



Maurizio Barattucci: Observation, Reflection, Response – A Printmaking Retrospective

VISCOSITY PRINTING was an innovation of modern printmaking in mid-20th century Paris. As a medium that lent itself to producing visually powerful graphics and imagery, masterworks of the genre have a contemporary feel and immediacy 50 years on. Maurizio Barattucci was one of its leading innovators and most skilled proponents. Like other artists experimenting with viscosity printing, Barattucci employed both intaglio and relief techniques. However, his technical mastery of the processes and exquisite control of how the viscosity (thickness or thinness/“stiffness”) of the inks could

be manipulated enabled him to extend the limits of this printmaking genre.

Instead of the simple color effects and simpler compositions more usual for viscosity printing, Barattucci perfected a sophisticated process. It began with creating a deeply etched metal plate in a multi-step process, then layering the inks onto the plate to achieve subtle gradational tones, color mixtures, and textured effects as intentional counterpoint to resist areas where inks did not mix. The results were complex compositions with dynamic juxtapositions of pictorial elements and the paper’s negative spaces.



Many of his compositions feature intricate embossed (raised) designs in the white of the paper, emphasizing the interplay of highly nuanced naturalism with graphic, sometimes almost calligraphic, abstraction. To raise the bar still further, for editioned prints Barattucci had to replicate precisely the same intricate steps, modulating the ink viscosities in precisely the same way for each print. Given the degree of direct manipulation required to build each print in an edition, each one is a unique work of art. Together, all these elements are distinctive hallmarks of Barattucci's work. There are no closely analogous works, much less any parallels with other artists.

Barattucci's compositions almost invariably were inspired by nature. They are bold, spontaneous, and exuberant in their expression, despite the paradoxical contradiction of being crafted with careful scientific precision. As much as any artistic endeavor can be, the virtuosity manifest in Barattucci's work is something akin to experimental alchemy. In the present exhibition, something old is new again, and it is both wonderful and refreshing to be reminded of it.

About the artist. Maurizio Barattucci was born in Rome in 1939. From an early age, he showed a creative flair for making things that required craft skills. He was recognized for his native talent as an artist with exhibitions and awards by the time he emigrated to the United States in 1956. After settling in California in 1960, he received scholarships to Art Center College of Design, Chouinard Art Institute, and Otis Art Institute, where he was mentored by Joseph Mugnaini. He went on to earn a Master of Fine Arts degree in printmaking, drawing, and painting at California State University, Long Beach.



In 1970 Barattucci cofounded a professional print studio in Redondo Beach. He played a pivotal role in establishing the L.A. Printmaking Society, serving as a board member until he moved to Santa Barbara in 1975. He taught figure drawing, painting and printmaking at El Camino College and later Santa Monica College, where he served as Art Department Chair and Dean of the Arts before retiring in 2008.

His work has been exhibited throughout the U.S. and Europe. Solo shows include exhibitions at California State University, Long Beach, St. Lawrence University, University of Colorado, Boulder, and University of Southern California. A prolific artist, Barattucci's prints, paintings, and drawings have won numerous awards and are held in many museum, gallery, and private collections. Read more at mbarattucci.com.

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November 6 – 15, 2025

Artist's reception:
1st Thursday Artwalk
November 6, 2025, 5–8pm



Community Arts Workshop
631 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Website: <https://www.sbcaw.org/>
Parking: <https://www.sbcaw.org/parking>

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