

PRINT MAKERS BALL

JUN 12-SEP 27, 2015



Exhibition Teacher Guide

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ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Printmakers Ball features 14 printmakers who are pushing the boundaries of the art world by exploring new methods of printing and expression, from portable presses to complex installations, often addressing social and political issues head-on – and always leaving their skilled mark.

Exhibiting artists include: **Michael Barnes, Aaron S. Coleman, Eric Fuertes (Dumbo Press), Martin Mazorra, Cleon Peterson, Sean Starwars, Joseph Velasquez, and Tara Zanzig (Tararchy)**. Featured are the five Rockford artists who make up **Fatherless Print Posse – Corey Hagberg, Jarrod Hennis, Javier Jimenez, Greg Lang and Dave Menard** with guest artist **Ben Rider**. Collaborating on a dynamic display of woodcuts, screenprints and large print installations this nationally acclaimed hometown collective will also lead interactive programming and live print demonstrations.

Organized by Rockford Art Museum, curated by RAM Curator Carrie Johnson. *Printmakers Ball* is sponsored by Dean Alan Olson Foundation, Mark E. Fesenmyer, and partially supported by a grant from Rockford Area Arts Council, which receives support from the City of Rockford, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, and its members. This exhibition and related educational programming are partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency and by the Armer Ahlstrand Charitable Foundation. All education programs are sponsored in part by Women's Art Board.

COVER: Fatherless, Abe Series #5 (detail), 2013. Collection of Rockford Art Museum, Illinois. Gift of the artists: Corey Hagberg, Jarrod Hennis, Javier Jimenez, Greg Lang and Dave Menard.

RAM

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PRINT MAKERS BALL

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Michael Barnes

The recent body of graphic works by Michael Barnes depicts figures and mechanisms that wander or are stranded within the vacuum that has been created for them by the world they exist in. The work addresses, in part, the destructive nature and absurdities that so readily prevail amongst humankind, along with themes of mortality and the psychological questions of existence in general.

Aaron S. Coleman

Utilizing comic book imagery, I present a warped and exaggerated view of real events. I see a strong parallel between the mythology of super heroes and religious stories of good and evil. Religious imagery enters my work in the form of stained glass windows, which mirror the pieced together structure of the comic book images and are used as a vehicle to the moral and ethical dilemmas I explore.

Fatherless

FATHERLESS is a collaborative print posse from Rockford, Illinois USA. Our works are the result of five solo artists—Corey Hagberg, Jarrod Hennis, Javier Jimenez, Greg Lang, and Dave Menard—combining each other's imagery in a chaotic and detached sense influenced by our current consumer driven social climate. Described as a visual mixtape of cultural shenagination, we re-contextualize images from our throw away culture, creating works that stand alone yet cannot be claimed by any one artist. Ben Rider from the UK exhibits as a guest artist with Fatherless in *Printmakers Ball*.

Eric Fuertes

My work is an eclectic amalgamation of the now. I create complex artistic devices that mechanize the process of art making and conversely bring forth ideas of one's self portraiture imbedded amongst socio-political commentary, the super hero power of having the inherent ability to create and reflect, ideas about production, industry, democratization, the fallacies in contemporary culture, ideas of being "man," existing and the experiences of love.

Martin Mazorra

My most recent body of woodcut and letterpress botanical prints continue the late 19th century and early 20th century "Language of Flowers" as a means to convey coded messages of love or dislike. In Victorian society these were silent messages that were otherwise not dared spoken. Specific flowers communicated specific postures. My selections of flowers and text add contemporary, prurient twists to this tradition of secret sentimentality.

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PRINT MAKERS BALL

JUN 12-SEP 27, 2015

Cleon Peterson

Cleon Peterson's shadowy figures mete out violence in images that could just as well depict justice as they do barbarity. This work can be viewed as both a continuation and a progression of past works, in which graphically rendered scenes of sadism portray chaos as the inevitable order of things. Many of those scenes have featured characters with physical appearances largely undifferentiated from one another, suggesting a classless unsympathetic society, yet in this new body of work Peterson incorporates "shadow" figures and a new dichotomous order. There are haves and have-nots, but amid the havoc it's hard to decide who's who.

Sean Starwars

I choose the format of the large scale color woodcut because it best suits my energy charged, caffeine induced, aggressive approach to image making. I am drawn to the modern mythologies of American advertising. My fascination with these make believe worlds coupled with my largely pop/expressionistic printmaking sensibilities have enabled me to create an arena to play out any number of fantasies.

Joseph Velasquez

Joseph Velasquez is a Chicano artist and professor of printmaking at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. He is the co-founder of Dirty Printmakers of America and Drive By Press, a mobile print studio and print exhibition that has served more than 200 universities over the last eight years. Drive By Press has also toured with Indie bands, printing hand carved woodblocks on tees right along with bands such as SPOON, the Walkmen and the White Rabbits to name a few.

Tara Zanzig (Tararchy)

The work of Tara Zanzig, or Tararchy, explores spirituality and philosophy in contemporary America with a pop-punk sensibility. A multi-disciplinary artist, her emphasis is on non-traditional screen printing. She leverages scale using chunky neon, metallic, and black images in plastisol inks combined with other paint medium on recycled/found materials.

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EXHIBITION VOCABULARY

ARTIST'S PROOF. One of a small group of prints set aside from the edition for the artist's use.

BAREN. A round, smooth pad, either flat or slightly convex, used to press paper against an inked wood or linoleum block to lift an impression from the block.

BRAYER. A small, hand-held rubber roller used to spread printing ink evenly on a surface before printing.

PRINTMAKING. The process of designing and producing prints using a printing block, woodcut, etching, lithographic, or screenprinting.

REGISTRATION. Adjustment of separate plates, blocks, screens or paper in color printing to ensure correct alignment of the colors.

RELIEF. Printmaking technique in which the image is printed from a raised surface, usually produced by cutting away non-image material.

RELIEF PRINT. A means of making prints by creating a raised design on a flat surface. The design is inked or covered with color and stamped on paper or another surface.

STENCIL. A printing process by which areas are blocked out to keep ink from non-image areas.

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CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1 MAKE PRINTS FROM NATURAL OBJECTS

Printmaking is an exploration of texture, design, and technique. The pieces on view in the *Printmakers Ball* exhibition feature many different techniques of printmaking, with different materials, using different subject matters. In the following lesson, we will explore texture, technique and design through organic material. Because most objects in nature have texture, gather a variety of objects found outside and apply ink to make prints of their textures.

Materials

- watercolor paper
- printmaking ink
- brushes
- brayers
- organic found materials
- water cups
- paper towel

Instructions

Have students examine objects found in nature including but not limited to leaves, grasses, weeds, rocks, pinecones, and bark. Have students take note of the different textures that can be found on the objects and have them bring the chosen objects back to the classroom.

Once back in the classroom use a brayer or a paintbrush to apply printing ink to the surface of whichever material was chosen to be printed first. If ink is not available then tempera paint or acrylic paint is also acceptable. When the first layer of ink has been applied to the material, have students press the item down onto paper so the texture of the material is transferred to the paper.

This process can be repeated with multiple objects to create a layered effect on the paper; each layer of ink should be allowed to dry before a second layer is applied to avoid muddling the inks on the paper. Once the piece is finished the items and materials found outside can be saved for reuse at a later time.

ISBE Standards: 26.A.3e, 26.A.4e, 26.A.1e

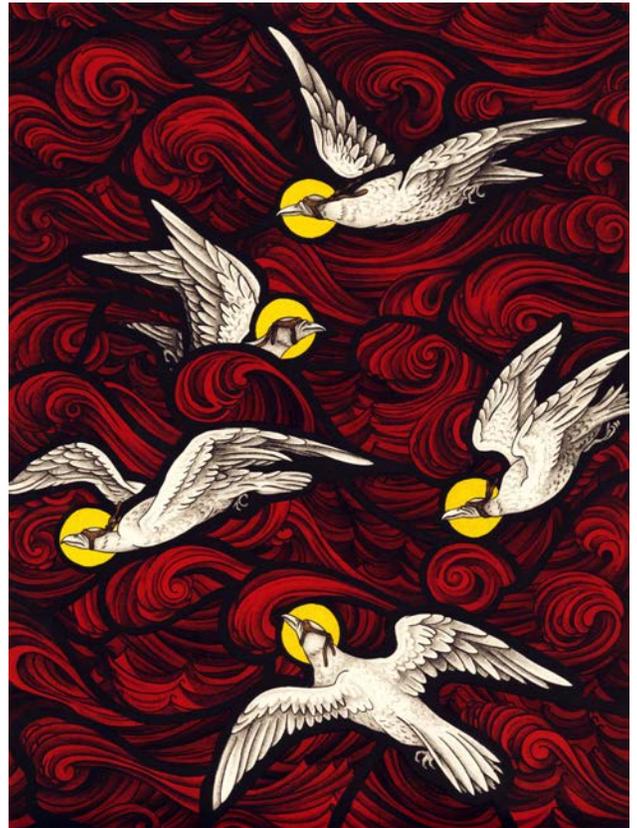


Image courtesy of Aaron S. Coleman

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JUN 12-SEP 27, 2015

ACTIVITY #2 SCREENPRINT WITH STENCILS

The prints produced by the Fatherless Print Posse are screenprints; the following lesson will utilize a style of printmaking that is accessible to the process of screenprinting and is still possible if screens are not available.

Materials

manila envelopes
screenprinting ink
cardboard
silkscreen set
pencil
X-Acto knives

Instructions

Have students look at different types of screenprinting and design a graphic styled image that will be easily transferred to their screen. Once the students have designed their image, have the students transfer their images to the manila envelope. The transfer can be a redrawn image; an easier method, depending on skill level, could be a graphite transfer. Once the image has been transferred to the manila envelope, have the students cut out the design from the manila envelope with the X-Acto knife.

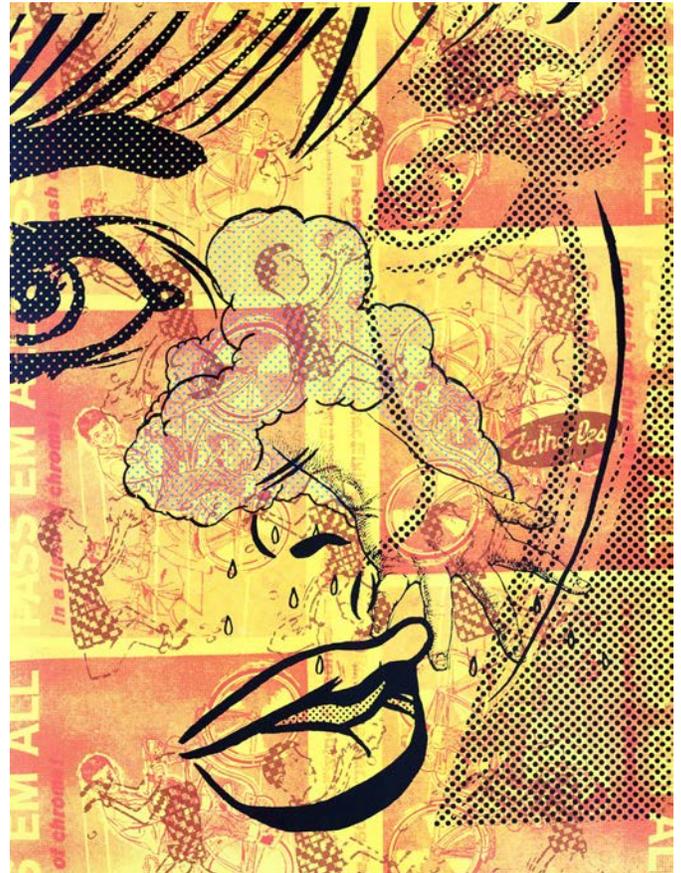


Image courtesy of Fatherless

Once the design is cut out of the manila envelope, tape the design on the backside of the screen leaving the cut out part open and clear of tape. After the edges of the design have been taped down to the screen, register the screen onto the paper and load the screen with the screen printing ink at the bottom. Once the ink is on the screen use a piece of cardboard to pull the ink across the design to transfer the ink to the paper.

If you do not have a screen available, you can use a brush to transfer the design to paper by using the stencil on its own. If using this method, just place the stencil down on the paper and use a brush to apply paint or ink onto the paper.

ISBE Standards: 26.B.4d, 26.B.3d, 26.B.5

RAM

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WEBSITES

Rockford Art Museum
www.rockfordartmuseum.org

Dick Blick Art Materials
www.dickblick.com

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE Standards)
www.isbe.state.il.us

ARTISTS WEBSITES

Aaron S. Coleman	aaroncolemanprintmaking.com
Martin Mazorra	martinmazorra.net
Sean Starwars	seanstarwars.com
Cleon Peterson	cleonpeterson.com
Joseph Velasquez	josephvelasquez.com
Michael Barnes	michaelbarnes.us
Fatherless	wearefatherless.com
Tara Zanzig	tararchy.com