

CTOBERmanhole madness

<http://michelleward.typepad.com/michelleward/2016/10/cover-girl-bobbi-mastrangelo.html>

Sunday, October 23, 2016

"Cover Girl" Bobbi Mastrangelo



Day 23: From the moment I landed on [Bobbi Mastrangelo's site](#) I knew I had met a kindred spirit.

She calls her series of art pieces based on covers, "Grate Works". Such a clever title for her body of work. She's also been called a Cover Girl - the perfect moniker for an artist whose work focuses on all kinds of street hardware.

From our very first email exchange Bobbi asked for my address so she could send me a postcard book that documents many of her masterpieces.

She has been an amazing cheerleader for this blog project of mine, leaving kind comments for me and the guests, as well as sending me piles of information and encouraging words each day. I'm so excited to be sharing Bobbi and her artwork.

Bobbi is a generous soul and has offered to send everyone interested a signed postcard. Send me an email with your address and Bobbi will send you a postcard. Even better, if you send her a self-addressed stamped envelope she will send you four signed postcards! Write me and I will give you her address. How cool is that?



"Grate Works" by Bobbi Mastrangelo - postcard book

Here's a description of her work, from her website:

Bobbi Mastrangelo, The “Grate Artist”, is internationally known for her unique creations based on the theme of manhole covers. Deeply embossed prints on her hand-made paper transform the mundane iron covers into jewel like mandalas. Her tromp l'oeil sculpture relief works artistically capture the essence of utility covers in urban settings. Their appearance is so realistic that viewers wonder how she managed to put all that “weight “ up on the wall.

She is a mixed media artist like us - creating with several mediums in many sizes. Bobbi makes one-of-a-kind sculptures, with a long list of distinguished collectors, and she creates affordable prints and reliefs too.

Incorporating paper casting, printmaking, sculpture, and paint - she is inventive, creative, and an environmental activist. Her career began as an elementary school teacher but she eventually found her way to art-making and has been at it for thirty-seven years. Bobbi's site is very extensive and there is a lot to see. **Visit her site and her blog at BobbiMastrangelo.com**

My favorite interview where I got a sense of her process and her passion is [HERE](#), from 1997.

This piece is practically in my backyard - at the Zimmerli Museum where Fallon has classes at Rutgers. Looks like a real cover doesn't it? She nailed the metal, and the discolored area surrounding the cover, as we often see in the streets.



"Borough of Manhattan" by Bobbi Mastrangelo

Created 1996 - 36" x 48" x 3"

The Permanent Collection of the National Association of Women Artists
at The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Museum at Rutgers University - New Brunswick, NJ



"City of Orlando" by Bobbi Mastrangelo, 2011
48" x 31" x 3", submission for
Orlando Museum of Art's First Thursday's Competition 2012

On Bobbi's site, she takes you through the process of creating some of her pieces, and the stories behind them.

I loved reading about this one, and how she problem solved the issues along the way, including the use of simulated moss and actual debris from her street to fill in the gaps.

Not only are her interpretations very real, there are minerals included to contribute to the deception.

See the full story of her submission to Orlando Museum of Art, "City of Orlando" [HERE](#).



work in progress - cover created from blank foam



reference rubbing by Susan Raff

interpretation in foam + paint

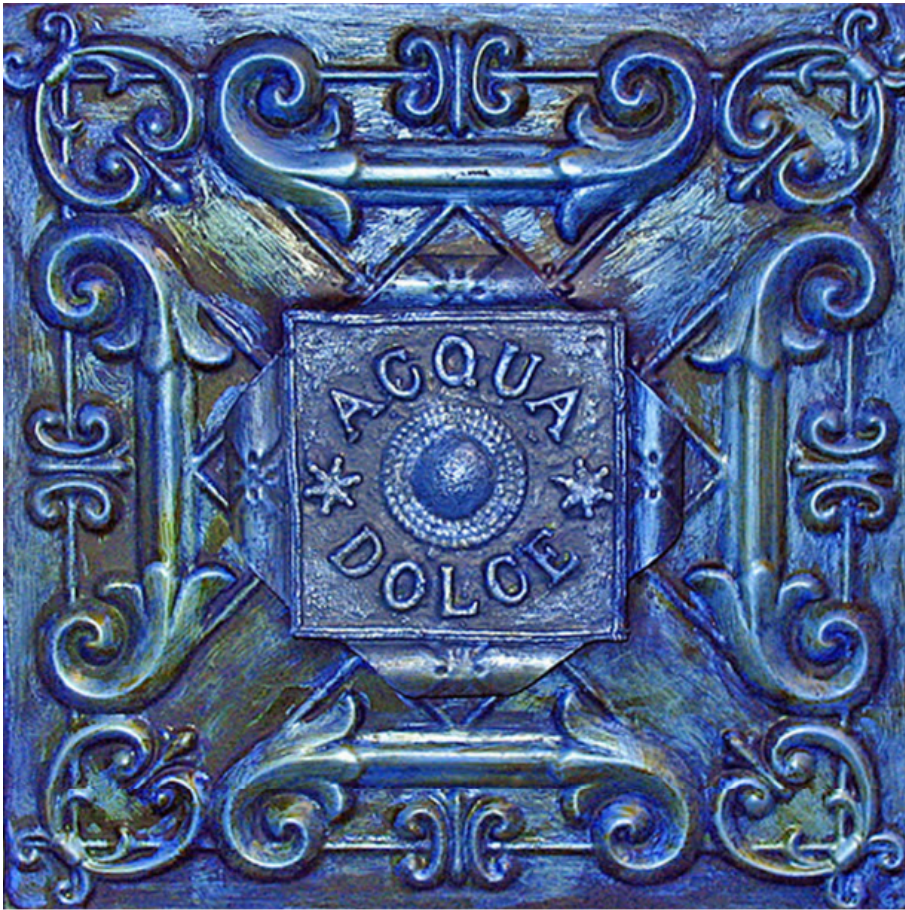


foam coated with plaster gauze, cement, acrylic paint, antiquing - and the final layer to close the gaps: simulated moss and actual cinders from our street

Showing the diversity in her use of materials, here is an [embossed metal piece](#) - love the color selection for the subject. She also has several works which have been hand-tooled from copper.

See those [HERE](#). And [fiber](#)!

She does textile work too. Like many of us, Bobbi is curious about how to manipulate various resources to express herself, and learned techniques through the process of problem solving.



"Acqua Dolce" by Bobbi Mastrangelo
12 " x 12" x 1", mixed media on embossed metal
Featured in 2008 Attleboro Arts Museum Auction

You can see more of her realistic presentation of covers we have become familiar with - water, sewer, coal. She even replicates the glass light vaults. The story behind Three Covers, and how they often became "bases" when a "city street turned into an asphalt field of dreams for kids", is [HERE](#).



"Glendora Water" 2013
by Bobbi Mastrangelo
18" x 14" x 2"



"Three Sewers" 1995
by Bobbi Mastrangelo
34" x 30" x 4"



"Jacob Mark Chimney Cover" 1987
by Bobbi Mastrangelo
27" x 32" X 5"



"Great Wall Medallion" 1984
by Bobbi Mastrangelo
36 "Dia.

Bobbi makes pulp from scratch and creates paper castings, and prints are available of her originals.



"Con Edison Black", NY metro area



"Buffalo Water" St. James, NY



"John E. Potente" found in Hicksville, NY



"Manhattan DPW" NY

Bobbi Mastrangelo's Grate Little Giclees - Limited Edition 12" x 10" hand-signed archival prints



Bobbi with some of her Grate Works



"WHEN (The People Care)"
by Bobbi Mastrangelo
Fiber Art, 31" x 13" x 3"

Looking back through more than two dozen emails, I can't believe we've only known each other less than a month. Her enthusiasm for our shared obsession is genuine - which was evident through our correspondence, then confirmed with several phone calls. I would love to tell you everything I've learned about her and her art but to be honest, her body of work is so extensive, and her involvement in [exhibitions](#), and events like [National Post Card Week](#), exhausts me just reading about it. I will tell you one more thing - as I went on a research spree for this series I landed on many websites, forums, blogs.....and on many postings I would often see Bobbi as a commentor or as a link. She gets *around*. And she's an endless font of positive energy. I encourage you to visit her site and poke around, then go back again. And reach out to her - she is a true gem. BobbiMastrangelo.com

Thank you Bobbi for letting me share your talent, your passion, and most of all, thank you for being a "grate" friend.

Readers, don't forget: a postcard from Bobbi awaits you. Send me your address.