

MICRO/MACRO EXHIBIT

PRINTMAKERS NETWORK OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

At the Newport Art Museum and Art Association, Newport, RI
September 3 - December 31, 2011 Reception Friday, September 9, 5 - 7pm

by Carol Strause FitzSimonds

The Newport Art Museum and Art Association presents Micro/Macro, an exhibit of original prints by the twenty-four members of the Printmakers Network of Southern New England (PNSNE). This exhibit runs from Saturday, September 3rd through Saturday, December 31, 2011 in the Griswold House main gallery. The opening reception is Friday, September 9th from 5-7 PM. Gallery talks and printmaking workshops by PNSNE members will be scheduled in conjunction with the exhibit. Check the museum web site at www.newportartmuseum.org for dates and times.

Size was the inspiration and the limiting factor for the art - only small prints 5 x 7 inches or less, or images 18" X 24" or larger. The choices of technique, style, subject, and materials - from traditional wood, copper, and stone to 21st century polymers and digital technology, were left to each individual artist. The results are images as diverse and arresting as the size extremes. A collection of twenty-one 5 x 7 inch bleed prints, edition of 25, titled "Micro" was created for this exhibit. Only four of these collections are available for purchase from PNSNE. For more information on this collection visit www.printmakersnetwork.com.

Among the images are prints dealing with environmental and social issues. *Piscine: Up for Air*, from Margot K. Rocklen's on-going series dealing with man-made and natural environmental issues, depicts a murky body of water where fish crowd the surface gulping for air. Melody Knight Leary's words "Oh the things we women do to 'fit' in," says it all about her latest series, *Venus Envy*. Thinking about women's struggles to 'measure up' to societal ideals, Leary began crafting images with a vintage corset she found in a consignment store. "I couldn't help thinking about how women throughout history have continually tried to alter their shape based on society's standards of beauty. The 21st century has its own version of

the girdle and today's 'body shapers' continue to play a role in a culture of thinness. How is a girdle/corset viewed today: a necessity, a sexy fashion accessory, beneficial or constraining?"

Not to be missed are the mesmerizing landscapes of Shirley Bernstein, architectural collagraphs of Grace Bentley-Scheck, and intriguing abstract installation of Rhea Nowak. The luminous relief "skyscapes" of Bernstein use expressive tool marks to convey the boundless space of the



Rhea Nowak, "Sum of the Parts,"
size varies each installation,
Multiple Techniques



Shirley Bernstein, "Blue Not Blue,"
5 x 7 inches, Relief

sky as well as reflecting the force, vigorous action of nature. Her lush skies take on a spiritual quality with a meditative stillness. Grace Bentley's Scheck's large collagraph, *56th Street Harmony*, is a view from an upper story window where, above the traffic, one can appreciate the geometry of the urban space.

Scheck views architecture as space humans enclose. These enclosed spaces become dynamic via passage



Melody Knight Leary, "Waist," 2.25" x 2," Photopolymer Intaglio

through time expressed in layers of painted advertising and graffiti, weathered surfaces, and slight shifts in color. The play of light and shadow become visual symbols expressive of an intersection of time and space. In her large multi-print installation, *Sum of the Parts*, Nowak explores the relationships between clarity and chaos, rhythm and awkwardness, mark and intention, presence and absence. Intrigued by different formats, Nowak states, "it is in the process of taking things apart and rebuilding them that I see aspects and relationships in new and

intriguing ways. The idea of this piece is that it changes each time it is installed."



Barbara Pagh, "Hunting Island,"
5 x 7 inches, Photolithograph

Founded in 1992, the Printmakers Network of Southern New England is a network of established and emerging art-ist/printmakers sharing common goals. PNSNE sponsors printmaking lectures and workshops for adults and students. The Network has completed four portfolio projects, the *Travel Original* print/poetry book collection, and an educational video about printmakers and their methods. The four boxed portfolios each contains 15 to 30 prints and are entitled: *Unabridged 1994*, *Intimate Prints 1997*, *Collective Independence 2003*, and *Under Pressure 2005*. PNSNE has exhibited at museum, university and gallery venues throughout the eastern United States. For more information on the group and its members go online to

www.printmakersnetwork.org

The Newport Art Museum and Art Association is America's oldest known surviving art association. Home for the Museum since 1916, the Griswold House at 76 Bellevue Avenue, is a National Historic Landmark designed by famed architect Richard Morris Hunt. Completed in 1864 for John N.A. Griswold, a China Trade merchant and financier, Griswold House was Hunt's first major commission in Newport and is the premier example of American Stick Style architecture. In 1912, a group of artists and intellectuals led by Maud Howe Elliott banded together to form the Art Association of Newport for the purpose of promoting and exhibiting fine arts and fostering arts education within the community. Barely a month after its creation, the Association staged its first exhibition, which included contributions from within the group and renowned artists such as George Bellows, Mary Cassatt, John White Alexander, Childe Hassam, and Arthur B. Davies. Today, the legacy of the founding artists is a three-building campus and community cultural center that provides the region with high quality exhibitions, an art school, educational programs and events.

401-848-8200

www.newportartmuseum.org



Margot K. Rocklen, "Piscine: Up for Air,"
5 x 7 inches (part of Micro collection), Multiple Plates and Techniques

Printmakers' Network

of Southern New England

Founded in 1992

PNSNE is a collaborative group of established and emerging artists working in traditional and contemporary printmaking techniques.

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