

Johanna Atkinson **Associate of Arts Degree 2004**



Johanna headed to Yavapai College right after high school graduation in 2000. She explored the arts for several years and ended up working toward her Associates of Arts Degree which she earned in 2004. She continued her art education when she moved to Show Low, but really committed to her career when she moved to San Francisco and entered the prestigious San Francisco Art Institute. This innovative institute allowed Johanna to take a curricular matrix that inspired her to develop innovative approaches to her art. She received her BFA in Printmaking at SFAI.

She currently lives an artist's dream in Santa Cruz's Tannery Arts Center with her mother Mary Sawyer Atkinson, an accomplished mixed water media painter. (<http://www.tanneryartscenter.org/mary-sawyer-atkinson>) Johanna feels her style is similar to her mom's and admits a profound influence as she grew up. Johanna explained the concept the City of Santa Cruz has developed for the artists in area. The Center is a first-in-the nation art community where artists (in dance, music, drama and art) and their families live and work. Johanna says "This creates a dynamic atmosphere that inspires and sustains creative expression. The Tannery Arts Center is a hub of activity that draws in the community and visitors alike." It provides a strong economic tourist draw for their community.



She continues to take classes there and has zeroed in on Print Making as her major artistic endeavor. She credits Steve Mason her instructor at Yavapai College with introducing her to this art. His huge prints fascinated her. She took his Mono Print class and loved it. She became a teacher's aide and ran the print shop. It just happens that Steve is her best friend's father.

I learned of Johanna's work when she participated in the Feb 4- March 26, 2011 Al-Mutanabbi Street Broadside Project Show held in our Yavapai College Prescott Art Gallery. This collection of broadsides – in its entirety of 130 works- commemorates the March 5, 2007 car bombing of Baghdad's Al-Mutanabbi Street. The street had been the heart and soul of the Baghdad literary and intellectual community. Named for a famed

10th century classical Arab poet and known as “the street of booksellers,” al-Mutanabbi Street is a legendary locale in Baghdad, a winding lane filled with bookstores, outdoor book stalls, small presses, and cafes where books have been sold, made, and discussed for centuries. On March 5, 2007, a car bomb was detonated on Al-Mutanabbi Street. At least 30 people were killed and 100 were wounded.



Letterpress printing has historically been the platform by which many cultures found out about current events. Put up quickly in the places where people walk and gather, their visually bold and easily accessible messages spread the word simply and concisely. The Al-Mutanabbi Street collection, which includes works from artists around the globe, likewise announces that this attack on culture took place, establishing its inclusion as part of a cultural community that has no geographic bounds. Johanna's roadside is shown here.