

Artist Statement

My perception of the physical world and emotional response to it is the basis of my art. I see and I react, that is what compels me to explore the relationship between the two factors. It is a simple truth that is relayed back as an interpretation emerging from my conscious mind and expressed using my hands to draw, paint or carve into a surface. Using careful observation the delicate interplay that exists between structure, form, colour, light and shadow are studied and adapted to my work.

My imagery is highly influenced by my surroundings and personal experiences. Influences are also derived from my appreciation for the work of various artists who share strong personal bonds with the natural world.

Landscape and nature are the prominent component in my work. During the past several years I have focused mainly on creating original hand printed images on paper. I have also explored acrylic, oil and watercolour paintings and detailed pencil renderings. I am captivated with natural structures and designs found in the many varieties of organic life. It was living in northern wilderness areas during my childhood that intimate connections were established to nature. This bond has continued into adulthood and is marked by journeys into remote regions both on foot and by canoe.

The region where I live harbours vast areas of boreal forest that encompass a large number of fresh water rivers, streams, lakes, ponds and marshes. There is an amazing biodiversity that exists here that is accented by an array of unique species of flora and fauna. I have chosen to illustrate the interconnectedness that exists between the landscape, organic living things and the elements. I feel a strong connection to the land that has forged a deep personal and spiritual relationship. My imagery is a visual diary that captures my experiences as individual moments. They not only reflect a particular time and place but as forces of change proceed to alter these habitats and ecosystems, the studies might serve as a record or archive.

Many of the images have first been acquired as source material in the form of photographs and sketches. These serve as reference materials that become the basis for much of the interpretive artwork. The basic composition is then translated using a variety of traditional and current printmaking disciplines. As an image develops either above or below the surface of a particular matrix it evolves. I will spend a fair amount of time developing the image. It doesn't matter what discipline is employed, each one presents a set of challenges that force me to think about, learn from and ultimately expand my levels of skill and expertise in that medium. The images are derived from a variety of surfaces that employ several types of printmaking techniques. These include serigraphy, relief block, plate based intaglio & photopolymer gravure and collagraph plate. Prints are created using traditional hand printing methods. I also implement more current non-toxic materials such as vegetable oil inks and UV light reactive polymer plates. This is out of respect for the environment and my own health.

I hold the belief that I am a guest when in the wilderness and it has never been my intention to disturb that delicate balance established by nature but to relay my observations and experiences through my artwork.

Brian Holden