

# JEN COON

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## Artist Biography: Jen Coon

An interest in untying knots and solving puzzles helps printmaker Jen Coon to investigate complex processes and grapple with technical decisions. Resulting from her patience and problem-solving skills, she often arrives at questions in her printmaking practice such as "what if I change the order of printing the blocks on the page, color by color?" and "which tool do I use to carve this shape or edge to get the best print possible?"

Jen graduated from the State University of New York at Purchase with a BA in Fine Art. Early on, she aligned with figurative painting and life drawing. She was first introduced to printmaking during a woodcut class in college. Soon after she began lithography, a printmaking process which, for her, felt very similar to painting and drawing. Post college, Jen moved from Ossining, New York to Raleigh, North Carolina in 1987. Her first studio space was in 1990 at The Paper Plant, a well-known creative space in Raleigh. Soon after, Jen moved her studio to Raleigh's popular Hillsborough Street and joined the NC Printmakers Guild, with which she exhibited until 2009.

Jen's love and respect for nature is evidenced by the many subjects and concepts of her art. She muses that "there's something about the printed mark that's a perfect metaphor for the passage of time; it's a documentation of a specific moment and human presence in the ever-changing world around us." While much of her art is tethered to ideas about the beauty, mystery, and the poetry of life, by contrast, other works are conceptually derived from personal experiences with loss and transformation.

Jen lives in Raleigh, North Carolina with her partner Sophie and their cat, Jester. She has worked in the Education and Visitor Experiences Departments since 2008. Jen currently holds studio space at BLAM! in downtown Raleigh.

## **Artist Statement: Jen Coon**

I make prints on paper using both parts of the human body and the surfaces of everyday objects to reference physical relationships between humans and the world. The printed mark creates for me the perfect metaphor for the passage of time; a documentation of a specific moment, of human presence in the ever-changing world around us. Each impression on the paper belongs to a moment in time with specific circumstances that are unique yet, through printmaking, repeatable.

Many of my works are conceptually tied to the ideas of belonging and presence. Some of them point specifically to social constructs such as family, tribe, or identity. I draw inspiration and visual content from the observable world, the phenomena of nature, and more abstractly, the nature of beings. The human form and the complex relationship we have to our physical, especially domestic, surroundings are anchors in my work that I feel provide rich meaning and the possibility of reaching the viewer.

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## EDUCATION

Purchase College School of Visual Arts, State University of New York, Bachelor of Fine Arts, 1985

## SELECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

*Winter Residency: Printmaking and Letterpress*, Penland School of Craft, Bakersville, North Carolina, 2010.

*Traditional Japanese Woodblock with Master printer Kenji Takenaka*, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, 2006.

*Book Arts Symposium*, Wells College Center for the Book Arts, Aurora, New York, 2004.

*Stone Lithography with Master Printer Cappy Kuhn*, Penland School of Craft, Bakersfield, North Carolina, 2002.

*Japanese Woodcut with Master Printer Keiji Shinohara*, Penland School of Craft, Bakersfield, North Carolina, 2002.

*Relief and Intaglio*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1993

*Stone Lithography*, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 1992.

## SELECTED TEACHING AND PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

2016          Demonstration, printmaking, North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, North Carolina.

2009          Interview, National Public Radio's *The State of Things*

2008          Teaching artist, *Workshop Day for Educators*, North Carolina Museum of Art Raleigh, North Carolina.

2007          Teaching artist, lithography workshop, Meredith College, Raleigh, North Carolina

2006          Presenter, artist's talk, Rebus Works Gallery, Raleigh, North Carolina.

## **SELECTED EXHIBITION HISTORY**

- 2012 Durham Arts Place, "Queer Artists Invitational," group show, Durham, North Carolina.
- 2009 311 Gallery, "North Carolina Printmakers Guild," group show, Raleigh, North Carolina
- 2007 Frankie G. Weems Gallery, Meredith College, "A Sense of Place with Soni and Maureen Banker," group show, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 2006 Rebus Works Gallery, "Jen Coon: A Storied Span: the Boylan Bridge," solo show, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 2006 Horace Williams House, "NC Printmakers Guild," group show, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
- 2005 Fayetteville Museum of Art, "Metamorphosis," group show, Fayetteville, North Carolina.
- 2005 Progress Energy Center, "North Carolina Printmakers," group show, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 2004 Durham Art Guild, "North Carolina Printmakers Guild," group show, Durham, North Carolina.
- 2002 Frankie G. Weems Gallery, group show, Meredith College, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 2002 Rocky Mount Arts Center, "45th Annual National Juried Exhibition," group show, Rocky Mount, North Carolina.
- 2000 Designbox, "East Meets West with Kwang Suk Park," group show, Raleigh, North Carolina.
- 1992-97 Frankie G. Weems Gallery, Meredith College, "Raleigh Fine Arts Society: Annual Juried Exhibition," group show, Raleigh, North Carolina.

## **AWARDS**

Scholarship recipient. Winter Residency Scholarship. Penland School of Craft. 2010.  
Scholarship recipient. Abbie Watkins Bernon Scholarship. Penland School of Craft. 2002.  
Purchase Awards (2). 45th Annual National Juried Exhibition. Rocky Mount Arts Center. 2002.  
First Prize. Cash Award. Raleigh Fine Arts Annual Juried Exhibition. 1992