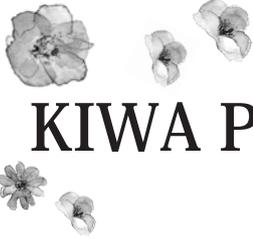




KIWA TOPICS

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京都国際木版画協会
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KIWA PRESIDENT'S EXHIBITION REPORT

Richard Steiner

The 6th KIWA Exhibition has finished. It was held in the Kyoto Municipal Museum, Annex, a Meiji Period building on the outside, but a state-of-the-art exhibition hall inside. KIWA has used the same large second floor twice before, in 2003 and 2007.

Exhibitions of this sort are usually only six days long. The show was installed on Monday, opened on Tuesday, closed on Sunday and was dismantled on Monday. In between over twelve hundred visitors came to see a fantastic display of truly wonderful, contemporary woodblock print art.

We received 800 prints by 300 artists from 45 countries, more in each category than ever before. The level of craftsmanship was the highest yet, and the range of subject matter also wider and therefore more interesting than in previous exhibitions.

KIWA is drawing the best art from the best artists around the world. Judging Day was held in the middle of September, 2010. It took one whole day. There are only 11 prizes, but about 40 artists' superb artwork had to be judged. The

resulting choices can be thought to represent the top level of the most excellent printwork we have received in our 15 years of existence. More prizes are needed, to be fair to the other artists whose prints didn't get awarded.

Two and a half weeks before the show opened, Japan experienced a mighty earthquake and a terrible tsunami. We wondered if it would be right to hold an art exhibition in such circumstances. We went ahead, opened the show, and put out a Donation Box, which got filled with money that we will donate to an art-related entity in that area. What was most interesting, however, were the comments visitors gave us, about how wonderful it was to see such excellent art, and to have their dark and depressing moods lifted and relieved. KIWA and I personally were thanked daily for offering this exhibition. What greater reward can an artist have than to know that his/her art blesses and comforts viewers?

I thank each and every artist who sent work to the 6th KIWA Exhibition. It was a history making experience, for us and for the visitors.



1~4: The young and old, whole range of people came to enjoy the show.

5: Installing the show.

6: After dismantling the show.



“Reaching Maturity”

James Pizzorno
Pizzorno-Lunetta Prizegiver

In Kyoto, cherry blossoms just at their peak, the stage was set for a breathtaking event. The 6th KIWA exhibition was indeed an awesome sight which challenged even the fullness of the season.

Walking into the exhibition, I was struck by how incredibly mature KIWA had indeed become. From its humble beginnings in 1997 with 9 artists and 21 prints, KIWA has

become a heavyweight in the international woodblock printmaking world. With over 800 works from 300 artists, it is a giant.

And yet it made me wonder how such a professional operation can produce what it did with its meager budget. The answer obviously is the dedication of Kimiko and Richard Steiner and the members on the ground in Kyoto.

Each print is painstakingly cataloged, photographed, mounted, judged and hung; all with the greatest of care. Evidence of this was very forthcoming, not only in the show, but in the catalog (a must buy) as well.

Their dedication to the craft and excellence/attention to detail drove me to sponsor an award this year, and I am committed to sponsoring further future awards as well.

Although I am of course partial to

our award winner, Remo Giatti, other works stand out to me as well.

The complex message of Carolyn Mount's *All that I want you to be (and all that you aren't)*; what is the meaning of the complimentary rabbit and aura? The sublime texture of Bobby Patmore's *Janus* which changes as you change your position, like the mythical god itself. The perfect pastel poetry of Natsuko Katahira's *Close to the Beyond IV*; I actually feel as if I am closer to something I did not know. I would implore you to buy a copy of the limited addition catalogue to explore further.

The overall beauty of all works submitted and the commitment to the artist was breathtaking. Four years can not come quick enough and when the next KIWA comes, I urge you all to make the trip; it is well worth it.

“Truly Outstanding”

Ken Rogers, Managing Editor, Kyoto Journal

The recent KIWA show was a revelation. Who knew so many artists in this mega-pixelated era were still enraptured by the heady challenge of an entirely hand-crafted medium? Who knew they were patiently re-envisaging its traditional attributes and adventurously opening up so many previously unimaginable potentials? So many nationalities, glimpses of so many visual languages transcending boundaries and borders; such a joy to see that creative pursuit of uniqueness, and that shared universal faith in blade and block, the subtleties of ink and paper. Great kudos to KIWA for giving so many artists this opportunity to show, together, what makes woodcut still so relevant, so exciting.

“Artistic Encouragement”

Iku Sakurabe



I am a college student studying printmaking in Richard Steiner's workshop. I participated in the 6th Show as a staff member where I saw an amazing number of works displayed. “Are these all woodblock prints?” Many of my friends showed a big surprise. Looking at these prints from all over the world, I was greatly inspired and strongly felt that I should push myself more into printmaking. I want to create works which can convey some good message to the viewers, like I saw in the 6th KIWA.

■ Editor's note :

A long time has passed since we published the last issue of KIWA Topics. Why did it take so long? Those who came to see the 6th Show may understand the reason. Those who did not, please look at the catalog or the home page, then you will understand that in order to prepare such a fantastic, exciting exhibition, we had to put many things aside. I am not a printmaker myself, but came to be a staff member of KIWA through Mr. Steiner's encouragement. Surrounded by the prints in the museum, I strongly felt the warm atmosphere which digital art can never create. I am sure that it came partly from the power of woodblock prints, but also from the power of KIWA which made this exhibition possible. I hope our readers will continue to support KIWA so that it can continue to grow. (Fuki Haritani)

■ Publisher :

Kyoto International Woodprint Association

Address: 64-29, Matsunoki-cho,
Shimogamo, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto,
Japan, 606-0816

E-mail: rks-rks1@nifty.com

URL: <http://www.kiwa.net>

Editor: Fuki Haritani

Translator: Kimiko Steiner

