

Ben Moreau

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Represented by Davidson Galleries, Seattle, WA

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Ben Moreau was born in Portland, Maine, and earned a BFA in printmaking from the Maine College of Art in 1999. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he was awarded an MA in studio art in 2002, and an MFA degree in 2003. Ben has taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Tacoma Community College, Shoreline Community College, North Seattle College, and was a full-time adjunct faculty member at Western Washington University from 2006 to 2015, in charge of the printmaking program. Additionally, he served on the board of directors of Seattle Print Arts from 2013-2017. Ben has an extensive national and international exhibition record, and his works are found in the permanent collections of the Syracuse University Art Galleries, the West Virginia University Art Museum, the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, and at the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University, among many others. He is represented by the Davidson Galleries in Seattle, Washington, where he currently lives and works with his wife and two sons.

My still life and object images are reflections of anxiety and fears, and I view them as an extension of my previous work investigating self-portraiture and the human condition.

This body of work is an interpretation of vanitas still life images imbued with a dark sense of humor. The objects in these contemporary memento mori pieces are related to everyday life, and primarily consist of skulls, unread or unfinished books, children's toys, empty beer bottles and cans, or scrabble tiles. The small and intimate scale forces the viewer to approach and inspect the artwork closely, examine the details, and consider the labor involved. I find creating artwork to be contemplative and self-reflexive, and the scale imparts that experience onto the viewer. The mood is bleak, and there is a pessimism that borders on the nihilistic. A general sense of ennui permeates the work as I struggle to find my place and inject meaning into my life while examining the overwhelming presence of my failures as a husband, a father/provider, an artist, and an educator. The divisiveness and binary nature of contemporary American politics begins to infiltrate my art adding to a general sense of helplessness and hopelessness. I am overcome by our current economic system, and the depressing reality that I cannot provide a better life for my children than my parents were able to give me.

My images are designed to be open-ended and accessible, to invite contemplation, subvert expectations, and welcome individual experiences with various readings and interpretations.

In these works I am particularly influenced by some of the writings of John Baldesarri and the Romanian philosopher Emile Cioran. Chiefly, Baldessari's fascination with people's desire to imbue things with meaning, and how meaning happens when objects are placed within close proximity, and Cioran's writing about pessimism and nihilism, specifically themes alienation, despair, and futility have had a solidifying effect on my own thoughts.

Education

- 2003 MFA, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
- 2002 MA, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
- 1999 BFA in Printmaking, Maine College of Art, Portland, ME

Awards

- 2015 Finalist, Williams Prize in Drawing for Emerging Artists, The Artist for Artists Project
- 2014 Western Washington University Mini-Grant
- 2013 Western Washington University Mini-Grant
- 2012 Second Prize, 2012 Oso Bay North American Printmaking Exhibition
Western Washington University Mini-Grant (twice)
- 2011 Danforth Museum of Art Purchase Prize, 2011 Boston Printmakers Print Biennial
- 2010 The Larry Sommers Art Fellowship, Seattle Print Arts
Western Washington University Mini-Grant
- 2009 International Lithographer-In-Residence Award, Black Church Print Studio, Dublin, Ireland
- 2007 Patricia G. Norman Purchase Award, LAPS 19th National Exhibition
American Print Exhibition Award for Lithography, Foothills Art Center, Golden, CO
- 2003 Class of 1930 Purchase Award, University of Wisconsin Memorial Union
- 2002 Print Gumbo Purchase Award, Southern Graphics Council
- 2001 Juror's Choice Award Counterpoint 2001, Hill Country Arts Foundation, Ingram, TX
Hooper Foundation Scholarship, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 1999 Boston Printmakers/Arches Paper Materials Award, Boston Printmakers Student Print Exhibition

Solo Exhibitions

- 2017 *Marathon Man* Normandale Community College Art Gallery, Normandale Community College, Bloomington, MN
- 2014 *Beta Male* Davidson Gallery, Seattle, WA
- 2012 *I Have My Doubts* Shoreline Community College Art Gallery, Shoreline, WA
- 2011 *Recent Etchings* Davidson Gallery, Seattle, WA
- 2006 *Kra-Koom!* Copernican Design, Seattle, WA
- 2005 *I've Always Been A Glass Is Half Empty Kind of Guy* Anchor Graphics, Chicago, IL
- 2003 *Sophisticated Duh* 734 Gallery, Madison, WI
- 2002 *Fear of Falling Pianos* 7th Floor Gallery, Madison, WI
- 2001 *Numbnuts* Bascom Gallery, Madison, WI

Recent Group Exhibitions

- 2023 (*upcoming*) *MECA&D Alumni Print Exhibition* 49 Oak Gallery, Portland, ME
BIMA Spotlight Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, Bainbridge Island, WA
- 2022 *Trying Harder* OPENS Gallery, Portland, OR
Drawn 2022 Manifest Gallery, Cincinnati, OH
Printmaking: A Social Practice Class of 1925 Gallery, UW Memorial Union, Madison, WI **juror:** Tyanna Buie
The Contemporary Print 2022 Big Medium, Austin, TX **juror:** John Hitchcock
- 2021 *Vox Populi Print Collective Member's Show* 2622 Gallery, Wauwatosa, WI
Exhibition of Personal Collections from a Few West Coast Gentlemen Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle, WA
Portraits? Davidson Galleries, Seattle, WA
- 2019 *Seattle Print Arts Member's Exhibition*, Editions Studio, Seattle, WA
2019 Northwest Print Invitational Davidson Galleries, Seattle, WA

- 2018 *The Print Effect: Small Works/Big Impact* Manhattan Graphics Center, New York, NY **juror:** Lothar Osterberg
Southern Printmaking Biennale VIII International Bob Owens Gallery, University of North Georgia, Dahlonega, GA **juror:** Aaron Coleman
Orchids and Evergreens M Rosetta Hunter Gallery, Seattle Central College, Seattle, WA
- 2017 *Printwork 2017* Artist Image Resource, Pittsburgh, PA **juror:** Joe Lupo
Making Our Mark Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA **juror:** Michael Monroe
(Dis)Connected Kirkland Arts Center, Kirkland, WA
Endless Editions Biennial 20/20 Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 *Pressing On* Schack Art Center, Everett, WA
Contemporary American Lithography Konstlittografiska Museet, Tidaholm, Sweden **curator:** Andrew DeCaen
Near Mint Land Gallery, Portland, OR, Portland State University, Portland, OR
Seattle Print Arts-The Print Exchange Decade ARTReach Gallery, Portland, OR
My Rules North View Gallery, Portland State University, Portland, OR
2015-2018 Southern Graphics International Traveling Exhibition Contemporary Gallery – Center for Art and Theater, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA (catalogue) **juror:** Ruth Weisberg
- 2015 *From the Artist's Eye* Museum of Northwest Art, La Conner, WA
2015-2018 Southern Graphics International Traveling Exhibition Emporium Art Center, Knoxville, TN **juror:** Ruth Weisberg
36th Annual Paper in Particular National Exhibition Columbia College, Columbia, MO **juror:** Alida Fish
Discovery - Art & Design Faculty Exhibition Western Gallery, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA

Select Collections

Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
 Rare Books Collection, Duke University, Chapel Hill, NC
 West Virginia University Art Museum, Morgantown, WV
 Danforth Museum of Art, Framingham, MA
 Black Church Print Studio Archives, Dublin, Ireland
 Private Collection of Drew Carey
 Permanent Collection, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, Christchurch, New Zealand
 University of Colorado Special Collection, Boulder, CO
 The Art Museum of Estonia, Tallinn, Estonia
 University Art Museum, California State University, Los Angeles, CA
 Kohler Art Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
 Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
 Southern Graphics Council International Print Archives, Bernard A. Zuckerman Museum of Art, Kennesaw State University
 Syracuse University Art Galleries Permanent Collection, Syracuse, NY
 University of Wisconsin Memorial Union, Madison, WI
 Amity Art Foundation, Woodbridge, CT
 Hanoi Institute of Fine Arts, Hanoi, Vietnam