

GALLERY **AT** 14 MAPLE

Presents

A SURE HAND



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Humans have been fascinated with their hands since the Paleolithic period. Paintings and drawings dating from 40,000-15,000 BCE have been found in caves in France, Spain, Romania and Australia but perhaps the oldest are on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. Images of bison, horses, deer and aurochs (extinct cattle) were drawn in charcoal, red and yellow ochre, manganese oxide and hematite. Rarely were human images drawn though tracings of hands, *finger flutings*, are in many locations. Ancient man placed his hand against a cave wall and blew pigment to create ghostly stencils. This captivation with hands has been passed down thousands of generations. We find it in young children who instinctively make impressions of their hands in finger-paints or trace them with pencils, markers and crayons while many (adult) artists focus solely on hands. Hands are both our tactile window to life *and* a familiar object.

A SURE HAND allows us to examine 21st century drawings of four artists each of whom were invited for their expertise, talent and vision. We selected work that embodied the defining element of drawings—simplicity. The Exhibit Committee's loose criteria embraced simple materials, charcoal, graphite, pencils and perhaps a small amount of paint or pigments. Drawing juxtaposes the austerity of the single line with the power of the image that emerges. It is the sure hand of these artists that transforms the humble into the extraordinary.

Doug DePice has been at his craft for over 40 years. Both morally and ethically informed, his haunting work carries messages of his subjects' difficult lives, of street children, of poor circumstances, of political upheaval and of civilizations *in extremis*. The agony he captures in his Holocaust series is enhanced by the starkness of these black on white drawings. At first, the crematorium smokestacks echo columns and ruins of ancient civilizations but we soon realize that these are DePice's "tombstones of history". Yet, out of the embers of these atrocities, he has chosen Anne Frank as his touchstone of an enduring human spirit. In one portrait, dark uneasy tones foretell Anne's fate. In another, DePice has placed tape on her face to "symbolize confinement and imprisonment" and as a visual reminder of the "distress, anxiety and uneasiness, which gnawed daily at Anne's psychological well-being." The large work in the lobby, *Elie Wiesel with Snowflakes and Bullets in Auschwitz*, depicts a small child standing alone and confronting his psychological alienation while surrounded by the beauty of the snow and the horror of bullet marks."

The playful inventiveness and whimsy of **Neal Korn's** work does not distract us from his mastery of drawing. Whether it is a statue of Lincoln or Union, NJ, Neal's addition of his own head, a miniature self-portrait, flying through the air, makes us take a second (and third) look

third) look at the visual sleight of hand to what we thought was such a familiar and serious image. He uses the exactness and true perspective of his drawings to fool us into thinking this is simply a “straight” scene until we discover strange elements in which he shares his own vision.

Abstract artist **Arlene Gale Milgram** unapologetically incorporates her life experiences in her pieces. The “energy of thoughts drives the hand to work in different rhythms and densities.” While her pieces are deeply personal, she “hopes to engage the viewer to get lost in the image and find glimpses of shared humanity.” Tapping into some of the universal feelings she believes are inherently in all of us, she expresses herself through a process of “layering, obscuring, releasing, reclaiming, scarring and stitching things together with fine thread— metaphors for my ideas.” Her incorporation of mixed media and a technique of layering convey richness to the drawings floating on top.

Two huge bronze hands almost caress, a twisted and warped beam salvaged from the World Trade Center ruins in sculptor **Sassona Norton's**, 2005 **9/11 Memorial** in Montgomery County, PA, which commemorates the 9/11 plane crash in Pennsylvania. The transmogrified steel has magically become an ethereal flame in artist's astonishing rendering. Thirty-five years ago, Sassona decided that hands, more than any other body part, became the best vehicle to express emotions. “My two works in the show, *Gift* and *Supplication*, are about what is missing as [much as] what is there.” In *Gift*, a powerful large portrait of mature, strong hands are poised and offering something that is in the viewer's imagination. Norton comments, “The gesture is what matters—what is given is absent.” In *Supplication*, these powerful hands appear again, now clasped in prayer. What they pray for is less important [she notes] than recognizing the “instinctual need” to do so. Norton's perception of the human condition drives her work. She is a deep thinker, philosophizing about the shortness of life, the concept of yearning, the sadness of want and the fierce desire to change reality. She effortlessly folds these themes into her exuberant charcoals of hands.

A SURE HAND is an amalgamation of four very different artists' work and is but a sample of the diversity in the art of drawing.

I thank the very talented and supportive Exhibit Committee of Gallery 14 at Maple, Dr. Lynn Siebert, Elaine Rastocky and Tom Werder for their insight, patience and hard work that resulted in this exhibit.

Dick Eger, Curator

February 2015

Doug DePice

The ideas that inspire me:

“I tell you ...there is nothing truly more artistic than to love people.”

These words by Vincent Van Gogh have inspired me and my directions in art. In my eyes art is linked to the human condition. It is an individual private creative process that can cascade into larger shared ideas. Social concerns are artistic concerns, and social problems are spiritual and artistic problems

Elie Wiesel and Anne Frank both experienced the Holocaust in their youth. In her journal Anne had written, “I feel the sufferings of millions.” With these 6 prophetic words she literally painted a haunting image that has echoed through time. We all bear the stamp of this thought in some way.

I wanted to give some artistic expression to these words and the beautiful life that wrote them. The few pieces in this exhibition belong to a larger body of work that explores the theme of the Holocaust with a particular focus on Anne Frank and Elie Wiesel.

How do you represent or symbolize the imprisonment and brutal suffering of a young boy, and the confinement and death of a beautiful little Jewish girl and the millions they represented? Without a clear answer to that I proceeded to try.

Historically art has been concerned with both the struggle of existence, and the mystery of existence. And yet the functions of art making are “insufficient without love, compassion, courage, friendship, and empathy.” (Dean Koontz)

About the Art works:

The art works I have submitted are drawings using charcoal, masking tape, and at times some paint. When I use paint I see my process as comparable to drawing with paint, vigorously sketching as I do with charcoal, pencil, or graphite stick. The tape symbolizes confinement and imprisonment.

In the portrait of Anne’s face with tape and charcoal I wanted the surface to be scarred, marked, and ripped as a visual reminder of the distress, anxiety, and

uneasiness which gnawed daily at Anne 's psychological well-being.

The chimney and smoke stack series were inspired by Elie Wiesel's book *Night*. He had written, "*hunger-thirst-fear-transport-selection-fire-chimney: these words all have intrinsic meaning, but in those times, they meant something else.*" (Elie Wiesel, *Night*, p. ix). I was moved by the image of the chimney –part obelisk and part industrial. In my eyes these smoke stacks function visually as tombstones of history.

The piece titled ***Elie Wiesel with Snow Flakes and Bullets in Auschwitz*** depicts a small child standing alone confronting his psychological alienation while surrounded by the beauty of snow and the horror of the bullet marks.

"In war the first casualty is truth" (Aeschylus), and then the horror follows. The Holocaust was a time that was brutally imprinted into our history, and that belongs to our collective memory. There are people who still want to plunge the world into an eternal night. I hope these artworks serve in some way as a light to the darkness of ignorance and hate.

Doug DePice

Doug DePice



*Art is insufficient without compassion
and friendship*

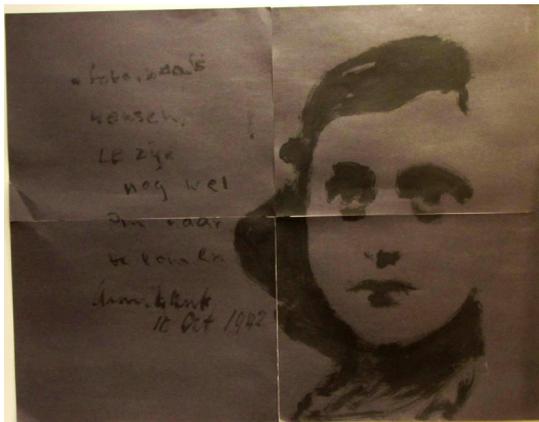
2008

Ink and acrylic paint on paper

14" x 16.5"

Collection of the Artist

\$750



*Black on black Portrait of Anne Frank "I
can feel the sufferings of millions."*

2013

Acrylic paint on black board

48" x 60"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,000



Chimneys: Tombstones of History

2005

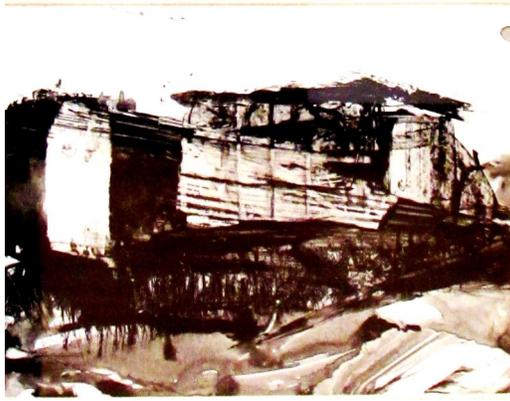
Ink on paper

14" x 16.5"

Collection of the Artist

\$750

Doug DePice



Crematorium: "First the alien then the Jew I only did what you let me do." ("The Hangman" by Maurice Ogden)

2007

Ink on paper

14" x 16.5"

Collection of the Artist

NFS



Elie Wiesel with Snow Flakes and Bullets in Auschwitz

2014

Charcoal and pencil on chloroplast board

48" x 96"

Collection of the Artist

\$2,000



Smoke, Souls and Silence

2012

Charcoal and acrylic paint on paper

26.5" x 32.5"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,200



Truth, will she live again?

2013

Charcoal and masking tape on paper

42.5" x 62"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,000

Neal Korn

I started drawing icons as an excuse to leave my home. To get out and see something local or national that makes (in my opinion) an icon. First, I stayed close to home and drew the cannon that is an iconic image in Union, NJ. This is really a cross over piece. It is part portrait (that is my head being blown out of the cannon) and part icon (the cannon). This piece began the icon series. Eventually, I would draw images from Sandy Hook (NJ), Philadelphia (PA), New York (NY) and Baltimore (MD). The Lincoln-Newark piece was (what I thought to be) the last of this series (that is my head flying over the Lincoln statue). The “Head on over to the Seaport Marine” is a revisit to both my portrait series and my icon series. I start each drawing by drawing the image as tightly and analytically as possible. Next, I apply the rice paper as intuitively and loosely as possible. At some point there is a combination of both tight and loose application of materials and drawing until I have nothing left to say. In the end, I can only hope that the viewer receives the image in a visceral way.

Neal Korn

Neal Korn



Central Park

1996

Charcoal, pastel on paper

24" x 31"

Collection of the Artist

\$700



Head on over to the Seaport Marine

2014

Charcoal (pencils, vine & powder), rice paper on paper

42" x 58"

Collection of the Artist

\$2,400



Newark-Lincoln, NJ

2012

Charcoal (pencils, vine & powder), pastel, kraft paper, tracing/rice paper on reinforced road construction paper

60" x 32"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,800

Neal Korn



Sandy Hook, NJ

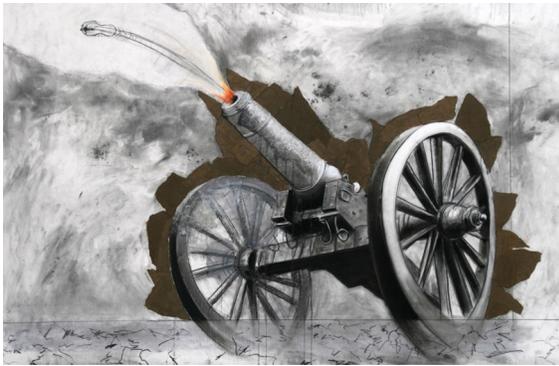
2012

Charcoal (pencils, vine & powder),
pastel rice paper on reinforced
road construction paper

70" x 17"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,800



Union, NJ

2009

Charcoal (pencils, vine & powder), pastel,
kraft paper, tracing/rice paper on rein-
forced road construction paper

38" x 57"

Collection of the Artist

\$2,500

Arlene Gale Milgram

My work is abstract, but at the core, it is my way of processing my life experience. On one level it is concerned with mark making. The energy of thoughts drives the hand to work in different rhythms and densities. It is also about reclamation. Failed works become resources for new pieces. Mixed-media pieces become dense and layered as life; full of false starts and new beginnings. Traces of what came before inform what is new. The scars that remain are maps of time and experience. Obsessive areas are places for meditation.

Lately, my focus is on aging, support systems (literal and metaphoric) and the fragile threads that hold us together. I try to communicate through a variety of marks made in a variety of experimental media. Discovery drives my practice. My process of layering, obscuring, releasing, reclaiming, scarring, stitching things together with fine thread are also metaphors for my ideas.

Hopefully, what is personal is also universal. I don't expect the viewer to read my story in my work. Rather, I hope to engage viewers to get lost in the image and find glimpses of shared humanity.

Arlene Gale Milgram

Arlene Gale Milgram



Between Time and Memory

2011

Mixed media

30" x 10"

Collection of the Artist

\$950



Breaking Connection

2013

Graphite on plaster on panel

7" x 5"

Collection of the Artist

\$400



Constant Motion

2014

Mixed media collage

26.5" x 30"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,200

Arlene Gale Milgram



Deep Inside

2014

Mixed media

8" x 10"

Collection of the Artist

\$550



Deeply Rooted

2014

Graphite on Mylar

27.5" x 19.5"

Collection of the Artist

\$1,200



Dream State #4

2014

Mixed media

16.5" x 12.75"

Collection of the Artist

\$850



Remember

2013

Mixed media

7" x 5" each

Collection of the Artist

\$650

Arlene Gale Milgram



Skeletal Thoughts

2014

Mixed media

8" x 10"

Collection of the Artist

\$450



Still Standing

2011

Mixed media collage

27.5" x 19.5"

Collection of the Artist



Stonescape Suite #2

2008

Mixed media

16.5" x 21"

Collection of the Artist

\$400



What Lies Within

2013

Mixed media

16.5" x 21"

Collection of the Artist

\$400

Sassona Norton

REFLECTIONS ON HANDS

Thirty five years ago I replaced painting the whole figure with the painting of large hands. Hands' rich architecture answered my need for a variety of shapes more than any other part of the body: flat with joined fingers - the hand is a palette; fingers spread apart turn it into a lobed leaf; a closed fist ends as a ball. But more importantly, blowing a hand to a much larger scale and filling an entire canvas with it enabled me to intensify the details that showed the passing of time.

Time has been essential to my perception of the human condition. Our knowledge of how limited is the future, and how it would end, is what makes time our most precious commodity. Without our awareness of how short life is, nothing would have mattered, and yearning would not have played the role it has in our lives. I am fascinated by yearning. I find it most complex. It stems from the sadness of want and is propelled by determination and fierce desire to change reality.

The richness of hands and their universal propensity to express emotions make them, in my eyes, the best figurative vehicle for presence and absence. My two works in the show, "Gift" and "Supplication," are about what is missing as what is there. Two very strong hands are involved in giving and receiving. The gesture is what matters. what is given is absent. "Supplication" is about the strength of praying, without hinting at any context. My subsequent sculpture, "To Whom Do I Pray," would point to praying as an instinctual need, even without the presence of a known God.

The two paintings in the show can be seen as drawings. Or drawings that are actually paintings. This duality stems from my attraction to the very old charcoal, a drawing medium that I rubbed into the canvas, until the weave resembled skin. Now it hinted at becoming a three dimensional work - the route of sculpting I would choose years later.

Sassona Norton

Sassona Norton



Gift

1984

Acrylic paint and charcoal on canvas

50" x 60"

Collection of the Artist

NFS



Supplication

1983

Acrylic paint and charcoal on canvas

50" x 50"

Collection of the Artist

NFS