



NYC artist visits Paper+

Paul Fabozzi talks about the importance of place, explores PJ Factory

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It seems as if information flows directly through artist Paul Fabozzi and into projects. He's just that kind of an artist — wherever he is, his surroundings become his work. If he's in Rome, mapping the city becomes his project, when he's at home in New York City, translating the landscape becomes his artwork, and when he visits Williamsport — you guessed it — he starts eyeing it up for potential pieces.

"A lot of my work is being in, sensing and translating a location," Fabozzi said. "I'm interested in taking some data that I get from the experience of a place and then translating it and re-translating it both in terms of the way that I absorb and handle it."

It makes sense that Fabozzi — originally from Amsterdam, N.Y. — would be attracted to Williamsport because of its living history.

"It's amazing how much this town reminds me of Amsterdam, with its history and the way it looks," the artist said. "But Amsterdam has really steeply declined whereas Williamsport's got a lot going for it."

Fabozzi said that Amsterdam once had a great boom like Billtown except that it was for rugs in-



PHOTO PROVIDED

New York City-based artist Paul Fabozzi recently visited Paper+, a printmaking studio at the Pajama Factory, 1307 Park Ave., to make prints with his former University of Pennsylvania classmate, local artist Chad Andrews.

stead of lumber.

"Amsterdam was the rug capital of the world," he said. "But it hasn't figured out a way of rebounding."

Fabozzi visited Williamsport because he wanted to reconnect with his old classmate, local artist Chad Andrews, make prints in Paper+,

Andrews' printmaking studio at the Pajama Factory, 1307 Park Ave., and because the factory piqued his interest.

"I was excited by the

possibility of working with Chad again," Fabozzi said. "We've been in touch since he set up the shop and I've been dying to do prints. And I was just really intrigued by the idea of the Pajama Factory. He talked about it and it sounded like an interesting community."

Fabozzi, an associate professor at St. John's University in New York, received his bachelor of fine arts degree in painting from Alfred University School of Art and Design in 1988 and master of fine arts degree in painting from the University of Pennsylvania in 1993.

He has won a fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts in Drawing in 2005, a research grant from St. John's University in 1998 and 1999 and a grant for a trip to Italy from the Georgia Foundation in 1989.

"I ran the St. John's University program over there (in Italy) for 12 years," Fabozzi said. "I get over there once a year — I am intimately familiar with Rome."

According to his Inliquid page, Fabozzi has "created a series of graphite as well as colored works on paper layered with imprints and visual 'maps' from historically significant locations and buildings in Rome."

Fabozzi said that his interest in place probably grew from his childhood adventures.

"I was able to walk around as a kid and explore, I wasn't as situated as kids are now in auto-

mobiles and plopped in front of a TV," he said. "But at the same time, Amsterdam wasn't the kind of place to stay because of its steep decline. I knew early on that I had to leave. It allowed me to build a sensibility of being from some place but being necessarily exiled. A lot of this is about trying to find home."

The artist's fascination with place includes a pre-occupation with walking, which gives him the opportunity to reflect upon his surroundings.

"There's something about walking, about moving through space that allows my mind to open up and concentrate in a different way," he said. "It's rhythmic and meditational — it opens me up and allows me to be truly present in a place."

Fabozzi's time at the factory made such an impression that he wants to encourage other artists to visit and he hopes to return and start a project here.

"There's a lot of really exciting ways in which this place can continue to move forward," he said. "It's great for artists. I'm looking forward to passing the word around about it and coming back for sure."

The Williamsport Sun-Gazette is printed on newsprint which contains recycled material

