

CECELIA FELD

BY GINGER MYNATT

The four-hundred pound, stainless steel roller occupies prime space on a large table in the center of Cecelia Feld's studio in Bells. Sometimes art takes a little muscle to go with the inspiration.

When working, Feld carefully inks each area of a collage and covers it with paper before adding layers of protective foam and wool, and then turns the crank that moves the heavy roller back and forth over the work until she is satisfied that the ink from the collage has transferred to the paper. The machine is called an etching press and the print of the collage, a collagraph.

"I am very two-dimensional in my work. I am always aware of the world around me in terms of shape, pattern and color—like that ladder in the corner." She pointed to a folded step-ladder with red and black steps. "I see red and black rectangles. And the blinds are stripes."

After Feld cranks the roller back and forth, the collagraph may be finished or it may not be finished. Often she adds

more paint or layers bits of found paper here and there. Sometimes she glues other objects, such as painted twine gathered in loose coils, or stamps, or textured objects dipped in paint on the work. When finished, her projects often are intriguing combinations of bright, sometimes unusual, colors, swirls of line and blocks of textures.

"I have a sense of how color works with color," she said, "so I know that I can make certain things happen, and then I say 'what if?' or 'why not?' or 'how about?'"

"I am a happy person. I purposely don't use color combinations that create anxiety, yet all the emotions are there: elation, thrills, anxiety, disappointment, you name it. Serendipity is the hallmark of my work. I love the unpredictability of working with paint, paper, ink and plate."

Feld likens her work to jazz with repetitions and variations, harmony

and dissonance, and twists and turns along the way. "Cecelia always adds the unexpected," said Mary Tomas, who carries Feld's works at the Mary Tomas Studio Gallery in Dallas. "She knits as a hobby, and you can see the influence of knitting in her work with the intricate weaving of line and layers of color. She has a poetic sense of shape and form, and I love her unusual color combinations."

It may be art for art's sake, but for Feld producing art is also her job. "It's work. I show up," she said. And like her artwork, she has more than one dimension. On weekends, she goes to Dallas to her studio and promotes her work. Mid-week, she spends in her modern farm house on a country road near Bells.

"In Dallas, I'm friendly and outgoing. I like to talk and listen. At home when I'm working, I'm a solitary person. I think I can be happy alone because what I do is so satisfying. Yes, there is always frustration in creating art—the rejection-acceptance thing. But if you're an artist, your work must be self-satisfaction." She looked at the collage on the table as she spoke and lightly rubbed her fingers over the shiny steel roller of her etching machine. "Working with shapes, textures, light and darkness, and color is very satisfying to me."

Cecelia Feld graduated with a B.A. from Hunter College in New York City and earned an M.F.A. from the University of North Texas. Her next show opens May 20, 2010, at Artspace III Gallery in Fort Worth, Texas. It's a two-person show titled *Cool: Collagraph to Collage*.



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