

More Stories!

Forum

Number 21

October, 2007

They Click When Handled

by **Greg Shattenberg**

They click when handled, my father's blocks. Precisely carved patterns. Patterns to travel on. I hold them and look. Trying to sense something. Rubbing the surface trying to connect with what is not there. Like lost keys, wandering from room to room searching for the car keys. They always get found. These keys, keys to pertinence, keys to relevance, never get located. So the block gets held and I will build something else. My father's blocks can hold ink. They will be destroyed in the process, no longer a carving, but a printing plate. The paper will become the object. The text become the key. Blocks in colors, used to generate life which is not there and cannot be located. I can hold on to a block or build an image, but not do both.

I am not going to discover him, he is gone. I am not going to touch him, he is gone. So I get to build a relationship. A relationship between patterns and words. I rarely see my father, he is dead. So what is a picture. I can tap impulse and motivation and commonality. Impulse to carve a block, impulse to publish it. Motivation to carve a block, see the patterns, motivation to explore another's work.

The house was empty. We had picked through the objects. We had picked through the emotions. There was little else we could do. Time for the yard sale. In the basement was a box full of blocks. They were worked, chip carved. He was dead, this is a product. I could not leave them. I handled them and did not want to. I took the box, not the blocks.

And now I want to carve. Engrave. Not knowing where to start, the box stares back. The blocks have not been touched, and I will. They will get inked, they will get worked, and something else will be carved.

copyright 2007 by Greg Shattenberg

Greg Shattenberg is an artist residing in West Paris, Maine.

**The Windswept Press
Saugerties, NY**

www.windsweptpress.com