monotype reflects a different approach to visually representing the pain of the loss of loved ones. The first versions were created during the height of the Covid pandemic. Subsequent versions were printed this year as meditations on recent mass shootings and the continued violence in our country.

Althea Black

My studio work involves archives, repetition and the queer body. I see the studio as a space to "look differently" and resist pressure "to represent" in a coherent, singular way - instead thinking about embodiments and material senses within the work. This has involved techniques like drawing games, photograms, ghost printing, artist-publishing, shibori, cameraless animation, endurance performance, and collaborations with other artists. For this series of monoprints, I make five prints from the same matrix. By using stencils "drawn with scissors" as part of the print matrix, there's a chance for gravity and paper to act as agents in the work, and for images to reappear or fade away in each of the five prints. The prints are fleeting, faint, and complex with no focal point or "correct" orientation. My authorship becomes loosened; it hovers above the print, but it is not the print. Weaving together monoprints further intertwines their imagery. For some time, my practice has used abstraction to defy representation and easy reading. I am interested in what happens when a text or image is difficult to read, or when we "see through" or "fail to see" and recognize certain aspects of difference, whether they are actually visible (and to whom) or not. Navigating my own queer- and transness over two decades of political change, I'm ever more convinced it cannot be entirely understood or legitimized through representation and public visibility. I also draw from experiences of working in the HIV/AIDS response, and passing of loved ones that have challenged my beliefs on the body and dying. What is felt or sensed but not seen, not entirely visible, is overlaid with multiple layers. I am exploring these ideas in monoprints, letterpress, and weavings that integrate the multiple stages of the print into one piece. My work is not explicitly about identity, but instead about creating objects, images and texts that are hovering alongside it.

Meri Brin

Each monoprint is a unique composite made up of multiple layers that combine relief block printing and pressure prints, and take advantage of the contrasting qualities of each technique. Individual matrices are intentionally repurposed throughout the body of work, obscuring and degrading their form to construct unexpected compositions.

Mark Brodie

I enjoy finding beauty in the world. I do not try to make a statement with my work, but let it speak for itself. My current exploration involves creating abstract compositions based on images we see daily. If successful, it

encourages a viewer to contemplate and allows them to form their own interpretation. When creating, I enjoy the process of letting the work develop in a semiconscious and experimental fashion by analyzing what was most recently applied and then trying to visualize what comes next. I love to pull a print and see what appears, partially through my hand, but also by chance. This serendipity is what most intrigues me about this approach. I am drawn to works on paper, especially Japanese papers. They are light, incredibly strong, with appealing textures. Paper itself can be so alluring, but then enhanced by placing an image upon it. Portions of my prints are intentionally left empty, resulting in making heavy objects, like buildings, feel light and floating, blurring the boundaries between static and movement. My works are all monoprints created as a series of continual adaptations to the original. Each piece is unique but related.

Megan Broughton

"Pack Ice II" was conceived after The Arctic Circle Residency, sailing the waters of Svalbard, Norway in June 2019; a then record-breaking month for soaring temperatures in the Arctic. As an etcher whose iterative work lies between creation and destruction, Svalbard's dichotomies spoke to me. I spent hours watching ice break apart and transform. I realized that copper plates act the same way in acid as melting ice does in water; a natural resource incrementally lost. "Pack Ice II" began with an image of ice across five copper plates that were incrementally altered by ferric chloride and printed in various combinations. The plates were regularly reshaped in acid until nearly destroyed. These were printed in two parallel editions of 10 for each etched state, with one being the variable edition, "Shifting." The end result is a series of 100 etchings.

Donna Brown

These series of prints were created in the Fall of 2023, using a plain silhouette in different allegorical spots. The landscapes all include a woman's shadow in various surroundings. They are designed to draw the viewer in and to evoke a response. There is a sense of quiet within each waiting to be disrupted.

Caren Catterall

This series draws on the Fibonacci sequence, golden proportion and designs in nature. Collected diagrams and images show the great variation and the mathematical patterns that are behind them. Using a gum Arabic image transfer technique the colors of the background are transferred from a laser print onto a wiped zinc plate with the tree and birds. Every print in the edition is different in the background theme. The juxtaposition of these ideas is what the crows and other creators are thinking about as they create the world.

Beth Fein

These woodblock monoprints are a play between form, color and layering. They are improvisational and evolve as I work with the shapes in relationship to each other and the space the paper presents as the canvas. The color is intuitive and derives from my current variable emotions as I print the series. My life and dreams wend their way into the work. My art practice layers my subconscious and my emotional state with the ever evolving outside world that surrounds me, creating strata of variation.

Karen Florito

I took clippings from plants and started used them as materials for monoprintmaking. In this series, I printed the image of an anatomical eye in litho on top of these prints to show the connection between Nature and humans.

Studies show that when we interact with plants, our serotonin and dopamine levels go up. Even looking at a plant can cause us to feel calm and happy. I believe this shows how we are a part of Nature, and Nature is a part of us.

Sarah Grimm

"Searching" is the name of the series of 17 works I made as a local resident artist at Kala Art Institute in October 2023, all composed on the same studio plexiglass. The concept behind the abstract compositions is the search for my younger sister, who was last seen on September 30, 2023 in the middle of the desert in Arizona with two flat tires. She is my only sibling, 1.5 years young, and while my parents and I have been doing everything we can to find her remotely, it is not safe for us to go there in person. My process-based, meditative approach to painting mediated by the American French Press was particularly cathartic. The forms are created by pieces of paper crumpled during the participatory performance "Detained Imprints II," created in collaboration with Badri Valian. These papers hold a poem all about the detainment, spiritual or physical, of women across the world, and in this version of the performance I included Chelsea. Using these as vehicles for texture on the monotypes lead to a new element of transformation. This all becomes a metaphor for how I am metabolizing this unfathomable, ongoing trauma.

Marian Harris

My greatest artistic passion is learning new techniques and experimenting with materials and processes to find unique ways to express my vision and ideas. Printmaking lends itself to this fascination very well, with multitudes of types of processes, from silk screen to lithography, to etching and many more. And there are unending ways in each practice to experiment with technique. Monoprinting in particular provides an avenue for this obsession which I have, and I do monoprint variations consistently with pretty much all plates I make. In this series, I have created a copper plate of very rich imagery, including egg-crackle technique, and aquatint. I have made quite a number of prints from it, using various ink colors, chine collé applications of colored gampi cut-outs, and cut outs of other papers, including Suminagashi prints, which I also made. I also apply gampi backing of different colors often, and that can affect the colors and textures of the other chine collé applications and print. The only limit to possibilities is one's imagination!

Kathryn Kain

These works are intuitive, made with layers of color, actual plant impressions and repeatable lithographic image transfers. The repeated use of found images through photocopy transfer functions as a mutable matrix. The use of actual plant materials can be interpreted as a temporal matrice.

Quinn Keck

Each of these pieces are created using the same grid template. The world wants people to be put in numbers and boxes, become data points that can be analyzed with clear outcomes predicted. In breaking free of the gridlines we are put in, we uplift not only ourselves, but our fellow human beings. We can be free beyond the confines of society's binary constructs, not only to not just choose another box to be put in, but to be free of having to choose a box at all. We get to keep changing and becoming better versions of ourselves, but not having to be a single finished product as capitalism demands.

Joanna Kidd

My goal is to create visual representations of inner emotional states with work that provokes an immediate emotional response. "What Are You Thinking?" was made during a California Society of Printmakers residency at Gruenwald Press. The black and white matrix for the print was made using stone lithography. I created textures with ink tusche and crayon applied directly to the stone with little to no preliminary drawing. The print was then developed as a varied edition with text and textures, using monotype layers of transparent color.

Danguole Kuolas

The variations in color and the addition of chine colle in these monoprints with a photopolymer etched matrix create an atmosphere and mood which tell the story of a day. The blue coolness and calm of the early morning belies the coming heat of the smoke shrouded day leading to the melancholy of twilight.

Genevieve L'Heureux

The title of this series, *Déclinaison*, is French for Inflection: noun: change in pitch or loudness of the voice. 1.b : a form, suffix, or element involved in such variation. I am intrigued by simple things that can be manipulated and transformed into different manifestations of themselves. It is a recurring theme in my work. Here, different images are produced using the same four-plate matrix. The background (square plate) is printed in color and serves as the context for the changing foreground to come to be. As the title suggests, a part of the image remains static and constant while the other (the part on the end -the suffix) changes from image to image. The resulting series is one where, because of the 'kit-of-parts' matrix, multiples can be created of each unique configuration, even though the edition number is kept at a minimum. With *Déclinaison/Inflection* I wanted to touch upon the notion of variations but also of materiality. The process of printmaking is very much a physical one involving the handling of substantial things: copper, hand wiping ink, paper, working a two-ton press... I wanted to imbue the printed image with the same intense physicality and materiality inherent to the printmaking process. I treated plates as discrete physical elements to be assembled (and re-assembled) on the press bed to form a whole. Plates were printed in successive passes so that overlaps would be possible and embossments, created by the thickness of the plates, would be emphasized. The hope was that the physicality of each of the plates would yield a sense of materiality to the printed image.

Kippi Leonard

Using a triptych of acrylic plates and had cut forms, I produced unique 1/1 editions. This involved subjecting the artwork to multiple press passes, sometimes up to eight, and making precise rotations and adjustments to the placement of materials for my design. Throughout the creative process, all materials used retained traces of paint from the numerous passes and rotations, as they were continually reused. Upon completing this series of four monotype prints, I conscientiously disposed of the materials employed in their creation.

Aileen Lum

Ego death is an internal process. The disintegration of one's foundation of being can be invisible to the outside world. In one lifetime, those born under the sign of Scorpio undergo this type of personal transformation as a matter of course. The cycle begins in the darkness with the obliteration of old structures that no longer serve, followed by the coalescence of fresh, new thoughts in the etheric realm. A new way of being materializes. In the mind's eye, in a nanosecond of brilliance, the flaming phoenix emerges from the ashes to herald the triumphant end of the cycle crowned with the dawning of a clean slate. These monoprints are akin to whipping out your smartphone when startled by something incredible, then shooting a burst of pictures hoping that the anomaly will

be in frame and somehow captured. The repeated imagery of the bird is manipulated to give voice to the processes of change, destruction, disintegration and creation that occur in flight, when the mind and heart are untethered to the physical World.

Ellen Markoff

The theme of multiples occurs frequently in my work because of certain processes I use. I like to work with wax paper as a template. Because there is reusable ink on the wax paper I use this to create repeatable shapes in my work. There are many ways to create repeated images in monoprints. Ghosts prints are second pulls from a plate with the ink left from the first pull. You can print additions onto these or alter them in other ways but the repeatable image is there. Alternatively you could leave them as is after the second pull because ghosts are often quite beautiful themselves.

Mary V Marsh

My work explores the changing technologies of communication viewed through the lens of my personal experience and anxiety. I have become interested in the fake trees that are leased by internet providers. They exemplify our need for internet connection everywhere, and our desire for invisible infrastructure. Camouflaged, they are silent witnesses to our movements and interactions. In my Hear/Hear series photographic negatives of cell tower trees are scanned to make photopolymer intaglio plates printed on an etching press. Screenshots of maps and texts made into polymer relief plates are printed on the letterpress. I am imagining how our messages are moving through the landscape, connecting with the next transponder down the road where our metadata is collected and sold, our attention transformed into currency. Letterpress pressure printing circuit patterns in cut paper add a layer of unseen infrastructure. Using a uniform size for all of the plates, I can layer and build a complex environment that I imagine mimicking the world seen through a small screen portal. There is a spontaneous trial and discovery process when choosing the color and plate to add next. Some have gouache pochoir elements. The finished prints are a result of many different sessions on the press, with prints at different stages cycling through, echoing the chaos of our digital world.

Monique Martin

The interconnected murmuring voice of being supported, held, comforted and cared for is ever present in the world in which we live. Everything is fundamentally interdependent; plants, earth, wildlife and people. Information is given in its absence and in its space. A tendril on a pea plant cannot use itself as a support structure which is often the same for humans, we need others. A tendril finds something to support it by reaching for the light because there is darkness. If time could stretch like a tendril on a vine we could hang on and suspend that last moment, but we never know when that last moment will happen. Sometimes the gap between what society could be and what can happen is as wide as the gap between a young tendril and a support structure. What is possible can exceed individual grasp, like climate change, homelessness, poverty or the economy. A graceless fall like a tendril curled around itself on the ground can be experienced by reaching too far on our own, alone and unsupported. We continue to reach out to stretch our potential with endurance similar to a tendril. Time curls in on itself and around itself with a sense of urgency that is invisible in our days. Humans when faced with dark days can reach for interconnected structures that give them comfort and confidence.

Vicki Nakamura

These monoprints are part of a series based on iPhone photos of tree shadows I started taking during walks when the Covid pandemic lockdown was in effect. Shadows obscure the actual form of an object and can connote darkness and uncertainty. I am particularly attracted to the shimmering of light and the abstract shapes cast by trees and their branches in sunlight. In these prints I explored the effect of layering images and varying the color and transparency to reflect these flattened shadows and suggest the quality of flickering light.

Ann Pike

My love of the laser cutter took me on a monoprint exploration. I love how using that stencil and the ink matrix over and over can build up colored layers and variation. The print, the stencil and the plate all collect new ink tones. For some reason I was into bright warm colors, not my usual cool tones. Then when the work was nearing a finish, I pasted some of the stencil pieces into the images. The finished pieces reminded me of the fireworks and dragons of the New Year parades. I was reminded that this (the year 2020) would be a New Years to remember as everyone traveling might spread a new coming disease. Little did I Know!

Deborah Rantz

I visited Shanghai, China in 2014. The city was mesmerizing...history, incredible art and architecture, beautiful parks, food and fashion. The apartment where I stayed looked out onto other matching high rises in the same complex. Beyond this complex was another and another, as far as the eye could see. Across the street from the apartment complex was another housing development, a lilong, a lane house, a traditional Shanghai dwelling built in the 19th and 20th centuries. These dwellings created neighborhoods and communities. Some have been converted to modern housing but older and less desirable lane houses are being destroyed and replaced by modern construction. I saw two Chinese characters spray painted on walls of this lilong and later learned they represented the term "demolish". A few weeks ago I asked the people I visited in Shanghai if the lilong was still there. Now back in the U.S., they said they aren't certain, but it is very likely gone. I chose the tangled wires of the lilong for the monoprint motif to tie together imagery of old and new Shanghai. The wires remind me of veins and arteries that carry power and life into and through the lilong, and bring a different kind of power, Wi-Fi, to modern buildings, creating today's form of connection and community.

Donna Sharee

I created the first print using stencils. The colors were so saturated that I decided to make a ghost from the first print. I kept printing layer upon layer with new passes of the same stencils while keeping a similar color palette. Gradually the prints took on very different directions which I played to the hilt until the prints felt complete.

Siana Smith

In "Planet Earth", I invite the viewers to embark on a visual journey that bridges introspection and the natural world. A solitary girl sits within a tunnel and gazes upon a lush forest beyond. (In the second image, the forest is on fire, while in the third image, it's cooling down and healing.) The butterflies, as a symbol of transformation, also evoke a sense of the fleeting and fragile nature of existence. I hope to foster a deep connection between viewers and the environment, emphasizing the importance of our harmonious coexistence with the planet. "Planet Earth" serves as a reminder of the profound connection we share with the natural world and the responsibility we bear in preserving the Earth's delicate Balance.

Ginger Tolonen

The causes and images repeat, but with infinite variation. Discord and violence from a new source each week. I seek a matrix where there is peace. A monolith to give me sanctuary. An infinite and constantly evolving sea to soothe and comfort me. And I seek the wisdom to understand, and to be an agent for change.

Susan Trubow

In this series of prints the image of a fence is used as the static matrix repeating thematically. The fence is a barrier intended to prevent escape or intrusion or to mark a boundary. It is subjected to the passing of time, both weathered and tested. It metaphorically stands as a witness.

Katherine Warinner

I explore the edge between representation and abstraction in works on paper in order to translate my felt sense of the natural world. My prints combine different processes and are tied together by being printed on an etching press. They pass through the press many times—matrices of laser cut birch created from my own photographs are inked in various ways and combined. In this, my newest body of work, lush color and layered textures dominate. Inspired by my view of trees growing by a creek in my back yard, the isolation of the pandemic made me appreciate the subtle beauty of changing light and color right at home. Every day brought new inspiration, and every print evolved differently as I sought to capture my impression of a moment.

Nancy Willis

Light has always been an important element in my work but during the Glass Fire in 2020, it took on a new role. I evacuated 3 times and lived in a hotel for 30 days. Making art felt precarious and necessary. I began with a familiar motif, the chandelier and looked for new ways to take it from its original photographic source and give it new shape and dimension. The image was created with 2 distinct plates each inked with slight or exaggerated color and printed two at a time on the page.

Susan Wolf

For this series of monotypes the day begins with the gathering and curation of artifacts. Items are from one of three categories: paper, plastic or woven. The complexities of the objects, their use and reuse in the act of carrying and their impact as single use items informs the surface translation once inked and transferred to the page. The material leaving its mark is the unavoidable packaging from purchases made to celebrate my 65th birthday. The palette is limited to two colors then mixed and rolled onto two separate mylar plates. Objects are arranged and then sandwiched between the inked surfaces before moving through the etching press. This first pass of translation generates ephemeral components ready to be rearranged and imprinted while being sandwiched between two papers. The resulting dyad is a mirror, an invitation for reflection and a visual contemplation of the ordinary. The inked mylar plates continue to provide an alternative version to the original translation. Torn newsprint is used to articulate irregular borders before being transferred to the next blank page. Frequently, some of the inked objects are included, breaking across the shapes or over the surface and at times leaving an embossed mark.