

# Bev Doolittle®

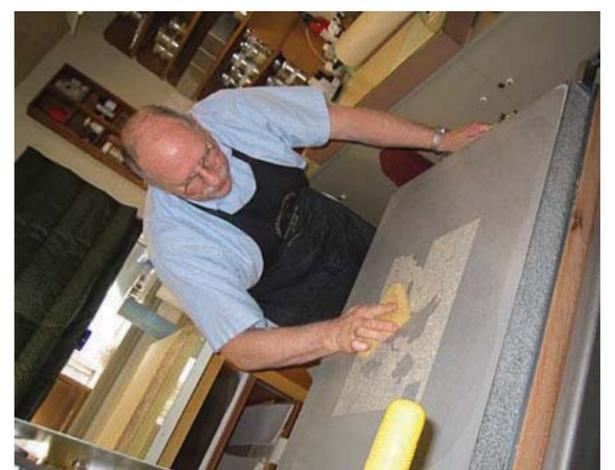
## SPEAKING THROUGH STONES

Stone lithographs are regarded as originals because they are not reproductions of an existing image but rather the creation of a new work of art on stone, through the hand-pulled inking process, that is transferred to paper. Lithography literally means “writing on stone.”

- Bev starts by sketching ideas on paper. Once she is satisfied with a composition, she recreates it on the highly polished, fine-grained surface of the limestone with a lithographic (waxy) pencil, a process that takes days for a large or complex image. Brushes, tusche (in stick or liquid form that works to hold ink similar to crayon), pens or etching needles can also be used to soften, scrape or form the drawn images.
- Besides being an original work of art, much of the inherent value of a stone lithograph lies in this difficult drawing stage and the irreversible nature of working on stone. Small mistakes can be fixed with a sharp blade, but otherwise the artist needs to start anew by grinding down the stone to a flat polished finish or starting on a fresh stone.
- Lithographic stones are super-smooth limestones mined from a specific quarry in Bavaria. They range in size from something similar to a 2" thick postcard weighing 10 pounds, to a 26"x 40"x 4" thick stone that weighs over 1,000 pounds.
- Once Bev is satisfied with the image on the stone, special etching compounds are used to fix the drawing on the stone and to make the drawing more receptive to ink. The printing process is based on the principle that grease and water do not mix. The stone is inked and wiped down with a wet sponge. The parts of the stone not protected by the greasy pencil soak up the water. The flat, polished parts of the wet stone repel the ink. Ink holds fast to the drawing, and when the paper is pressed to this surface, it picks up the image in a flopped version of what the artist first drew onto the stone. The stone is sponged wet and re-inked between each print. A delicate balance between ink and water (keeping the stone wet and properly inked) must be maintained throughout the run. Acid-free, 100% rag paper is preferred. The edition is left flat to dry for a few days before Bev signs, titles and numbers each sheet in pencil.
- Bev Doolittle prints her stone lithographs in the studio of master printer Wayne Kimball in Utah. Stone lithographers are considered master craftsmen and artists in their own right, since the interpretation of the artists' original drawing onto stone, and then to paper, is a collaboration between artist and printer. A talented master printer can both “correct” unwanted mistakes and suggest methods to execute an artist's idea.



Bev spends many hours transferring her idea to the stone meticulously sketching and etching.



Bev prints her lithos at Wayne Kimball studios. She was introduced to Wayne through artist James C. Christensen who also prints his stone lithos at Wayne's studio.

