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St. Thomas University

# FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE

- A SERIES OF INTAGLIO PRINTS -

BY

WILLIAM FORRESTALL



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To Jamie Steel and the legendary Salty Towers. To Rodney Mann for his talent and patience. To Professor Martin Kutnotski and Professor Robin Peck for advice and support. To Jeffery Carleton for spreading the word.

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FOR MY MOTHER  
NATALIE FORRESTALL  
1933-2006

# FOREWORD

William Forrestall has an expansive appreciation for the potential of still life for the contemporary viewer. In this new series of still life prints, William builds on a body of imagery that he has successfully developed throughout his career. This series of intaglio prints, created in collaboration with the master print maker, Robert Van de Peer, feature images that rank among the artist's most engaging.

Best known for his transcendent still life painting, William has, with this series, provided a critical expansion of his oeuvre through the intaglio medium. The rich darkness of the inks and the emphatic graphic nature of intaglio provide for an important reinterpretation of William's still life subject matter.

Incorporating egg-shaped objects found in gravesites from the dawn of history, juxtaposed with his own highly-personal associations that provoke titles based on his own family, he has created works that quietly echo the universal connections that define a shared humanity. William's new intaglio series offers the viewer opportunity to reflect on the interconnectedness of art and life, a human constant through history.

PETER BUCKLAND





# FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE

“THE DEEPEST, THE ONLY THEME OF HUMAN HISTORY, COMPARED TO WHICH ALL OTHERS ARE OF SUBORDINATE IMPORTANCE, IS THE CONFLICT OF SKEPTICISM WITH FAITH.”

—GOETHE

The intaglio printmaking process offers a medium of exploration that is in many ways based on a conviction or faith that images will be discovered. The often-laborious process of etching, scraping, burnishing or otherwise coaxing an image out of a copper plate is a blind process where the artist does not know the outcome until it is revealed in the final print. At the inception of this project I had little idea as to the images that would be discovered hidden in the copper plates, but I am grateful for the exploration,

gratified by the outcomes and indebted to the master printmaker Robert Van de Peer for his help and guidance in this exploration.

The original intent of this body of work was to use the unique graphic qualities of the intaglio medium to explore still life subject matter based on drawings I did at the British Museum in London and the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University. The original drawings included a range of artifacts recovered from ancient graves

around the Mediterranean and Near East. I had originally intended to select subject matter reflecting elements of daily life: cups bowls, lamps and other domestic utensils found throughout history and common objects we still use today.

As the project developed my reflections on potential subject matter started to focus on a series of drawings based on a group of more mysterious looking egg-shaped objects from the Ashmolean Museum. The egg-shaped objects were originally grave offerings from 6000-year-old sites in what is now Egypt. These objects were created by a people about which little is known. They pre-dated the later, better-known dynastic empire builders of ancient Egypt. They lived a simple existence at what could be described as the dawn of history. As a people they seemed to hold ostrich eggs

in high esteem, possibly as water containers or as objects of beauty. The more established (or wealthier) members of their culture were buried with real ostrich eggs; the more common, and numerically more significant, graves would be found with eggs crudely made of clay, some were small and solid, others larger and hollow with openings. The egg is a universal cultural symbol and a remarkable example of nature's engineering. It is symbolic of life's inception and culturally the egg remains symbolic of life, and of its strength, resilience and fragility.

Found along side the egg-shaped objects were other common clay utensils. In particular, I was fascinated by some small roughly made little pinch pots, one of which was a little bowl perhaps 2 or 3 inches across made of clay and revealing very evocatively the thumb imprint of the child who made it. These grave offerings

of roughly made clay eggs and pinch pots told me a story of the families who created them and of the society they came from, a story that still resonates today.

These small little objects seem to embody the most elemental of human concerns, icons that whisper shared concerns through timeless generations. Looking into these little egg shaped forms is like looking into another world, one surprisingly quite familiar.

It is easy to imagine family or social groups from 6000 years ago gathering together to bury their family members or friends. Gathering together to respect and honor their deceased, to console each other, and to help the deceased enter into a new world by offering accompanying articles for the journey, actions that articulate a faith in and of another world.

History and its transcending stories offer modes of clarity of shared commonalities. We are all born equal and we all leave the same way. The rest can be considered immaterial except that we are accountable for our lives to God and in some rather more difficult way to articulate to each other. What we offer of value in our lives is to our family, our friends, our close community – the very people who will see us off.

I found myself increasingly attracted to the egg shaped objects, the most enigmatic drawings in the notebooks. They kept coming back to me throughout this project and developed as the key source of subject matter for this series of prints. The images returning each time in a manner that echoed and reinterpreted the previous image, like relationships that build up over time, the sequence of developing



these prints offered with each rendition new layers of interrelated meaning. The prints developed commonalities and differences. The backgrounds in particular offered both opportunities and challenges for setting the tone and values of the still life arrangement, each completed print informing a search for variation in the background for the next.

The shelf as developed in two of the prints creates an unlimited horizon, that goes on beyond the image and becomes a dividing line between up and down, and metaphorically between the real and the unreal. The cabinet, as a compositional element found in four of the prints offers an alter like reference.

I gave the prints titles at the end of the project. After reflecting on the origins of the original

subject matter, I titled most of the works in direct relationship to my own family members who have gone before. It seems fitting to return to the original intent of these grave offerings as a way of respecting the original makers of these objects.

As I started this process of scratching and etching into the copper plates looking for an image I was guided by the master printmaker Robert Van de Peer. His commitment to his art, and the new non-toxic standards of intaglio printmaking offered a solid premise which the search for these images. I am grateful for the process and the images we found.

WILLIAM FORRESTALL



# **FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE**

- PRINTS -

# FOR THE OAKES SISTERS

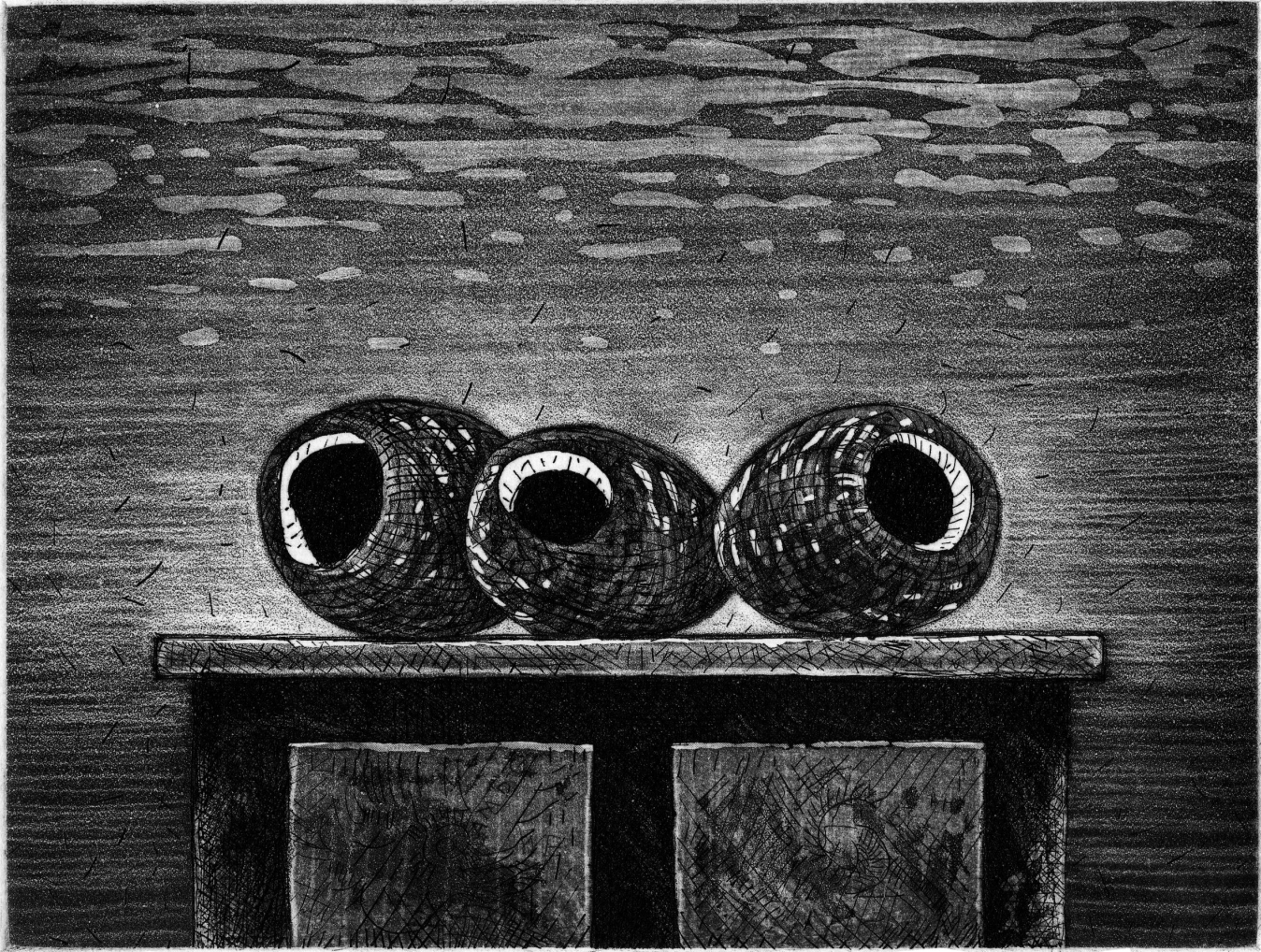
INTAGLIO ETCHING

6" x 8"

2010

The Oakes sisters include my great-grandmother and her two sisters who were raised in England. Eventually one emigrated to Australia, one to Canada and one stayed home.





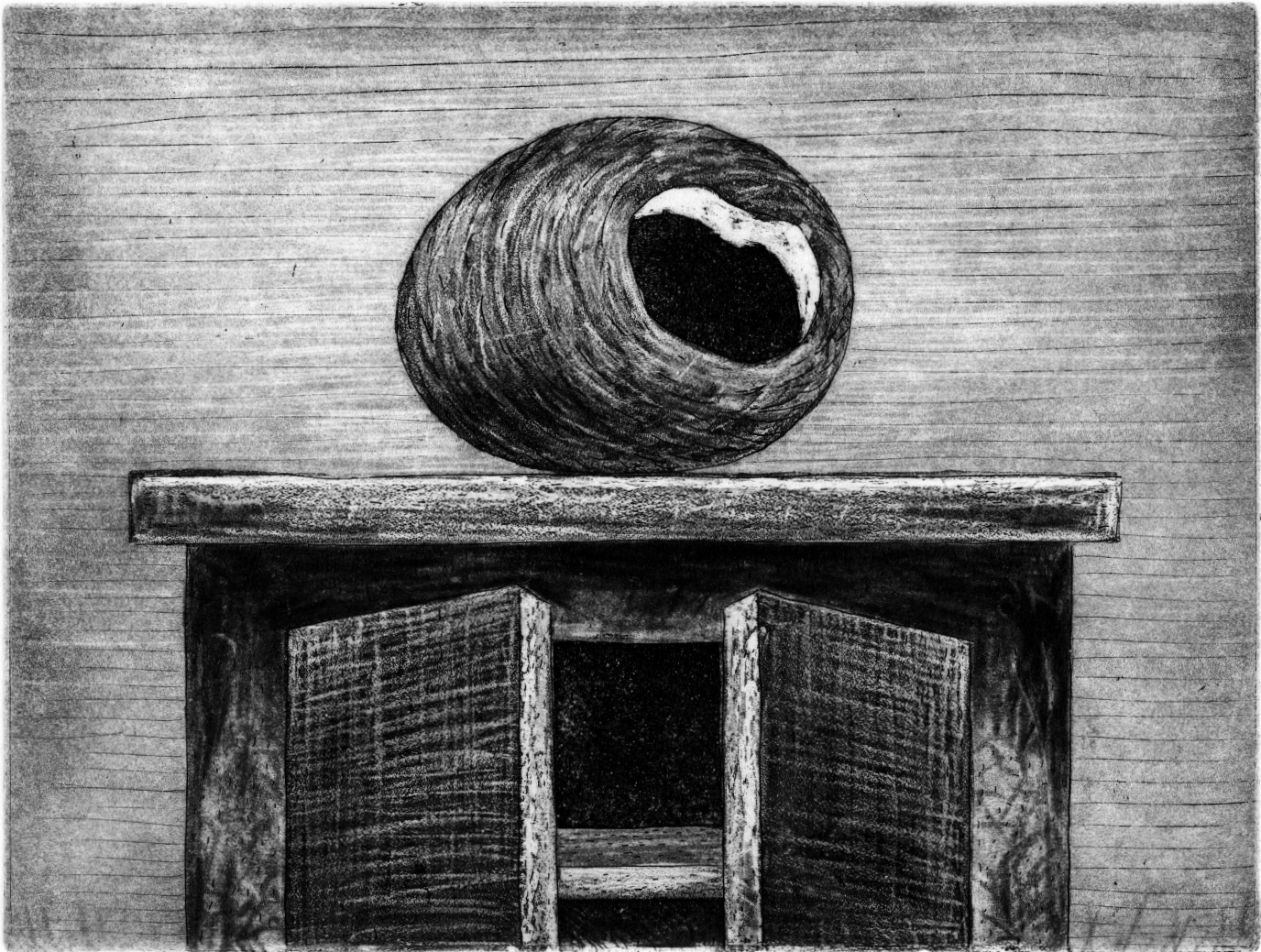
# FOR MICHAEL

INTAGLIO ETCHING

6" x 8"

2010

Michael was my uncle, my father's brother;  
he led a public life where the doors were always open.



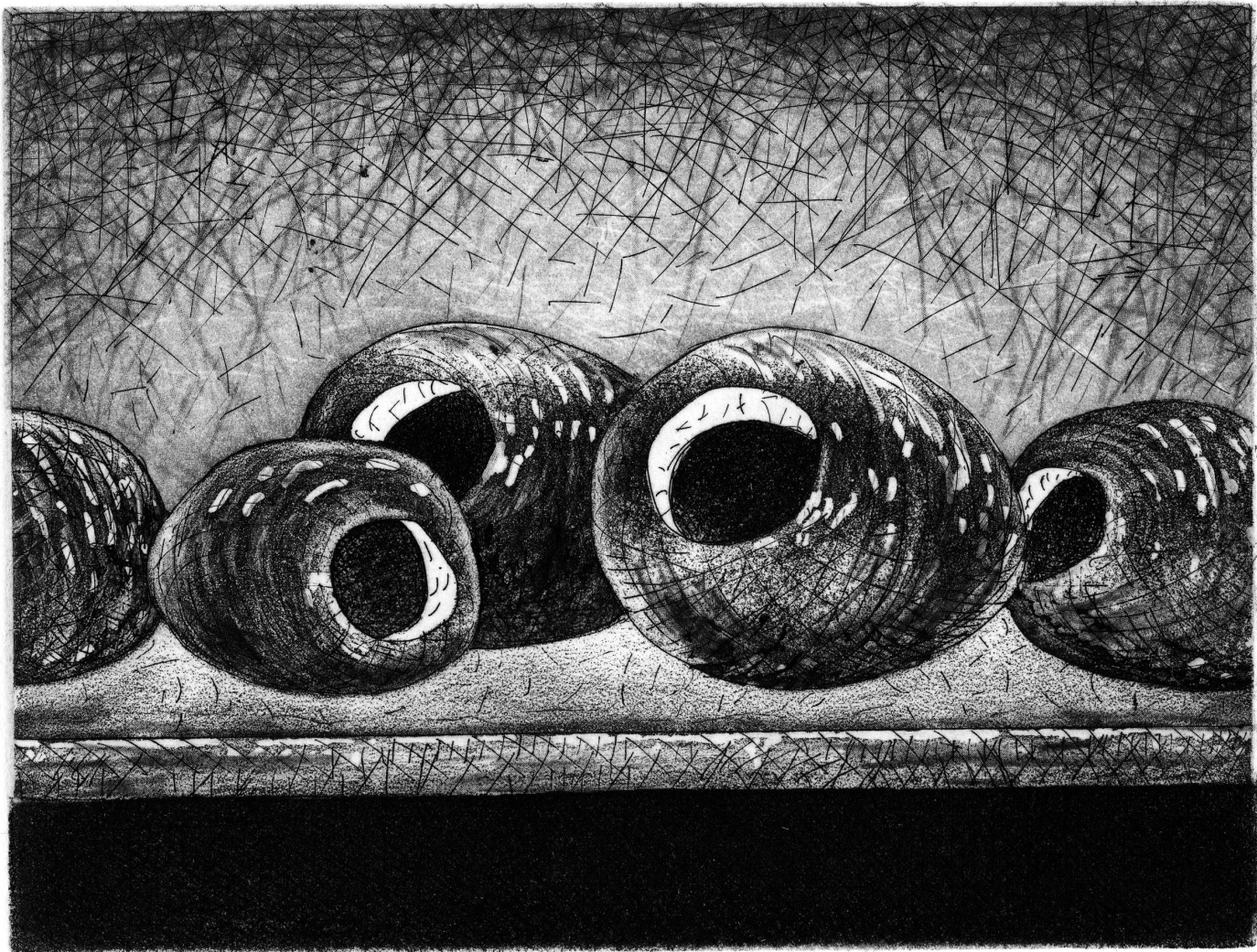
# FOR MY GREAT-GRANDPARENT'S FAMILY

INTAGLIO ETCHING

6" x 8"

2010

My great-grandparents family, the Curpheys, lived in Deep Brook, Nova Scotia. I remember their old house and how, after they died, it slowly fell into disrepair. The house is now gone, but I still think of them when I pass the site.



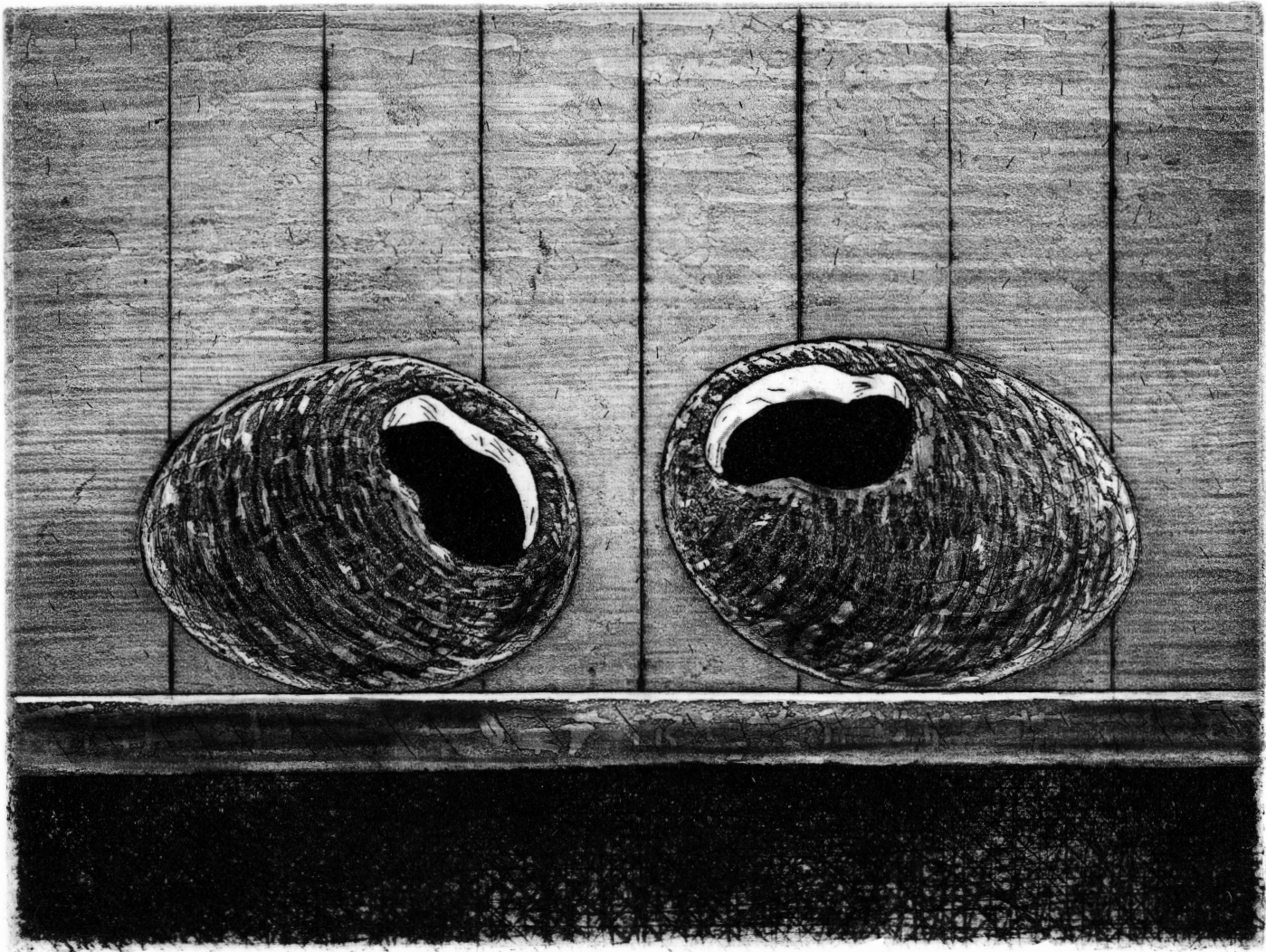
# FOR GEORGE AND CHRIS

INTAGLIO ETCHING

6" x 8"

2010

George and Chris were my grandmother's brothers;  
they both served in the Second World War in which George lost his life.



# FOR TOM AND ESTHER

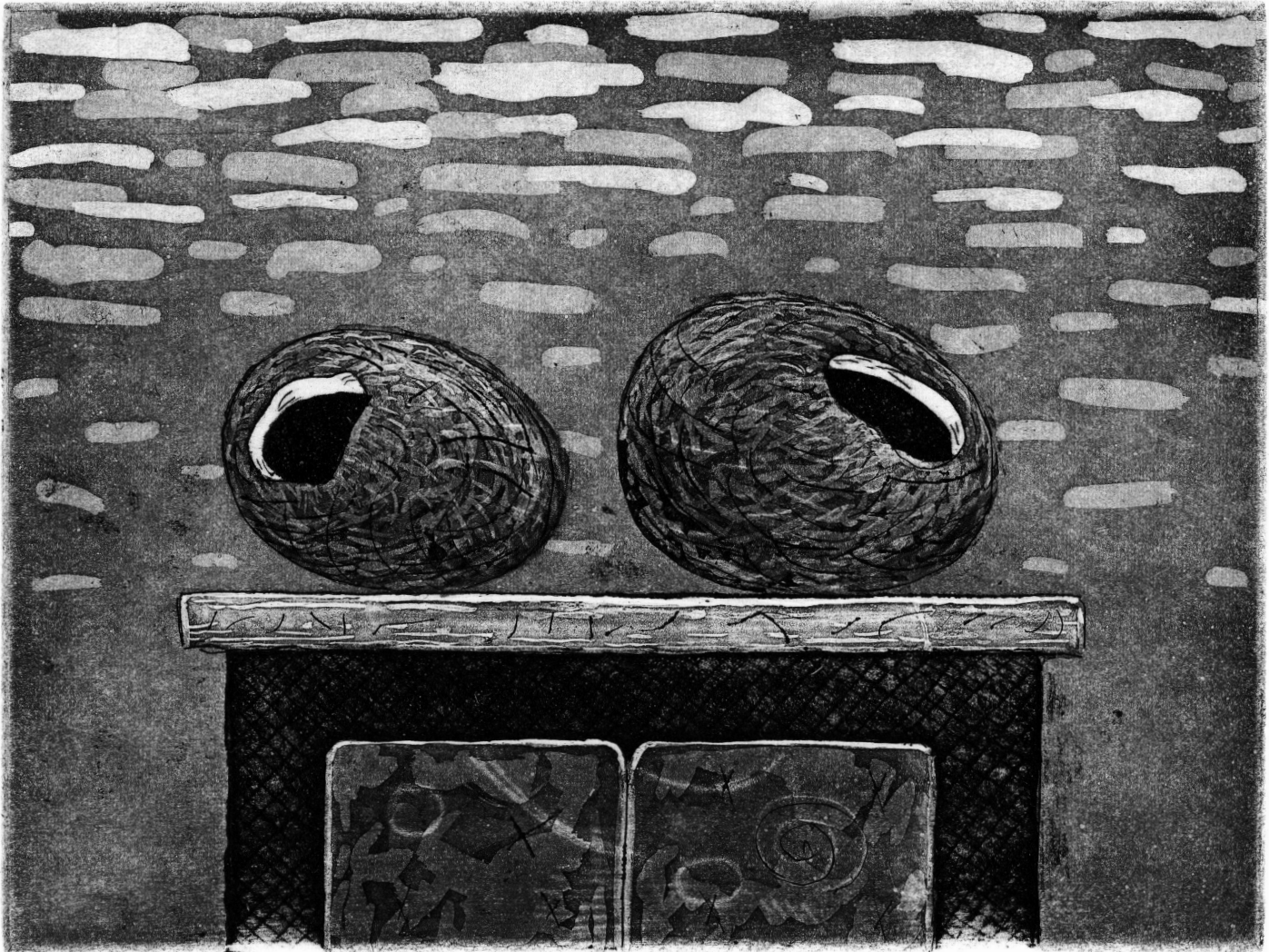
INTAGLIO ETCHING

6" x 8"

2010

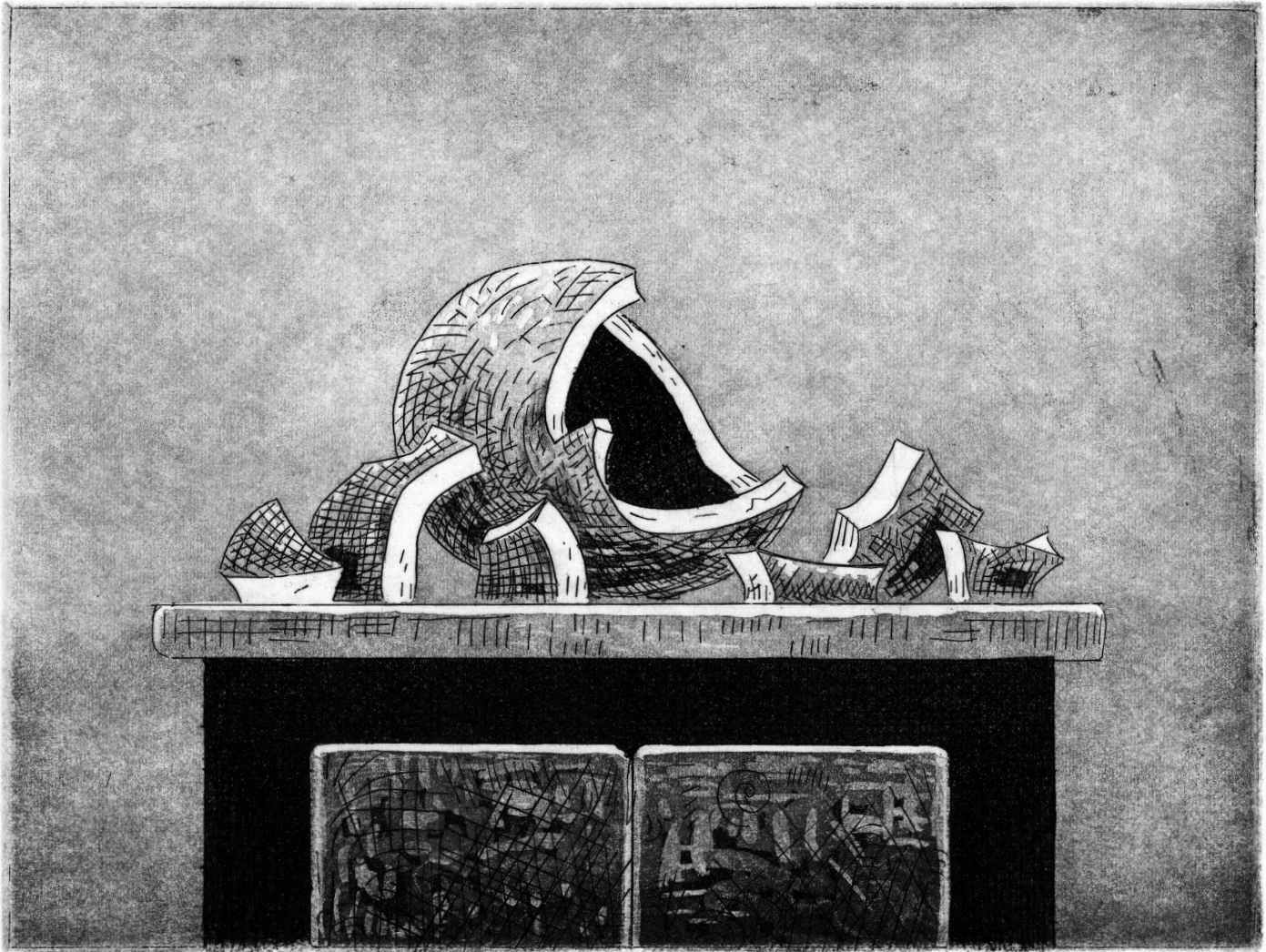
Tom and Esther were my grandparents on my father's side.





FOR 1914  
INTAGLIO ETCHING  
6" x 8"  
2010

In 1914 the lights went out across Europe, and in the darkness that followed much and many were buried.





## FROM AN ANATOMY OF A PRINTSHOP

Printmaking is a world of beauty, a world of remarkable imagery, and one of endless possibilities encompassing creative innovation and progressive thinking. Printmaking is not a form of reproduction where “copies” are made of an original artwork. Printmaking is a medium where original works of art are created within the printing medium. When an edition is printed, all prints are identical and made from a unique printing element such as a copper plate for example and created by hand by the artist. The prints in an edition are all multi originals.

Printmaking is a world of processes, which requires the artist to have knowledge and

understanding of materials and substances, and how they work collectively towards a creative and artistic end. To make this end possible, essential items are required, such as printing presses, specialized benches and work tops; facilities for preparing printing paper and for drying finished prints. Special sinks and work areas are a necessity for the handling of acids and the etching of copper plates. A printshop provides these items, and more importantly provides for all the needs that an artist requires, both aesthetically and technically.

A printshop is more than just a conglomerate of materials, it is a centre for creative development



and a facility that encourages and fosters the creative process on all levels of expertise.

Most printshops have a Master Printer in residence, whose role is to guarantee that the shop is in perfect working order, to give advice, guidance and assistance to artists and to help them to realize their creative goals.

The Master Printer is in many ways a “means to an

end” in the capacity of a teacher, a resource and a person who encourages innovation and exploration of the medium.

An intriguing aspect of the creative process is that it is a collaboration between both the artist and the printer. For the printer, it is an activity involving both intimacy with the artist’s work and ideas, and a professional responsibility to the artist in ensuring that their work achieves fruition. To this end a unique

bond occurs between artist and Master Printer. It is best described as a convergence and melding of creativity and skill on a symbiotic level with a mutual aesthetic aim in mind.

In this modern world, the Master Printer has another obligation that is to ensure that only the most non-toxic materials are used. He or she has an obligation to the health and safety of all participants using the printshop, and should devote special attention into research of organic substances for the benefit of both the work place and the environment.

The advent of non-toxic techniques in the printmaking studio is seen as a revelation by most artists; a complete renewal as though discovering this medium for the first time. It is a long overdue environmentally safer voyage towards future creative initiatives in the world of beauty, and remarkable imagery.

ROBERT VAN DE PEER



WILLIAM FORRESTALL



## C.V.

### **SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 2010 "For Those Who Have Gone Before" a series of intaglio prints  
Yellow Box Gallery St. Thomas University Fredericton NB
- 2010 "New Works" Studio 21 Art Gallery, Halifax Nova Scotia
- 2009 "William Forrestall" retrospective New Brunswick Museum, Saint John NB
- 2009 "Focus Works" Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John NB
- 2008 "Objects for Study" Gallery 78, Fredericton NB
- 2006 "New Paintings", Gallery 78, Fredericton NB
- 2005 "New Works" Gallery 78, Fredericton NB
- 2005 "New and Familiar" City of Saint John Gallery
- 2004 "New Works" (two- person show) Kinsman Robinson Gallery, Toronto ON
- 2004 "Still Life and Landscapes" Studio 21 Art Gallery, Halifax NS
- 2004 "Still Life Opening" New Brunswick Museum, Saint. John NB
- 2003 "Beauty and Myth" Peterson Fine Arts, Toronto, ON
- 2003 "Still Life: A Collection of Paintings" Renaissance College, UNB, Fredericton,
- 2003 "Still Looking, Still Life" Studio 21, Halifax, NS
- 2002 "Ancient, Instant Still Life" Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John, NB
- 2002 "Still Life Opening" St. Peter's College Art Gallery, SK
- 2002 "Still Life Opening" (two-person show) Rosemont Gallery, Regina, SK (catalogue)
- 2002 "New Paintings" Studio 21, Halifax, NS
- 2000 "Artifacts of Time" Gallery 78, Fredericton, NB
- 2000 "New Works in Egg Tempera" Studio 21, Halifax, NS
- 2000 Media Market, representing NB, Los Angeles, California

- 1999 "Recent Works and Prints" Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John, NB
- 1999 "Flowers, Paintings and Works on Paper" McCain Gallery, Florenceville, NB
- 1997 "New Still Life Works" Studio 21, Halifax, NS
- 1996 "A View of Still Life" Sunbury Shores Art Center, St. Andrews, NB
- 1996 "Still Life Works, Selected and New" Gallery 78, Fredericton, NB
- 1995 "The Artist in Profile: Paintings and Prints" Studio 21, Halifax, NS
- 1995 "Prints and Paintings" Pilar Shephard Gallery, Charlottetown, PEI
- 1994 "Diptychs" Galerie Rochon, Toronto, Ontario (catalogue)
- 1993 "Diptychs" Mount Saint Vincent Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia (catalogue)
- 1993 "Painting in Series" McCain Gallery, Florenceville, New Brunswick
- 1993 "Primary Elements" Edmund Casey Hall, St. Thomas University, Fredericton,
- 1993 "Primary Elements" Ward Chipman Art Gallery, University of New Brunswick, Saint John Campus
- 1992 "Still Life Works" Studio 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia (catalogue)
- 1992 "Studies and Paintings with Broken Glass" McCain Gallery, Florenceville, NB
- 1992 "Still Life with Painted Shards" Aitken Bicentennial Exhibition Centre,  
Saint John, New Brunswick (catalogue)
- 1991 "Shards" University of New Brunswick Art Centre, Fredericton, NB
- 1990 "New Egg Tempera Paintings" Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1990 "Recent Works" Anthony Gallery, Burlington, Ontario
- 1989 "Egg Tempera Paintings" Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1988 University of New Brunswick University Club, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1987 "Egg Tempera Paintings" Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1986 "Aspects of Still Life" Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick

## **SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 2010 " A Family Affair" Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John NB
- 2009 "Portraits; New Brunswick Painters" overview of painting 1970-2000 in New Brunswick,  
168 page catalogue/book, New Brunswick Museum Saint John NB
- 2009 Peter Buckland Gallery Small Works Exhibition, Saint John NB
- 2009 "Rock, Paper, Scissors" Faculty Exhibition Yellow Box Gallery St. Thomas University Fredericton NB
- 2009 Gallery 78 Group Exhibition, Fredericton NB
- 2009 Fredericton Arts Alliance Exhibition, City Hall Fredericton NB
- 2008 Peter Buckland 10th Anniversary Exhibition, Saint John NB.
- 2008 Studio 21 Group Exhibition, Halifax NS
- 2007 Gallery 78 group show, Fredericton NB
- 2007 Casements Exhibitions, Fredericton City Hall
- 2006 A Tribute to Natalie, Gallery 78, Fredericton, NB
- 2005 Toronto International Art Fair, Kinsman Robinson Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2005 Studio 21, Halifax, NS
- 2004 Kinsman Robinson Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2003 Peterson Fine Art Gallery, December Show, Toronto, ON
- 2003 "The Casement Show" NB Crafts Council
- 2003 Christmas Show, Gallery 78
- 2003 Vision 20/21, Studio 21, Halifax NS
- 2003 Peterson Fine Art Gallery, Summer Show
- 2003 "Atlantic Canadian Artists a Selection" Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton NB
- 2002 "Faith Healers" A Space Gallery/Spin Gallery, Toronto, ON

- 2002 "Four by Three" Gallery 78, Fredericton, NB
- 2002 Group Exhibition, Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John NB
- 2001 "Recent Additions to the Permanent Collection" Nova Scotia Art Gallery
- 2002 Peter Buckland Gallery, Group shows Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- 2000 Evidence of Things Unseen, Tynedale College, University of Toronto
- 2000 Provincial Exhibition, Aitken Bicentennial Exhibition Centre, Saint John, NB
- 2000 Three-person show, Sunbury Shores Art Center, St. Andrews, New Brunswick
- 2000 Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 2000 Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1999 "Egg Tempera Paintings" Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1999 "Arts Festival" Studio 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 1999 "Works On Paper" Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1998 Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1998 Studio 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 1998 Peter Buckland Gallery, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1997 Theatrum Mundi, Marion McCain Atlantic Art Exhibition, Beaverbrook Art Gallery,  
Fredericton, New Brunswick; Dalhousie Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia;  
Canadian Embassy, Washington, DC. Curated by Susan Gibson Garvey
- 1997 Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1997 Studio 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia
- 1996 Vision 20/20, Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1996 Between Oceans and Lands: Through the Eyes of Canadian Artists, (catalogue) Taipei, Taiwan
- 1995 50th Anniversary of The Fiddlehead, Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1995 New Brunswick Artists, The Algonquin Hotel, St. Andrews, New Brunswick
- 1995 Spring Time at the Gallery, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1994 Gallery Artists, Galerie Rochon, Toronto, Ontario

1994 Middlemarch, Literary Press Group, Toronto, Ontario  
1994 Small Works, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1994 10th Anniversary Show, Gallery Connexion, Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1993 Christmas Show, Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1993 Reflections on Still Life, UNB Art Centre, Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1993 Exquisite Corpse, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, Curated by Tom Smart  
1993 Acquisitions 91-92, UNB Art Centre, Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1993 Mini Format Show, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1992 Studio 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia  
1992 Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1992 Kicking Against the Pricks, Gallery Connexion, Fredericton, NB, Curator Mw MacKay  
1992 Small Works, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1991 Marion McCain New Brunswick Juried Exhibition, Beaverbrook Art Gallery,  
1991 New Art Brunswick, UNB Art Centre/Gallery Connexion, Fredericton, NB  
1991 Mini Format Show, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1991 Vert, Studio 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia  
1990 The Artist in the Garden, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1990 Recent Acquisitions Show, UNB Art Center, Fredericton, New Brunswick  
1990 The New Brunswick Art Bank Collection, Gallery Connexion, Fredericton, NB  
1989 Marion McCain New Brunswick Juried Exhibition, Beaverbrook Art Gallery NB  
1989 10th Anniversary Ring Gallery of Art Exhibition, Ring Gallery, Saint John, NB  
1988 Flying with Bats, University of New Brunswick Art Centre, Fredericton, NB  
1988 Unchartered Terrain II, Windrush Gallery, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1988 The Chess Show, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick  
1987 New Brunswick Juried Art Competition, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton,  
1987 Unchartered Terrain, Windrush Gallery, Saint John, New Brunswick

- 1986 Mini Format Show, Gallery Connexion, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1986 Group Show, Playhouse Gallery, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1985 The Flower Show, Ring Gallery of Art, Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1985 Aspects of Fredericton, Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1984 New Brunswick Juried Show, Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB
- 1984 Reflections of a Province, Gallery 78, Fredericton, New Brunswick
- 1983 Christmas Exhibition University of New Brunswick Arts Center
- 1983 Group Show, Annapolis Valley MacDonald Museum, Middleton, Nova Scotia

**SELECTED COLLECTIONS**

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Trimark Investments, Toronto, ON | CRESAP Corporation, Toronto ON            |
| Canada Council Art Bank          | Ash, Casry Thorton, Fredericton NB        |
| New Brunswick Art Bank           | Toronto Dominion Bank                     |
| Sheraton Hotel, Halifax          | University of New Brunswick               |
| Beaverbrook Art Gallery          | NB Capital Commission                     |
| New Brunswick Power Corp.        | Public and private collections in Canada, |
| Nova Scotia Art Gallery          | United States, Europe and Asia            |

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- Virgil Hammock, "William Forrestall; Beauty and Myth" catalogue essay, published by Maritimes Arts Projects/ Broken Jaw Press ISBN 1-55391-027-3 November 2003

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Alison Hughes " The aging process continues" Telegraph Journal August 21, 1999

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Terri Robin Vernon," William ForreSTALL: Millennium Icons" review Arts Atlantic Vol.15, no. 2, Fall 1997.

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Tom Smart 'An Exquisite Corpse" catalouge essay , Gallery Connexion ISBN 0-920674-36-4 1994

Christina Sabat " He found Artistic Roots On European Tour" The Daily Gleaner Dec.31,1994

Matthew MacKay, "Opposing Arguments- the Diptychs of William ForreSTALL" essay, Galerie Rochon; Toronto ON, 1994

Gil McElory, "Under the Grid of Originality: Diptychs by William ForreSTALL" review Arts Atlantic 50 Summer 1994

## **EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, 1982.

PETER BUCKLAND is a cultural entrepreneur and writer. He is the owner of the Peter Buckland Gallery located in Atlantic Canada's most beautiful city, Saint John, New Brunswick. He co-authored the book "Portraits: New Brunswick Painters", which was published by the New Brunswick Museum, in tandem with an exhibition held in 2009.

ROBERT VAN DE PEER was Professor of Printmaking at St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology, Kingston, Ontario from 1970 to 1995. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts, Printmaking at the Medway College of Art, Rochester, England and his MFA - Painting and Lithography from the Royal Academy of Arts, London, England. He has been Master Printer in Residence at Sunbury Shores since 1998.

WILLIAM FORRESTALL graduated with a BFA from Mount Allison University in 1982. A nationally recognized artist with well over 100 solo and group exhibitions across Canada and internationally; he has won many awards, including the 1994 Brucebo Traveling Fellowship, which allowed for an extended study tour through European art galleries. He maintains an active studio practice and lives with his family in a 19<sup>th</sup> century home in downtown Fredericton.



