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INTRODUCTION

The Bradley University Galleries Program seeks to expand the audience for the visual arts and to promote understanding, appreciation and scholarship of contemporary art.. Since 1950, when Director of the School of Art at Bradley University, Ernest Freed, initiated the Bradley Print Show, it has been central to achieving these objectives. It was among the first nationwide juried print exhibitions, and the Bradley National is now regarded as one of the oldest and most reputable print and drawing competitions in the country. The exhibition remains a national juried competition created to provide working artists with a showcase in which to display their works in professional gallery spaces. The final installation of the selected works presents an opportunity to central Illinois community members to view current trends in contemporary art.

In the years since its beginning, some changes have been made. The exhibition has become biannual rather than annual due to its now expansive size. A growing number of purchase awards have helped attract distinguished artists. As art faculty members at Bradley University increased their global interests, the exhibition has expanded to include the international arts community.

We are pleased with the elevated level of interest nationally and globally in the exhibition and look forward to further communication with artists in Europe, South America, Asia and Australia. This year over 600 artists from the USA, Canada, Peru, and Finland sent more than 1,7 00 slides of their works. 132 works representing 125 artists were chosen for this year's exhibition.

Karen Kunc, the juror for the 29th Bradley National Print and Drawing Exhibition, is a Professor of Art at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has exhibited her woodcut prints and artist's books nationally and internationally. She is active in both the Southern Graphics Council and the Mid-America Print Council. Her work can be found in public and private collections, and currently she is co-curating "The Liquid Language of Artist's Books." Her awards include a Fulbright Fellowship. I would like to thank Ms. Kunc for her careful consideration and astute eye in reviewing the works submitted this year. To be the juror of the Bradley National is an awesome and changing task, and we are grateful to have had someone of Ms. Kunc's perception and feeling for contemporary art. This exhibition emphasizes many distinctive artistic views that are unified by a commitment to visual expression.

The Bradley National falls into the category of juried shows, and in that role it serves an important function for new ideas to be brought to the front and to be considered by our peers, curators and the community. In *Graphic Impressions*, the Southern Graphics Council newsletter in the summer of 2001, Ms. Kunc referred to the juried show as a part of a balance. This balance was inclusive of a wide range of venues, such as commercial galleries, traveling invitationals, international biennials, and educational institutions not unlike the galleries at Bradley University. In the preparation of the slides for Ms. Kunc, my staff and I were struck with the high level of engaging ideas of the artists who submitted their works for review. At the conclusion of the jurying process we returned the slides with letters stating our appreciation and admiration for their efforts both artistically and professionally with the optimism of seeing their work at other opportunities offered by the Bradley University Galleries.

Pamela Ayres
Director of Galleries, Exhibitions and Collections for Bradley University



I have six catalogues from past Bradley Nationals here in my lap as I write my juror's statement. I've been looking at past jurors remarks, prize winners, artist's lists - to see how my contribution can add to the ongoing dialogue that this prestigious endeavor sets up. And I can attest to the value of these catalogues as a record, to knowing that this prestigious juried show exists, as one who has participated both as an accepted or rejected artist through over 25 years of striving to achieve "the Bradley". Many of you will know of my passion and commitment to the value of juried competitions (see Graphic Impressions, The Southern Graphics Council Newsletter, "Letter to the Editor: A Response to 'Why Bother?' ", summer 2001) and that I

do not take my charge here as a juror lightly - certainly not as a "game". For me this has been an enlightening experience to see work - to see a lot of work - that I would not otherwise have viewed, and to seek to enter into each artist's mind, hand and body. Thus it has been a distinct pleasure to learn of so many of your works, to see the ongoing works of many colleagues, peers and friends - whether included in the show or not - and to learn of the myriad of artists out there. The impression I can present after my involvement as juror for this installment of the Bradley is that of the great panoply of artists, and the resonance of the works.

I was at one time on the crest of the wave of knowing who's who in the print world - knowledge gleaned from years of following fellow juried show participants, establishing contacts through the printmaking organizations and conferences, seeing exhibition announcements sent to me from friends, acquaintances, and even artists I have not met. Again, this is largely how to keep up with what is happening in the vast, non-centralized print world, as opposed to basing one's knowledge on the glossy art journals that rarely cover the self-publishing print artist or drawing artist at all. Now, I am impressed with the many artists who are making terrific work, new to my eye and up and coming, and those I know but did not know your works well. It is refreshing to know of such waves of artists - and that I will never be able to keep up again! So, this richness of discovery has been most rewarding, and confirms my belief that art arises everywhere, that the ability and drive to make art is part of the human condition.

JUROR'S STATEMENT

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A previous juror for the Bradley states that "technique and theme are crucial vehicles for a resonance which stems from something ineffable". These works accepted for this presentation create this ineffable resonance - an evocative phrase that attempts to speak to the effect of seeing meaningful art and the lingering contemplation and awareness that such powerful and beautiful art exists. I found that for me the show developed itself, as works spoke to each other, and fell into groupings that arose out of the endless trays of slides. These groupings are: fragments - of bodies, faces, textured shapes; iconic natural systems - plant-like, organic forms; ways of "reading" - visual sign, symbol; faceted/multiple viewpoints in serial presentations, with cinematic flow; tonally dark works that set a pensive, vulnerable, lonely mood; colors that echo between works from different artists; the sensual movements of markmaking - pin pricks, sewing stitches, metallic or burned impressions, ink obliteration, decisive empty space. Therefore, this show slows down, works on an intimate scale, has a calm, contemplative attitude, works speak to and complete each other. Each work seems deeply moving, visually compelling and challenging.

I was able to create something in jurying this show, not for a set agenda, but with a result that is more specific than simply selecting the accomplished in every genre or approach. However, if truth be told, my "agenda" and purpose in looking at art is always to see how issues and concepts are addressed through an artistic lens that is a creative, interpretive voice; and to consider the amazing transformation of "raw" materials and use of humble tools - from stylus, pigment and binder, substrata, matrix, detritus from the world - into meaningful, beautiful works of art, through the artist's hands.

The organizers and patrons of the 29th Bradley National Print and Drawing Exhibition are to be commended for their great effort and commitment. I want to thank Bradley University for their continuing support and organization in putting together this important exhibition, and for giving me the opportunity to take part. Thanks especially to Pamela Ayers, gallery and exhibitions director, for her enthusiasm and energy, and to her students who have worked so hard and with great professionalism. Thanks also to all the artists who originally submitted their work for review. And finally, I want to thank and congratulate the participating artists in making this a beautiful and intriguing exhibition.

Karen Kunc
Professor of Art
University of Nebraska-Lincoln