

At The Galleries

By Alberta Friedlander

Citizen Art Critic

Two exhibitions of graphics by artists of widely disparate sensibilities, yet each a master craftsman, currently are being displayed here — Donald Sutphin at Kay Bonfoey Gallery, 1156 S. Swan Road, and Lars Bo at Harlan Gallery, 18 N. Tucson Blvd.

Bo's prints (etching and aquatint) in color are surrealist in content. Figures, birds, boats, and other subjects are depicted in actions more suited to dreams than reality. They are rather above and beyond reality.

His line has the utmost delicacy and gentle color enhances his forms. "Daybreak" is a lovely example as a huge white bird broods over a sea broken only by a tiny boat.

Danish-born and educated in Copenhagen, Bo executed set designs for the Swan Lake ballet given by the Royal Danish company. There are five etchings inspired by this dance in this showing. They are all charming fantasies.

In No. 2, figures sit at a table drinking wine as two others dance on it. At left is a topiary tree whose top is trimmed as a swan; a sculpture, half-human swan, is also in evidence as a large group

of figures disappear in a tunnel below the castle.

"Great Rocks Move to the Sea" is a fascinating nocturnal view of a black sea and crescent moon. Huge rocks with human torsos move towards and into the dark water.

"Pussycat on a Couch" is a delightful example of Bo's wit. A striped girl sits on a striped couch against a striped background while an interesting, soft motif with floral and geometric designs rises from the floor. The contrast is most interesting.

The sea figures often as a theme. Again, in "The Tide Rises," there is a table set with overly large bottles. A couple drinking is oblivious to the rising sea (a small motif in the upper left corner) as a boat is tossed and figures tumble out.

One can try for his meanings, whether they are philosophical, as many are for me, or just enjoy them for their elegance and imaginative moods. In addition to the 23 prints framed and hanging, the Harlans have a number of others matted and in the bins.

Bo's prints have been shown throughout Europe, in Tokyo,

New York, and Washington D.C., and are in the collections of museums in Paris, Amsterdam, London and other European cities. His prizes include the Prix de Gravure at the Paris Biennale.

His studies were interrupted by the war in 1942 when he joined the Danish Resistance. Later he settled in Paris where he and his family still live.

Donald Sutphin, at Bonfoey's, carves bold reliefs in his blocks for woodcuts. His thoughts seem occupied with suffering and death, reminiscent of Kollwitz, while their vigorous slashes resemble Franz Kline's paintings.

Among his stark black and white prints is a strong head titled "King" and a "Warrior" who could be a samurai; they seem to accost us in defiance. "Field of Sorrow" places two shrouded figures in an eerie graveyard, the whole a scene of loneliness.

Sutphin mixes unusual colors for his inks and interesting combinations in his woodcuts. In "Spectre," a large lavender and purple death's-head manifests itself out of a large gold shape in a dark forest. A ghostly figure rises from the "Vacant Sea" printed in gold, vermilion and black; terror is expressed in the face of "We Run, We Run," printed in shades of green and orange.

He executed a masterwork in black on brownish paper, a hanging scroll 8 feet high. It is titled simply "1956." From a head and shoulders at bottom, two arms rise ending in up-raised hands, indicating supplication or reaching for something important — it implies more than it says.

A contrast to the rough-hewn look of his woodcuts are Sutphin's lithographs in black and white. In these he shows his ability to use a variety of delicate textures.

In "I Have Gathered Many Flowers," note the old woman seated in a field of varying tiny forms suggesting flowers, pebbles, etc. Her work-worn hands hold a small bouquet but her eyesockets are like black pools of emptiness — or is it inner wisdom?



'Field of Sorrow' by Donald Sutphin

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