

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION:

Carol Wax: Extraordinary Objects

April 5 – May 24, 2024



Vine-el Glory, 2020
Mezzotint engraving, 5 x 4 inches

BOSTON, MA – Carol Wax’s masterful mezzotint engravings depict the ordinary as extraordinary. Using dramatic lighting effects, exaggerated perspectives, and a dose of wit, Wax transforms commonplace objects into astonishing icons, cleverly revealing “the anima in the inanimate”.

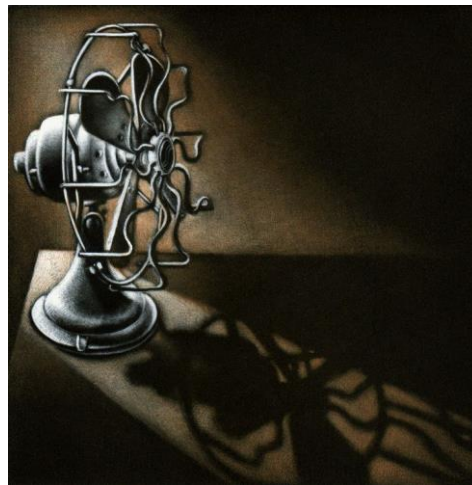
Wax originally trained as a classical musician at the Manhattan School of Music, earning a bachelor's degree in 1975 with a major in flute performance. While continuing to work as a musician, Wax took printmaking courses at the Lake Placid School of Art during the summers of 1975 and 1976. She subsequently studied at the Pratt Graphics Center in New York City, where she was first introduced to mezzotint engraving.

Developed in the 17th century, images in mezzotint engraving are achieved by roughening a copper plate using a tool with a curved serrated

blade, called a rocker. The rocker’s teeth plow up a field of burrs that, when inked, produces a rich black background. Images are drawn by erasing the burrs in increments so they hold less ink to print as lighter tones and print white where burrs are removed entirely. The resulting wide range of tonal gradations and textures made it ideal for reproducing paintings.



Type Face, 2002
Mezzotint engraving, 9 ¼ x 9 ¼ inches



Fan-C, 1998
Color mezzotint engraving, 5 x 5 inches

Though mezzotint fell out of favor in the 19th century with the advent of photography, it experienced a resurgence as a means for creating original works of art in the 20th century due in large part to the publication of Wax's book *The Mezzotint: History and Technique*.

In addition to her virtuoso work as a mezzotint artist, Wax is regarded as an authority on the history of the medium as well. Her groundbreaking publication on mezzotint is the result of the artist's frustrations with the limitations of technical knowledge available in the 1980s. This led Wax to conduct her own research into historical techniques, uncovering methods long out of use that could be revived for contemporary artists. The updated and expanded upon Second Edition of *The Mezzotint: History and Technique*, recently published by Schiffer Books, will be available for sale throughout the duration of the exhibition.

Extraordinary Objects highlights Wax's use of mezzotint's unique qualities to reinvent antiquated machinery and vintage wares into lively gadgets and anthropomorphic objects. In her words, the work "...speaks to an inner life perceived in inanimate objects." Marrying the hardness of everyday items with the soft richness of mezzotint, Wax's subjects take on a life of their own, often with cheeky titles further humanizing the cameras, fans, phones, and other objects appearing in her work.

Venturing through several decades of the artist's prints, *Carol Wax: Extraordinary Objects* is on view in the Childs Gallery Print Department April 5 through May 24, 2023.



Photo Realism, 1999
Mezzotint engraving, 16 x 8 ½ inches

About Childs Gallery: Established in 1937 on Newbury Street in Boston's Back Bay, Childs Gallery holds one of the largest inventories of oil paintings, drawings, watercolors, prints and sculpture in the United States. We actively service collectors, artists, estates and corporate clients throughout the country in the buying and selling of fine art, and have placed exceptional works in major museums nationwide. Our extensive holdings – including prints and drawings that range from Old Masters to 20th century notables to 21st century contemporaries, along with superb paintings and sculpture from the past 200 years – are particularly appealing to the eclectic tastes of today's art lovers, as it's the collector's eye, not the historic period or medium, that makes for a cohesive and personally satisfying collection.

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