

Rebecca Gilbert: wonder

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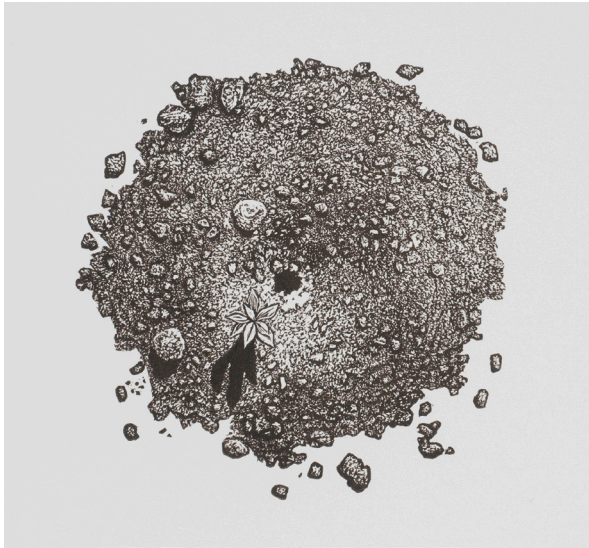
**THE
PRINT
CENTER**

Rebecca Gilbert: wonder

Rebecca Gilbert: wonder brings together new prints by the Philadelphia-based artist. Gilbert's works come out of her interest in both traditional print processes and her poetic response to the landscape.

This new body of work grows out of an artist residency Gilbert had in 2015 at *OCHO*, Questa, NM. During the residency she explored the countryside around Questa guided by a treasure map created in the form of a poem. It was created by a retired art collector living in Santa Fe named Forrest Fenn, who has hidden more than one million dollars in gold somewhere in the rugged nearby countryside. Gilbert's hunt for Fenn's treasure became an opportunity to take notes and make sketches of the beautiful landscape with its interesting rock formations and hidden petroglyphs, as well as of objects she found during her hikes. Those sketches were the starting point for the engravings and woodcuts in this exhibition. While Gilbert's treasure hunting activities are recent, her work has focused on gold in the past. As Gilbert describes it, "I have been using dirt, water, sticks, coins and gold as imagery in my work to symbolize that which we impulsively crave, seek out and hold valuable."

The works in this exhibition illustrate Gilbert's deep commitment to traditional print processes, including wood engraving and complex, multiple-layered reduction woodcuts. The artist's intense attention to craft and process reflects her interest in the technique, workmanship and perfection found in the work of masters such as Albrecht Dürer. Gilbert is drawn to Dürer because of the "technique, the



Ant Mound, 2015

workmanship, the perfection of it. I teach printmaking classes about process and maintaining a studio practice and exploring the creative process, and the conversation always comes up that you shouldn't strive for perfection, that it will hold you back. I know that is probably true, but I feel compelled to strive for perfection."

The small wood engravings in this exhibition are realistic, monochromatic, depictions of symbolically important objects Gilbert found during her time in New Mexico. Influenced by prints in historical natural history texts, these works faithfully reproduce such things as an antique toy horse, an ant mound and a rattle Gilbert used to scare away bears during her hikes.

These are paired with larger reduction woodcuts that approach the Southwestern landscape much more symbolically, becoming embodiments of Gilbert's experience of her stay. In *Confluence*, ant mounds are joined together as if being viewed from multiple perspectives at once, creating an almost hallucinatory vision. Made from up to ten layers of ink, these enormously complex works explore our perception of both space and beauty.

About the Artist

Rebecca Gilbert received her BFA in Printmaking from Marshall University, Huntington, WV and her MFA in Printmaking/Book Arts from The University of the Arts, Philadelphia. She also studied nontoxic etching at the Grafisk Eksperimentarium, Capileira, Spain. For several years she was a member of Nexus Foundation for Today's Art, Philadelphia, where she presented three solo exhibitions and curated several group exhibitions. Gilbert's work is in numerous public collections, including the Free Library of Philadelphia Print and Picture Collection; Princeton University Graphic Arts Library; and Zuckerman Museum of Art, Kennesaw, GA. Her work has been included in recent exhibitions at Birke Art Gallery, Marshall University, Huntington, WV; Crane Arts, Philadelphia, PA; The Center for Emerging Visual Artists, Philadelphia, PA; and Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA. Gilbert is represented by The Print Center Gallery Store. In 2014, The Print Center exhibited Gilbert's work at the Editions Artists' Book Fair, New York, NY.

Gallery notes are generously provided by Brilliant Studios.

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11:00am - 6:00pm

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Front: *Confluence*, 2016.



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