

An Artist's Life

My father was my first art teacher, and I was a serious student of two point perspective at age 8. The budding talent was then bundled off to the Art Institute of Chicago for sculpture lessons. How scary it was to walk to the classroom with Egyptian sarcophagi looming on either side of me! It did get better, however.

Art school at the University of Miami was trippy with instructors ranging from very traditional to very contemporary. Abstract Expressionism was all the rage, and you can still see broad sweeping emotional marks in my work. Painting was my passion. And can you believe this was all before acrylics were even invented?

After raising my daughter, I had energy once again to make art. Watercolors, handmade paper, and whimsical soft sculpture fell out of my creative psyche in the early '80s—then came the life changing opportunity to travel to Florence, Italy, and the Santa Reparata Graphic Arts Centre where I learned to make prints.

Here I was introduced to collagraphy, traditional etching, and watercolor monotype. With a background as a painter, I naturally gravitated to the monotype process. However, the seductive textural quality of the collagraph, and the ability afforded by etching to translate drawings into new forms of expression worked magic on me. Over the intervening years, I have experimented with these techniques, always attempting to push their limits. Woodcuts, pochoir, and wooden letterpress type fonts also appear in my work. The advent of the solar plate has been exciting both as a method to combine photography and also add the dimension of drawing in my monoprints.

In 2000, I earned my Ph.D. in Mythological Studies. I presented my dissertation, "Footprints at Tesetice-Kyovice: 7500 years of sacred story" as an artist's book on handmade paper. For this study of a Neolithic sacred site, my successful methodology was to use art making as the data collection method. I featured monoprints and woodcuts on handmade paper in this monumental installation in the Czech Republic and a similar one later in Turkey. After 2007, I returned to studio based art.

Printmaking gave me the opportunity to play with all the techniques I love: painting, drawing, sculpting. And that's just what I've done for over 25 years. I still go to Florence almost every year; and, my art continues to evolve. In 2012, I found a very traditional studio in which to work and experimented with both Tempera d'Uova and Tempra Grassa—the painting mediums of the great Renaissance artists.

I continue to push the limits of traditional painting and printmaking while maintaining my own quirky aesthetic, and relentlessly explore new opportunities. For ten years, starting in 1994, I worked "in the field" creating monumental temporary installations in forests, on beaches and in the midst of neolithic archaeological sites; between 2009 and 2014, I directed Momi Lani Paper Arts in Santa Cruz, CA, teaching printmaking, book arts, and paper making techniques. "The Amazing Adventures of Radish Toe," a children's book featuring my monoprints on handmade paper

was published in 2010.

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What a wonderful journey this has been so far.