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artscope

New England's Culture Magazine



Last Leg 2012, suite of 12 screen prints, 11 x 17 inches each, edition of 8

COMMUNITY: CLIMATE CHANGE IN PROVIDENCE, 2015

Suzanne Volmer

LOOKING AHEAD IN 2015
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

FRESH CURATORIAL AND ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVES

JAN/FEB Issue 2015

Excerpt:

It is noticeable, looking at artwork made in Providence as we enter 2015, that the flavor of the city is changing. Facilitated by a re-branding process that seems to also address anti-intellectual posturing as an impediment to global context, the city is willing, at the moment, to entertain the concept of varied aesthetic languages informing its learning curve with sophistication and surprise. Fresh curatorial perspectives are afoot, both institutionally and independently, that are beginning to shape the art climate in ways that comment upon and reflect this growing dimensionality.

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FINDING THE HUMOR

Allison Bianco is also a colorist who is making prints that combine the simple and the complex; she will be an interesting artist to watch in 2015. Creating in small editions, she engages an original voice that matches humor with a cataclysmic event. She elegantly cartoons-up serious subject matter, often relating to ecological consequence, and her narratives, though charged, carry the lightness of pop anime while moving through archived characteristics of Japanese printmaking history. Her work has a richness of content manipulation and technique to which one can return and find newly satisfying.

Allison and her husband Todd grew up in Rhode Island and later attended the University of Hawaii for their graduate degrees. Hers was an MFA and he received his PhD in geophysics. They moved to Providence when Todd received a National Science Foundation Fellowship at Brown University. His move from academics to policy led them to live a year in Washington DC where Todd worked as a congressional science fellow in the office of Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse. The senator liked the sensibility of Allison's prints, and that led to the opportunity for her work to be on view in his Washington office. In the summer and autumn of 2013, Allison's prints were accepted for inclusion at the International Print Center in New York City, and more recently, she had a solo exhibition at The Print Center in Philadelphia.

Allison creates her work at AS220's printmaking facilities, known for their excellence, and she thrives in its collaborative setting. Combining intaglio etching and screen printing processes, she mixes techniques to achieve remarkable depth and subtlety of imagery. Her work is in the collection of the RISD Museum and, on the alternative side of the tracks (literally), her prints are in the corporate collection of Truth Box Architects, a green development firm run by Peter Gill Case located in a colorful, repurposed, shipping-container structure visible from Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.