**ArtsBenicia** California Printmakers: Tradition and Innovation

I pursue a multi-disciplined art practice that crosses various mediums and techniques. Within this pursuit, works on paper in general and printmaking in particular have always held a special place. The versatility and variety paper allows lends itself to unlimited possibilities. While I do engage in traditional executions of works on paper and printmaking, I enjoy attempts to treat these familiar materials and processes in somewhat unconventional ways.

The printmaking process is often well thought out and technically precise. My pieces represented in “California Printmakers: Tradition and Innovation” are attempts to add a sense of spontaneity to the genre. Monotypes tend to allow for more flexibility within the print medium. These representations utilize silkscreened monotypes as the foundation to the process. They represent a continuation of my investigation of surface manipulation and the blurring of distinctions between 2- and 3-dimensional results. It is hoped a visual tactile quality of heightened texture is created beyond the sense of pure color, form and composition. In these cases, the surfaces are penetrated in various ways which then accept secondary elements that become prominent gestures. As is the case with all my non-sculptural work, the results are nonobjective abstractions. Each artwork begins with a very general imagined blueprint, but quickly give way to the impromptu actions of creative process. They appear almost organic in nature - germinating, growing and blossoming with each studio session. It is hoped that this sense of freedom translates into exuberance rather than just random chaos. While each piece experiments with these principles they arrive at very different ends. **WOP\_1** (Making Amends) is an example of the base print actually being severed and then unified by applied printed strips that interlace the surface. It is not intended to be destructive, but rather reinforces the premise that the whole is the sum of its various parts. In addition, it adds an unexpected dynamic that would not have been realized had it been treated more conventionally. **WOP\_4** accelerates my interest in exaggerated dimensional investigations within the print medium. Through the introduction of printed tissue paper a fluid dynamic takes hold within the composition. Tissue paper was selected for its translucency and the malleability that allows for this unique result. **WOP\_5** features a print base with applied unbleached Mulberry paper chine-colle. The result is then penetrated and receives additional Mulberry paper elements that are then hand colored. The translucency created by the chine-colle application creates a wonderful sense of depth as it mutes the base. The infusion of the painted knotted applications results in a synthesis of dimension, texture and color. Ultimately, in spite of the impulsive nature of these works, the intention is a sense of harmony, beauty and energy resulting in an experience that is compelling and visually rewarding.

I would like to thank the Jurors and all those associated with Arts Benicia for this opportunity to present my work.

**j. marc mueller**