



You've been upgraded from 10 to 20 complimentary articles courtesy of IBM.

GET GLOBE UNLIMITED

ONLY 99¢ FOR
YOUR FIRST MONTH.

TRY IT TODAY

[Home](#) » [Arts](#)

R.M. VAUGHAN: THE EXHIBITIONIST

In Hamilton, the mundane becomes spectacular

R.M. VAUGHAN

Special to The Globe and Mail

Published Friday, Feb. 18 2011, 4:30 PM EST

Last updated Wednesday, Sep. 21 2011, 2:23 PM EDT



Heaps and Hives at the Print Studio Until Feb. 26, 173
James St. N., Hamilton; www.theprintstudio.ca

Heaps and Hives, a small group show at the Print Studio, mines similar terrain – particularly the atavistic need shared by many sentient creatures to create patterns, to repeat and layer visual stimuli in order to both measure time and counter time's erosive power.

Simon Frank's wall-mounted forest of relief prints, made via ink-rolled cedar planks indented with a simple tree shape derived from a logger's tag, is part memento mori for our disappearing forests, and part playful sight gag.

Using a deep, St.-Patrick's-Day-green ink that will remind you of childhood construction paper projects, Frank repeats the tree stamp over and over onto narrow, rectangular strips of thin paper – mounted onto the wall at the topmost point only, so that each sheet can sway as you pass by or whenever the gallery door is opened. Frank's fluttering glade reminded me of birthday-party streamers, Mexican Day of the Dead cutouts, and Buddhist prayer amulets, of temporary markers used to celebrate lasting milestones.

Next to Frank's arboretum hang two quieter sets of works: Alexis Granwell's etchings of the outlines of tunnels and pits, recreated via elaborate, deftly arranged strings of pale blue-grey dots, marks as quiet as mouse paws on cotton; and Nadine Bariteau's documents of her cheeky riverside interventions, which feature rafts made from empty water bottles (a happy accident, but one nicely in sync with the Landry exhibition).

Both of these works address the need to make patterns as a kind of mania driven by anxiety – Granwell's exacting replication anxiety, and Bariteau's anticipatory (for the future of the Earth) anxiety.

Heaps and Hives will make you feel more secure about your own squirrely habits, especially now that OCD-like hand washing is actively encouraged by public-health officials.