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works of fine art on paper*



Audrey Lenora Flack

"Great art is in exquisite balance. It is restorative. I believe in the energy of art, and through the use of that energy, the artist's ability to transform his or her life, and by example, the lives of others."
from Commencement speech at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, May, 1974. The art world lost an artistic polymath on June 24, 2024, when Audrey Lenora Flack died at age 93.

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© JOURNAL OF THE PRINT WORLD, 2024 ISSN: 0737-7436 VOL. 48, #4

Prints to Remember

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL
MOKUHANGA CONFERENCE, ECHIZEN

INHERITANCE & INNOVATION: MOKUHANGA ARTISTS EXPLORE JAPANESE PAPER

by April Vollmer

While the long anticipated Fifth International Mokuhanaga Conference was brief, held from April 4 to 6, 2024, it showcased a huge number of astonishing prints at eight exhibitions scattered across the Japanese papermaking town of Echizen. It was the first in-person meeting of the triennial conference since the pandemic.

Keiko Kadota (d. 2017) initiated the triennial conferences in 2011 as a way to maintain and expand the international connections she created through her residency programs. The Nagasawa Art Park residency, begun in 1997, moved to a new location near Mount Fuji in 2011 as the Mokuhanaga Innovation Laboratory (Mi-Lab). In 2024 it moved to Echizen in conjunction with the conference. It was attended by 120 artists who use mokuhanaga, the traditional water-based technique refined in Japan during the 18th century to make ukiyo-e prints.

The conference included valuable talks and demonstrations, a banquet with local food, and tours of local craft factories. It was wonderful to witness the expertise of the Echizen papermakers, but the heart of the conference was the exhibition program, ably organized by artist Katsutoshi Yuasa, who in addition held a solo show, *Depthless*, at the Washinosato Art Museum. With an MA from the Royal College of Art, London, he teaches at Tama Art University as well as running his East Tokyo Mokuhanaga Studio. His hand cut woodcuts are based on photographs taken during his extensive travels. They suggest

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metaphysical ideas about the relation of place and time, expressed through his meticulous carving of wood blocks using traditional Japanese tools and materials.



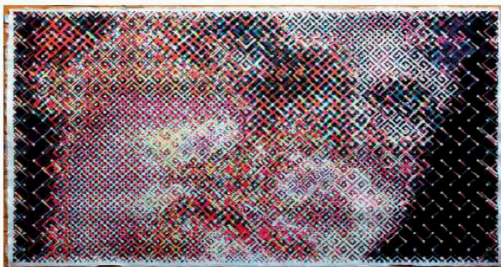
Katsutoshi Yuasa, "This is not a story to be passed on (with blue eyes)," 2023, 36 x 63 inches, image size, edition 3, oil based woodcut on Iwano Heizaburo Kozo paper

Ralph Kiggell (d. 2022) was honored for his innovative use of woodcut in a memorial exhibition in the front foyer of the Imadate Art Museum. Wayne Crothers of the National Gallery of Victoria, presented a moving talk about Ralph and his legacy, and Jacqueline Gribbin wrote a personal tribute presented in front of his work. From the UK, Ralph spent many years in Asia and studied mokuhanaga with the Yoshida family and with Akira Kurosaki in Japan before moving to Thailand where he experimented with using local materials for his woodcut prints. *The Hunter*, from 2020, was made in Thailand and is composed of six woodcut segments printed on collaged local Saa paper. This suite of giant prints was a fitting backdrop for reunions and award ceremonies at the conference.



Ralph Kiggell, "The Hunter," 2020, giant woodcut collage in six parts printed on Thai Saa handmade paper from SP Studio, Lampang and natural pigments

The Board Member Exhibition recognized the substantial contributions of the board. Two of Mike Lyon's (USA) large machine cut multi-color portraits dominated the back wall of the gallery. Mike combines his fluency in computer programming with an expertise in Japanese printing to create abstracted portraits based on his photography, printed on fine washi.



Mike Lyon, "Jessica," 2024, 42 x 77 inches, mokuhanaga from four blocks, kozo paper by Iwano Ichibei

Mara Cozzolino (Italy) and Jacqueline Gribbin (Australia/UK) both contributed prints with tree images. Jacqueline's *Hot Burn I* is printed with ink she made from charcoal of trees burned in bushfires near her home in the Northern Territory, Australia.



Jacqueline F. Gribbin, "Hot Burn I," 2021, 17.3 x 23 inches, edition 10, water-based woodblock print on Tosa Kozo, ink from Stringybark and Woollybutt tree charcoal

Florence Neal (USA) also contributed tree images, woodcuts with layered tree bark patterns. Other board members represented were Ralph Kiggell (UK/Thailand), Kari Laitinen (Finland), Tuula Moilanen (Japan/Finland), Hiroki Morinoue (USA), Yoonmi Nam (Korea/USA), Michael Schneider (Austria/Japan), and April Vollmer (USA). This exhibition demonstrated a wide variety of prints from an international group of artists who have worked together over many years to promote international understanding, the mission of the conference.

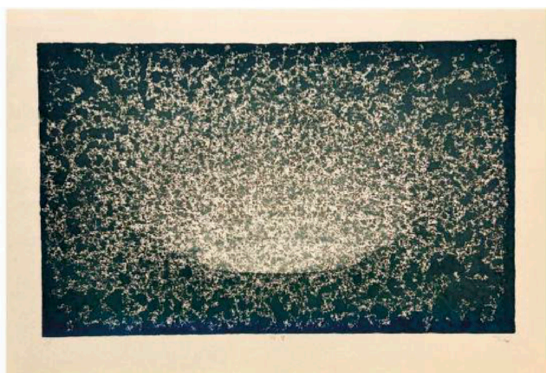
The Mokuhanaga Sisters (Katie Baldwin, Patty Hudak, Mariko Jesse, Kate MacDonagh, Yoonmi Nam, Natasha Norman, Mia O, Lucy May Schofield, and Melissa Schulenberg) created a special exhibition, *Masaban*, in the attic of Udatsu Museum. Each of the nine artists produced an edition of ten woodcuts, printed with sumi ink on masaban size washi (half size sheets) made by the Udatsu papermill. This uniform format highlighted the variety of approaches in the prints, which were suspended from rafters with dramatic lighting. This group met at Keiko Kadota's residency programs and has continued to present exhibitions and mokuhanaga projects together.



Yoonmi Nam "Bamboo," 2024, mokuhanaga, edition 5, 21 x 17 inches, 2 blocks, 4 passes

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The 2024 Juried International Mokuhanga Exhibition in the Imada Art Museum showcased 140 prints on washi. Chirio Taki (Japan) who teaches at Mi-Lab and demonstrated paper sizing, showed one of the speckled (gomazuri) prints she is known for.



Chihito Taki (Japan), "Reverberation," 2023, edition 15, 12.5 x 17.5 inches, gomazuri

April Vollmer (USA) created patterns by printing both sides of transparent kozo washi multiple times in "Flycatcher II."



April Vollmer (USA) "Flycatcher II," 2023, 19 x 13 inches, edition 6, on transparent kozo

Many accomplished artists including Roslyn Kean (Australia), Michiko Hamada (Japan), Sayaka Kawamura (Japan), Sarah Brayer (Japan/USA) showed work. Prizes for prints in the juried exhibition were awarded to Daryl Howard (USA), Andy Farkas (USA), Mike Lyon (USA), Cameron Bailey (USA), Julie Strasheim (China/USA), Charles Spitzack (USA), and Neilton Clarke (Australia). The conference website includes an illustrated list of all the prints in this excellent exhibition.

Open Portfolio was the most exciting part of the conference with artists displaying portfolios of woodblock prints on tables. Aleksander Wozniak (Poland) showed a series of oversized hand cut portrait prints, enlivened with eccentric off-kilter registration.

(all photos courtesy the artist unless otherwise noted)



Aleksander Wozniak, "Jasiek," (portrait of the artist's nephew), 2021, 22 x 19 inches, edition 4/6 E.V.

Matthew Willie Garcia (USA) presented his brightly colored explosion woodcuts. Carol Justin (UK) whose book Japanese Woodcut: Traditional Techniques and Contemporary Practice was recently released by The Crowood Press, presented her subtle multi-layered prints. Keiko Hara's Mokuhanga Project Space in Walla Walla, Washington, which offers residency and training programs related to mokuhanga, displayed woodcuts she published by Patricia Clark and Donald Groskost.

Additional exhibitions included Terry McKenna's solo show, the **MI-LAB Collection** Exhibition of work created at the residencies, and **The Macau Print Association Exhibition Birds in the City**.

Documentation of exhibitions and other events can be reviewed on the International Mokuhanga Association website and Youtube channel. The next conference is being planned for the University of Kansas, Lawrence, in 2027.

WEBSITES

International Mokuhanga Association: mokuhanga.org
International Mokuhanga Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@InternationalMokuhanga
Mokuhanga Sisters: mokuhangasisters.com
Mokuhanga Project Space: mokuhangaprojectspace.com

Announcing
the successful conclusion of the
Fifth International Mokuhanga Conference, Echizen, Japan,
and the October 19, 2024 fundraising event at
Kentler International Drawing Space, in Red Hook, Brooklyn.
The fundraiser includes many of the artists active in the conference. Kentler's ongoing flat file program focuses on mokuhanga and carries many of the artists affiliated with the conference.

mokuhanga.org
kentlergallery.org
aprilvollmer.com



Florence Neal, "Wood to Water: White Ash," 2022, 15.8 x 31.75 inches, edition 6, mokuhanga on Kozoshi washi
(Board Member Exhibition International Mokuhanga Conference, Echizen)



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