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NEW PAPERS

for Drawing, Watermedia
& Printmaking | PAGE 18

**How to
Suggest
Movement**
in Your Still Lifes

**Attract More
Attention**
to Your Landscapes

**Explore & Enjoy
Watermedia
Painting**

**SPECIAL REPORT: Celebrating
a Favorite Landscape Subject**

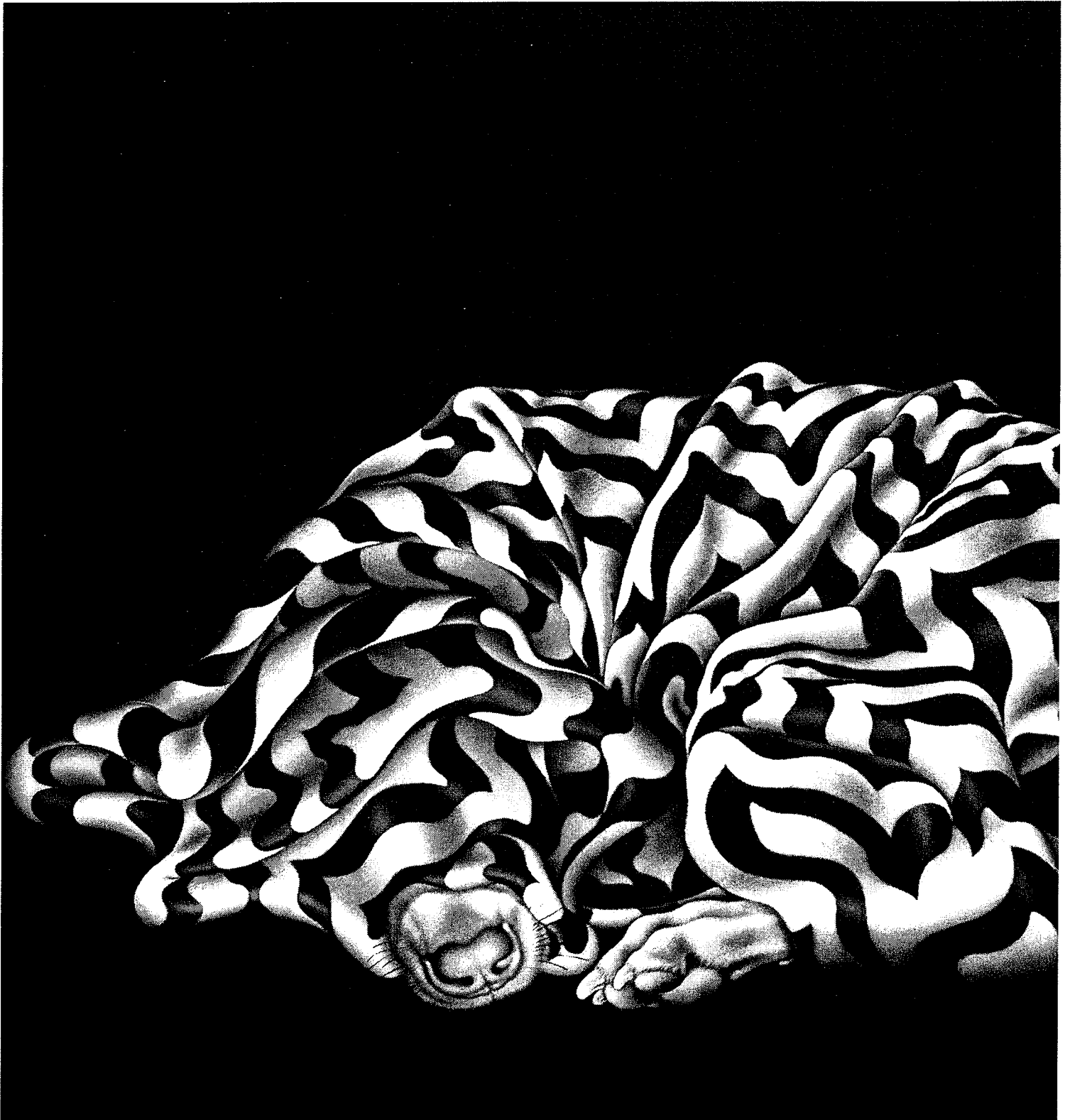
-PAGE 24-



COVER:
An Autumn Obi (detail)
by Claudia Seymour

Under Wraps

by Carol Wax, 2008, mezzotint, 16 x 20.
Copyright © Carol Wax, 2008.



New Papers

for Printmaking, Drawing,
and Watermedia Painting

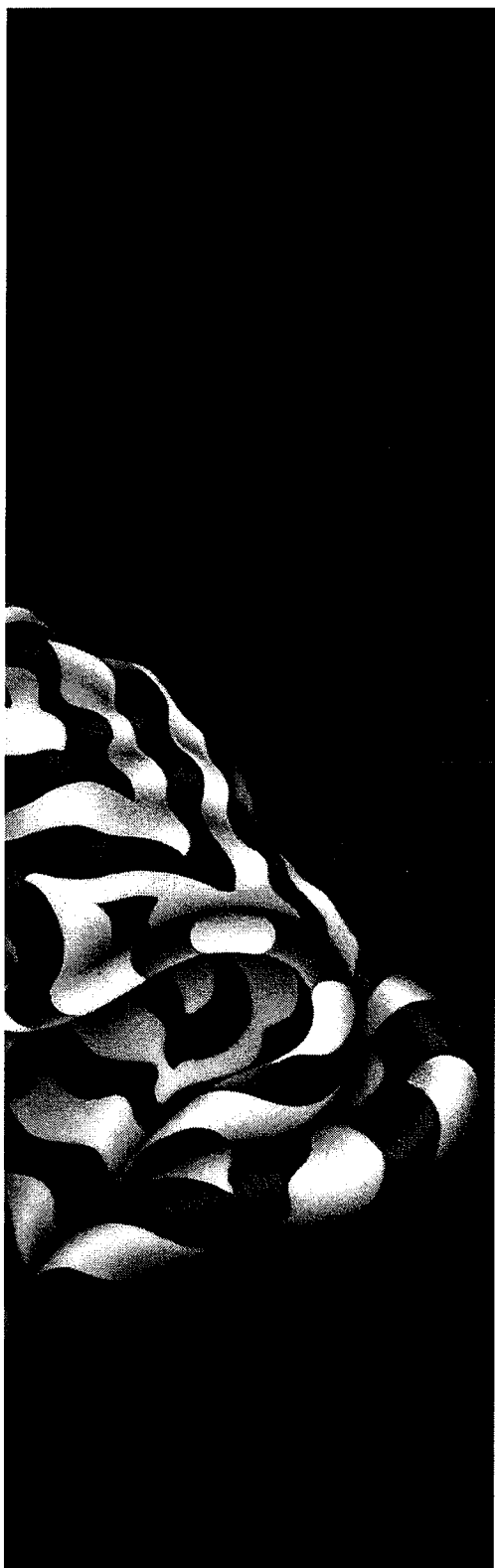
Several new lines of papers have recently been made available to artists who are finding that the colors, surfaces, qualities, and versatility of those new products offer new possibilities and resolve challenges. | **by M. Stephen Doherty**

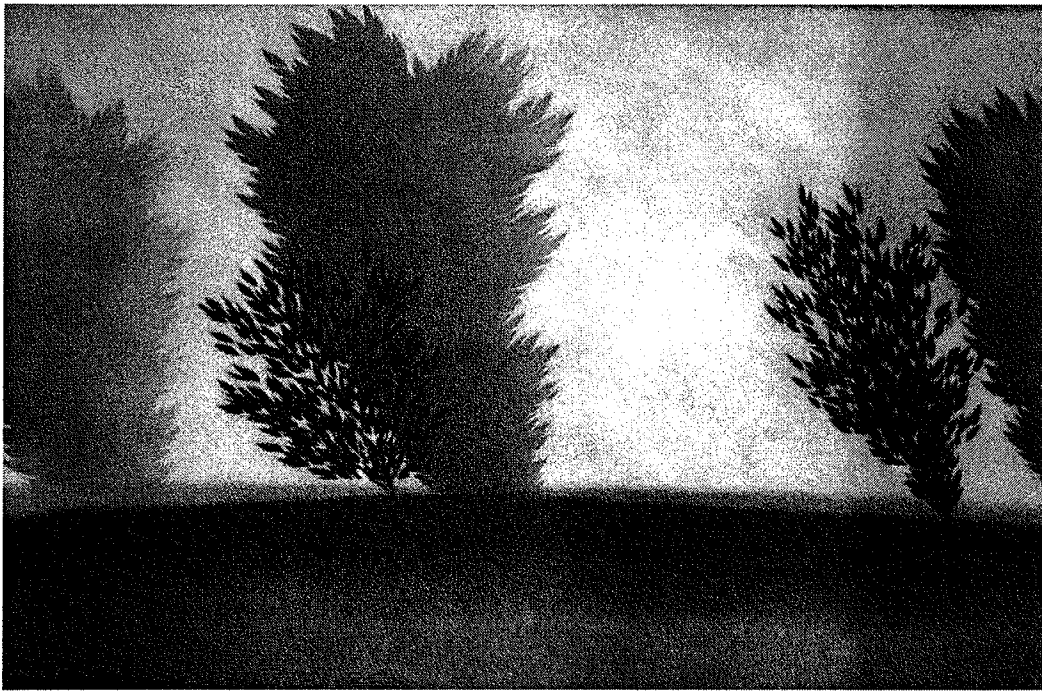
It isn't often that completely new lines of fine art papers are introduced to the market, especially those intended for professional artists who demand consistency, durability, variety, and flexibility. It is worth noting that Legion Paper (www.legionpaper.com) recently introduced 17 different Revere papers that are produced by Cartiera Magnani, the Italian mill founded in 1404 that is well known for such papers as Pescia and Acquerello.

In order to best determine how artists can use these papers in their studios, *American Artist* asked several artists, master printers, and teachers to sample the papers and describe the characteristics they found most useful in either reinforcing their current approaches to making art or in expanding their range of creative possibilities.

Sample packs and single sheets of Revere paper were given to Anthony Kirk, the artistic director and master printer at the Center for Contemporary Printmaking (www.contemprints.org), in Norwalk, Connecticut; Julia Ayres (www.ayresprintmaking.com), author of *Printmaking Techniques* and *Monotype: Mediums and Methods for Painterly Printmaking* (both Watson-Guption, New York, New York); and Carol Wax, a distinguished artist and teacher who wrote the book *The Mezzotint: History and Technique* (Harry N. Abrams, New York, New York).

It should be noted that Revere is particularly well-suited for printing original etchings, engravings, dry points, mezzotints, and relief prints. Those techniques normally require the use of papers that are not as heavily



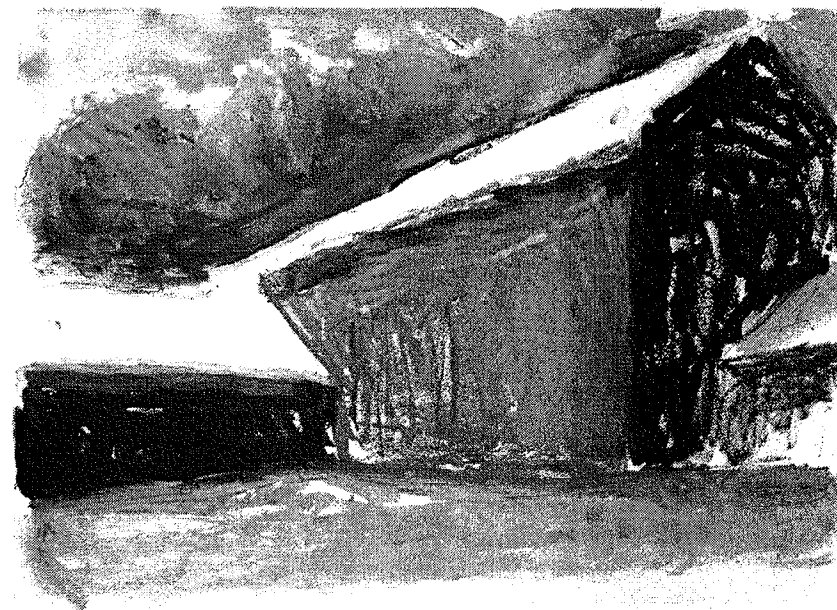


LEFT
Interlude III

by Robert Kipniss, 2009, mezzotint, 9½ x 14¼. Courtesy the artist and the Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, Connecticut.

BELOW LEFT
Dunklee's Barn, Vermont

by Wolf Kahn, 2009, monotype, 10 x 14. Courtesy the artist and the Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, Connecticut.



sized as drawing and watercolor papers are. Printmaking techniques usually require that the papers be dampened in order to pull ink off of a plate or to quickly absorb the ink into the fibers of the paper. It wouldn't make sense to put a great deal of internal or surface sizing on a printmaking paper knowing the sizing will be washed out before printing takes place. Drawing and watercolor papers, in contrast, are usually heavily sized, so the charcoal, graphite, Conté, or

transparent watercolor sits on top of the paper. If, for example, a watercolor paper absorbed a great deal of the paint applied over it, the painted shapes would likely expand beyond the edges of the brush marks and the colors would become dull.

"Revere is a perfect paper for printmaking because it is a 100-percent rag, is lightly sized, and comes in a remarkably wide range of colors and surfaces," says Kirk. "I usually soak the paper for about 10 to 15 minutes to soften the

fibers, blot off the excess water, and store the damp paper wrapped in plastic until I am ready to print on it. I use oil-based etching inks, so it is important to have the right amount of moisture in the paper. Too much water would cause uneven, blotchy tones in an aquatint, mezzotint, or plate tone in any of the intaglio processes. On the other hand, an oversized, stiff paper wouldn't properly absorb the ink from the etched recesses of the metal plate.

"As a master printer, I recognize that Revere offers a solution to some of the challenges I have faced in recent years," Kirk adds. "Some papers I relied on—such as Lana Gravure for the printing of Robert Kipniss' mezzotint editions—have been discontinued. The Revere ivory papers are a superb replacement." Kirk, like many printmakers, appreciates that Revere is a green alternative to other papers because it is manufactured using energy generated by the mill's water turbines.

Julia Ayres has spent her printmaking career seeking non-toxic plate-making and printing techniques as a way to eliminate acids, aquatint powders, oil-based inks, and petroleum-based solvents from her studio. "We have all become more aware of the potential hazards associated with strong acids, airborne resins, heated grounds,

oil-based inks, acetone, and mineral spirits," she says. "Those can be used in a well-ventilated studio if artists take the necessary precautions, but it is difficult to introduce those into classrooms where environmental concerns and safety standards have become more important. That's why my daughter Gail Ayres and I continue to seek the best materials and techniques that we use in our studio and teach in workshops."

Ayres printed a block print, an etching, and two monotypes on Revere paper using Akua Kolor water-based inks and applying pressure with a PinPress, a precisely machined metal



Simon on Revere Silk

by Julia Ayres, 2009, monotype, 8 x 6.
Collection the artist.

rolling pin. "The paper is responsive enough that it would pick up the images without my having to run the plates through an etching press," she explained. "That makes it ideal for artists who want a simple, water-based printing process that gives professional results. I briefly immersed the Revere Silk and Revere Suede papers in water for a couple of minutes before placing them in an airtight box the night before printing. This moistening technique allowed the internal fibers of the paper to soften without the surface becoming soggy. Then I lightly blotted the paper so that excess moisture did not cause the inks to smear. Previously I had printed these

same plates with a paper that didn't have any sizing in it, but it absorbed a lot more of the ink so that the full color of the ink was not realized on the print surface. The ink was more vibrant on the lightly sized Revere papers."

Although Carol Wax is best known as a printmaker, author, and teacher, she is interested in using the Revere Suede black paper for drawing. "Drawing on black paper is similar to engraving mezzotint plates," she says. "In mezzotint, a copper plate is roughened to create a texture that prints as solid black; shaving away or polishing the texture extracts tonal images from the black ground.



Heron on Revere Suede

by Julia Ayres, 2009, block print, 5¼ x 4.
Collection the artist.

Starting with black paper, I establish my highlights with white gouache and use colored pencils to graduate tones back into the black background. Similarities between this drawing technique and the mezzotint process make it particularly useful to have paper that accepts both paint and pencils when making preparatory sketches for prints." Although Revere papers are primarily intended to be used for printmaking and drawing, they will also perform well for artists who want to use wet media on an absorbent surface. ■

M. Stephen Doherty is the editor-in-chief of American Artist.