

Grace Sellers
Miller Arts Scholars
Fourth Year Arts Award Outcome Report
March 21, 2025

A Puppet's Life

Introduction

In the spring of 2024, I requested \$3000 to create a series of prints that would investigate the psychological effects of control and obedience through representations of puppets, exaggerated facial expressions, theatrical scenes, and gothic elements. With the generous award, I was able to purchase all the materials I needed to create these prints.

Artwork

This award has allowed me to explore more advanced printmaking techniques. This year, I have been learning a lot about multi-run color lithography. I have been working on a three-part lithograph inspired by marionettes. Each of the three lithographs has three color runs through a process of drawing, etching the stone, deleting, counter etching, and adding visual information to the stone. Each part of the piece will have a part of a body, so that when they are hung on the wall together, they will resemble the parts of a marionette coming together to form the figure. The first piece I created for this project was the head and upper body. I decided to make this a portrait of my sister to explore my relationship with her, and how it has affected my life. I next created a print of the arm, and then finally the legs that appear to dangle in the air like those of an actual marionette. Through making these prints, I have learned to print lithographs independently, whereas before, I always needed a partner to maintain the moisture of the stone as I printed.

As I worked on these lithographs, I have also been working on etchings and woodcuts. With etchings, I have learned how to etch with steel, as opposed to zinc, as steel is a much cheaper alternative, albeit a bit harder to achieve the bright whites you can achieve with zinc. And for woodcuts, I have been learning about multi-block prints. In the past, I have done reduction woodcuts, where I have slowly carved down a single block, printing it multiple times as I go to achieve multiple colors. With multi-block prints, I have a bit more freedom with the colors because you don't have to stack the colors on top of each other like you do with reduction, leading the colors to mix together.

Changes from my original proposal

In my original proposal, I said that my prints would depict scenes of marionette puppets, people with exaggerated facial expressions and gestures, and fantastical settings. The prints I have created still involve marionette puppets and strange expressions, although I have leaned into more portraiture than depicting whole scenes that are full of visual information. Further developing my compositions and environments in my artwork is something that I am continuing to work on in my artistic practice.

Reflection

This project has allowed me to delve deeper into my passion for printmaking, advance my knowledge of techniques, and push myself in my practice.

Miller Arts Scholars Budget - 4th Year Arts Award

Intaglio Materials		Source	Date accessed	
5-Zinc Etching Plates - .064 Thickness, 18" x 24"	Etching plates for intaglio prints	Blick	7/16/24	\$1,008.45
100-BFK Rives Printmaking Paper - 22" x 30", White, 280 gsm	Paper on which to print etchings	Blick	7/16/24	\$625.00
Woodcut Materials			7/16/24	
4-1/2 in. x 4 ft. x 8 ft. PureBond Birch Plywood	Wood for woodcuts	Home Depot	7/16/24	\$269.52
4-Mulberry Thick Paper Rolls (38" width)	Paper on which to print woodcuts	Hiromi Paper	7/16/24	\$294.40
Lithography Materials			7/16/24	
10-Ball Grained Litho Plates 30 X 36 X 0.015 in.	Aluminum plates for lithographic prints	Takach Press	7/16/24	\$350.00

Hanco Litho Ink -- 1-1lb can each of black, white, process magenta, process yellow, intense blue for a total of 5 cans	Ink for printing lithographs and woodcuts	Takach Press	7/16/24	\$155.00
100-Fabriano Rosaspina Paper - 20" x 27", White	Paper on which to print lithographs	Blick	7/16/24	\$278.00
6-Korns Lithographic Crayons	Crayons for drawing on aluminum litho plates	Takach Press	7/16/24	\$36.00
Total				\$3,016.37
Budget Income, Funding, or Other Awards				
Income item:	MAS Third Year Award			\$3,000.00
Income item:	Personal contribution			\$16.37
Total				\$3,016.37

