

Ellen Burchenal

Sorrento Again

Wednesday, November 28–Sunday, January 13

RECEPTION: Friday, December 7, 5–7 pm

Maryland Institute College of Art

Bunting Center: Pinkard Gallery

I create drawings on paper and on walls with charcoal, ink, pastel and paint. The repetitive and tactile drawing action makes sense to me as I build a convincing image.

As coordinator of the MICA Sorrento, Italy Summer program, I have spent the last 17 summers on the Bay of Naples. Yet my introduction to Italy began much earlier. At age 19 I went to study in Rome by accident, and after that I continued to take long trips there whenever possible. I was exposed to a degree of ornamentation and passionate conversation that was contrary to my taste and upbringing.

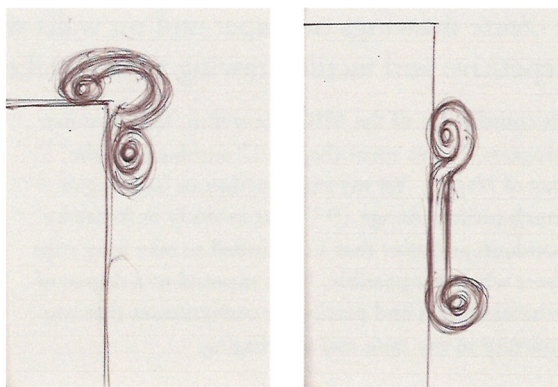
Now, in Sorrento each year, I experience the extravagance of baby blue and gold ballrooms, pink sports newspapers, giant lemons, Pompeian floor mosaics, the Neapolitan language, and an active volcano. All of this is very real in southern Italy – the comedy/ tragedy, the illusion, and the violence of unseen forces. It is this hilarity of form, the illusion of it, and the forces that act upon it that interest me.



(top) Studio installation of digital prints. (bottom left + right) Source images from Italy



Street view, Florence



Sketchbook drawings

The Volcano Lover drawing series is a conversation with the sweepingly romantic Mount Vesuvius.

The Hotel Drawings are a series of lap-sized drawings of decorative mirrors or frames. In 2008, as faculty in residence with the MICA SACI program, I lived in the center of Florence, Italy. I was struck by how the decorative architectural forms literally elbowed me out into the street. So I have been experimenting with techniques to make the lap sized drawings as big as I am. The ink jet prints shown here are part of this on-going exploration of layering digital images on a larger scale.

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MICA

Founded in 1826, Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) is the oldest continuously degree-granting college of art and design in the nation. The College enrolls nearly 3,500 undergraduate, graduate, and continuing studies students from 48 states and 54 countries in fine arts, design, electronic media, art education, liberal arts, and professional studies degree and non-credit programs. Redefining art and design education, MICA is pioneering interdisciplinary approaches to innovation, research, and community and social engagement. Alumni and programming reach around the globe, even as MICA remains a cultural cornerstone in the Baltimore/Washington region, hosting hundreds of exhibitions and events annually by students, faculty, and other established artists.

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