

A word, while ephemeral and not a solid thing, may become as worn and useless as a husk, utterly meaningless with overuse. Houses fall into disrepair and all things tend downwards, but there is wisdom in the earth that testifies to a reversal of this movement. Andrei Tarkovsky wrote that one of the purposes of art is to give humanity some understanding of the reason for its appearance on the planet. In my estimation this has something to do with the artist acting as a mirror to the productivity of the earth, counteracting this downward tendency, reversing the emptiness brought on while we slumber in carelessness.

Reversing is a methodology that I frequently employ in my prints, drawings, and sculptures. This sometimes looks like letters being written in the negative, backwards, and so closely together that they appear to be a floor plan rather than a word. At other times it is drawing lines evenly spaced that describe a garden or a field and in so doing conflating an abstract surface and a landscape. The later methodology is a reversal of the normative means of looking—a reversal of the elapsed time between seeing and comprehension. While my prints draw from the earth, my sculptures tend to look upwards and make solid a perceived void between stars or other heavenly bodies.

Kierkegaard asked the question, “How do you feed a man who has so much food in his mouth that he can’t swallow what he has and it must end with his dying of hunger? Does giving food to him consist in stuffing his mouth even more or, instead, in taking a little away so that he can eat...it is precisely through a process of taking away that his copious knowledge may be transformed and assimilated anew.” Primarily I engage in this “taking away” for my own contemplation: in turn, offering this contemplative opportunity to the viewer. Towards this end I exhaust all of my energy on what might lift my imagination and my will out of its malaise and into productivity and cultivation.

I have found woodblock printing desirable and a ready tutor for the following reasons: its earthbound matrix, the need to literally remove material in order to posit an image, and its inherent process of reversal. As my images in this medium and others attest to observations of flora and fauna and the history of the quest for light and God, it is my hope that the viewer will follow suit and, like the bees at the center of *Mystic Ark*, carry the pollen of my work with them and compile it into a mysterious and tasty nectar to share with their community.