

grasses. The 25 screens, scroll paintings, ceramics, and lacquer boxes were created between the 17th and early 20th centuries and each projected a distinctive perspective on landscapes observed in autumn, a time the Japanese associate



*Full moon rising over fall grasses, with shikishi poem cards* (detail from a six-panel folding screen), 17th century, ink, mineral colors, silver wash, and gold leaf on paper, 14 1/2" x 67 1/4". Erik Thomsen Asian Art.

with work, reflection, and preparation for winter's severity. They demanded close attention, for every detail contributes to an overall impression of strength, simplicity, and timelessness.

In one section of the imposing six-panel folding screen with poem cards *Full moon rising over fall grasses* (17th century), the gold of the background casts a glow on the white moon and even radiates from behind the thin, massed green lines of the grass, partly concealed by two poem cards. The poems' delicate lettering is painted with ink, mineral colors, silver wash, and gold leaf on paper, and the work appears surprisingly contemporary.

The great Mori Ippo, from Osaka, painted the more ethereal and equally exquisite *Full Moon and Clouds*, in the 19th century. Done in varying shades of ink and gold wash, the simple scene shows the full moon half hidden in gentle, billowing clouds. Seeing the motif on the glistening, black 19th-century Raku tea bowl adds a tactile quality to the two elements—the grasses and a

rising moon—for the images appear on opposite sides of the bowl, as if observed through a circular window of a tea house. Though quiet, all these works left a powerful impression, as if their creators had been able to see beyond the everyday reality of their subjects and discovered their essential tranquility.

—Valerie Gladstone

## Wendy Mark

Jill Newhouse

Poet, painter, and print-maker Wendy Mark has long been engaged in producing intimate, complexly atmospheric works. She has portrayed trees, clouds, hills, and houses in her studies. Often they've been part of book collaborations with poets and writers, including Charles Simic, Paul Muldoon, Mark Strand, and Javier Marías, among others. Here she part-

nered with herself, as illustrator and poet, in some of her most compelling works to date.

The works on paper in this exhibition, titled "Drive," are strangely provocative and suggestively narrative. Mark's images lead us on a road trip through memories and cultural signifiers and testify to her abiding, promiscuous love affairs with cars. There's a Fiat, an MG, a Mercedes, and other iconic models in the drawings as well

as in her poetry, which is printed in the online catalogue.

Among the most charming works in the show was a small monotype, about 5 by 6 inches, simply titled *Waiting for the Mechanic to Show up* (2011). A female figure in what looks like a pickup truck sits with the door open. But she has no facial features and the car, or pickup, has no detailing; the background is empty white, underscoring the sense of no place and no time. The image embodies tentativeness and an attendant atmosphere of anxiety.

And there were various stops somewhere in Spain, and at different times of day. The atmosphere can be dim and moody, as in *Noon/August/Spain* (2011), a brownish oil and charcoal on paper with the limned form of a man, his interior erased, standing beneath a storm cloud, or the brighter *Spain/Road/Monotype* (2011), in which there are no humans, but beautiful scenery and an ominous sky. Other works showed Mark the seductive colorist. In one, *Maud at the Met* (2011), she describes a woman beside a sports car (a Miata? A Porsche?), pensive outside the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She could be in Europe.

The everyday world, the unassuming landmarks of memory, and the way color can obviate the need for shape are subjects in these nonspecific narratives that somehow get under our skin and let us share the artist's uncertain remembrances.

—Barbara A. MacAdam



Wendy Mark, *Waiting for the Mechanic to Show up*, 2011, monotype, 4" x 6". Jill Newhouse.