

Born in western Pennsylvania during the Great Depression in the U.S., Martie Zelt graduated from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in the 50s with awards in mural painting and graphics for independent study in Europe. She settled in Madrid, Spain in 1955 where she illustrated two children's books for Editorial Aguilar; she met the post Spanish Civil War generation of writers at *tertulias* in the *Café Gijon*. The poet/anthologist Rafael Millan Pinillos and Martie Zelt published a small review of poetry "*El Laberinto*." A few years later, they emigrated to Brazil where, as a Brazilian, she entered her woodcuts in *Salao Nacional* and the International Bienale. Her first solo show, at *Galeria Penguin* in Copacabana, was reviewed by Poet Laureate Manuel Bandeira.

On return to the U.S. in 1961, using skills learned in Brazil, Zelt created large geometric screenprints primarily influenced by Frank Stella, Navajo art, and Josef Albers. On frequent trips to the museums in New York and Washington, D.C. she became familiar with work by Warhol and others; she was the first in Philadelphia to use photoscreen techniques in fine art prints. In 1976 after making paper with Joseph Wilfer, she left behind hard edges and began making each impression a unique work by incorporating other media, even machine stitching, in her editions

In the 60s she learned how to teach, first in Philadelphia neighborhoods, then for the Ford Foundation-funded "Prints in Progress" program at the Print Club (now the Print Center). In 1968 she was hired as an instructor by both the Pennsylvania Academy and Philadelphia College of Art (now, University of the Arts.) These positions gave the artist time and income to develop her work. In 1982, she left them to take a year long residency in Roswell, NM. When that grant ended, she went back to teaching in colleges on the East Coast, also traveling throughout the U.S. to give workshops and lectures. Beginning in the mid 70s, Martie Zelt's prints and drawings began to be widely exhibited nationally. In 1976, Gene Baro included one of her first stitched mixed media prints in the Brooklyn Museum publication "Thirty Years of American Printmaking," and in the early 80s, he curated two solo shows of her work: a small one in the Brooklyn Museum Print Gallery and a very large one for the Carnegie Museum of Art Scaife Gallery.

In 1989, the artist left full-time college teaching/administrative work to take another residency in Roswell, N.M. She stayed on there teaching part-time at ENMU-R, (the community college) at the Roswell Museum and Art Center, and doing computer page design for local printers. Before going back to Madrid, Spain in 1999 for several years, she designed and worked on a 32 foot mosaic mural for the new Civic Center in Roswell, recruiting local people of all ages to help create the panels as well as experts to advise on areas such as geology and biology. The public contributed so many old tiles that truckloads had to be taken to the landfill. With support from Aria Finch and The Pecos Valley Potters Guild at the Roswell Museum and Art Center. the artist hand crafted ceramic tiles for a second smaller, mural depicting the habitats at Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Over her lifetime, the artist has traveled many times to Mexico: the first time in 1951, when she left art school for a semester to study the great

murals on her own. Other trips followed: after the grant in Roswell in 1984; again in 2005, 2006; in 2007 for a solo exhibition at the *Instituto de Artes Plasticas* in Xalapa, Veracruz where in 2008-2009 she returned to set up a papermaking studio on a Fulbright Garcia/Robles Lecture/Research Grant. Most recently, she attended the *VI Bienal Internacional de Arte Textil* Conference and Exhibition as an invited artist in 2011.