

On Cultivating Trust

Sue Gosin and Paul Wong, currently collaborating on a William Kentridge book of watermarks in their 32nd year at Dieu Donné Paper Mill in New York City. William is arriving in a week's time to check the results of some drawings that have been converted into cotton watermarks for a book project. Paul has spent the day today in the studio on a new suite for Richard Tuttle, entitled: 'Weak Hydrogen Bonds'.

Can you tell me a little bit about the project you are working on together at the moment, as well as the Tuttle project underway?

PW - Well, since I've been working with Richard, we had published a triptych, a suite, previously, and Richard came on a sponsorship residency - so we worked together for 3 days in the studio, and he was working with silk thread that he was dipping in dyes and then dropping on to wet sheets that had watermarks on them - there was a diamond patterned watermark covering the whole sheet. He was doing a repetitive motion and making these linear marks with the threads. He did a number of pieces, some he left the threads on, some he picked the threads back off so it left the trail of the dye. So that led to this triptych that came out of that kind of experience of him having a dialogue with the process.

So, these few years later, I asked if he wanted to do another project, and he was excited about coming in but he wanted to really approach papermaking from an entirely different place – he really was interested in how the pulp itself without forming it and pressing it – just the pulp itself with its hydrogen bonds holds together. He considered working with these weak hydrogen bonds, and the title of the project is 'WHB' part 1,2,3 and 4.

He kept coming back to develop the images that were in a way hand casting the pulp, which he decided on. He brought in the pigments, coloured the pulps, and he sat down with me and informed me of the step by step procedure to form the pulps for each piece in this suite of sculptural pieces.

He felt it was very important to document his actions in creating the prototypes for each piece - so we videotaped as best we could him making each one. Then that became part of understanding the work, in that the artist is in a way performing and you can see how the work was structured internally by looking at the step by step procedure, whereas by looking at each piece finished, you don't really see how each piece was built up and then in a way was destroyed.

He referred to a metaphor of building sandcastles – like a child building sandcastles, and then destroying them - and so in each piece there is kind of a method of destroying the built-up sandcastle, and that then became the methodology for creating each piece.

It's a very interesting way to watch the artist in their process and discover their process. As a collaborator, over the years with experiences with so many different artists, can you describe a few of the different ways you have used to do that?

PW -Well, every collaboration with each artist is different. It depends on what each artist brings to the table. In some cases the artist leads you because it may be the work or the image that he wants to work with is so specific that in a way you have to interpret the methodology in papermaking to achieve that image in paper, so in a way you are kind of acting as a technician, and that's what you are sharing with the dialogue... and in some cases the artist is totally in the dark about the process for instance, or they don't really have a very specific set of goals they want to achieve - in a sense they are almost like students and wanting to discover something along the way.

Sometimes you have to lead the collaboration and show the artist possible applicable techniques that might interest them, sometimes you are surprised because a painter might end up doing something sculptural - nothing obvious that you would anticipate but something that might lead both of the collaborators to another place.

And lead paper to a new place...

PW - Yeah, like sometimes you have to do something you've never done before. You have to figure out another way of working that is within the means of the materials and the equipment but you might have to bring something else into the mix that you've never done before or used before to get to that point.

Do you have an example of a case where you had to invent a new means in order to achieve the ends of the piece?

SG - Well, the early collaborations with Virginia Armillo when we were first kind of discovering what the pulp would do...

PW - That's true – that's a good example...

SG - We were not literally making watermarks in a historical context, but understanding what it would mean to layer different pulps and how that can create an image – how you then control that – so you kind of stumble across things that are in the hardware store next door - like tape! With a lot of these techniques it was a lot of play.

So what ideas did you have about collaboration when you started Dieu Donné as a paper mill? Did you have a sense of exactly what you wanted to do with artists or was it more informal?

SG - I almost always have clear ideas...

Because I started playing around in papermaking myself, I was actually an etcher more than anything else... and I started playing around in the paper mill at the university of Wisconsin and Joe Wilfer was working with Alan Shields and they were bringing up artists and working in the paper mill and it was very exciting it was all so brand new.

I used to go into the paper mill, I would sign up to go in at 3 in the afternoon to finish about 6, and ended up leaving at about 3 in the morning – it dawned on me how much artists would enjoy this process. At that time there weren't any other hand paper mills in the US anymore, much less collaborative ones. So I had a very clear idea of bringing an ancient craft that had become reinvented as an artists medium to the centre of the art world of that time which was NYC, and sharing that with as many artists as possible.

But easier said than done. Chuck Close talks about how Joe Wilfer - who at one point actually joined us at Dieu Donné, was trying to introduce him to hand papermaking, and he didn't want to touch it.

So there is a lot of arm twisting and a lot of going back and forth working with artists and I think that very often some of the best collaborations come from being a collaborator who really loves an artists work – who really gets it and loves it and wants to show that artist some of the wonderful gifts that the papermaking process has to offer and help them interpret their work with these unexplored gifts or toys that they have never used before.

In introducing them to paper – for the artists – are you trying to find something new or something familiar in their creative process?

SG - Well it's a reinterpretation very often of a concept that an artist has been working with – a lot of the time it's that way. But people do often talk about the fact that they have breakthroughs when they are working with the process because it's so playful and I think all art comes from play. And we often talk about paper as being a very generous process, it has a lot to offer sculptors and painters and its very childlike - so it's disarming in a way.

People come in and they can be really tense. You can't blame anyone because for someone who thinks of themselves as a serious, professional artist it's very intimidating to go into a process that you can't read about – to go into a studio where you don't know the people yet. Because basically making art is like being naked - so you walk in the door into the studio, you take off all your clothes, you are supposed to trust yourself – your heart and soul to complete strangers and to a process that you don't know anything about.

John Kessler was saying that he felt like he had to be “on”, and do a kind of performance for everyone who was around him – so then as a collaborator you have to find a way to make people feel comfortable, and everybody's different.

PW - Well that's why it's difficult. Like in a multitasking studio like ours, where if a certain artist comes in that really needs that kind of privacy then everyone else has to hush up - it changes the dynamic. Whereas in other cases, other artists like E.V. Day for example - she is talking to everyone and she likes the hubbub...

SG -Well that's a real gamble and you find that artists do feel like they have to perform when they come and there isn't someone watching. That's something that always concerns me – it always has, because I feel that

it's almost fundamentally a very intimate medium, and so that combination of intimacy and performance can be a little uneasy somehow.

PW - I think you might find that even more so with an artist of very high stature, coming in to the studio – it's like they want all the focus to be in respect to them being there. So everything has to accommodate that...

SG - Creation is a very sacred thing, so you have to protect the artist basically. One of the wonderful things about working with Paul all these years and watching him with people is that he understand boundaries very well and is very careful to quietly guard people's private space – even in a three ring circus which Dieu Donn  sometimes is. You have to be very careful about that.

In terms of collaboration as the profession which it has become, at the EFA recently they had a public forum about various aspects of collaboration, and the printer Luther Davis made a comment about how they don't teach collaboration in art school and would that it were that they did. So, what are the balances you are trying to keep in a collaboration and how would you convey the process to somebody new?

PW - It obviously takes a long time to teach someone the sensitivities of working with an artist – obviously the collaborator probably needs to be an artist themselves – no matter what level they are but at least one that is mature enough to understand the process completely. So obviously that is a whole training in itself, and then to be able to have the maturity to be thrown into a room with someone they've maybe never met or talked to very peripherally before the session and be able to read the other person and receive how to respond and to be able to know, "Well I need to make that further step to bring them out some more".

So it's mostly about non-verbal communication...

SG - I think what Paul is talking about too is that to be a successful collaborator takes a lot of maturity – your ego has to be in repose and yet your vision and your skill have to be as refined as the artist you are working with. And the most exciting collaborations occur when you are peer to peer with the artist that you are working with – what you are bringing is of equal value in a way – to what the artist is bringing. It often reminds me of dance – because if you're dancing with a partner you take cues from each other all the time, and very often one will lead and then the other follows and vice versa.

Like a musical performance – like being in a band together...

SG - I've never played music but I've danced and it is that rhythm, that give and take and it gets really good when there is a lot of trust - and trust comes from being able to read each other quite well. That's why sometimes remarkable collaborations happen right off the bat, but very often collaborations get richer and better over the years as you have developed this incredible trust which is a great foundation for collaboration and its quite personal - you really know each other quite well, you've worked together before.

PW - I think Richard and I are probably at that level. He has brought projects to us even though we have maybe only made the paper for it, but we have still been having a dialogue and this has been going on since... 1988.

So you've learnt to speak his language?

PW - Well, I think to understand his language.

SG - When it's really fun and you're willing to work especially hard for an artist is when you are so stimulated by the ideas that they are working with and what you are able to bring – your own ideas and how that's appreciated – that's very satisfying.

In the visual arts we don't have as strong a tradition of giving collaborators the kind of credit you might get in the film industry for example, where collaborators traditionally play off each other and are then recognized for that. There, you have this incredible mix of people who are working with each other, feeding off each other... there is a very rich art product coming out of all these people working together and knowing that they will be recognized for the contribution they have made. I think in the visual arts we are really lagging in that sense.

PW - I think that's the difference between a collaborator who works with an artist and an artist who works with their assistant who just perform for them and make stuff - but in this context you're having a dialogue with the artist and its like a dance.

So what do you think is important for the artist in that dance and dialogue – why is it important to come and have that interaction with you here?

SG - That's probably something for the artists to answer but I have heard many artists say that they have had little breakthroughs in hand papermaking that have been a big surprise to them.

PW - Well, for instance, Virginia Armillo and Bart Wasserman were both painters and, I guess, in a way mid-career but once they worked at Dieu Donn  a number of times they got so into the discovery and creating that both of them almost completely converted their work into paper and stopped working on canvas... both of them.

What peculiar aspects to the papermaking process tend to attract artists – what are artists discovering in paper?

PW - Well, obviously the hand papermaking process offer something very, very unique and it's really those who have opened their doors with facilities like these that can give those artists the ability to work in processes like these. It is so equipment and material oriented that you have to have the studio - you can't make paper in your personal studio on such a level if you want to work large for example...without having the right equipment in place.

SG - You do need the equipment to a certain extent, and you can do it on a very basic level too...but certainly the kind of work that has been going on here for decades now, I think that we are developing a level of expertise that is pretty distinct. There is something that happens here - we are very conscious at Dieu Donn  that the most important thing is the art.

PW - And after thirty years to build Dieu Donn  up to that level of what it is today. You know, it's taken that long to really have everything in place, the people, the equipment...

SG - ...and the process.

But its interesting because what is our strength is also our shortcoming to a certain extent. Our strength is that we used to have printing equipment as well as papermaking and at a certain point it was quite obvious that there was so much to learn and do in papermaking that you can only do so much at any one time we had to focus on papermaking.

Whereas other facilities can have other types of equipment available because many times the paper will simply be the substrate for an image that goes on top and it is used in that traditional way. But the shortcoming of that is that you don't have to go back to the process over and over again to problem solve.

We have forced ourselves always to find the imagery in the process and in doing that we have invented, and found out that the process is so inventive, it matches - it more than it matches us at every single turn – which has been very exciting. It's our strength and its also our shortcoming in terms of working with artists, but I do think we can use that opportunity to really explore the medium – we get into it. We find these things really exciting.

And the mistakes and limitations often offer you new opportunities and new routes...

PW - In a way it's a more pure... in a way by restricting the focus away from a shop that has printmaking and bookmaking etc. its like purely working in paper and so you are problem solving purely in paper – and so the end product speaks that. I think that's where you really see the possibilities and the character of the material.

And in a lot of respects you evolve a new kind of aesthetic because you are in a way kind of challenging printmaking – the perfection and precision is so finite and so detailed, so that in a way papermaking is restricting you from that kind of precision so you are in a way creating another kind of aesthetic.

SG - And also a different kind of precision – and there is a whole new vocabulary that is coming with that precision – it's a precision within hand papermaking. We are working with pulps to make them into creative

vehicles for us in a way that other people use ink - and it has taken us decades to learn those pulps and we have only scratched the surface. Our palette is much bigger than what we were working with in 1976. And just when you think about what the plant world has to offer, really, we have barely scratched the surface.

Whereas inks are, ink has a lot to do with colour and what colour has to offer.
Paper is so tied to nature – it's a different kind of offering.

PW – It's also structure too – it's image making but it's also structural. Printmaking is just surface its just making an impression on a surface, but then papermaking can go all the steps beyond that and push the image into the substrate and manipulate that too - so that's why its exciting to focus on the possibilities because they are so vast in papermaking.

You both have been working together for a very long time and there has been a collaboration between the two of you. Maybe we can talk about the Kentridge project a bit?

SG - Well I love watermarks and I love Williams work so I worked with this book with him (Receiver) and the paper was designed very specifically for some prints...

PW - Well can I just backtrack a bit – when you brought William in initially to do the three day sponsored residency – were you the one who got William onto watermarks or was he attracted to the technique?

SG - Well that was Mina (Takahashi) and Megan (Moorehouse).

I think that the way that Mina tells it he pretty much came in and fixed his eye on it and had that idea of what paper meant to him at that point.

PW - So perhaps it was his preconception of seeing old papers with watermarks...

SG - First he came to do the watermarks in 2003 - that suite, and then I approached him about the book because he had quoted one of my favourite poets, a polish poet in a lecture. I thought it would be great to do a book with him, I approached him - and he said yes.

I have given William a lot of tutorials in papermaking and what it has to offer and I did a lot of tests. I love his imagery and I love my process and so I started to do a lot of different things – first, with an airbrush and pulp and then an airbrush and air and water and drying it and trying to see how I could attain a process – we were talking about the precision of printmaking and of course William is such a fantastic draughtsman, and one of my goals has always been to create a vocabulary in the papermaking process that is as precise as printmaking.

Different of course, but as precise.

That's the only way that you are going to be able to do serious work - if you know how to control it. Not working against it - but you can work with it.

Use it expressively.

Yes, with great control and precision.

And so I did piles of tests for William and playing around with the paper process and what it can do for him, and he rejected about 90% of them. And finally he saw something that was interesting to him and, finally, said - this is how I want my art in that medium to look... and then you follow and support his art, basically.

And so Paul is involved now as well, how have you been involved?

PW - Well Sue is directing the design of the book – so I am just as a papermaker - I am pretty much editioning the various watermarks.

SG - Well, I am helping William making decisions showing him different options or he will make a suggestion and that's where the conversation goes back and forth and you get practical about what decisions you need to make.

I am struggling to finish off what Paul has started with the editioning right now though - he has a way of developing a rhythm with his papermaking that is hard to pull off.

PW - It took me quite a while – I mean obviously everyone has formed a sheet of paper with a watermark in it – but to do it over and over again to perfection - hitting the mark every time is altogether another challenge.

SG - Hundreds and hundreds of times – hitting the bullseye.

PW - But also making as many sheets to do that. Making twice as many sheets to get to those perfect ones – so along the way in editioning, I had to figure out all the problems and overcome them and it took me about a week and a half to do it. Even an issue like mould size – like we were doing 2-up on an 18x24 inch mould, then doing single images on 11x14 inch and even the two different moulds had different problems that I had to overcome and figure out, “How do I deal with these problems?”

SG - And it's interesting because Paul then had to get started on the Tuttle and here I am at square one trying to do the same as he had done, and Paul is there making hamburger patties out of bright orange and bright green, and smashing them.

...looking like he's having too much fun..

PW- ...and doing the opposite – like she is...

SG - ...green with envy! Trying to think, “What am I doing with these perfect sheets that are just one after another are just giving me such a hard time?” It got me thinking that perfection is in a sense a really bad thing to aim for, and you should just have fun. That's what its all about.

PW - Well it is very challenging to have the level of craftsmanship and to be able to execute it.

SG - And to do it over and over again, but to get to that level as a craftsman - to do it again and again and again.

What Paul is offering to William Kentridge with these wonderful perfect 'Zen-like' sheets is that, to me, they have a grace to them - when I peel them off the pellons – I can tell when he is in a rhythm within the process – you can just see it in the paper and flow of the pulp and how it would look in the sheet. And then to watch him and take this precision and apply it in the same way to making...

PW - ...sandcastles.

SG - To switch gears that way to make ...these pulp cowpies. And I really have respect for them, because I think it takes a long time and an enormous amount of confidence to do it from the get-go. You have to be so confident and uninhibited, and skilled, and present.

There is a papermaker in Japan called Iwano Ichibei who said once that if he is not concentrating on what he is doing then the paper will be angry with him. Dieu Donn  is a mill as well as a collaborative studio – and there aren't many models like that with both going on and I was wondering about the interplay between those two things - if you feel that papermaking and doing large editions of custom paper orders gives you a different approach to collaboration?

SG - Well I don't think you can be a good collaborator unless you know your craft. Just learning sheet forming making the pulp yourself, cooking from scratch...

PW - Obviously some projects require that level of perfection that a very good papermaker is always practicing. But in this 'three-ring circus' obviously it's hard to go back and forth and keep that perfection intact because the equipment has been exposed to so many extremes and the concentration is somewhat lost - and you have to kind of regain it somehow.

So it is difficult, but we try to practice it here - both extremes.

SG - In the first couple of years at Dieu Donn  we were trying to get artists to try paper but it was difficult and we did a lot of papermaking. You can't read about it - you have to do it. You get into the rhythm and the

concentration - I can tell (from the paper) when Paul is in the rhythm and when he is upset and when he is distracted.

PW - It's true.

Heizaburo Iwano's factory papermakers talk about how they could tell from the surface of the paper which team in the history of the mill made it... and who was leading the team, what kind of team.

PW - I think it's pretty evident who has made the sheet.

SG - I can tell from Terry and Paul's paper – Paul is left-handed and he shakes differently.

PW - Often times when I have to do a project – well maybe even more so in the past, we were making all kinds of papers that would have to hold up to all kinds of historical papers – in the quality and the formation. So I would have to do the whole project from making the pulp to drying be totally in control of the whole process from start to finish, because I didn't trust anybody to do it – you know – to pay attention to every step. So I think it's kind of an issue that if you have somebody making the pulp and then somebody else forming the sheets and then somebody drying them... you know, its chaotic.

SG - Its how much you invest in the paper- in the process and if you are making sheets of paper its how much you care – you see it very clearly.

In Japan they find the perfect balance - you know the masters by the individual glow coming from their paper, but it is altogether flawless...

So to come back to collaboration in particular and the strange animal that it is – if you could liken it to anything - what is it that you are doing?

SG - You are stepping into the artist's shoes... literally stepping in their artistic shoes and then bringing your experience which they don't have to that understanding – and saying "There's a whole path you can go down with this." And that's why there has to be so much trust. There's an interesting thing that goes on with boundaries in collaboration.

What do you mean?

SG - Because you cross into each others boundaries and because trust is so important and you won't betray the trust – to allow someone to come in to where you are and you will go where they are and when you are done you separate again. But when you are really inside that collaboration - its like when you were talking about production say, you are really concentrating – you're completely aware and you are feeling someone out and at the end of the day there is this incredible work that has come out of this intimacy. It's very intimate – the process of collaboration.

So as it has been called, a blind date?

SG - Well, you get in the sandbox and you play. You kind of forget about the rest of the world and you are playing with one another. But in a more psychological way you could also talk about the boundaries and feeling very comfortable about stepping into somebody else's shoes...

PW - I think it could be a blind date in the beginning, but it can be the second date and the third date and the fourth date...

Which date are you on with Richard Tuttle?

SG - They're practically married...

PW - Well I guess we've bonded.

The way you characterize it - it seems like the role a translator has to take on in a way – its not their words but they have to find the right metaphor in a new language to create the same character of what is being said and allowing that to be communicated in this totally different system – and to know that metaphor well enough...

PW - Well that's why Richard and I understand each other because he understands papermaking enough now that he's worked in it over the years - not just with us, but he's worked with other people too. So in a way, this time around his experience has already lead him to depart and follow this new path. That's why the video documentation was a vehicle in this project because it recorded his recipe, so to speak – it's a guide for me to go back and recall the procedure to be able to do the edition. So that's why it was an integral part of the editioning.

SG - Thinking about translating - I had one friend in particular who was working with a poet and translating his work from Urdu into English and though he knew English quite well – he couldn't write poetry in English. So they worked together so they worked together and collaborated quite closely – which is a very different process I would think taking work of a writer posthumously and translating from one language to another – because you are not interacting the same – the more immediate that interaction the more possibilities there are for that interaction - the more intimate the collaboration is necessarily going to be. Certainly with many printers, publishers etc. a maquette or original arrives in the mail, and its just a reproduction process, which is different from collaboration.

PW - Well, like first project I worked on with Richard was the book we did together. He didn't know me from Adam and he came over. The whole project was initiated by the Whitney Museum, people donated money and so they would publish different artists and writer's projects every year. So in a way it came through that and all he had was a bunch of paint splats on sheets of paper using enamel paint and this and that and he just said: "Can you reproduce this in paper?"

So I had to come up with, well for example, one was kind of a green blob that dripped down and it was all bubbly and I had to figure out how I was going to create this kind of bubbly look in pulp. So, I had to figure that out as well as how to create the same kind of qualities with different materials. In a way that's a kind of translation from other materials to create the image.

SG - Well its closer to saying, "This is how we work – can you do this in the medium" and now he knows the language and has the vocabulary of his own.

PW - And he knows I am going to follow through...we're both talking the same language, now.

I think Chuck was much more inventive early on – well it was like being a child in the sandbox and you just want to grab at everything that you can - and he did kind of exploit lots of different methods.

Collaboration is kind of a strange morphing creature...there are many kinds of collaborations because it's all based on the two collaborators. It's really the personal dynamics between the two people. I think that at the talk at the EFA there was a woman who really brought up the other aspect of what a collaboration is – that is to say between two artists. That's a *really* different thing from the collaboration that you are addressing here. When someone from a shop working with an artist it's kind of a different relationship than two artists collaborating.

Rachel Gladfelter at that talk brought up the role of chance in papermaking in particular – in some way comparing it to print and other media and making that distinction. Where printmaking is often about exacting a specific desired goal – Rachel was saying that you often have to release yourself to papermaking in a way.

PW - Well in printmaking the closest you can come to that kind of spontaneity is doing monotypes - but obviously papermaking is so fluid and spontaneous that it's a much faster kind of procedure to respond to ... I think with printmaking it's more trudging through the different parts of a process – like ink up the plate and run it through the press and then look at it – it slows you down so much that you can't play with it and keep this kind of fast-paced momentum and excitement, in a way.

SG - It's also the fact that it's a liquid medium I think its really its so fluid. And it is – it's like a fast moving stream. Sometimes you can wade in shallow water for a while...

PW - ...or drown...

SG - But, taking the metaphor literally, the fact that water is the main vehicle is really important.

PW - It's the elixer of life the universal solvent. All life on earth is based in water – it's an integral part of the human process. I think that's why it's so unique – you almost don't even have to understand it – its just so inherent – it's intuitive.

It's interesting on a scientific level too because water is this kind of electrolyte – it separates out positive and negative ions and creates a space where things become charged - and they can come together and create new relationships and bonds. It is a medium where alchemy can happen and can create the chance for things to break apart and reform and realign.

SG - There is a lot of alchemy in the process – a lot of mystery too. It's kind of like photography – when you are in the darkroom and watching the image come up. When the water drains away there is always a sense of surprise...

So papermakers and paper collaborators are also alchemists.

Looking at John Cage's mountain paper projects with their burnt soot marks on paper... his Zen inspired work – I was wondering if you had ever considered bringing an artist like him in here whilst h was alive. Because he had been trying to find a way for the process to take over and take the lead and to delete the artists ego or hand in the process. It would surely have had been fascinating how he chose to work in paper - in the wet process.

SG - Well yes, he was always trying to create structures where the ego has to be in the background and something else would create the work – not his ego. And I think papermaking, yes, naturally lends itself to that - becoming an observer in the process in a way.

So do you think artists get that too out of the process – they can become an observer of their own work and step back in a way and have a different relationship to what they have been doing in their own space in the studio?

SG - Well, I think a lot of artists actually get frustrated with that and I think they might hold it against the process because there is an approach to art where it's mainly ego – but in this process the subtlety is more of a standing back and allowing ...

And at the same that's kind of a contribution in a way to the art world at this point.

SG - Oh yeah.

What do you think brings artists to come back and work with great collaborators, like Ken Tyler for example?

SG - I think artists come back to work with great collaborators when there's chemistry. A good collaborator helps you make great art.

PW - First you have to make this distinction about – is this person a publisher too? Ken Tyler is a publisher so obviously he is creating relationships – lifelong relationships - with certain artists that he wants to work with. So that's one reason why...

SG - If you take an artist who works by themselves in a studio in isolation on, lets say, painting... that's a very pure form of the artist and their work. Most artists have to circulate too somehow though... so in the collaborative studio there's a lot of social interaction as well as getting to produce work. And, if you have a small army of people helping you to produce your art – well, then you have a lot more art.

And, well, you would also go to different studios for different needs.

It seems to me from watching the process with E.V. Day - E.V. is sharing her process of discovery with people - and it's like having someone in your studio when you are usually alone and kind of having the chance to say, "What do you actually think about this?" and gauging other peoples reactions. As an artist you have an audience in mind for your work, of whatever kind, but you don't often get direct feedback from them... But when E.V. is in the studio and working with Catherine she can immediately see and feel how Catherine responds to the ideas - that gives the artist that conversation that they are trying to have – that communication they are trying to have through making work.

SG - One of the reasons Dieu Donn  is set up the way it is - because I loved the social environment of the printmaking studio. You can be alone and go off into your own world and do your own work but then if you wanted to chat a little bit that was okay too. Because, artmaking can be a very lonely process and I think that artists are probably very happy to have collaborative studios where they can have their artmaking be a little bit more social.

And, there's the aspect of whether or not the collaborator you are working with really understands what you are doing with the work – you're always having a conversation with yourself and when they get what you're doing – it's like you are really standing in each other's shoes in a way. It's somebody who is versed in your language and knows how you are trying to express yourself...

Paul you said earlier that it is important for a collaborator to be an artist or know that process well enough for themselves... why do you think that is?

PW - Because then you can speak the same language - in working with an artist of a specific stature, well let me put it this way – you don't want to go to Paris and not be able to speak French like the French... you'd have to know how to interpret the aesthetics of their work and execute a piece that is at the same level of their competence in another medium. So you have to be really... you have to know your stuff. You have to have the experience and the confidence to follow through and stand in the room and not *not* know what you are talking about.

SG - You can't be intimidated by the artist that you are working with. For the artist – going to a studio and working with a collaborator who just does not have the experience nor the same professional standing as you are - how exasperating would that be? And you feel like you are kind of wasting your time if they haven't had the years of decision making behind them – because a lot of artmaking is about decision making. And then there's the skill of knowing your craft well and the process well. Those are two different things.

PW - And you have to know where to draw the line with certain people – if you're not able to meet each other on an equal level – like even some really big-name artists can be very insecure, and they tend to lean on other people to create their work on some level. So sometimes its kind of disheartening to be put in that position - you have to say, "Well you make that decision – I'm not going to make your art for you." Because sometimes it comes to that - and its very tough you have to really do it in such a way that you're not insulting them or hurting their feelings.

SG - You have to help them feel confident and sometimes that is just not knowing the process very well... and that's where as a collaborator you want to give a helping hand and help them feel like they can come out the other side.

I saw Steve McQueen on a panel in Japan giving a talk about his work with a translator he didn't trust – and his instincts were pretty good – he could tell she was editing and altering the nuance of what he was trying to say. As a collaborator – it's a real challenge to make an artist feel in control of what they are saying.

SG - Well it's about the sympathy. If you feel that someone isn't trying to express really what you are saying you can sense it immediately. It is all an issue of trust.

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