

Palmer, James. "Printmakers Pushing the Envelope of Their Art" In: *The Riverdale Press*, November 28, 2013. p.B1

Palmer, James. "Collaborating with Artists to Make a Good Impression" In: *The Riverdale Press*, November 28, 2013. p.B1

Thursday, November 28, 2013
Page B1

LIVING

SECTION
B

WHAT'S ON? ■ DINING GUIDE ■ WHAT'S COOKING? ■ REAL ESTATE ■ CLASSIFIED ■ SERVICE GUIDE ■ BUSINESS CARD DIRECTORY

The RIVERDALE PRESS

Printmakers pushing the envelope of their art



By James Palmer
jpalmer@riverdalepress.com

The ongoing exhibition at the Lehman College Art Gallery titled *The Morphology of the Print* explores the way contemporary artists and printmakers are combining conventional techniques with innovative approaches to printmaking.

Lehman's art gallery director Susan Hoeltzel, who assembled the show with curatorial assistant Yuneikys Villalonga, says the 32 works on display show the range and diversity of how some artists and printmakers are using prints today.

"These are unfamiliar techniques in printmaking," said Ms. Hoeltzel. "These are different ways of thinking about how people make multiples."

The traditional purpose of prints is to allow artists to make copies of their original works and distribute them widely to the public at affordable prices, Ms. Hoeltzel said.

But the artists and printmakers in the current Lehman show are blending media and applying experimental techniques, including stitching, digital embroidery, etching, relief, collage, calligraphy, silicon carbide, installations, sculptures and even smoke machines to expand the boundaries of print.

The exhibit opens with an installation of a life-size intimate living space titled *Fabricated Image/Reflected Space*, by Jeremy Coleman Smith. The walls, floor, armchair, lamp, plates and wallpaper are all made from paper with printed designs on the surface, while the print covering the outside walls are designed to depict clapping.

Ms. Hoeltzel says Mr. Coleman draped wet paper over cedar board to make an impression of the grain, and then made prints that show the intricate patterns of the wood.

Andrea's Zittel's *Sprawl*, which resembles a digitized Navajo blanket, reflects on the environmental impact of the construction of her home,

including sections of a picket fence, through a press to show the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy and express additional ecological concerns — in this case, the affects of global warming and extreme weather.

An 18-foot-high piece that extends five feet out from the wall by Rob Swainston turns viewers' attention away from nature and back indoors. The work consists of a series of intricately designed prints neatly presented in symmetrical rectangular boxes to form a grid. The work is modeled after the ceiling of hyperbolic paraboloids covering the gallery designed by the modernist architect Marcel Breuer.

Ms. Hoeltzel said the piece invites visitors at the gallery to contemplate the architecture and the space around them. "It makes you think about the angles of the building you're in and this ceiling slanting and twisting above," she said.

Morris Park resident Rosemarie Fiore used a smoke painting machine she built along with lit color smoke, firework residue and color monotype ink to create the swirling lines that spiral furiously along the paper in *Smoke Painting Monotype #5*.

Jean Shin employs digitized embroidery to converge a conductor leading an orchestra with bars of the musical score *My Country* by Czech composer Bedrich Smetana and a band of sound waves as a means to reflect the nature of music. The image of the conductor's back covered with a black suit encompasses the majority of the print, with the score in a narrow strip of white at the bottom and the sound waves sewn at the point where the two meet.

Valerie Hammand's photogravure *Apparis* conjures mystical notions with so-called ghost photography of the 19th century. Ms. Hammand employs the bare back of fellow artist Kiki Smith as a canvas to cast the glowing celestial images that appear like a photonegative.

The Lehman Art Gallery and the school's art department moved to its present site on the college's campus in

Morphology of the Print runs through January 8, 2014. The Lehman College Art Gallery is located at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard West. For more information call 718-960-8731 or visit www.lehman.cuny.edu.

Photos by Marisol Diaz

Clockwise from top left:

WHITFIELD LOVELL'S
'Barbados' (2009)

LOVELL'S 'Georgia' (2009)

TAMMY NGUYEN and
Lesley Dill's 'The Thrill
Came Slowly' (1996)





Courtesy of Lehman College Gallery

the expansion of her home town, Las Vegas, further into the desert. According to the exhibition guide, Ms. Zittel used a satellite image of the southwestern desert to create a large lithograph by reproducing the image 16 times and then mirroring and matching the multiple images.

In the large print *Jamaica Bay*, Maire Lorenz ran flotsam,

1984, when officials decided to relocate and expand the library that once stood in its place. Today, the gallery is used as an education tool for college, elementary, middle and high school students.

"We use the exhibitions extensively to teach for college and public schools," Ms. Hoeltzel said.

Collaborating with artists to make a good impression

By James Palmer
jpalmer@riverdalepress.com

Master printer and Riverdale resident Judith Solodkin created several of the prints displayed in the Lehman Gallery's exhibition, *Mythology of the Print*. The exhibition emphasizes examples of experimental works by modern printmakers that are redefining the medium.

Ms. Solodkin is on the forefront of the movement to expand the borders of traditional printmaking. "I work with other artists to translate their work into another medium," she says.

In 1974, Ms. Solodkin was the first woman to graduate as a master lithographer from the Tamarind Institute, part of the college of fine arts at the University of Mexico in Albuquerque. She established her printmaking company, Solo Impressions, in Manhattan the following year. She moved to her current location

on Riverdale Avenue in 2011.

Ms. Solodkin describes her printmaking process as one of collaboration whereby she and the artist create a final work that satisfies both. The method is often intricate and the pace slow because she says at each step along the way, "We're trying to figure out what do — how to proceed."

For the past 15 years, Ms. Solodkin has used digitized embroidery to add a tactile quality to some of her prints. She uses a computerized six-needle embroidering machine that translates a drawing to a sewing file. The needles then sew the design in thread. She also uses an electric sewing machine to manually sew stitches onto prints.

Ms. Solodkin says the art world has traditionally viewed embroidery as what she terms low art, whereas painting is typically considered high art. "It's not taken as seriously because it's women who predominately do it," she

says of embroidery.

This notion is satirically portrayed in a piece Ms. Solodkin teamed with Elaine Reichek to create titled *The Pounds, 1913*. The work refers to a conversation between Ezra Pound and his future wife Dorothy Shakespear in which the poet encourages his paramour to paint rather sew. Ms. Solodkin highlighted words in the print to accentuate the title and points in the conversation.

In addition to working as master printer producing hand-printed lithography, woodcuts and linoleum cuts, Ms. Solodkin is a milliner who makes hats. She has also taught at Columbia University, the School of Visual Arts and the Pratt Institute.

Though she has scaled-down her printmaking operation, Ms. Solodkin has no plans to retire, saying, "I'm working with major galleries, major museums, major artists and major works of art."



Photo by Mairis Diaz

JUDITH SOLODKIN, master lithographer, in her Riverdale Avenue studio.