

Booklyn

Terry Turrentine

Swords and Angels, 2016

Origin: San Francisco, CA

Medium: etching, photo

Binding: accordion

Dimensions: 14.0 in W x 12.0 in H

Edition Size: 8



Description: After completing three artist's books in celebration

of the Great Egret, Snowy Owl and Northern Gannet, which included images of birds in the wild that were bright, colorful and infused with light.

I began to think about the opposite kind of image: darkness. I became interested in the subject of bats, their beauty and importance in nature and how they have been demonized in films, literature, and popular culture. Even Batman, who fights for good, must hide his identity, while villains and vampires and most otherworldly creatures are cast as demons inhabiting dank and gloomy spaces.

It occurred to me that we as a society have been conditioned to equate evil with darkness-- with black, scary images. So, I wondered how it would be to portray bats as luminous creatures, symbols of goodness and light. This is the genesis of my recently released book about bats entitled "Swords and Angels".

Conceived as a reinterpretation of "darkness," "Swords and Angels" is also about the struggle for survival and harmony in our universe—both physical and spiritual. The bats, deserving celebration as every other creature, are portrayed in this book in all their celestial beauty and nobility.

THE 3 YEAR PROCESS

My role as the Photographer and Creative Director in my new book was to create, edit and prepare the images for printing and then assemble the team to bring my vision to life. The team consists of renowned Bay Area artists who are experts in their fields.

In September of 2014, I spent a week photographing Nectar Bats, Pallid Bats, and Lesser Long Nose Mexican Bats at The Pond at Elephant Head in Green Valley, Arizona. I constructed an outdoor studio using 4 strobes, a camera trap and 3 Nikon digital cameras retrofitted with an infrared sensor to capture their flight. They were feeding on agave plants, insects and pond water during the nighttime hours. I repeated this field trip 3 times.

I spent months reducing thousands of images down to a small number to use in the final product. I then converted the original infrared images to grayscale and edited them for printing.

The master printer Paul Mallowney translated the images to rich photogravures on Somerset Satin white 300 gram paper. He used Charbonnel black etching ink mixed with Prussian Blue.

The poet Marshall Weber, artist, writer, and curator of Booklyn, responded to the photography with his poem "Swords and Angels", portraying bats as angels fighting to save not just themselves but the universe from humans.

Designer Dana F. Smith of danadanadana editions, conceived of a way to show the dramatic interplay of the poem with the photographs in an accordion fold structure.

Using Smith's prototype, the acclaimed bookbinder John de Merritt created the accordion style structure using Japanese Mulberry paper, the edges treated with graphite and sealed with beeswax. The book is 12"x14" when closed and when extended, measures 30 feet. Specially made by Pergamena Tannery in Montgomery, NY, the book cover material is black calfskin, and blind stamped with a bat wing, using a magnesium die. The custom housing is covered in Duo book cloth and foil stamped in metallic silver.

Calligrapher Meredith Jane Klein illustrated the poem and book title in Fraktur blackletter calligraphy. The photographer's name was in Unical calligraphy, written in Moon Palace Sumi ink with a Brause nib on Canson Pro-layout Marker paper. The book title was written with an Automatic pen, a British pen with a wider metal nib. Nathaniel Swope of Bloom Screen Printing then took the original calligraphy and silkscreened it in metallic silver ink.

The entire process took 3 years to complete.

—Terry Turrentine, Photographer & Creative Director, San Francisco, 2017

From the Colophon—

Photographs were taken by Terry Turrentine at The Pond at Elephant Head, Green Valley, Arizona. Strobes, a high speed camera trigger system and a Nikon DSLR with an infrared sensor were used for capture.

Copperplate photogravure etchings made by Paul Mallowney, Mallowney Printing.

Printing assisted by Erin McAdams and Keisha Mrotek.

Book design by Dana F. Smith.

Swords and Angels poem by Marshall Weber.

Calligraphy by Meredith Jane Klein.

Silkscreen text by Nathaniel Swope, Bloom Screen Printing Co.

Portfolio box and binding made by John DeMerritt Bookbinding.

The set is limited to an edition of 8 with two handling copies.

Swords and Angels

Verily I say unto you
that I am an angel
risen from darkness
yet striving towards light

I bring my knowledge of evil
to those who would diminish it
and I take courage in this task

In my hand at all times
is a razored bright sword
forged in the realm of light

Do not mistake it as mine
for it is borrowed
and the debt of return
is carried by me for all time

You are are an angel of light
pure, kind and clean

but dread skills are needed
to vanquish pollution

so you carry a sword of solid smoke<
burning coldly and cut edged

Your nature is not that of the sword
though its use bends to your desire
its cutting cares not for your intentions

Its damage is fatal and legion

We meet and surrender
on the battle fields of earth
I drawn to your dark sword,
a familiar weapon, once mine
a reminder of my origins

and you drawn to my eternally clean blade
once yours, hopefully, hopelessly
mistaking the tool for the laborer.

So we struggle together across the spectrum
in a war with no sides,
with no possible winners or losers
seeking only the balance that seeds peace<

—Marshall Weber, 2016

Institutional Collectors:

St Olaf College
Yale University Art Gallery (YUAG)
University of Michigan, Special Collections
The Getty Research Institute
Library of Congress (LoC)
Bainbridge Museum of Art
University of Colorado at Boulder

Exhibitions:

Manhattan Fine Press Book Fair 2017
Solstice Book Fair
Editions / Artists Book Fair 2017 (EABF 2017)
Los Angeles Art Book Fair 2017 (LAABF 2017)
Codex International Book Art Fair 2017

Brooklyn Artists Alliance - 37 Greenpoint Avenue, Suite E4G / Box 23 Brooklyn, NY 11222

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