

Susan Eley

Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Recollection
Fumiko Toda
Karin Bruckner



Susan Eley Fine Art, NYC
46 West 90th Street, Floor 2
New York, NY 10024



June 30—September 5, 2022
Opening Reception: Thursday, June 30th, 6-8PM

Susan Eley Fine Art is pleased to present *Recollection*, a two-person exhibition featuring mixed media monoprints, monotypes and paintings by Fumiko Toda and Karin Bruckner. *Recollection* is on view at SEFA NYC from June 30 to September 5, 2022. There will be an opening reception with the artists on Thursday, June 30th from 6-8PM.

Toda and Bruckner—once teacher and student, now colleagues—explore the richness and possibilities inherent in the monoprint medium. *Recollection* fosters a conversation between the printmaking practices of the two artists. Their works are interconnected in approach and effect, yet unique in subject and style.

Toda and Bruckner are long-term Gallery artists on SEFA's roster. Toda has been featured in *Winter Selects* (2021); *Luis Maldonado & Fumiko Toda* (2012); and *Illuminated & Adored* (2010). Bruckner's work has been exhibited at SEFA Hudson in *The Archaeology of Memory* (2022) and at SEFA NYC in *White Out* (2022); *Winter Selects* (2021); *Paper Trail* (2020); *On the Rocks* (2019); *Winter Selects* (2019); and *One of One* (2015).

The two artists met a decade ago at a SEFA reception and connected over their shared affinity for making one-of-a-kind prints. Essentially, they employ techniques often associated with reproduction and circulation to create singular artworks. At the time of their meeting, Toda was

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teaching printmaking out of her studio. She invited Bruckner to join her classes, spurring the flourishing of Bruckner's personal practice (even acquiring two printmaking presses of her own). The title *Recollection* has a two-pronged meaning in the context of this exhibition: Firstly, it reflects a literal coming back together—a reunion perhaps—and a remembering of the artists' shared past as creators and colleagues. Secondly, *Recollection* refers to the “re-collection” of ideas and materials—a stacking of goods, objects, wares, textiles, papers and more onto the printing plate. This referencing and layering of past and present, used and new, is characteristic of both Toda's and Bruckner's practices.

Neither artist is a traditional printmaker. Instead, they constantly push the boundaries of standard printmaking techniques in search of fresh outcomes and innovative applications of everyday materials. Bruckner was first exposed to the allure of breaking the rules in Toda's studio, and now applies this approach with her own students as a teacher at Carter Burden / Leonard Covello Center in East Harlem. Toda regularly loads a printing plate with multiple small copper etchings, running them all through the press simultaneously to create a single image. Usually unsatisfied by the variety and richness of detail from a single pass through the press—Toda reworks the page with intricate hand drawings after the initial printing.

Toda was classically trained in Japan, where she mastered the basics of painting and printmaking techniques. Subsequently, she worked at the Robert Blackburn printmaking studio in NYC, where she further honed and refined her skills. Adhering to the proverbial “learn the rules to break them” mentality, Toda has never lost sight of the fun and the humor in the world. Whimsical characters and animated insects have always played an important role in the imagery of her paintings and prints.

Similarly, Bruckner comes from a rigorous profession as an architect, an industry beholden to engineering and building rules and regulations. After a successful career with the architecture firms of Richard Meier and Philip Johnson, Bruckner became a full-time artist, relishing in the opportunity to make her own rules in a new game. Her exposure to the various printmaking techniques in Toda's classes, and later through continued training and experimentation, led to her unique practice. Her approach is characterized by an openness and a freedom to use any number of materials—household and otherwise—to make monotypes. She has incorporated flattened cardboard boxes, old CDs, lace paper doilies, thread, twine, coffee grounds, coffee filters and more. Nothing is off limits; it is all fair game. Toda and Bruckner celebrate the happy accidents that occur with this liberated approach, ultimately making each a bolder, more exciting visual artist.



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FUMIKO TODA

The highlight of Toda's artworks in *Recollection* is a suite of six monoprints featuring a kaleidoscope of butterflies. They were printed over several years from one zinc plate, then individually hand-colored. The result is a series of unique prints entitled "Butterfly Away," each rendered in its own jewel-toned color palette with varied details, patterning and textures. This exhibition marks the first time that the "Butterfly Away" series is being shown together. *Flowers in a Vase (Kabuki)* is a monoprint of a wildly colorful floral bouquet, chine-colléd with Japanese checkered patterned Washi paper and two Kabuki figures peeking out from behind the flowers. *Roots: Sky* is a quintessential example of Toda's mastery of combining several plates to create a single image. In this case, two square plates are separated by three tiny plates, stacked vertically yet resulting in one image. A principal motif for Toda, the work is teeming with insects, beetles, ants and other insects crawling along a tangle of branches.

KARIN BRUCKNER

In *Recollection*, Bruckner debuts her most recent artworks from 2022: large-scale mixed media works on paper that combine printmaking (often used as the base layer) with painting, drawing and collage. *ARoseIsARose* features a large flower, created with a Turkish marbling technique and sprinkled with a dusting of gold leaf at its core. Swirling white cloud-like forms make up the backdrop. In *AlltheWorldsAStage*, the first layer is a print on newsprint, overlaid with deep red paint and black painter's tape. This powerful work reads as both abstract and figurative; the forms reveal hints of dancing female figures, which are reminiscent of a Matisse painting. In *Glacier*, Bruckner fuses shards of interior white paint to the surface of a monotype. At 12 inches high by 42 inches wide, *Iceshelf* mimics the actual shape of an iceberg. It is painted on mylar with acrylic, house paint, coffee, sumi ink and painter's tape in verso. Ever the provocateur, Bruckner uses no printmaking in *Iceshelf*. It is pure paint, but as Bruckner explains: this painting would not have been possible without her years of studying, teaching and experimenting as a printmaker herself.



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MONOTYPE V. MONOPRINT

A monotype is created by applying ink or paint to a non-absorbent surface, placing a sheet of paper on that surface and then running it through a print press. A monoprint differs because it begins with some form of basic printing matrix, such as an etching. The same etched plate can be used to make many monoprints. Following the printing process, artistic elements—paint, collage, ink—are applied to create unique works. The etched portion remains the constant design across any number of monoprints. Like a monotype, each monoprint is unique and not editioned, or perhaps an “edition” of only one. Monotypes were first produced in 17th-century Europe; later in 19th-century France by artists such as Degas and Gauguin; and took off in the middle of the 20th century. Monotypes are often referred to as “the painterly print.”

CHINE-COLLÉ

Chine-collé is a special printmaking technique in which paper of a different color or texture is adhered to the surface of the overall piece. The paper, usually in pre-cut shapes, is actually bonded to the heavier support paper of the print in the printmaking process. It is not just glued to the print as a collage element. Chine-collé is sometimes mistakenly used to refer to any type of collage. Yet, its fundamental element is that the overlaid papers become one with the base—fused together rather than just resting atop—creating a unified singular artwork.