

## ABOUT MY WORK IN THE 1980S

All of my work has been an exploration of paper, a journey of discovery into its complex nature and its ability to serve as a metaphor for the world around us. Paper, for me, is the medium rather than merely the surface for the work. I have been intrigued by its outward fragility and its inner strength, its apparent simplicity and its structural complexity, its capacity for both hardness and softness, opacity and translucency, smoothness and texture, flatness and sculptural dimensionality.

In all of my work, the choice of printing and construction techniques has been pertinent to the subject or image of the piece. Most of my work had dealt with the landscape as subject and further elaboration of printing techniques to express aspects of the landscape continued into the 80s. Several trips to the Southwest resulted in series based on that landscape and more elaborate collage, chemical treatments and “paper-distressing” techniques were called into play. Other works used these techniques to express geological processes.

There was also a “black and white” period in which I explored graphite drawing and constructed silkscreen in this limited palette.

In the early 80s I was introduced to hand made paper and studied Western-style and Japanese-style papermaking techniques. In the beginning, I juxtaposed hand made paper with silkscreened papers in order to explore ideas, which did not make sense to do in multiples or could not be achieved within the limitations of the silkscreen process. Eventually, hand made paper opened up new views of nature in that the very textural quality of the material lent itself to closer views of the subject than did the flat, printed shapes of silkscreen.

Hand made paper and the papermaking process itself suggested a strong connection between the paper and the process of the formation of rocks, the layering of bark on trees, the planar nature of leaves and the multiple layers of material of walls and fences.

The Walls Series has been sustained into the 90s and I have yet to run out of new connections between paper manipulation and treatment techniques and the aging of architectural surfaces. A sub-text of the Walls Series has been the Graffiti pieces through which I acknowledge what I feel is legitimate folk art/calligraphy and social commentary despite the legal issues. Walls are our urban canvases on which nature and man make their marks. Paper is uniquely structured to express the nature of a wide variety of surfaces and to bear the effects of age and wear. As such, the Walls testify to the vulnerability and resilience of life itself.

In the mid-80s I began a series of self portraits in hand made paper which eventually lead to figurative imagery, more 3-dimensional sculptural works and the introduction of social issues in the 1990s. While the Walls and Graffiti series continued into the 90s, use of my art work became only one component of what was termed “Social Practice”