

I began making prints in 1985 when after some years of making large paintings I felt a need to work on an intimate scale. Painting small was unsatisfying to me because I was unable to adjust my gesture, with a loaded brush, to the appropriate scale, and my pictures felt constrained, fussy, and wrong. Intuition told me that the gesture made with a knife or a gouge would suit me better, and I began making color reduction linocuts. This was a wholly satisfying solution to my problem. In working in the new medium, I discovered there are many other reasons to love the printmaking process, not the least of which is the expressive quality of line which is unique to each printmaking medium.

I began working with David Kelso at *made in california* in January of 1994. I hadn't made an etching since I was in college, so I had a lot to learn. I asked David to cut me some very small plates for test pieces. The test pieces became etchings and we completed a portfolio of fourteen prints late in 1994.

While we were working on the portfolio, David asked me some questions about my working methods and imagery which in turn gave me some insight into my own process. I realized that while my work is not narrative, there is a story involved in its making.

Usually I tell myself a story before I begin working. The source of the story can be practically anything; an overheard conversation, a memory, an object, a news item, a daydream, something spotted from a train. Sometimes stories evolve from the juxtaposition of a remembered sight and a dialogue. They are often uncomplicated and not particularly profound, but seem to have some relevance to my life. The stories jumpstart the image making, and as the images progress they evolve with them. I don't illustrate the stories, but rather work under their spell. In the end, what I hope is left of the story in the work is this spell.

As important as the story is to me in the making of my work, it is no more important than the visual and physical elements of the process. The expressive qualities of hardground and softground lines, textural variations made by combining these with aquatints and burnishing, and the overlaid translucencies of color, are inspirations in themselves and sometimes even become source material for the story. In mixing it all up, the suspense builds and becomes a compelling force for completing the print --to find out how the story ends.

I am now working with David on a 12" x 18" black and white aquatint etching that has a working title of "Yardbird", which is from a memory of an incident in the dining car of a train. It is larger than any of the etchings I have made to date. I like the size and would like to propose making a 3 or 4 plate color etching of that size. Since most of my experience as a printmaker has been in reduction printing, I have found color printing with multiple plates the most challenging aspect of the etching process. It is an area where I feel I can push myself to break new ground in my prints.