

SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY

NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

Rick Shaefer

CV

Lives in Fairfield CT

EDUCATION

Duke University

Art Center College of Design

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2021 *Rick Shaefer: The Refugee Trilogy*, Plattsburgh State Art Museum, SUNY, Plattsburgh, NY
- 2020 *The Golden Door*, Silvermine Arts Center, New Canaan, CT
- 2019 *The Refugee Trilogy*, Hand Art Museum, Stetson University, FL
- 2018 *Rick Shaefer: The Parson's Tale*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2018 *Rick Shaefer: The Refugee Trilogy*, BYU Museum of Art, Provo, UT
- 2017 *Rick Shaefer: The Refugee Trilogy*, Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI
- 2016 *Rick Shaefer: Drawing*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 *Rick Shaefer: Refugee Trilogy*, Fairfield University Art Museum, CT
- 2015 *Larger Than Life: Drawings of Rick Shaefer*, Leclerc Contemporary, CT, curator: Isabelle Garrucho
- 2015 *Rick Shaefer: Drawing the Line*, Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT
- 2015 *Rick Shaefer: Rendering Nature*, The Bellarmine Museum of Art, Fairfield, CT
- 2014 *Black, White, Color Light: the Art of Rick Shaefer*, The Stamford Museum, Stamford, CT
- 2013 *Rick Shaefer: Crows*, Discovery Museum and Planetarium, Bridgeport, CT
- 1997 *Landscapes: Rick Shaefer*, Kirshner Gallery, Fairfield, CT
- 1997 *Spectral Landscapes: Rick Shaefer*, The Westport Gallery, Westport, CT
- 1995 *Constructed Landscapes*, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- 1995 *Flowers, Landscapes & Insects*, The Westport Gallery, Westport, CT
- 1994 *Rick Shaefer: Landscapes*, Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, LA

SELECTED GROUP SHOWS

- 2021 *Winter Selections*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2021 *Birds of the Northeast - Gulls to Great Auks*, Bellarmine Museum, Fairfield University Museum of Art
- 2020 *Summer Selections*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY

SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY

NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

- 2019 *ReSeeding the City: Ethnobotany in the Urban*, State House, Providence, RI
- 2018 *Good Bye Columbus*, Aden + Ayers, Spring/Break, Armory Arts Week, New York, NY
- 2017 *Touchstones, Totems, Talismans: Animals in Contemporary Art*, Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, VT
- 2017 *At a Languorous Pace*, Sears Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 *Natural Wonder*, University of New Hampshire, Museum of Art, Durham, NH
- 2015 *Summer Group Show*, Sears Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2015 *DREAMscapes*, Westport Arts Center, Westport, CT, curator: Alexandra Munroe (Guggenheim Museum)
- 2015 *SOLOS 2015*, Westport Arts Center, Westport, CT, curator: Richard Klein (Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum)
- 2015 *Black + White*, City Lights Gallery, CT
- 2015 January Drawing Show, William Holman Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 September Group Show, Sears Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 Summer Group Show, Sears Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
- 2014 *Drawn: Exploring Contemporary Drawing*, The Drawing Room Gallery, Cos Cob, CT
curator: Cameron Schmitz
- 2013 *Crossing the Line: A Collection of Drawings*, The Institute Library, New Haven, CT,
curator: Stephen Kolbasa
- 2013 *Wide Open 4*, BWAC (Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition), Brooklyn, NY,
juror: Carrie Springer, Sen. Cur. Asst. Whitney Museum of American Art
- 2013 Exhibition of Drawings, William Holman Gallery, New York, NY
- 99–12 *Aldrich Undercover*, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- 2011 *Vestigial*, National Arts Club, New York, NY, curator: Michael Martin
- 1999 *In the Garden of Earthly Delight*, The Discovery Museum, Bridgeport, CT,
curator: George Jordan
- 1998 *Selected Prints*, Betsy Senior Gallery, New York, NY
- 1996 *Changing Horizons: Landscape on the Eve of the Millennium*, Katonah Museum,
Katonah, NY
- 1995 *Nature Studies*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, curator: Regina Coppola
- 1995 *Connecticut Art*, Stamford Museum, Stamford, CT, juror: Eugenie Tsai,
Whitney Museum at Champion
- 1995 *Dark Room*, Stark Gallery, New York, NY, curator: Allison Green
- 1995 Group Show, Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston, MA
- 1995 *Suite of Five Etchings*, Daniel Elias Editions, Boston, MA
- 1994 CT Visions, Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, CT, jurors: Elizabeth Rea, Michael Rea
- 1994 Eighth Annual Ecclesiastical Art Exhibit, Historic Trinity, Detroit, MI,

SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY

NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

curator: Samuel Sachs II, director, Detroit Institute of the Arts

1994 Art of Connecticut, Stamford Museum, Stamford, CT

juror: Martha Scott, critic/former curator, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

1993 *The Return of the Cadaver Exquisite* *, The Drawing Center, New York, NY,

curator: Ingrid Schaffner

*traveling show: Corcoran, Washington, DC; Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City; Santa

Monica Museum of Art; Forum for Contemporary Art, St. Louis

1993 *Things to Make Your Eyes Happy*, Muranushi/Lederman Gallery, New York, NY

1993 Selections Fall '93, The Drawing Center, New York, NY, curators: Anne Philbin, Beth Finch

1993 Summer Group Show, Muranushi/Lederman Gallery, New York, NY

1992 Group Show, Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, LA

1992 Summer Group Show, Arthur Roger Gallery, NY

1991 Art of Connecticut, Stamford Museum, CT, curator: Vivien Raynor, art critic NY Times

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2021 Pollock – Krasner Foundation Grant

2015 Pollock – Krasner Foundation Grant

Artist Fellowship Grant, Connecticut Office of the Arts

SELECTED CORPORATE AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

U.S. Department of State Art in Embassies Program

Microsoft

American Express

Prudential

Court Square Capital Partners

Michael Lynne

Arthur G. Rosen

SEARS·PEYTON·GALLERY

NEW YORK·LOS ANGELES

Rick Shaefer

Artist Statement

I tend to always come back to the line work. I find what I respond to and admire in other artists' work, past or present, is usually the integrity of the line – whether it's a single stroke or a mass of scribble in the shadows. If the marks are put down with validity and assurance they will resonate and the piece will vibrate. False or uneasy notes stand out and unsettle and even demoralize. A confident fluidity of movement and gesture is what is consciously and unconsciously felt and appreciated by the viewer. At least that is how I respond to a work.

For me the scale of larger drawings compels a distinct approach to the process of the mark-making—more gestural, almost calligraphic. The act of drawing itself is a highly sensual and pleasurable one. If things are working I hurriedly scribble with a writer's hand in a spontaneously invented language with looping cursive gestures, larger flourishes, and tight punctuations. If the rhythm is there you find yourself writing your way across the surface as if capturing thought in a frenzied rush of note taking.

Because of my photography background and countless hours spent trying to secure a rich array of grays and blacks in the prints, creating a full range of tones in the black and white drawings is important. But for these larger pieces it has been crucial for me to create the tonal range by line alone – without smudging and rubbing the charcoal in any way. Maintaining the crispness of the individual marks is the goal—not unlike that of an etching, engraving or woodcut—with rich blacks being crucial to the conveyance of shape but also to the sense of bulk and weight.

I have been drawn to subjects with a great variety of textural surfaces: the idea being to draw these pieces life size, with an archivist's fidelity to detail and scale. In a sense, the process is not unlike scanning the surface of a highly varied landscape from high up—mapping the transitions from rough areas of exuberant detail to the occasional quiet patches. When I first decided to do this series, brought on by the felling of a large old oak in a neighbor's field during a storm, the textures of the bark and decay were what initially caught my eye. Added to that was the sense of massive weight and the anthropomorphic elements in the curvature of the trunk and the large “eye” in the middle. It seemed to resemble a large dying beast, a beached whale for instance, peering at us from the finale of a grand and quickly waning life. The vast wealth of mythology, symbolism, and iconography surrounding our historical relationship with trees can't help but inform such encounters. Presented in these drawings life-size and complete, these large trees take on an almost totemic presence -- quietly insistent on our engagement with them.

The surface and scale exploration of the first oak tree led to the Rhino, with its similar beseeching eye and intricately distinctive, textured hide. Subsequent works in this series continue to explore the extensive use of line work to convey a perception of an abundance of detail and a sense of voluminous weight while keeping the mark making itself fluid and almost abstract when viewed up close.

Fall 2017 exhibitions on view October 6, 2017–January 14, 2018

Public opening gallery talk at 6:30 pm on Thursday, October 5

The Haggerty Museum of Art on the campus of Marquette University will open a series of exhibitions on Friday, October 6, that explore social issues ranging from the current immigration crisis to the persistence of apocalyptic visions through time. Artist Rick Shaefer and guest curator Sarah Schaefer will participate in an opening discussion on Thursday, October 5, at 6:30 p.m. The Haggerty Museum of Art's exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public.



Rick Shaefer: The Refugee Trilogy

The *Refugee Trilogy* is a suite of large-scale charcoal drawings by Connecticut-based artist Rick Shaefer. The works employ the visual language of Baroque painting to express—in a language both familiar and historical—the plight of contemporary refugees, and the persistence of this epic human tragedy across time. The three triptychs, each measuring 96" x 165", are exhibited in a chronology suggested by news reports. *Land Crossing*, the first of the three, addresses the hazardous journeys faced by refugees fleeing war, famine, drought, or other causes. The second work, *Water Crossing*, portrays the perilous journeys across open water. The third work, *Border Crossing*, addresses the conflicts and hostilities faced at borders. In addition to the three triptychs, the exhibition includes seventeen preparatory drawings. In an interpretive space adjacent to the exhibition, visitors may watch short video interviews with Marquette University faculty members—from areas ranging from law to nursing to history—who work on the subject of refugees. *Rick Shaefer: The Refugee Trilogy* was organized by the Fairfield University Art Museum.



Rick Shaefer: The Refugee Trilogy

Fairfield University Art Museum

2017–2018

The Fairfield University Art Museum is pleased to present the inaugural exhibition of a monumental new series by artist Rick Shaefer created in response to the ongoing refugee crisis convulsing the globe. This three-piece suite is comprised of *Land Crossing*, dealing with the migration across foreign lands; *Water Crossing*, addressing the perilous journeys of refugees who take to the open seas; and *Border Crossing*, spotlighting the hostilities refugees face in seeking safe haven far from a violence-torn homeland. The trilogy employs the artistic lexicon of old master painting (specifically incorporating heroic figurative elements from works by Rubens and Géricault) to explore this contemporary crisis in a language both familiar and iconic. Such historical allusions underscore the tenacious persistence of this epic human tragedy throughout time, past and present.

In addition to the three triptychs, each executed in charcoal on vellum, the exhibition includes seventeen of Shaefer's preparatory drawings for the series.

Audio clips were created by refugee and relocated youth, and their teachers, who found inspiration in Shaefer's work. The participating students attended the Ubuntu Academy, a summer literacy lab hosted by the Connecticut Writing Project at Fairfield University that brings teachers and students together to write.

Artist Rick Shaefer

By Robert Kiener

New England Home

April 18, 2017

Charcoal is the medium of choice for Rick Shaefer, whose powerful drawings reflect his fascination with, and mastery of, the “integrity of the line.”

Bent over a waist-high, eight-foot-square table in his airy, light-filled studio, Fairfield-based artist Rick Shaefer seems lost in thought as he feverishly draws with charcoal on a massive sheet of white vellum. He works quickly but precisely, scratching out crisp black lines.

Pausing and standing back to inspect his progress, he explains why he prefers to create works in charcoal rather than paint, pencil, or some other medium. “It’s so primitive,” he says. “Our Paleolithic ancestors were scratching with burnt wood on the walls of caves, and I like to think—at the risk of sounding too romantic—that using charcoal somehow links me to what artists have been doing for thousands of years. I also like the tonality, the rich, crisp blacks on white that I get with charcoal.”

A former editorial and fashion photographer, he left photography in 1994 and began painting and experimenting with mixed media during what he terms his “everything goes” period. Five years ago he decided to concentrate on drawing.

“I’d always loved the power and preciseness of line and enjoyed making etchings, so I decided to try to create drawings that looked like huge etchings,” he says. To prepare himself, he spent months peering through a magnifying glass at drawings by Rembrandt and others, as well as woodcuts by Dürer.

“Rembrandt’s drawings fascinated me,” says Shaefer. “I studied how he laid down each line and marveled at his fussy and finished lines as well as his moments of spontaneity. I suppose I was trying to find out where the genius is.”

Shaefer’s work has been widely exhibited in both group and solo exhibitions, and is included in private and corporate collections such as Microsoft, American Express, and Prudential.

For the last five years or so he has focused largely on nature, depicting everything from animals to trees to cloudscapes. He creates large, often life-size drawings because the format gives him the freedom to be more gestural or, as he explains “more calligraphic.” “If I’m in the flow, it’s as if I am writing my way across the surface, like I am capturing thought

in a hurried frenzy of note taking.” Also, he says, “I like life-size drawings because there’s something about the weight and size of the subjects I depict that demands contemplation.”

His most recent project, *Refugee Trilogy*, inspired by the ongoing European refugee crisis, echoes Baroque and Romantic paintings of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries by artists such as Rubens and Géricault. Other works spring from events closer to home. For example, on a walk after a heavy winter storm, he was saddened to see a massive black oak that he had long admired toppled to the ground in a neighbor’s field. “Although it had fallen, it still had a majesty to it,” he says. “It looked like a beached whale, complete with a giant eye peering up at me.”

He photographed it—it was so huge he needed five shots—and made a five-panel, nineteen-foot-long charcoal drawing, *Van Breems Oak*, of the fallen beast.

Regular midafternoon visits by a mad crescendo of squawking crows outside his studio inspired Shaefer to draw an ongoing series of charcoal portraits of the noisy visitors. Because his large-scale drawings can take several months to complete, he describes his crow drawings as “light relief.” As he explains, “The crows are an interlude to break up the sometimes arduous process of drawing large animals and life-size trees. They are also just fun to draw because they have so much attitude.”

From a distance, Shaefer’s drawings may look like the work of a photorealist, but the closer a viewer gets to the work, the more evident is his mastery of line and his spontaneity. There is a richness that invites viewers to move in closer then back away only to return.

Shaefer has an interest in helping to spread awareness about endangered species, and he has drawn everything from snow leopards to the long-extinct Dodo bird to the Indian rhinoceros. His massive *Indian Rhino*, inspired in part by Dürer’s famous sixteenth-century woodcut, covers three panels. Does the triptych hold special meaning for Shaefer? “Well, it is a classical form,” he explains.

Then, with a wry smile, adds, “And I wouldn’t be able to get an eight-by-twelve-foot drawing out my studio door!”

Hartford Courant

Rick Shaefer's Refugee Triptychs At Fairfield

By Susan Dunne

Hartford Courant

September 7, 2016

In the last few years, many artists have been inspired by the Syrian civil war and asylum seekers to create art to acknowledge the humanitarian crisis. Rick Shaefer, a Bridgeport artist who works in charcoal on vellum, wanted to create something, too. But he couldn't decide how to approach the subject matter.

Then he visited the Yale University Art Gallery.

"I saw these apocalyptic 16th- and 17th-century paintings, the 'last judgments,'" Shaefer said. Further exploration into that era led him to the work of Peter Paul Rubens, whose intense allegorical, mythological and religious works depicted scenes of strife and torment. "He had that angst, that fervor, that pathos," Shaefer said.

Using Rubens' masterpieces and a few other Old Master paintings as an inspiration, Shaefer has created a trilogy of large-scale triptychs depicting masses of traumatized people in flight: over land, over sea, driven out of a city by violent soldiers. The trilogy is on view now at the Walsh Art Gallery at Fairfield University.

Shaefer's "Border Crossing," a chaotic scene of a city in anguish, takes its compositional structure from Rubens' "Massacre of the Innocents" and borrows elements from a Van Dyck work and more than a dozen other works by Rubens, most prominently "Daniel in the Lion's Den." Some humans lie dead, surrounded by military and civilian thugs and vicious animals. Others try to flee or sit in shock. Angels fly above, witnessing the tumult on behalf of the entire universe.

In the center of the piece, a lion stares straight ahead, his face almost human, viewing everything with dismay. "I consider the lion the conscience of the whole thing," Shaefer said. "He's forlorn, disheartened, saddened, wise."

In "Land Crossing," Shaefer used a peaceful scene by Rubens — "A View of Het Steen in the Early Morning" — as a backdrop for a more torturous scene in the foreground inspired by works of Rubens, Titian, Jacob Jordaens and Cornelis Holsteyn. A burdened and overwhelmed group trudges behind other emigrants into an unknown tomorrow. Small fires burn throughout the distant landscape, signaling the possibility of more danger ahead. Many of the group fall in exhaustion and are trampled by the rest.

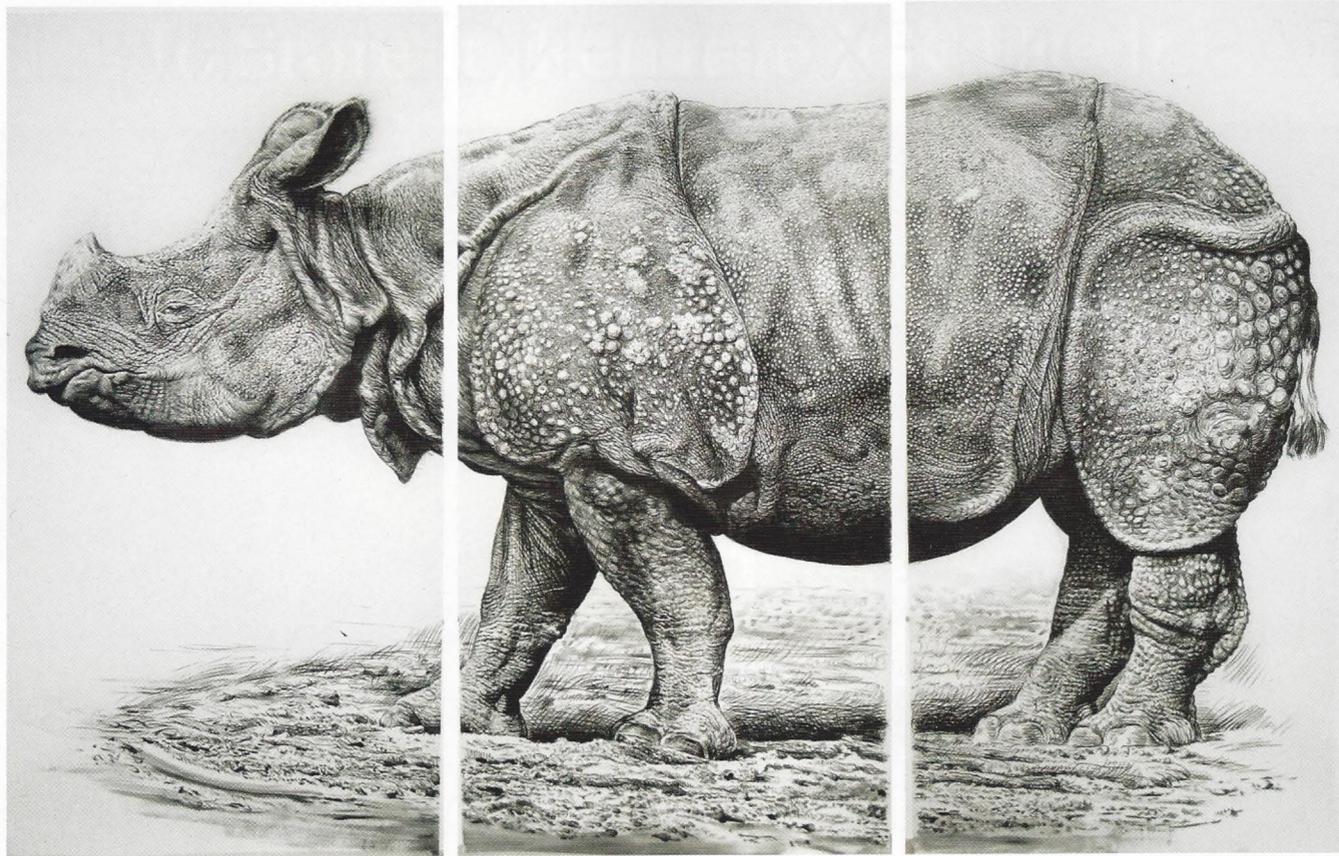
"Water Crossing" co-opts imagery from Rembrandt's "The Storm on the Sea of Galilee" and Géricault's "Raft of the Medusa" and adds elements from 12 Rubens works to show an overloaded boat filled with desperate people on a storm-tossed sea.

Mimicking the imagery in Rubens paintings, Shaefer put a Christ figure in the center of each piece.

Shaefer said grounding his work in a 16th- and 17th-century aesthetic casts the refugee crisis in a more timeless and universal light. "I'm not trying to make overtly political statements. I'm trying to make something that resonates on the subject of refugees," he said.

"Since the beginning of time men have been fleeing places. We all started out in Africa and scattered from there. It's not just Syria and Iraq and Africa. It's Vietnam, the Cuban boat people, the Trail of Tears," he said. "It'll keep going on."

The exhibit also includes several of Shaefer's preliminary studies for the pieces, as well as diagrams listing all the paintings used as source materials.



Black Magic

Charcoal is the medium of choice for Rick Shaefer, whose powerful drawings reflect his fascination with, and mastery of, the “integrity of the line.”

//////////
BY ROBERT KIENER



Bent over a waist-high, eight-foot-square table in his airy, light-filled studio, Fairfield-based artist Rick Shaefer seems lost in thought as he feverishly draws with charcoal on a massive sheet of white vellum. He works quickly but precisely, scratching out crisp black lines.

Pausing and standing back to inspect his progress, he explains why he prefers to create works in charcoal rather than paint, pencil, or some other medium. “It’s so primitive,” he says. “Our Paleolithic ancestors were scratching with burnt wood on the walls of caves, and I like to think—at the risk of sounding too romantic—that using charcoal somehow links me to what artists have been doing for thousands of years. I also like the tonality, the rich, crisp blacks on white that I get with charcoal.”

A former editorial and fashion photographer, he left photography in 1994 and began painting and experimenting with mixed media during what he terms his “everything goes” period. Five years ago he decided to concentrate on drawing.

LEFT: *Oak After Storm* (2016), charcoal on vellum mounted on paper, 45”H × 57”W. ABOVE: *Indian Rhino* triptych (2012), charcoal on vellum, 96”H × 148”W.



studied how he laid down each line and marveled at his fussy and finished lines as well as his moments of spontaneity. I suppose I was trying to find out where the genius is."

Shaefer's work has been widely exhibited in both group and solo exhibitions, and

is included in private and corporate collections such as Microsoft, American Express, and Prudential.

For the last five years or so he has

"I'd always loved the power and preciseness of line and enjoyed making etchings, so I decided to try to create drawings that looked like huge etchings," he says. To prepare himself, he spent months peering through a magnifying glass at drawings by Rembrandt and others, as well as woodcuts by Dürer.

"Rembrandt's drawings fascinated me," says Shaefer. "I



focused largely on nature, depicting everything from animals to trees to cloudscapes. He creates large, often life-size drawings because the format gives him the freedom to be more gestural or, as he explains "more calligraphic." "If I'm in the flow, it's as if I am writing my way across the surface, like I am capturing thought in a hurried frenzy of note taking." Also, he says, "I like life-size drawings because there's something about the weight and size of the subjects I depict that demands contemplation."

His most recent project, *Refugee Trilogy*, inspired by the ongoing European refugee crisis, echoes Baroque and Romantic paintings of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries by artists such as Rubens and Géricault. Other works

spring from events closer to home. For example, on a walk after a heavy winter storm, he was saddened to see a massive black oak that he had long admired toppled to the ground in a neighbor's field. "Although it had fallen, it still had a majesty to it," he says. "It looked like a beached whale, complete with a giant eye peering up at me."

He photographed it—it was so huge he needed five shots—and made a five-panel, nineteen-foot-long charcoal drawing, *Van Breems Oak*, of the fallen beast.

Regular midafternoon visits by a mad crescendo of squawking crows outside his studio inspired Shaefer to draw an ongoing series of charcoal portraits of the noisy visitors. Because his large-scale drawings can take several months to complete, he describes his crow draw-

BELOW: *Dodo* (2016), charcoal on vellum, 45"H x 45"W. FACING PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM: *Van Breems Oak* (2012), charcoal on vellum, five panels of varying sizes, 60"H x 234"W overall; *Spanish Bull* (2014), charcoal on vellum mounted on aluminum, 42"H x 60"W; detail from *Crows on Wire* (2013), charcoal on vellum mounted on nine board panels, 18"H x 148"W overall; the artist in his studio working on his *Border Crossing* triptych from the *Refugee Trilogy* (2016), charcoal on vellum mounted on board, 96"H x 165"W.



"If I'm in the flow, it's as if I am writing my way across the surface, like I am capturing thought in a hurried frenzy of note taking," says Shaefer.

ings as "light relief." As he explains, "The crows are an interlude to break up the sometimes arduous process of drawing large animals and life-size trees. They are also just fun to draw because they have so much attitude."

From a distance, Shaefer's drawings may look like the work of a photorealist, but the closer a viewer gets to the work, the more evident is his mastery of line and his spontaneity. There is a richness that invites viewers to move in closer then back away only to return.

Shaefer has an interest in helping to spread awareness about endangered species, and he has drawn everything from snow leopards to the long-extinct Dodo bird to the Indian rhinoceros. His massive *Indian Rhino*, inspired in part by Dürer's famous sixteenth-century woodcut, covers three panels. Does the triptych hold special meaning for Shaefer? "Well, it is a classical form," he explains.

Then, with a wry smile, adds, "And I wouldn't be able to get an eight-by-twelve-foot drawing out my studio door!" •

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rich Shaefer is represented by the Sears Peyton Gallery in New York City and Los Angeles, searspeyton.com. To see more of his work, visit rickshaefer.com



HOUSATONIC
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Rick Shaefer Draws the Line at Housatonic Museum of Art

By Janet Serra

Housatonic Community College

March 18, 2015

The Housatonic Museum of Art presents *Rick Shaefer: Drawing the Line* on view in the Burt Chernow Galleries, 900 Lafayette Blvd., Bridgeport, CT, through March 27, 2015.

Drawing is essential to the training of an artist. It is the most direct medium between the artist and his observations, thoughts, feelings and experiences—serving both as a record and as a revealer of truth. Drawing is both a cognitive and manual process that provides the foundation for painting, sculpture and architecture. Fairfield artist Rick Shaefer's monumental, breath-taking drawings offer viewers an adventure in looking with his technically precise and visually poetic drawings of animals and nature.

At first glance, it is clear that Shaefer has more than a passing acquaintance with works of art across time. Of all the masters he has studied, it is Albrecht Durer that has influenced him most. In the 16th century, the natural world of animals and plants had become the focus of scientific and cultural interest as explorers returned from far-flung places carrying examples and illustrations of exotic new species. One of Durer's best known pen drawings, *Rhinoceros, 1515*, demonstrates the artist's fascination with recording the curiosities and wonders of the world. Paradoxically, Shaefer's own *African Rhinoceros*, beautifully rendered in rich charcoal on vellum, comes full circle by documenting what now may be the waning days of these magnificent beasts.

Shaefer's trees, crowned with leaves or barren and in varying states of decay, are densely detailed and sensitively modeled through the use of tonal gradations. Majestic oaks and tangled vines allow the artist to mine the sculptural properties of a charcoal line, expressing not only what he observes but how he feels. A dramatic narrative unfolds before the eye, compelling the viewer to travel along through the light and into the shadows.

And, like the rhinoceros, these powerful and confident drawings circle around a common theme: the effects of human activity on nature. Climate change specifically could lead to the massive destruction of forests as well as the extinction of countless species. Global warming has led to the increase of forest fires as well as a proliferation of pests and diseases. *Rick Shaefer: Drawing the Line* looks to the rich tradition of drawing in order to explore the critical issues of our time.

The New York Times

N.Y. / REGION

Events in Connecticut for March 1-7, 2015

FEB. 27, 2015



BRIDGEPORT “Live Oaks” (2014), charcoal on vellum mounted on aluminum, is on view in the solo exhibition “Rick Shaefer: Drawing the Line” through March 27 at the Housatonic Museum of Art, 900 Lafayette Boulevard. For more information: 203-332-5052 or housatonicmuseum.org. [Sears Peyton Gallery](#)

Los Angeles Times

Luxe bag brand Parabellum opens a flagship store on Melrose Avenue

By Adam Tschorn

August 31, 2014

Luxe L.A. bag and accessories brand Parabellum has opened its first permanent brick-and-mortar space — a flagship store on Melrose Avenue just west of Paul Smith's pink pied-a-terre.

The roughly 1,100 square feet of retail space boasts unfinished wood floors, white-painted brick walls and spare metal and glass fixtures that reference the Parabellum aesthetic — table and shelf legs shaped like arrows (which fans of the brand will recognize as a recurring motif in its wares), gold-colored arrowheads as feet, and metal versions of feathered fletchings at the glass table tops (which, you may notice have corners cut to 45-degree angles, another flourish found in the construction of their military-grade bison leather bags and wallets).

The shop, which officially opened Aug. 23, has a western interior wall dominated by a 12-foot-by-9-foot three-panel charcoal drawing of an American bison created by artist Rick Shaefer opposite a custom-made, 8-foot-long, black bison leather Chesterfield sofa with claw feet. Other wall art includes mirror and metal pieces by L.A. brand Blackman Cruz.

In addition to telegraphing Parabellum's traditional-meets-modern aesthetic via fixtures and furniture, the company's first stand-alone retail space will, for the first time, showcase the label's full complement of bags, wallets belts (some 65 different style and color options) and offer custom services previously available only on a limited basis.

"One of the things we're going to offer here is the creation of these crests," said Parabellum partner Mike Feldman, holding aloft a clutch the size of an iPad mini embossed with an intricate heraldic design. "People will be able to come here and make an appointment with [creative director] Jason [Jones], he'll come up with something that visually represents you, what you stand for, then we'll have the metal plates made downtown — a big one and a small one — and it'll be your kit." Customers can then have their bespoke crests stamped into pieces for purchase, he said.

Feldman explained that while they've offered the service for years via phone and Internet (they've created custom crests for both Arnold Schwarzenegger and Colette in Paris, among others), the new space will allow them to expand their reach. "Now people can come in and have this really personal experience — kind of like a tattoo appointment."

As the brand's recognition grows (it was one of the 2013 CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund finalists) Feldman sees the first dedicated, permanent physical location as a key part of the label's evolution. "This is it. This is the whole thing, this is going to be epic," he said enthusiastically during a tour of the space. "People used to find us — [and] make the pilgrimage to our [atelier] space in Hollywood but being here on this corner is going to be great for us. It's such a perfect spot."

As if to highlight the fact, Feldman gestures toward the front entryway of the space at the corner of Melrose and Harper avenues and notes that the doorway has been positioned at a 45-degree angle.

"We didn't even do that," he said. "It was like that."