Interconnectivity:
Artistic Observations of Coastal Ecosystems
Submerged (2010) - mixed media-encasotic, monotype, etching
ABSTRACT:

My proposed project, *Interconnectivity*, will be a series of prints depicting various animals, plants, and ecosystems located along the coast of North Carolina. The artwork created for the project will reflect the relationship and connection each of the individual entities featured has with its surrounding environment or ecosystem.

Each piece in the series of diptychs will portray an extreme close-up of an organism as well as a more expansive view of the environment in which it lives. The intimacy of the close-up on one side of the print will give the viewer a more personal relationship with the subject shown, while the larger, expansive habitat view will relate narrative information about place, time, and background.

The final project will consist of 15 prints created in various mediums ranging in size from 6" x 8" - 18" x 24". The body of work will be created over the course of four semesters.
INFLUENCES:

Rolf Nesch

"The herring catch was an immense experience that I shall never forget. I have made a series of prints, six colored sheets that go together...it is my best graphic work so far. Under no circumstances whatsoever would I leave this country without having seen the herring catch...my life has changed". – Quote by the artist

Rolf Nesch was considered by many to be one of the most technically innovative printmakers of the early twentieth century. His experimental techniques included biting his printing plates all the way through or attaching metal to the surface. In his artwork, Nesch emphasized the complex ties that bind humanity and nature. In *The Herring Catch*, the sea is a great vast space that supports both the abundant fish as well as human elements such as boats, nets and sails. The connection between the two groups is depicted throughout the dramatic piece.

The visual link between nature and man in Nesch’s work is inspiring to me as I search for ways to depict this connection in my own art. His use of line, shape and near abstraction is *The Herring Catch* appeals to me greatly as I search for the artistic rendering style to use in my project.

*The Herring Catch*
Rolf Nesch—1938
Color mixed intaglio with added relief elements
6 plates
Georgia Marsh

"I don't think we experience anything without having a code before the experience...why not look at this idea of abstraction and mess it up a bit? Why not look at this notion of handmade representation in Western culture since nobody likes it much anymore? Why not take another look, rearrange the terms?" - the artist on challenging the preconceptions in looking at nature and representing it in art.

Georgia Marsh is a printmaker and painter whose work has greatly shaped the ideas that form the basis of my proposed project, *Interconnectivity*. Her efforts to challenge the viewer's preconceptions of nature in her subtle, exquisitely rendered prints and drawings inspire me to rethink the ways that coastal environments can be rendered. Marsh’s use of close-ups, diptychs and square formatting impose a conceptual structure onto a graceful image of natural beauty. The rich velvety lines and under-wiped areas on the plates add to the tension created by the pull that exists between real and artificial. These contrasting elements as well as Marsh’s conceptual ideas are inspiring to me as an artist and ones I plan to employ in my project.

*Natura Naturata*

Georgia Marsh, 1993
Color monotype, (26 3/4 x 25 3/4)
Stephen Raul Anaya (1946- )

Stephen Raul Anaya is a contemporary California printmaker and painter whose work has been exhibited around the world. Pilgrims relates to the viewer a dreamlike state in which the over-flowing ocean connects to the complex night sky. Light, texture, and form are all beautifully rendered in the piece. The tenuous connection between the sea, land, and sky is apparent. The almost fantasy-like atmosphere in Pilgrims, as well as the rich, velvety blacks Anaya has achieved intrigue me. These are both elements that I am considering for use in the pieces for my proposed project.

Pilgrims
Stephen Raul Anaya – 1972
Original aquatint & etching
Olga Poloukhine

"We all live with a duality which is intrinsic to our human nature: on the one hand an inner world of faith, of interiority: the thread of prayer, of relationship to God. On the other, our outer world of relationships with people, with nature: the persona we put forth. It is that "edge" where the outer world encounters my interiority, which I address in my paintings and prints. They are the expression of my experience and emotions. They invite the viewer to share them with me."—quote from the artist

The art created by the painter/printmaker/iconographer Olga Poloukhine spoke to me in a deeply spiritual manner the first time I was lucky enough to discover it. She can take a landscape we have all seen many times and depit it with a mysterious, dreamlike quality through her choice of soft colors and beautiful rendering style. Scenes recreated in Poloukhine's art become very personal and have a narrative, emotional quality that I seek to convey with my own art.

Opposite page, clockwise from top left:

Drifts - intaglio (6" x 12"
Racine - intaglio (21"x 24"
Mangrove - intaglio (18" x 24"
Shallow Waters - intaglio (18" x 24"
Previously Completed Works:

The following pages contain additional examples of my most current work. Several of the pieces are from a series I recently completed relating to midways and circus life. Work from the recent Academy of Art Study Abroad program in Italy which I participated in is represented here also. The various mediums included in this portfolio are etching, lithography, silkscreen, mixed media, watercolor, & acrylic.