

In Brief

2018 marks 200 years since Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* or, *The Modern Prometheus* was published. *Frankenstein* is a classic work for a variety of reasons: arguably the very first work of science fiction; a core text of Gothic literature; tackling themes of ambition and hubris, ethics and morality, free will and empathy. Today, these topics are hugely relevant in relation to current concerns of genetic manipulation and synthetic biology, artificial intelligence and machine learning. Liverpool Book Arts has taken *Frankenstein* as a theme for the third iteration of the fair, which runs until mid August in Liverpool Central Library. So far the selection includes books stitched and collaged, with complex pop-up folds, and those that show human biochemistry and anatomy. PT wonders if the new edition of *Frankenstein*, published this year by MIT Press 'annotated for scientists, engineers, and creators of all kinds' will also feature.



The+Hands+of+Prometheus+1+&+2+open+2 by Christine Pereira-Adams. Artist's book

Our world will run out of digital data storage space by 2040, states a team of undergraduates at the University of Edinburgh known as the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM). Looking for alternative storage solutions, they have proposed and prototyped a DNA typewriter which can encode sequences of words on the double-helix intracellular molecule that is the blueprint for life. Amongst proposed benefits are extreme privacy, density of storage, accuracy and apparent sustainability (though surely temperatures must stay below 100°C). PT wonders what will happen should any of the data accidentally mingle with life-forming information. What would result from the viral conjunction of this DNA with the human stuff? At the end of the day, we are all just prints.

Printing debt relief

Print meets politics in *Bank Job*, a money-printing production-line in Walthamstow, London.

In March, artists Hilary Powell and Dan Edelstyn set up a renegade money-printing operation titled HSCB (Hoe Street Central Bank). They employed a team of 10 printers for two weeks (using borrowed machines from Spike Gascoigne's Walden Press) to print £50,000 worth of specially designed bank notes using screenprint, letterpress, foil block and stamp, signing each note individually. The Queen's face was replaced by local heroes – leaders of a foodbank, homeless kitchen, primary school and youth project – and notes were sold at face value to raise hard cash.

PT visited the factory one snowy Saturday afternoon, where the steam was literally rising from the presses, and the adjacent room was heated with dreams of triggering a social and political movement with a small art project. Being low-fi and compact, the machinery fascinated visitors with the speed and beauty of the print process. A parallel programme of talks identified burgeoning levels of debt with regard to income, and called for the abolition of payday loans where shocking interest rates perpetuate inequality.

PT admired *Bank Job*'s use of printing as an agent for democratic change, and contemplated how this money-printing operation questions the value of the printed image. In some respects the prints could be seen as tokens of loyalty, symbolising an emotional allegiance for the project itself, providing a focal point for buyers who have tangible evidence of their investment in the dream.

The money raised will be



Mix of Bank Notes (2018) by Phil Seddon/Hilary Powell/Dan Edelstyn. Screenprint, letterpress, foil blocking. 105 x 175 mm each

equally split between four causes: Eat or Heat Foodbank, P184U-Al Suffa, BarnCroft Primary School and The Soul Project, and to purchase up to £1million of local payday debt. To read more, and purchase notes, see www.bankjob.pictures or contact hilary@optimistic.foundation



The Saira Fifty (2018) by Phil Seddon/Hilary Powell/Dan Edelstyn. Screenprint, letterpress, foil blocking. 105 x 175 mm

Box of delights

The Printmakers Council (PMC) held a celebratory double exhibition at Morley Gallery, London in November 2017, with a show of mini prints made by members, and another show called PRINT CITY.

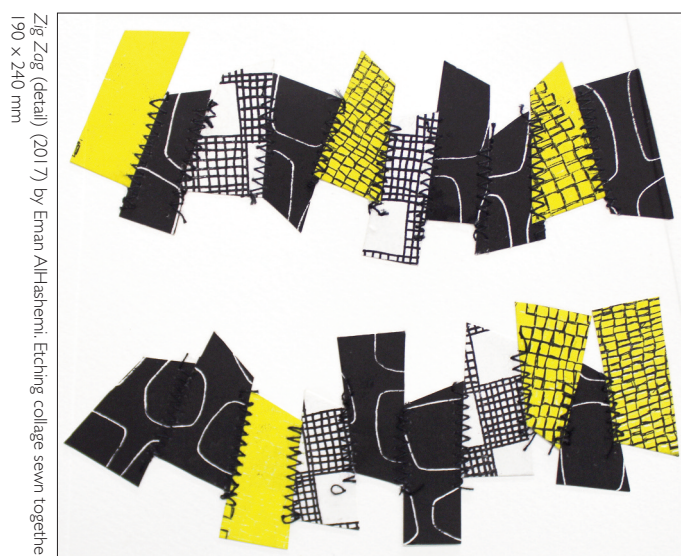
PT was invited to award a prize, which went to Eman AlHashemi.

Editor Leonie Bradley states, 'It was difficult to choose a prize winner from the outstanding quality and diverse selection of prints, but I kept being drawn back to a collaged piece *Zig Zag*

by Eman AlHashemi. She usually creates three-dimensional, ephemeral print-based works and it was fascinating to see how she produced a work to fit within the necessarily tight constraints of the mini print format by cutting up an etching, restructuring it and then sewing it back together.'

Two boxed sets of mini prints from PMC members were presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum for the Archive and Word & Image Department. Highlights of PRINT CITY included Alison Bernal's quiet detail of the intricate brickwork in Tate Modern's new *Switch House* and Melanie Bellis' striking etching *US Embassy Construction-scape*, which became unwittingly topical when Trump's planned unveiling of the new US embassy was cancelled at short notice.

For more information please see <https://printmakerscouncil.com/print-city-va-mini-print-exhibition/>



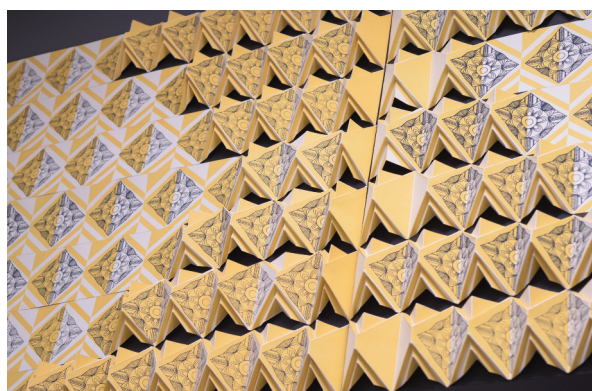
Zig Zag (detail) (2017) by Eman AlHashemi. Etching collage sewn together. 190 x 240 mm

Print, fold, repeat

Tatiana Potts speaks to PT about her project: Space of Tajtania, involving hundreds of printed and folded modular blocks that animate the environment.

During my MFA at the University of Tennessee (2016) I was interested in depicting different places and spaces that I'd been to. Inspired by architecture, I wanted to create a sense of being immersed in space, and was looking for some way to bring the drawing out of the frame and at a larger scale. Folding my prints made them more dimensional and refers to built structures and building blocks.

I draw the image first (one quarter of it) then scan it and multiply it in Photoshop to create a full square, playing with how the image changes with various juxtapositions, multiplications, repetitions and/or overlapping. Then I create a positive and screenprint it as a flat sheet. Next, I try out different folds on the prints. When I unfold them I take these creases as guides for where the shaded area of the fold will be.



Installation at Mead Art Museum (Yellow piece) (2018) by Tatiana Potts. Screenprint and folded French Paper. Installation approx: 2600 x 1530 mm. Photo by Tatiana Potts

The shaded areas will be darker, so I prepare a file in Photoshop for printing these darker areas. Since my guides are printed, it is easy to be precise with folding, although sometimes I ignore the guide and continue to experiment.

Each installation is modular. I combine the folded strips into compositions of 26 x 40 cm and then organise these blocks into a larger piece. My aim is to create pieces that seem to belong to the building. My recent show at Mead Art Museum, Amherst College in Massachusetts, was inspired by

one particular window of the Morris Pratt Dormitory. I'm drawn to windows and doors because they represent the passages and portals into the different spaces that I create. Printing enables me to add decoration to the architectural structure, and folding brings the prints to life. The installations animate the space and the light.

Upcoming shows are scheduled for Maryville College, TN in Sept; the Screenprint Biennial at Opalka Gallery in Albany, NY in Oct; and Rose Center at Morristown, TN in Dec 2018.

OBITUARY Gillian Ayres CBE RA 1930–2018

Amy-Jane Blackhall fondly remembers an artist who created truly original and pioneering prints.

From an early age, Ayres followed her own path and had a determined vision that flowed against the common currents. Over 70 years Ayres made prints in a variety of processes alongside her paintings and creatively collaborated with different print studios to suit, with ongoing support and publishing from the Alan Cristea Gallery since the early 1990s. The first prints she made were lithographs at Camberwell and, later, screenprints with Chris Prater of Kelpira Studio and subsequently Editions Alecto. In 1992 Ayres'

Gillian Ayres pictured in front of her prints at Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, 2012. Photo: Freia Turland. Courtesy of Alan Cristea Gallery



fruitful foray into intaglio printing began when she reconnected with master printer Jack Shirreff. Over the next 20 years, Ayres made a significant body of prints with Shirreff and his team at 107 Workshop. These works on paper were a true extension of her paintings at the time, which had become increasingly impasto and laden with paint. The translation of her textural and gestural mark making was enabled

by the use of two processes – both intrinsic to the studio – sugar-lift etching and carborundum printing. She instinctively applied both the sugar solution and carborundum paste with a

brush as she would when painting. The carborundum immortalized her brush marks and held its form in texture and weight but also in the embossing of the paper.

With Shirreff she produced revolutionary prints that pushed the parameters and the conformity of processes, quite literally when she hand painted the paper before printing.

As her paintings changed in her latter years naturally so did her print aesthetic. Ever bold, Ayres undertook another unfamiliar process to her, woodblock printing with Peter Kosowicz at Thumbprint Editions. The colours remained distinct and exuberant but the forms depicted and overall feel were lighter and more luminous.

Ayres was driven by an unyielding desire to make. Her joyously colourful and expansive body of work will always be unmistakable.

In Brief

Carol Wyss's site-specific installation, *Os*, in an old Jesuit church, Johanniterkirche Feldkirch in Austria (March 2018), involved the making of 180 etchings, one each of every bone in the human skeleton. Wyss explains, 'I have always been interested in structures. I see bones as the most physical basic human structure, one that carries us through life and stays behind longest. I wanted to create a line of all the bones from one skeleton. I made each bone as a copper plate so that I could print them freely on a roll of paper without any square edges showing. The resulting print ended up 16 metres long. These plates became the ingredients for the piece *REMAINS* in the church. It is a representation of the body which makes you see the body anew and think differently about the human position in this world.'



180 etching plates for *REMAINS* (2016–18) by Carol Wyss. Copper plate etching plates, dimensions variable

The UK Fine Press Fair in March brought together an abundance of beautiful works from artist book-makers, letterpress artists, calligraphers, printmakers and fine press publishers. PT was particularly taken by Otto's *Galactic Narrowboat* book whose pages are folded at angles, pulling the reader through the story and the trapezoid hole in the book's centre. Coincidentally, Tara Bryan, of Walking Bird Press, had a book called *Down the Rabbit Hole*, which also pulled the reader into the volume: one tug at the string holding the book together and the pages plummeted into a Chinese lantern-style construction with the storyline laser engraved around the edge. Too numerous to list, other poetic books included Andrew Judd's *Misericorde Linocuts*, set to poems by Philip Sharpe; and John Sutcliffe's *The Lost Colours of the Cyclopes*, published by The Old School Press.



1st print coming off the press at 107 Workshop of Gillian Ayres' *A Breeze Cuts a Pause* (2009–10) Photo ©Amy-Jane Blackhall

In Brief

Following a year working in Rome (1989–90) as a Rome Scholar in Printmaking, Anne Desmet's focus became the multi-layered nature of cities, where ancient ruins co-exist with C21st apartments and TV aerials. Using highly detailed wood engravings and linocuts of architectural subjects, she also makes complex collages in two and three dimensions, creating completely new images that develop the themes of her prints, allowing a building to take on an invented identity of its own. In 2016, the Royal Over-Seas League launched a facsimile of one of her Italian sketchbooks (published by the RA) alongside a solo retrospective exhibition of her Italian-themed work. This exhibition at Gainsborough's House brings together highlights from that show plus new works, including a sequence of prints to raise funds for Gainsborough's House. *Anne Desmet RA: An Italian Journey* runs from 23 Jun – 14 Oct. www.gainsborough.org/



Constructed Space I (2016) by Anne Desmet. Wood engravings & monotype prints on paper collaged onto convex glass. Diameter: 180 mm. Unique piece

A hedge in a small village in Northamptonshire has inspired Claire Morris-Wright to create a new body of art. She says, 'My practice has always been based on my surroundings. The particular hedge that inspires me is just beautiful. It's set on a ridge of a hill, silhouetted against the horizon like abstract lace.' After Arts Council-funded mentoring sessions with Beacon Arts, the Hedge Project was born. 'It is mainly about our relationship with nature and how this corresponds to mental well-being. I love symbols and metaphors and have played with all of this in my work.' Alongside keeping a regular visual diary of the seasonal changes via Instagram she has invited a lichen expert who logged the species on the national database. The work will be shown in Nottingham, Leicester and Kettering between Jul–Dec. For more details, please see <http://clairemorris-wright.com/hedge-project>

Ruminating at Rabley

The Precious Hours exhibition by Katherine Jones at Rabley Gallery, Wiltshire, in April, marked the end of a year's residency at Rabley Drawing Centre and Rabley Farm, reports Amy-Jane Blackhall.

Katherine Jones' prints have a distinct style, recognisable not only by their striking imagery but their subtle complexity and mastery of process. She draws on the inherent beauty of

permutations in print, through the accumulation and layering of elements. Favouring direct intaglio methods, particularly collagraph, she starts with a sketch using a pencil or a scalpel line on card. This inexpensive and versatile process is liberating and the plate making immediate, though the proofing stage can be extensive, and editioning laborious.

Visits to Rabley brought Jones away from busy London life to the Ainslie family farm nestled amongst the rolling Wiltshire Downs. She began with drawing on site in sketchbooks, and developed her ideas through watercolour and monoprint back in the studio. The editioned prints were a result of 'a slower percolation – a consolidation of disparate threads into something more concluded.'

The sky is a dominant theme in her work, notably because the sky in

Wiltshire appears so much more expansive than in the city. Immense, white cumulonimbus clouds feature in many prints and she was able to work on a large scale with the Rabley etching press. Tensions between the organic and the human-made are heightened in this work – an ever-present reminder of accelerating imbalances and the impact of climate change. Rolling curves and textural carborundum are juxtaposed with lines and rigid structures, printed in a palette Jones describes as 'melting ice-cream – sweet, ethereal colours dripped into the brown earth.'

Jones' new works continue a dialogue on the perspective of place, as seen in recent print folios from Eton College and her home estate Tulse Hill in South London. These evocative prints are meditations on environment, our environment, a global environment, and they encourage us to look up and out, as in this fragile world, time is precious.

www.rableydrawingcentre.com

A book with the same title, *The Precious Hours* by Katherine Jones, is available from blurb.co.uk ISBN 9780992681777



The Precious Hours (2017) by Katherine Jones. Collagraph and block print on paper, 920 x 710 mm

ARE Elections



With 48 portfolios to consider this year, each of a very high standard, the Royal Society of Painter Printmakers (RE) had a day of intense discussion, eventually electing three new members: Laura Boswell, Lisa Chang Lee and Ben Hendy. They join the Society as Associate members (AREs) where they will be included in regular exhibitions, both at the Bankside Gallery on London's Southbank and at the Society's numerous events in the UK and abroad.

The artists each demonstrated a particular and unique interpretation of their medium. Ben Hendy has a fascinating approach to technique, interpreting a wide range of marks, from autographic and painterly through photographic – each print consistently rendered in immaculate linocut. This transposition of marks is also present in Laura Boswell's reduction prints. In contrast they are rendered in translucent layers of colour and composed with a sensitivity to the empty space within the vast landscapes she depicts. Lisa Chang Lee's quiet, deeply thought work spans traditional printmaking, film, photography, and 3D. She works between London and Beijing and is a graduate of the

RCA printmaking MA and the Central Academy of Fine Arts, China.

These three artists each bring something new to the RE and are warmly welcomed by the members.



Curved Fall (2015) by Laura Boswell. Reduction linocut, 420 x 560 mm

OBITUARY George Craine (1930–2018)

Michael Craine, son, and third-generation colourman, pays tribute to his father's life and work, and describes how colour runs in the family's veins.



Photos by Peter Canning, Viewpoint Photography

Like me and my grandfather before him, George Craine was interested in the whole world of colour, and found the manufacture of artists' inks and paints fascinating.

My grandfather, also called George Craine, was an engineer, and entered the colour world via a circuitous route. George Craine senior came over to London from his native Dublin to solve an engineering challenge at an ink factory. In the 1940's there was a very large printing industry in Watford where newspapers and magazines needed vast quantities of inks. My grandfather designed a factory, complete with ink pumps that sent the fresh newspaper inks through pipes under the road to the neighbouring print works. Once that project was complete, Grandfather Craine found he had ink on his hands and a fascination with colour in his blood. He took over the management of an ink company in the Stratford area of London's East End and a family line was established.

My father George Craine entered the colour industry as a young man working for the letterpress ink maker Johnston & Cumbers, situated in Stratford's Sugar House Lane. At that time, there were six colour makers

within a one-mile radius. He founded the artists' colours and printing ink company Cranfield Colours, and moved to Cwmbran, South Wales in 1976, when relatively mucky industries were being encouraged out of the city.

I recall visiting varnish manufacturers who would boil and prepare the oils and varnishes for ink makers like us. It was a time of tradition, when beautiful products were produced largely due to the incredible knowledge in the trade. Today linseed oil is boiled under controlled conditions with constant monitoring with expensive electronic thermometers positioned through the vessel. In days gone by, a peeled onion would be put in boiling oil. When it looked cooked, the correct temperature had been reached!

Even since my grandfather's day there have been major improvements in pigment quality, lightfast qualities and non-toxic equivalents. The exact grind,

viscosity and tack required by an etching ink requires particular skills, specific raw materials and the phenomenal power of a large three roll mill. Western ink formulations therefore remain as 'private as prayers'. George Craine was a great believer in having as many mills as possible and built up a collection of eight mills, including a rare granite mill, particularly useful when grinding certain temperamental yellow pigments that otherwise can turn green under metallic pressure.

George made his mark in the industry in a tremendously positive way. A significant contributor to the non-toxic printmaking movement, he was the innovator behind 'Caligo', the first oil-based printmaking ink to be washed up with soap and water. He was particularly saddened at the wholesale destruction of presses, especially in colleges and universities, and wanted to do his bit to make printmaking non-toxic without compromising quality. The exact formulation for Caligo, whilst innovative, was firmly lined with the composition and manufacturing methods of our older traditional inks.

My grandfather was wonderfully eccentric, but never driven or ruthless. George was a man who put human relationships and the love of his work above all else. There was no competitive edge to him and the success of Cranfield Colours was a result of his genuine enthusiasm for everyone, whether competitor or customer. Long into his retirement, he would still come into work to tinker away at small, niche projects, simply because someone had asked for his help to solve a problem. He was in his natural habitat in the ink lab.

George leaves a tremendous legacy for printmakers and painters who benefit from his enthusiasm and innovation.



In Brief

PT's Wuon-Geon Ho remembers admiring the dense lines of Henry Moore's etchings hung in her school. Allowing children to experience art without having to go to a gallery was a concept championed in the 1940s with the School Prints: a post-war dream to bring affordable lithographs to 4,000 schools. Last year this concept was revived with the Hepworth Wakefield commissioning Jeremy Deller, Anthea Hamilton, Martin Creed, Helen Marten, Haroon Mirza and Rose Wylie to create prints for local schools. The post-modern irony of the artists chosen comes out in the images; Creed's broccoli prints and Wylie's stick frog will certainly remind children (living in a world saturated with slick imagery) that unpolished and simple still counts.



Father Sky (2018) by John Stezaker: Four colour photo-lithograph on 300gsm Somerset satin paper: 513 x 404 mm. Edition of 100. Produced by Paupers Press, London. © John Stezaker: Courtesy of Counter Editions, London

John Stezaker's latest lithograph *Father Sky* is a silhouette of a male film star, filled with a mysterious image of the night sky, taken from pre war photo etchings in early books of astronomy. The colour portraits of famous actors would have been traditionally photographed against illusionistic backgrounds such as airbrushed landscapes with fluffy clouds. Here Stezaker has replaced the figure with background. He states, 'Returning to the image as a lithograph was an opportunity to modulate this edge between interior and exterior, foreground and background and night and day... The colour enhancement of the lithographic process was also a way of harmonising the disjunction between the technicolour exterior and the pre-war photogravure simulations of the nocturnal sublime.'