

‘Deep Impressions’: Elinor Randall, master printmaker

By Mary Gow, Arts Correspondent
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Elinor Randall: "Wet Rack (Golden Gates Fields), 2nd State,"
1981, etching., Courtesy NNEMoCA

Horses at a futuristic racecourse, a dandelion growing in a crack of a backbone-like curving sidewalk, a theater audience facing a massive screen — powerful imagery and symbolism resonate in the works of master printmaker Elinor Randall, longtime resident of Plainfield.

Randall's creative career spanned more than 60 years with exhibitions in the United States and abroad between 1954-2013. She pioneered a multi-plate monoprint technique, founded Rung Rim Press, and was a founding member of Two Rivers Printmaking Studio in White River Junction.

“Deep Impressions: Elinor Randall Master Printmaker,” a survey exhibition of Randall’s printmaking, is presented at SPA in the Second Floor Gallery. This exhibition features approximately 30 etchings, monoprints, lithographs and woodblock prints — selections that illustrate the scope of her artistic output over several decades. The show also includes about 40 additional works which are unframed and matted.

“Deep Impressions” was created by the Northern New England Museum of Contemporary Art (NNEMoCA), based in Barre and Burlington and is curated by Mark S. Waskow, NNEMoCA founder and president.

“NNEMoCA is very proud to kick off its second exhibition season with this living legacy show of a significant local under-known artist. Elinor’s work is important and of a very high caliber,” Waskow said.

“There is a lot of unheralded, under-recognized, really talented work that has been done, that is being done, essentially right in our backyard, in our neighborhoods. I hope this show and others like it draw attention to the amazing creative talent in our midst,” Waskow said.

Drawn to art from an early age, Randall studied with and was influenced by Marshall Glasier and George Grosz. At a time when Abstract Expressionism was the paradigm, Glasier was a leader of a group of alternative artists in Wisconsin inspired by European Surrealism, their work bringing together dreamlike or mythological elements with realism. Glasier was not only mentor to Randall, he became a close family friend.

Waskow explains in his curatorial statement that Randall moved to Magical Realism and was a pioneer in this style in her generation.

Horses figure prominently in Randall’s work, a bond forged in her youth. Taking time with the exhibition, viewers see them as subjects and as metaphor, including Randall’s connections between equine labors and society’s expectations of women.

Waskow notes that the help and support of Dorigen Keeney, Randall’s daughter, was vital to the development of this exhibition.

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