

Joshua Watts Biography

Joshua Watts was born and raised throughout the Midwest, receiving his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2000 from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois under Professor Oscar Gillespie. While pursuing his undergraduate degree, Joshua taught in both public and private youth arts courses in the Peoria area, sharing multiple creative possibilities with his students. This experience would form the foundation of his desire to later teach at the university level. During his undergraduate study, he actively exhibited his work in both group and solo shows including the first undergraduate exhibition ever to be held in the Lakeview Museum of Arts and Science in Peoria.

After graduation, Watts began travelling for the next five years- going to California in the winters, Alaska in the summers, and even spending a winter in the Czech Republic. While constantly moving, Joshua continued exhibiting extensively, primarily charcoal and mixed media work based on the various locations he inhabited and beginning to explore alternative photographic media in his creative research. The culmination of his travels was a return to academia at the University of Alaska in Anchorage, where he studied printmaking under Professor Garry Kaulitz with a focus on monotypes and then moved on to complete his Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion.

During his 3 years of graduate study, he remained an active member of the printmaking community by assisting at Frogman's Print and Paper Workshop, organizing national portfolio exchanges, and annually attending meetings of the Southern Graphics Council. In addition to conducting multiple printmaking workshops, Watts taught many semesters of Drawing I and II at USD on an ongoing basis. His courses always emphasized the creative and expressive use of materials to in student work.

During the spring of 2007, Watts conducted a series of visiting artist workshops at facilities from Vermillion, SD to the east coast of the United States over the course of six weeks. Five schools hosted in all, including: Grandview College in Des Moines, IA, Bradley University in Peoria, IL, University of Buffalo in Buffalo, NY, George Mason University in Washington, DC, and East Carolina University in Greenville, NC. At each institution, he demonstrated viscosity monotype printmaking techniques to students, which are a painterly method of creating unique fine art prints on paper. Students worked with his assistance to create their own work using the methods demonstrated.

The summer after graduating from USD, Watts was invited to teach a summer course at the Santa Reparata International School of Art in Florence, Italy. This course explored fine art bookmaking and encouraged the aesthetic and expressive growth of students in contemporary bound structures. Using the historical setting and guided tours as an impetus for many of the projects allowed students to integrate their surroundings into the work produced during the summer session.

Since 2008, Joshua Watts has been an Associate Professor of Visual Arts at Zayed University in Dubai, UAE. Students in his Printmaking courses interact with the global art community through exchange portfolios each semester and are regularly exhibited in print exhibitions around the world. Recent examples of exchange portfolios include Alberta College of Art and

Design, West Virginia University, VCU Doha, and University of Hawaii at Hilo. Teaching a variety of courses in printmaking, senior project, mixed media and book structures, the sustained development of his own work continues while promoting the aesthetic, conceptual, and expressive growth of students in his courses and public workshops.

His most recent work began to take shape in the summer of 2013 when he noticed solar garden lights on a store shelf. Over the next few months, he began to create works which would bring his ideas out of gallery spaces and into public environments through site-specific solar lightbox installations. During the daylight hours the solar cell charges a battery while a photographic image is visible through the lightbox glass. As the sun goes down, the light is activated to reveal additional information that transforms the original image- providing a new layer of information for viewers to discover.

The changing nature of these works has led him to begin using time-lapse videography as a way to demonstrate how the installations evolve through the course of a day and night. This relationship between the external spaces and internal transformative dialogue allows each work to speak in ways not possible within a gallery context while bringing these unique creative visions into the public realm. Over time, these timelapse recordings would become the basis for creating works which flatten and compress the overall span of time into a single image. The "Amalgam" series is created by combining select images from thousands of possibilities and shaping them into a single cohesive statement.

The work of Joshua Watts has been featured in over 70 international group and solo exhibitions in venues including Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Venice, Portugal, Malaysia, China, Bulgaria, and Dubai. Recent notable exhibitions include Colorprint USA, ISEA 2014, Art Dubai, Sikka Art Fair, Douro Printmaking Biennale, Guangzhou International Miniprints Biennial and the Southern Graphics Council Traveling Exhibition. To see more of his work online or to contact this artist, please visit www.joshuawatts.net.