

- 1. What event in the graphic scene did attract you in the course of last two years (competition, exhibition, conference)?**
- 2. Do you want to highlight any interesting publication, article or another text related to contemporary printmaking?**
- 3. In comparison with 1990s, can we take notice of some new tendencies in the world graphic arts?**
- 4. In your opinion, are there some significant and interesting hubs of contemporary printmaking?**
- 5. In your opinion, must the printmaking open to new technologies and ways of presentation? And if so, how much, for it would remain a genre of its own right.**

guage. While printmakers have something to say that cannot be said in any other medium than prints, then the longevity of the medium is guaranteed.

**Karen Kunc**, print and book artist, Professor at the Department of Art and Art History, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

**1.** I have a very narrow and specific perspective as I was greatly occupied as the director of a major American conference Printmaking Relevance/Resonance. This was the biennial conference of the Mid America Print Council, and my effort was to create an important educational and cultural event sponsored and hosted by the Department of Art and Art History, at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln ([www.unl.edu/MAPC2004](http://www.unl.edu/MAPC2004)). For three days, 6-9 October 2004, keynote artists, museum curators, critics, collectors, art historians made presentations, lectures, studio demonstrations, gallery talks, participants took part in roundtable discussions, exhibitions and collaborative art activities. The broad spectrum of issues, artists and exhibitions were meant to have wide appeal to the public as well as the specialist, with the purpose to generate education about contemporary print art, changing art media and technologies use by artists, and to learn directly from the artists themselves. Keynote speakers were Outi Heiskanen, Akira Kurosaki and Judy Pfaff, with a recognition award presented to Carol Summers. Artists who demonstrated their printing included: Greg Murr, Seiko Tachibana, Debora Oden, Endi Poskovic, Sarah Smelser, Francisco Souto, and many others.

MAPC is a regional organization, but the conference program attracted more than 700 attendees from across the United States, and even internationally, with participants and presenters from Canada, Japan, Finland, and Americans from diverse origins, such as Bosnia, Russia, Japan, Korea, Venezuela, France. Also there was incredible participation from local artists, art collectors, art educators, and students. The conference gained local private sponsors as well, which gave them a specific interest in the events and public activities. Everyone in Lincoln, Nebraska, was aware of the conference, the organization of events and the possibility to see prints everywhere!

Networking between participants was an important outcome, especially with an *Open Conversation* session in which randomly assigned groups enjoyed the opportunity to talk with those they did not know, with group discussions lasting over 90 minutes.

A major exhibition opened at the conference: *Mirror of the Wood: A Century of the Woodcut Print in Finland*. This presentation of 70 graphic works, from small to monumental in scale, gained important national exposure, and the exhibition continued throughout 2005 with an American tour.

**2.** Rem Koolhaas text-based installation

at the 51st Venice Biennale... that analyzed space use, and the questions of preservation and reuse of waste urban space for art... a text rich installation that was also visually dense, which presented important content about re-thinking, re-cycling. This installation worked as a printed art piece and a significant text.

**3.** No answer

**4.** Among so many that I could mention, here are a few:

- University of Alberta, Canada – incredible facilities, institutional support, faculty and research team of leading print artists – Ingram, Caulfield, Jule, Osborne, Dixon.

- Utah State University, Logan, Utah – high quality of printmaking students who are learning from Professor Koichi Yamamoto.

- Academy of Fine Art, Helsinki, Finland – largest new etching press ever! great new facilities, with Antti Taanttu as the professor in this 5 year rotating position – an interesting institutional process to keep the faculty fresh.

- Nagasawa Art Park Artist-in-Residence Program, Japan, for Japanese Woodblock Printmaking ([www.endeavor.or.jp/engartistin.html](http://www.endeavor.or.jp/engartistin.html)) – a unique one-course-per-year intensive immersion for a small group of international artists.

- The re-establishment of the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop in New York City – an important effort to keep the spirit alive of this open workshop, in memory of a historic figure in American art.

**5.** I believe that print artists are inevitable technology nuts, who want to see where this ubiquitous print machine can fit into print art. But these artists are just like everyone else who is enamored with new ways of thinking/recording and working/playing that the digital age has spawned. Yes, it is all a great new tool, but it is an evolutionary change from hand making and physical encounters with real materials – what we are made for – to the removal of the hand and illusion. But in this hybrid genre of art – in which printed things are everywhere in new art presentations, but not necessarily called prints – I am most interested in work that is aware of this difference of “man/machine” as part of the content, that address and use the good aspects that come from ability to document and process information, and the de-humanization that this new machine age inevitably leads to.

I find that I am not as interested in so much new media work that seems to be more on the side of photographs than of prints, as those works seem too removed and about illusion. These works also seem to be about so much endless personal history investigations of not-so-interesting old family photos by the latest photo-mechanical means of films and polymer plates.

It was refreshing that the International Print Center New York recently concentrated their *New Prints 2005/Summer* show on only etching ([www.ipcny.org](http://www.ipcny.org)). So, this indicates an interest in comparing the newest of the old, with all the other technological art out there. But today's diversity in the art world should be open to all these means of art making – traditional genres and media are still here, and

will continue to be part of the multi-streamed art scene, and the new genres need to grow and not just be fashion.

Personally, I want to just leave the machine world – which keeps me sitting still, getting thick and stiff, which eats up my time, keeps me from face-to-face or nuanced voice-to-voice communication, but allows for my incredible world-wide contacts and projects. I want to retreat to my studio to make my work in my own way, that has not become out-of-date for me.

**Marcel Fišer**, director of the Klatovy / Klenová

Gallery, curator of the main part (competition) of the 4th International Triennial of Graphic Arts Prague 2004

**1.** Presentations of individual artists at group exhibitions rather than the exhibitions themselves. I can name f.e. gorgeous large prints by Jan Vičar presented at several actions here and abroad.

**2.** I would recommend the book *Image to Print* from 2003 focused on the printing workshop of Peter Kneubühler in Zürich. The most important artists were printing there, and outstanding projects were carried out there. Such activities are a demonstration for me that graphics still make sense nowadays.

**3.** Graphic arts are part of the more general development in art, which is realized in different media at the same time, to various degrees however. The 1980s saw a comeback of painting, and the graphic arts also profited from this. On the contrary, during the 1990s, photography and new media began to be important, so the graphic arts stood in seclusion. Today, the borders between medias are blurring and everything is mixing together; nevertheless, we still hardly hear about graphics. Specifically it is revealed by the fact that even the most interesting printmakers are isolated from a wider audience, and, in addition, the key personalities do not turn to graphics as their second media, which was the case at the time when painting ruled. But I must mention one exception from recent times. The young Slovak artist Martin Sedlák who, in the same year that he finished his thesis, won recognition in a short time with his light installations (he showed them f.e. at the Biennial at the National Gallery in Prague and at his solo exhibition at the Egon Schiele Art Centre in Český Krumlov), besides this he makes classical prints, which are successful at printmaking presentations.

**4.** Viewing the Czech Republic, I do not think so, apart from the activities around Dr. Hošková. We used to hear about Ostrava in connection with serigraphy, but I feel like it has passed away now. I drew some personal conclusions from this fact. When in 2001 we started the international linocut symposia in Klenová, we did not have any expectations. Later I realized that it is an empty field and we want to fill it, in other words we want our gallery to become such a centre. This year we have extended the symposium to a printmaking festival, under the name of Josef Váchal. Every year, several exhibitions of important