

# MAGNOLIA EDITIONS Newsletter No.6, Spring '05

## New Editions: Hung Liu

This Spring Hung Liu created her first piece at Magnolia Editions, a tapestry of her painting *Profile II*. Liu found inspiration for this image in a series of photographs called *Chinese-types 1869-72*, by Scottish photographer John Thomson. Liu, who often paints from old photographs, reclaims this image, and transforms it with her unique aesthetic. She searches for the mythic pose beneath the human figure, and combines contemporary techniques with ancient Chinese motifs. Liu's work is layered with paint, layered in meaning and in history and now layered with interwoven threads. *The color of the tapestry is yang*, Liu says, *deep and strong*.

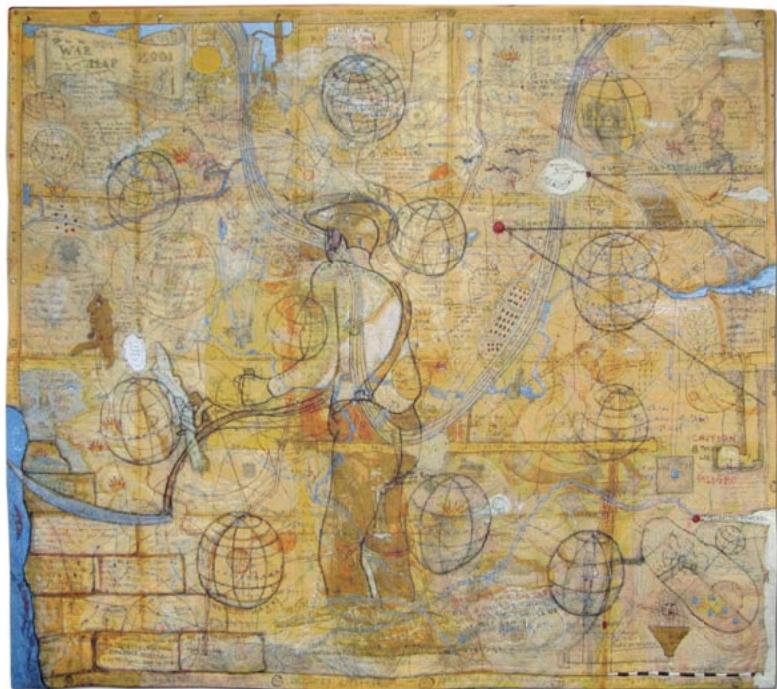
## William Wiley

In his new tapestry, *Creative War Map*, William Wiley faces the destructive war the US is waging with humor, beauty and hope. Little sketches referencing the current political climate are scattered about the map, some ironic interpretations of real situations, some creative alternatives to the present. Word plays allow the viewer to experience sorrow with a bit of laughter. The scroll in the upper corner bears the title of the piece and is signed by the *justus society*, a dotted line marks the boundaries of various diatribe.



Hung Liu in front of her tapestry, *Profile II*, 2005  
cotton jacquard tapestry, 78" x 82.5", Edition of 8

Wiley's work is an extension of his creative mind. When he visits Magnolia Editions he has us in stitches with a string of his well-crafted jokes. Then he sits down to work with a big grin, completely relaxed and confident. Creation flows and doesn't stop. The Artist's Proof of *Creative War Map* which Wiley took back to his studio is now studded with his collection of political buttons.



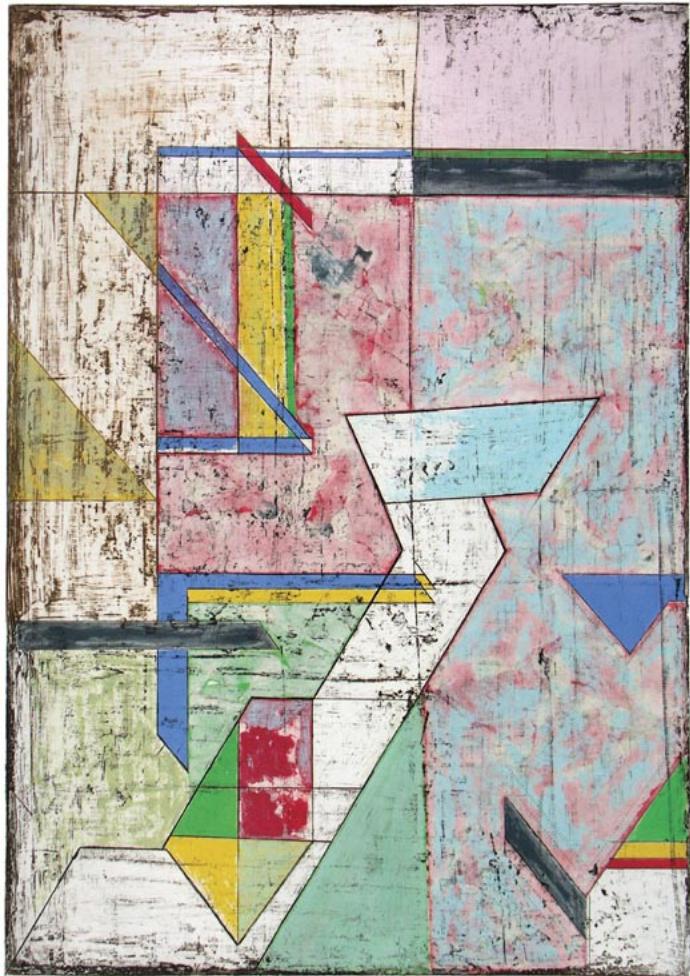
William Wiley, *Creative War Map*, 2005  
cotton jacquard tapestry, 72 1/2" x 82", Edition of 6

## George Miyasaki

George Miyasaki has been busy at Magnolia pushing traditional printmaking techniques to new bounds, causing director Donald Farnsworth to get up from his computer to work up a sweat helping printer Brian Caraway register and pull George's prints on the etching press.

Miyasaki met Farnsworth teaching at UC Berkeley in the 1970's, when Farnsworth was working on his Masters and studying printmaking and papermaking. Miyasaki acted as a mentor to Farnsworth and the two have continued working and experimenting together ever since. Miyasaki's new edition entitled *Terra Incognita* is a collagraph and mixed media piece created for a show at the National Academy of Design in New York. First, a hand sculpted plate is inked, wiped and transferred onto paper with a man-powered press. Each print goes through the press two or three times, an unorthodox technique which

is very difficult to register. Between runs Miyasaki works each print individually, using collage and paint to develop his composition.



George Miyasaki, *Terra Incognita*, 2005  
mixed media (collagraph, acrylic, collage), 27" x 19"

## Alan Magee

Alan Magee, an artist of long-standing with Magnolia Editions, is turning his delicate, photo-realist paintings into immense tapestries. Donald and Era Farnsworth had the pleasure of seeing Magee's retrospective when it traveled to the Frye Art Museum in Seattle this winter. In the gallery, oil paintings, watercolors, tapestries, and fantastical assemblages united to describe Magee's artistic sensibility. In the exhibition catalogue, Jonathan Weiner contemplates the origins of the artists' unique style, *...like the best work in any medium, Magee's paintings seem to exist outside all schools. Partly, perhaps, because he grew up in small towns, not cities, his paintings are not about art, about trends or theories, but about the beauty and magic of the things seen, and the things unseen beyond it.*



Alan Magee, *Brush Tapestry*, 2005,  
cotton jacquard tapestry, 82" x 66"

## Lia Cook

Lia Cook, head of CCA's textile department, recently came to the studio to check out the weaving technology the Magnolia Editions Tapestry Project is developing. Cook has worked with

a wide range of textiles and weaving techniques, often combining these with other media such as paint and video. Her wealth of knowledge about the origins of jacquard loom technology was greatly appreciated by the artists at Magnolia Editions. The outcome of her visit, *Folds*, is a tapestry of one of her tapestries. Over 200 colors were used to create the dimensionality of the draped material and the two faces hidden within. Donald Farnsworth was gratified by Cook's satisfaction with the tapestry and commented, *It's not easy to please a master.*



Lia Cook, *Folds*, 2004, cotton jacquard tapestry, 64" x 115", Edition of 4

## Lunch-break: A Conversation with Guy Diehl

As rewarding as working in the studio is, at Magnolia Editions everyone looks forward to lunch, when we all leave the 8000 sq. ft. warehouse and artists, printers, dealers, collectors, and whoever's around enjoy some relaxed conversation. This conversation took place between Guy Diehl, Donald and Era Farnsworth on such a lunch-break at Oakland's Bay Wolf restaurant.

**Donald Farnsworth:** Was it an easy thing for you to get into art? Did your parents encourage you?

**Guy Diehl:** No....No, I wasn't allowed to have fun doing things I enjoyed doing, which were drawing and painting and building things.

**D:** You weren't allowed to draw?

**G:** I wasn't allowed to draw until I got my homework or reading lessons done. Being dyslexic, this was a struggle for me, so I turned to art out of a necessity to achieve outside the realm of the academic. I had to find other avenues of achievement and expression.

I guess my first association with art was in the church I attended as a child (age six). On either side of the altar there were these two oil paintings, of figures, probably saints, and I was fascinated--not because they were religious, I was just intrigued that somebody painted something so realistically, and I had to find out how to do that. At about seven or eight I was starting to draw things realistically and I was getting gratification for that. My peers were saying, *Guy, draw us a submarine! or Draw us a car!*

**Era Farnsworth:** I remember getting that kind of affirmation



Diehl at Magnolia Editions

from my peers also as a little kid. And I think it does play a significant role for a lot of kids who maybe aren't getting that from their parents.

**G:** It was hard for my parents to see my passion for art. My grandfather saw what I was doing. He was kind of a jack of all trades, a very visual man. If I wanted something and I knew I couldn't afford it, I would make it out of cardboard. I'm quoting Don now from a conversation we had a few months ago, *We're all an experiment*. That really has sunk in.

**D:** We're all one of Mother Nature's experiments.

**G:** Yes, and we all get to experiment in life.

**D:** It's amazing that no DNA is the same and no upbringing is the same.

**E:** When did you and Don meet?

**G:** About '75, '77. Don and I met at Editions Press in San Francisco working for Walter Maibaum.

**D:** I was the printer.

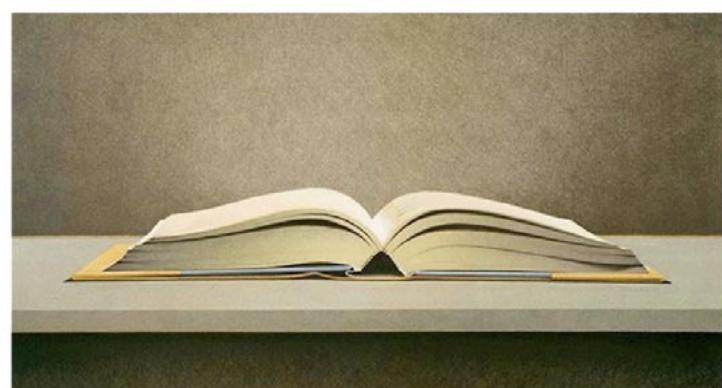
**G:** And I was hired as a pencil pusher or a chromatist, as they call it.

**D:** An artist had submitted a drawing, but it wasn't drawn on a stone. Guy had to translate the drawing to a stone. I had to print it and then the artist had to approve it.

**G:** Our first collaboration at Magnolia was '86, '87?

**D:** Open Book.

**G:** Don and I looked over some source images, we picked an image, and Rick showed me how to work with the mylar drawing surface, and we got our first edition.



Guy Diehl, Open Book, 1988, 15 color lithograph, 14.5" x 26.2"

D: I think the complexity of your work helped Magnolia fine tune the skills of color lithographs in runs of 20 to 30 colors, perfectly registered, without losing the entire edition to registration problems. If you're not careful, you could start out with 100 pieces of paper, and you might end up with 10. Also, keeping the highlights clean was big. Guy would actually draw the highlights in black. We would make reversals of that, and burn out the highlights in every single one of the 30 plates, so that the paper would be clean and white. That was a special technique.

G: With spending so much time sequestered in my studio painting, I found working at Magnolia over the years was a great opportunity to meet artists that I would not have otherwise. I would have known of their work, but would never have gotten to know them as an individual. I think that meeting one's peers is important for anyone who collects or creates art.

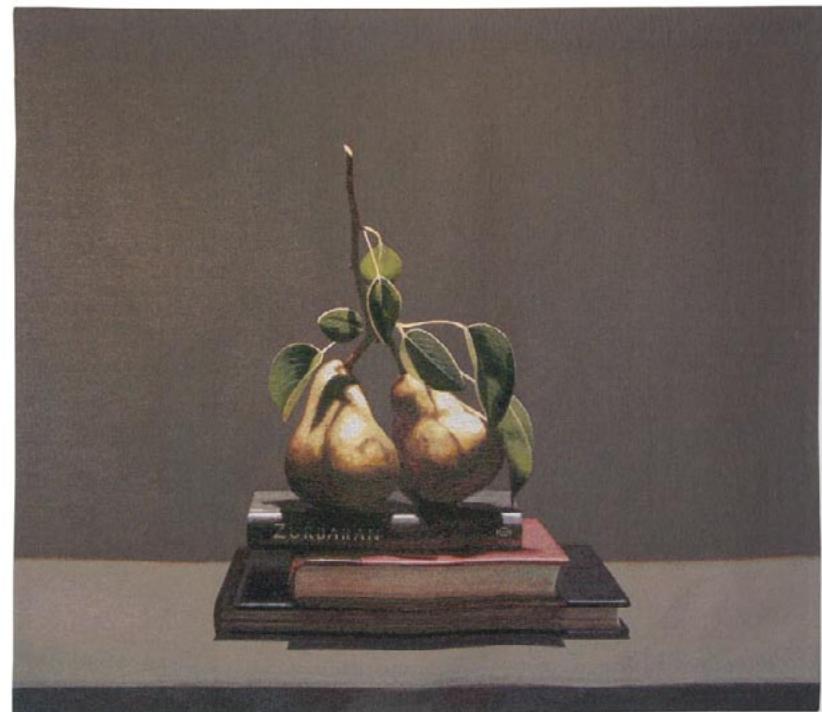
D: I remember when I was a young printer in the mid-seventies with Jean Milant at Cirrus in Los Angeles. After a day of printing we were hanging out and one of us asked, *So Jean, you've been in the art world a long time; what does it take to make it as an artist?*

And he said, *Nothing. Nothing, really, just persistence, and liking your own work. If you really like what you're doing, there will be somebody else out there who likes it enough to buy it.* He said, *Now, you may not make it young, you may not make it in middle age, and you may not make it when you're old, but if you like your own work, you'll be successful and the young artists will support you.* And he cited a bunch of young artists who were buying the work of older artist friends, just to help them survive.

G: Right.

E: Because they admire it. Artists do buy a lot of art. And artists do keep other artists alive by making homage to them, publicizing their work.

G: My work is about paying homage to the individuals that mean so much to me as an artist: Cezanne, Modigliani, Picasso, all of the early Modernists. I'm constantly looking at art history, music, dance, film, paying homage to those great individuals who have gone before. When I was studying with Mel Ramos at Hayward State, he got me thinking about *art about art*. He was working on a series where he was taking a J.L. David nude and superimposing himself or someone



Guy Diehl, *Still Life with Zurbaran*, 2005, cotton jacquard tapestry  
70" x 80"

else over it. He would take a Modigliani pose, and then he would superimpose a contemporary figure into the composition, using the same pose, the same gesture of the body.

D: He would give it a crazy title, *I Get a Thrill When I See Bill*.

G: Or *You Get More Salami with Modigliani*.

Wayne Thiebaud was a tremendous influence for me as a painter, in terms of color and composition. He's quite an artistic force. If you're a Bay Area artist, you don't rule him out.

E: You did a great job with your lecture the other day. (Diehl discussed how he uses a Mac in his work at the SF Apple Store as part of the First Thursday program).

D: Fabu.

G: It was fun, because you're not talking about your art as you would in an academic venue; you're talking about how you make your art with the Mac, the technical part of it. The fun part.

Don was kind of the driving force for me to use the computer. There were years when Don was just jumping in and making an effort to use the computer as a tool in any form, shape or way, to capture an image, or manipulate an image, or save an image.

D: Numerous artists blame me for getting them hooked on computers --

G: As soon as I realized what I could do with it, it was like, "It's time to get a computer."

D: It's just another screwdriver. In fact, it's THE screwdriver.



Edie Caldwell and Era Farnsworth at Edith Caldwell Gallery

G: The Mac changed my life. It's made me a better reader and writer. But for my art, I use it to preview compositions. Then for my book paintings, I lay the text out in perspective in Photoshop, and then make a stencil from the file, and then hand-cut the stencil and apply it to the painted canvas.

E: Your own work, Guy, is so contemplative, tranquil, calm. I was wondering if there is angst, and struggle, and stress when you are in the process of painting, and then you finally end up with your serene image.

G: My idea is to try to slow people down and give them something to look at for a moment or two, if they choose to. What goes into it is that sensibility that I have that I think you gather from your life's experience as a painter. I try to put all I know into a painting, but a lot of times that doesn't work. They don't yet have that spirit or soul that I intend they have within them. As an artist, you've got to solve a problem and you realize that there's nothing there to give you the answer, so you walk away from it for a while until you're ready to work it again. It's not easy. I think with any creative endeavor you hone your skills by practice, and repeating yourself, and learning from your mistakes so you can make the right corrections. ■

## Shows & Events:

### *Contemporary Tapestry Project*

Edith Caldwell Gallery  
Wed - Mon: 11 - 5pm,  
Sunday: 12 - 5pm  
819 Bridgeway, Sausalito  
(415) 331-5003  
<http://www.edithcaldwell.com>

### **Donald Farnsworth**

**Speaks at the Apple Store Theatre** as part of their First Thursday Lecture Series. This event is co-presented by the San Francisco Art Dealers Association, which sponsors gallery openings on the first Thursday of every month.

June 2nd, 6pm  
Apple Store, One Stockton Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
(415) 477-6201  
<http://www.apple.com/retail/sanfrancisco>

### **David Settino Scott: A Pure Working**

Fresno Art Museum  
April 19 - June 5  
Tues - Sun: 11 - 5pm, Thurs: open until 8pm  
2233 N. First Street, Fresno, CA 93703  
(559) 441-4221  
<http://www.fresnoartmuseum.org/exo405-scott.php>

### **Works on Paper published by Magnolia Editions, San Jose Museum Café Gallery**

Artists include: David Best, Rick Dula, Deborah Garber, Rupert Garcia, Joseph Goldyne, Sam Tchakalian, Chris Unterseher.

Through the end of September  
Tues - Sun: 11 - 3pm  
110 South Market Street  
San Jose, CA 95113

### **Squeak Carnwath's Happy Again**

is currently on view at Greens Restaurant  
Bld. A, Fort Mason, San Francisco  
(415) 771-6222

### **Squeak Carnwath: Guilt Free Zone**

May 6th - July 16  
Paulson Press  
1318 Tenth Street Berkeley, CA 94710  
<http://www.paulsonpress.org>

Magnolia Edition's printer and framer **Brian Caraway** has been working nights and weekends to complete his 11' x 40' mural for the group show *Every Dog has its Day*.

May 14 - June 4  
Red Ink Studios  
1035 Market Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
<http://www.redinkstudios.org>

**Rick Dula**, Magnolia Editions' master printer for 20 years, has had a busy art career since retiring to be a full-time painter 4 years ago. His paintings will be on view at George Billis Gallery

June 7th - July 9  
Opening: Thurs, June 9th, 6 - 8pm  
511 West 25th Street  
New York, NY 10001  
<http://www.georgebillis.com/gallery.html>

### **Berkeley Art Center's 22nd Annual National Juried Exhibition**

Juried by Karin Breuer &  
Donald Farnsworth  
July 17 - August 27, Wed - Sun 12 - 5pm  
Open & free to the public.  
1275 Walnut Street (in Live Oak Park)  
Berkeley, CA 94709  
(510) 644-6893  
<http://www.berkeleyartcenter.org>

**James Luna** will represent the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian at the *2005 Venice Biennale* as part of the collateral events.

June 9 - Nov. 6, at Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice  
For his performance piece, *Emendatio*, Luna has produced two tapestries at Magnolia Editions which will be combined with audiovisual elements, video projections and layered screens, photographs, found objects, dance and audience participation. The exhibition honors a Luiseno Indian, sent in 1830, from a California mission to Rome, where he died 11 years later, leaving behind a written history of his people. From the National Museum of the American Indian News.

Email from James Luna in Venice: They [the tapestries] went up yesterday and they dominated the space by bringing together all the colors! It was quite a moment.  
[http://www.nmai.si.edu/press/press\\_release.asp?ID=27](http://www.nmai.si.edu/press/press_release.asp?ID=27)