the museums, art galleries etc, find a restaurant, eat and drink, -the usual 'trials'. Driving back to Masereel on a mellow Belgian winter Sunday afternoon after these sojourns actually began to feel like driving 'home' after a while.
The three weeks were just long enough for us to establish a sense of familiarity in our routines - the evenings with our new friends down in the tavern(s) and watching the black & white TV, tucked up back at the chalet (waiting for something ENGLISH to come on) -the regular challenge of the supermarket;always an adventure - so many things to try (Jude wrote home,"1,000 different beers and Dick' only tried 100 of them.....) In fact our farewell 'do' just about wrecked my final print -we were one big happy family by this time of course, and those Belgian pubs never seem to shut down - neither do the Belgians....., walking back to 'No 5" through the pitch black forest and over the frozen corn stubble, seemed to take forever that night. The following day the last colour on the last print proved to be a bit of a shaky experience and the final stamping and signing just about finished me off altogether. Everybody else had managed to drag themselves out of their respective chalets by the time we'd packed up the Audi and cleaned up our little 'house'. We prepared to leave amongst much back-slapping, print swapping and hearty handshakes - even the grumpy old Flem, whose space I always inadvertently seemed to be invading in the studio joined the chorus. Three weeks and I hadn't picked up a word of Dutch -but we all knew what 'Goodbye" meant!
We drove off into the Belgian flat-lands filled with a heady mixture of exhilaration and sadness, a boot full of prints and a wonderful adventure behind us.

Dick Frizzell

OUT OF MY WINDOW



Long time , no work , or thus it may appear to the faithful reader of this newsletter,but nothing was ever further from the truth. Whilst others were out enjoying the sun , at least when it was there) and the surf my parents were , as usual busy with one of their ideas,that is to say,one of the thousand - and - one ones . This explains our late opening,as well as the fact that we only had the pleasure of visiting the beach twice this summer(justified outrage on my part).
But anyway you look at it they've been busy . And now, Muka Studio proudly presents (beside the main gallery and workshop at 17 Chamberlain Street Grey Lynn), a show room in the lounge bar of the Regent Hotel which will feature (as a complimentary on-going show) collections which have already been exhibited (mostly) at the main gallery.
The opening of this facility will occur on the 15th of April with a series of lithographs by;
Rodney Fumpston.

the Regent AUCKLAND

Wish us luck, or rather wish our parents luck,Saskia and I are, much as it may seem like desertion , leaving for five glorious weeks of holidays in Belgium (holiday ? not likely we have to attend school).
So,we are relying on crowds of people at the openings to keep them busy and to drive off the loneliness they are bound to feel (Saskia and I readily admit that we will also miss them),please, TAKE CARE OF THEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Dominiek Baetens-Van Gils

MUKA STUDIO NEWSLETTER

MUKA STUDIO 17 CHAMBERLAIN STREET GREY LYNN PH.765 323

MUKA STUDIO PRESENTS

at Chamberlain Street 17 Grey Lynn

NEW LITHOGRAPHS BY

DICK FRIZZELL

APRIL 8 - MAY 12

PREVIEW SATURDAY APRIL 8,4 - 6 pm

Hours Monday - Friday 11 am - 6 pm

at the Regent AUCKLAND

Albert Street

WORKS BY

RODNEY FUMPSTON

APRIL 15 - MAY 13

Hours Monday - Friday 1 - 7 pm

Three weeks at Masereel.

In 1987, at the recommendation of Frans and Magda, I applied and was accepted for a three week residency at the Masereel Lithographic Print Workshop at Kasterlee in central Belgium for the first three weeks of February '88. It turned out to be more of a learning experience than I'd anticipated...

Arriving at this intriguing little complex deep in the Belgian woods (and feeling rather proud of ourselves having found it after our first big drive into Europe) I was stunned to discover that it was assumed I knew how to actually produce a lithographic print! Y'know! The whole thing -from scratch (or grind)- the mysterious etch, the gum, the talc, the roll-up -the whole arcane ritual! All I knew was how to draw on a ready prepared stone with a selection of materials laid out before me, than go home and wait for results... Shock, horror.! Nobody was going to do it all for me here -unlike the "Muka Method" which I assumed was the norm for these print workshops.

My first impulse was to go into a massive sulk and drive straight back to England -fortunately Judy's practical sense prevailed and I was coaxed into staying at least until I'd made a bit of an attempt at mastering the medium's intricate and mysterious technicalities.

It got worse! I found that one was also expected to provide all of ones litho crayons, paper etc. After driving to the nearest town with a comprehensive art supply store for all the appropriate equipment, than down to local supermarket (called "Cash" aptly enough) for sponges, I began to feel somewhat more than slightly committed to the task ahead.

We spent the first evening settling into our little chalet (no 5), unpacking, setting the mouse trap under the sink, rearranging the sleeping quarters in the 'A' frames pointy headed mezzanine -had to take the door of its hinges to force the two single beds to function as a double- this is a Northern European winter, we're going to need the warmth. Bit of a sleepless night worrying about the impending 3 weeks. THREE WEEKS! I was so ill informed! I lay there thinking of everything I'd forgotten -drove back to Turnhout in the morning for tracing paper, chalk pencils, work trousers (!?) -this was turning onto quite an investment- I'd better get something out of it!

Also visited "cash" again for supplies - which turned out to be quite an experience in itself; everything bi-lingually, Dutch and French -which wasn't much use to us. How's this for a shopping list: Ademende vershoud-Folie, Woud-foret, Honing-Miel, Foncee Pied Boeuf, Tafel Bier -It took us hours to just get the basics together and then we ended up back at the chalet with Buttermilk instead of milk etc, etc. Thank God a bottle of wine is universally recognisable.



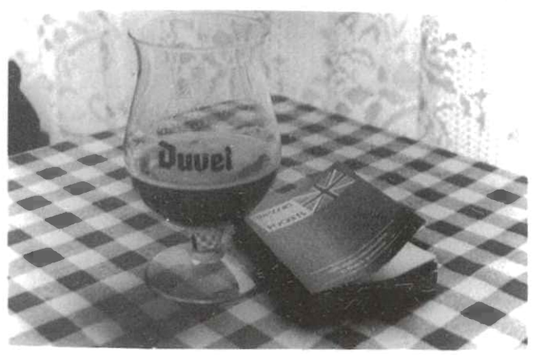
I finally entered the studio -with much misgiving. Everybody's busy, busy -working away- in fact the studio looked full; how was I to fit in -nobody seemed about to tell me. What was the procedure? I dumped my pile of (obviously) new 'stuff' on the edge of a bench, grabbed a stone off the racks and started grinding -and asking questions, lots of questions. Hell! I didn't even know who spoke English and who didn't and the two or three technicians bustling about certainly didn't look as if they were about to intervene on my behalf. Fortunately I managed to make an impression on three young graduate Dutch Art Students and a professional studio habitue from Canada, Walter Selenick, who began offering all sorts of (often conflicting) advice. I concentrated on Walter's suggestions, as they seemed to be the least confusing of the four, and began meticulously writing the information down in a note book - working my steps through as I came to them. They even set me up with my ''own' press -a pile of incredible ancient looking cast iron in that corner (of a circular studio?).

I was away! After a fashion. My display of total technical inexperience plus the odd pictorial nature of my work had all the other printers in the studio regarding me very quizically. Everybody else was scraping and scribbling, scumbling and dribbling, flowing and flourishing -making Litho's with a capital L- while I hunched determinedly over my 'pictures', single mindedly cranking each separation through my big black press.

Back at the chalet, Jude curled up by the giant radiators that flanked the living space downstairs and read or listened to the BBC morning service -or fed the squirrels as they hopped about in the frost at the kitchen door. Every evening the studio shut its doors at 4:30 (start cleaning up at 4!) and we would wander off into the evening chill to the local village on the edge of the woods to have another go at the shopping or to suss out the local taverns, of which there seemed to an inordinate amount for such a small village -standard Belgium practice we began to realize.

After dark -back at 'No 5' Jude would cook up a stoofvlees or some other mysterious Belgian treat while I wrote up the day in my diary, took care of correspondence and worked out the tracings for the next day's separations.

8:30 every morning would find me standing armed and ready at the big domed studio's doors ready to 'hit the press'. Printing went remarkably well and with help of the ever resourceful Walter's repertoire of short cuts and naughty tricks (Tricks that would've turned Frans's beard white, if 6 years in NZ hadn't already done that....) I managed to hit the magic target of three colours in one day -stripped to my black singlet heaving the big crank handle of the press like a navvy, with the print looking fit to bust -the sheets of paper lying strained and buckled in the racks. One day, in a burst of reckless confidence I roared ahead without referring to my ever-present note book, with potentially disastrous results. Fortunately one of the senior studio technicians who had previously tended to regard my studio performance with much surly suspicion must have decided, for reasons of his own, that I wasn't a complete fake and came to the rescue with a few amazing tricks of his own -and saved the print (which was into the seventh colour at this stage -a terrible time to run into trouble). I presented him with a copy of this particular print on the day of departure and, judging from his response, I think he'd even begun to regard my prints as somehow worthwhile as well. (Perhaps I should say here, that the Director of the Centre, who did not speak English, told me one evening, that he'd been at the Centre for 18 years and had never seen anybody make prints the way I did -I'm still not sure what he meant exactly).



Every Friday, after 'work', Jude and I drove off to visit some major Dutch or Belgian city for the weekend -find a hotel, visit