

**Juror's
Statement**

Jurying 700 or more prints to select an exhibition of a little over 100 prints inevitably sets off a series of meditations on the state of printmaking today.

A continuing problem is the dominance of "cookery" over imagery. It does not matter how many techniques one combines in the graphic *botuillabaisse*—how many sauces or spices—if the result is a stale or indigestible image.

Imagination is always welcome, but sometimes it is a matter of arbitrary combinations of style and image as annoyingly arbitrary as certain combinations of technique or materials. One imagines the printmaker speculating: "What if I combined frisbees and crocodiles? Or a bit of Vasarely with a bit of Lasansky?" After too many examples of this, one welcomes a bit of straightforward observation from life and a direct use of simple techniques: for example the specific sense of place in Joseph Corso's dusty landscape of a cyclone fence and Southern California palm trees or the forthright portraiture in Peri Schwartz's monotype. **This is not to deny the pleasures of imaginative invention.** See, for example, Carl F. Smith's lively house-shaped intaglio plate *One Chair Blowout* or Mary Sherwood's disturbing monotype.

Another conspicuous phenomenon while reviewing the many submissions was the problem of color, particularly intaglio color. In short, there is usually just too much color. The transparent etching inks lend themselves readily to eyeball-searing combinations of magenta, Prussian blue and acid green. All too few exercise some restraint in the use of these aesthetically dangerous inks.

Finally, it is gratifying to report after all the foregoing carping and crankiness that this was clearly one of the best years for the Boston Printmakers, with impressive performances from previous participants and quite a lot of new faces. The overall quality of the submissions was gratifyingly high. Here's to more bold and lively prints in the years to come.

Clifford S. Ackley
Juror



Mary Sherwood, "Pinnacle", monotype, 42"x35", 1984