

LIZ POLLARD - ARTIST' STATEMENT

A resident of West Yorkshire again, after almost twenty years in North Essex, artist Liz Pollard works mostly in traditional print media. After completing an M.A. in the Fine Art Department at Leeds University in 2000 in Feminism & the Visual Arts, she returned to East Anglia, setting up her studio space in Norwich and supplementing her art practice with part-time teaching at Norwich School of Art & Design. Now working at the University of Leeds in the School of Media and Communication, Liz has recently set up her own studio for her etching press in the front room, after over a decade stored away in pieces.

Liz creates work using a wide range of printmaking techniques, from simple monoprinting and relief prints to multi-plate etchings, using photographic references, sketches and drawing to develop her ideas. Sources of inspiration include a lifelong fascination with the hidden world of domesticity and the rituals involved in our daily lives. Completing an M.A. dissertation on 'Women, Madness and Cleaning' left Liz depressed, with a large collection of J-Cloths and rubber gloves and a strong aversion to housework to show for her efforts.

Influences range from 17th-century Dutch genre painting, Chardin's still-lives and interiors, Japanese wood-block prints, to contemporary video and performance artists as well as printmakers such as Nancy Spero, Paula Rego and Elizabeth Blackadder.

A 3-week trip to Hong Kong in 2002 was a rich and rewarding experience, and led Liz to engage with 'Eastern' aesthetics. Creating collages of her own relief prints and mono-prints combined with Origami and Khadi papers, these works play with the concepts 'Oriental' and 'Occidental', and tinker with abiding clichés about Eastern and Western cultures. The fusion of colours and pattern is intended to reach beyond cultural and geographical borders.

In an Easterly Direction, an exhibition in Colchester Library's *Les Livres Gallery* in 2004, continued to explore Liz's interest in oriental art and culture, the dynamic of line and space as well as printed textiles. Printmaking is often a delicate, complex process, juggling ideas with techniques. Her works reflect this ongoing creative conflict - to balance the colourful collages and the spare, linear works in which the

white space of the paper (as in Japanese calligraphy) is as positive as the marks upon it. Liz began creating her banners, backed with imitation rice paper, as a way of bringing print out from behind glass and frame, a chance for viewers to engage with the almost textile qualities of handmade papers. Initially, it was a novel way of displaying prints produced by Braintree Community Art Group in the Dome Gallery, Braintree, as part of ARTfresh 2002, and grew from there. More recent work is reinforced by life-drawing evening classes and at Leeds Art Gallery, in model-led sessions using drama, life-drawing, art history and the space and collections of the gallery. Currently Liz is looking at the natural world for inspiration and, ironically, now surrounded by moors and hills, is drawn to the coastline, the border between land and sea, with its opportunities for beach-combing and mark-making.

Liz Pollard, Fine Art Printmaker

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