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My Foot is a Desert

Abraham J. McCowan
Utah State University

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Abraham McCowan
Artist Statement
2013

My Foot is a Desert

My work is inspired by experiences I have had while hiking in the deserts of the American West and northern Mexico. While these desert regions are sparse, they are surprisingly rich in biodiversity. This arid abundance creates beautifully stark wilderness. It is the wild plant forms in these landscapes – the chalky yet silky saguaro rib, the fine fibers that feather and spin off a yucca blade – that inspire this body of prints. These are plants that I touch, taste, admire, and am fascinated with.

I have used the medium of woodcut to capture the essence of these wild forms. This process allows me the flexibility to print large areas of color and also the ability to carve down to the minutest details. Thus, while the scale of the prints is imposing, like the desert itself, the images attempt to capture the subtle unexpected elements to draw the viewer in. Exploration and experimentation with various mark making is at the core of this work. Large and minute, simple and complex –these core desert elements are themes that fuel my creativity.