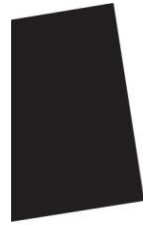


# Paul Morrison

## Essay

### 2 June – 1 September 2007



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#### **Print and Imagery**

Paul Morrison's strong relation to print and design creates an outline of association that evokes an immediate sense of recognition of the subject, while at the same time inspiring a sense of deeper historical context for that subject. Walt Disney, comic books, the fine outline of a filigree tree, shadows, the flat form with a subtle, sensitive almost quivering edge, all come together to mark the place where design, methods of reproduction and art converge. From painted Grecian pots to contemporary stickers, Morrison reveals how the language of recognition goes hand in hand with the use of repetition. Paul Morrison has used this apparently simple method of representation to suggest a complex questioning of belief, common ground and collective understanding.

Morrison has created a natural scene for Gallery One. It is composed of a range of drawn and printed image, suggestive of medieval engravings and commercially found images. But the scale of the printed, etched and engraved element distances it from its original function; the lines that would make up the early print are now a chunky structure of stylistic means. Morrison always creates landscapes. He uses the familiarity of this structure as the framework for his drawings, constructing apparently simple rural scenes. But beyond the mountain, the inland sea or the lake, a volcano rumbles in the distance to evoke quite a different quality, a shifting of gear, a disturbance beyond the initial sense of repose. Everything starts to take on meaning. To the left a cypress tree, to the right a dripping fir tree which become representations of good and bad, perhaps, or north and south. In the middle of the wall, holding the central space, is a huge flower that opens up to a doorway. It is an illusion that draws attention to itself. The blustering fire that comes from the top of the mountain offers the viewer both a peaceful totality and a theatrical secret of coded foreboding.

Medieval imagery brings a powerful, commonly understood, world of symbol and meaning with it. The medieval engraving or woodprint, whether fine or rough, complex or simple, represents an era when the beginnings of individual endeavour and expression are seen to emerge from a more collective consciousness. Paul Morrison's work here also acts as a metaphor for belief and faith, for the pull between common good and specific understanding.

Sacha Craddock