

PAT PICKETT:

A Record of Wind Conditions

From September 21 through October 30, 2006, The Drawing Room is pleased to present *Pat Pickett: A Record of Wind Conditions*, an exhibition of ink on paper abstractions, each a distinct record of physiological conditions realized during the artist's journey cross-country in July 2006. Pickett began her investigation of the marks made by pens clamped to branches swaying in the wind several years ago in Bridgehampton, New York where she lived for many years before moving to Los Angeles in 2001. Her automatic drawing technique evolved from her search for "a way to make pictures that directly expressed underlying forces – physics, bio-mechanics." Consciously eschewing her academic training, the artist gravitated instead to a form of image-making that embraces chance, "looking for something very specific in the face of unknowns."

Pickett set out from California in a car equipped with a GPS and the tools of her portable studio: wind maps, an anemometer, an array of paper up to 72 inches wide, foam core to support the drawings, a bag full of pens, clamps to attach the pens to tree branches, and a tripod to hold the drawing surface in place. With years of experience honing her process, she anticipates the markings that specific trees will generate in particular wind conditions. The drawings on view--created with the aid of a McNab Cypress in Marin County, California, a Sugar Maple near Northfield, Vermont, a Black Spruce at Mount Washington, New Hampshire and so on--reveal a range of gestural compositions, from lacey, open linear arrangements to intricate, nest-like webs, and broad serpentine gestures produced by the sway of long pendulous branches. In this body of work, a temporal record of a journey in search of some of the windiest sites in the country, Pickett sought out trees subject to extreme habitats, such as a gnarled old Black Spruce on Mount Washington. Only a foot off the ground, reaching out along the rocky mountaintop to avoid being whipped down by the wind, the tree creates a delicate and poignant drawing.

Pickett found the ideal site to produce the largest drawing in the series at Medicine Bow National Forest near Laramie, Wyoming. There, she struggled for an hour in high winds to steady a 4 x 6 foot drawing board alongside a small grove of quaking Aspen while seventeen pens clamped and taped to the branches of several trees simultaneously rendered a series of sketches. Working in tandem with nature, Pickett elicits a unique drawing, distinct in the quality, direction, rhythm and thickness of the line, from each tree she selects. These evocative drawings whose lineage includes Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism and Conceptual Art reveal mysterious structures that suggest a larger universal order.

A graduate of Scripps College with an MFA from Hunter College in New York, Pickett has been the subject of solo exhibitions in New York, Sag Harbor and East Hampton. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at The Parrish Art Museum, Guild Hall Museum and the Islip Art Museum and will be featured this fall in *Columbia: A Journal of Literature and Art*.

For further information or reproductions, please contact Susan Papa at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.