

## Sandra (S.E.) Penney Artist Statement

I've been teaching printmaking at the Kirkland Arts Center, a non-profit visual arts school and gallery, since January 2022, and I've cherished every minute of it! I learned printmaking at KAC under the tutelage of the talented printmaker, Karen Klee-Atlin, and have spent years refining my skills. As I've gained experience, I've been able to create prints that feature my love of painting along with my passion for carved print elements.

My process focuses on three specific art forms within the broader printmaking arena: **reduction/relief** and **monotypes** and **monoprints**. With reduction/relief, I carve into either linoleum or wood to create repeatable images that evolve on the paper through layered applications of oil-based inks. Some of my prints have over 14 layers and take months to complete. *Headwater* and *Sand Dollar* are examples of this reduction/relief process.

**Monoprints** have a more free-flowing, painterly approach but also contain a fixed "matrix" of a repeatable, consistent element. In my *Ouroboros* and *Crossing the First Threshold* prints, the viewer can see the repeatable, carved reduction/relief elements alongside the brushy, painterly techniques I use to add atmosphere and emotion to the print.

**Monotype** is the process of creating singular works of art using printing techniques. I start by inking up a piece of linoleum or acrylic, adding in organic materials, including fresh flower blooms, and running the plate through the press with a piece of paper on top so that the image on the plate transfers to the paper, creating the print. I will often alter the plate and run the same print through again, building up layers and textures as I work to refine the final image. Hand brushed ink onto the paper alongside stamping and stencils may also be used to enhance the artwork. My prints, *The Summer Queen* and *Bonfire of the Anthropocene*, are examples of my monotype artwork. The flower blossoms are not only beautiful but have become part of my visual language, expressing joy and innocence; and alternately, peril and destruction.

World events, mythology, fairytales, science fiction, and the natural world all influence and feature in my artwork. I began creating the *Ouroboros* series on the first day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This series is a celebration of the 13 soldiers on Snake Island who were the first line of defense when Russia attacked, and also reflects on how war closes borders and isolates people, yet violence recognizes no borders and splashes out far past the area of conflict.

*The Crossing of the First Threshold* series was inspired by a poem written by a local poet, Kari Tai. This monoprint series tries to capture the tension between innocence and experience, and illustrate the beginning of the hero's journey that each of us must make in our own lives.

*The Summer Queen* is part of my **Proserpina Project**; a body of work I am creating that explores the sadness the "long dark" brings to some of us living here in the Pacific NW, along with the hope and joy that spring and summer bring.

Visit [www.sandrapenney.com](http://www.sandrapenney.com), or follow me on Instagram @s.e.penney to find out more.