

Imprint Magazine article

Pentimento

1 November – 28 November 2006

Steps Gallery, Carlton, Vic

My major show for 2006-2007, *Pentimento*, explores the physical and symbolic layering of a place through time, amid the shadows and stories of its built (and rebuilt) environment. To create this work, I travelled with my wife Debra to Florence in November 2005 and then to Paris, seeking inspiration in those two beautiful cities. The prints were completed back in Australia at the Baldessin Press, St Andrews.

My response to Paris was almost visceral, whereas in Florence it was reflective and eclectic. I had an immediate and intense engagement with the panoramas of Paris. I looked at its cityscapes and felt compelled to create an image, but my task was to produce a good drawing that would allow multiple and fresh interpretations months and half a world away, while I sat in my studio in a bleak Kinglake winter. So, I withheld a little and changed my process to make it more disciplined.

I found myself particularly drawn to the motion and life of Paris, especially the way its boulevards roll through the cityscape, turning the wedges of buildings into organs fed by the arteries of streaming traffic. I was reminded that to draw such views was to explore all the reasons why I like to make prints: there was past, present and future all wrapped in these feats of engineering, in the city's legion flourishes of urban beauty.

Thanks to the generosity of patrons, Debra and I stayed in the centre of Florence, just minutes away from the Duomo Santa Maria del Fiore. There, I began my recording process by making pencil rubbings of Florence's innumerable and fascinating wall-engravings, such as letters, words, and crests. I needed these details as a catalogue of the physicality and the unique semiotics of the city.

I decided to create the *Pentimento* work on large plates, ranging from 60 x 90 cm to 90 x 130 cm. It was a hard choice to make because of the immense difficulty of handling and printing those plates, but I felt that certain scenes made sense only at that size.

Pentimento has more unique state prints than any of my previous shows. Spit-biting and hand-colouring have allowed me to add layers so that the new works have depth and intricacy. I am using a lot of burnt sienna to create a sepia look, suggesting remnants of memory and the essential elements of place. In other works, I have combined drypoint with monotype to create a greater visual depth with more layers and atmosphere.

More information at: www.marcoluccio.com

Marco Luccio will be given an Artist Talk at Steps Gallery at 2pm on 19 November.

Pentimento is curated by Mary Tokatlidis. The exhibition will travel to Impressions on Paper Gallery, Canberra, in July 2007, and Colville Street Art Gallery, Hobart, in November 2007. Other interstate and overseas venues are currently being arranged.