

apexart

Private Stash: A Musician's Eye Organized by Fred Hersch September 8- October 29, 2011

Clockwise from left
West Wall

Piano and coffee photograph
Hugh Kepets

One of the first posters I bought when I moved into my loft on Broadway in SoHo in 1979.
Coffee and piano - it says it all!

Hand photograph
Michael Wilson

These images were used in the CD package "Songs Without Words," a three-disc set for Nonesuch in 2001. To get these shots, we draped some black velvet over the back of a chair and I moved my hands around.

Maurice Ravel calling card and photograph

My mother's second husband, Harry Hoffheimer, bequeathed this to me. He had a sizeable autograph collection: from Washington and Jefferson to Stravinsky and Schoenberg. He wrote Ravel in 1933 and asked for his autograph and Ravel returned a signed "calling card;" Harry then had the card framed with a photo from the Library of Congress. It was the one thing of his that I really wanted. We think that the music on the piano is the violin sonata.

Medieval music manuscript

A gift by parental friend Robert Senior when I was in high school. Not sure what century this is from, but it is beautiful to look at.

Cincinnati Art Museum poster
Michael Wilson

This is the cover image of the CD "Songs We Know," a duo recording with guitarist Bill Frisell and me. Michael Wilson, from Cincinnati (my hometown), took the photograph. He only uses natural light and this funny upright piano, guitar and odd attic is very much in line with the music of the CD; we just played standards very off-the-cuff.

"Songs We Know" Fred Hersch and Bill Frisell CD

"Whirl" Fred Hirsch Trio LP

Ink swirl
Mary McDonnell

Another artist I met at MacDowell is an abstract painter, Mary McDonnell. We have homes near each other outside of New York. She also does graphic design and I asked her to design the CD "Whirl" that I released with my trio. You can see by the album cover how her artwork was graphically transformed by her and reflects the music so well.

Items on top of piano

Piano with cat lady and bird lady

This I also saw in Santa Fe and it was one of those "I have got to have this!" reactions. Not sure if the artist had ever seen a real piano...

Boxing fish on wheels

Another very odd fish-related item (note the boxing gloves as on the boxing mola).

Bakelite radio

From the 1950s, a gift from my longtime audio engineer Michael MacDonald. Great design and the black and white colors are appropriate for a pianist.

Paintbrush

Paintbrush used by Marianne Kolb

Swami sculpture

A gift from painter Marianne Kolb when she went to India several years back. The horn is removable.

Toy Piano (on floor)

I bought this at a yard sale in Pennsylvania - it works.

North wall

Walt Whitman
Marianne Kolb

You may notice that this painting is done over a photocopied piece of my music manuscript for "Leaves of Grass," my 2005 setting of Whitman's poetry.

Varnished painting
Marianne Kolb

Marianne was another person I met at The MacDowell Colony in 2000. The more we got to know about each other and how we worked, we realized we had much in common in our art. She uses a liquid watercolor paint that she "moves" around the canvas until a figure emerges. I often improvise at the piano until something comes to me, so we share almost the same composition method.

Calcutta photo
Rosalind Solomon

I met Rosalind at The MacDowell Colony around 2007 and we have since become friends in NYC. She is one of the master photographers of the 20th and 21st centuries and continues to make amazing work. When my partner Scott and I built our second house in the Pennsylvania woods, he bought me this print and it now sits in our entryway as a welcome to our home. We love the energy, the depth, the happiness of all the children, and the somewhat bizarre puppet figures. It makes us feel good every time we walk by it.

Ink dot fish
Rebecca Layton

I am not sure if Rebecca (another MacDowell friend) intended this to be a fish, but she was going to use this as a background for an ink drawing when I asked if I could buy it from her. She stands above the paper and slowly drops diluted ink, drop by drop, until she gets the shape she wants; the paper absorbs the water in the ink and becomes three-dimensional.

Two Paper Maiché/Fiberglass Fish Lamps
Linda Fisher

The red one was a Valentine's Day gift from my partner Scott several years ago. (Our friends Steven and Judy Gluckstern have a "school" of them that have always admired.) The white one was custom-made using my hand-written scores of tunes that have animal themes: "Black Dog Pays a Visit," "Cat's Paws," "Miss B." (written for Scott's now-deceased Rottweiler Barkley) and "The Sad Bird."

Fish Also Swimming
Madeleine Gekiere

I met Madeleine in the early 2000's at The Banff Centre in Western Canada—her studio was next to mine. She has been making work since the 1950s and is now well into her 80s. This drawing was a gift to my partner Scott and me and we chose it from among many of her works in many media. Besides the fish aspect (an obsession of mine), the drawing has humor and a great freedom of personal expression.

Two framed molas

The fish are in an unusual brown color for a mola and the design is wonderful. A child made the fish and it looks very happy.

Fish print
artist unknown, from a French *historie naturelle* (hand painted)

Bought at a bookstall in Paris on the Seine during a tour in the mid-1980s.

Pencil drawing
Alexandra Rozenman

Alexandra was another MacDowell colony fellow from whom I bought a few small pieces. Great images with somewhat primitive and magical realism. The man in the pencil drawing reminds me of myself, and the fish is a bonus...

Small framed print
artist unknown

Bought on West Broadway around 1980 when you could still find decent, cheap art on the streets of SoHo.

Six wooden animals: lion, dog, bulldog, cat with kittens, prairie dog, and crow
Miguel Rodriguez

When I first saw the bulldog in a shop in Santa Fe, I knew I had to have him. He, for me, represents "essence of dog." All of his animals have such personality and such humor—the crow with the ring in its beak, the color of the big dog, and the completely crazed look of the lion. Miguel was in the courtyard of the gallery, carving more animals (mostly with a

hatchet from logs) and it was fascinating to see him work. I kept collecting a couple each time I went back and I will no doubt collect more if I am back in Santa Fe.

Framed mola

The "boxing chicken" (with glasses and a beard just like me) is one of the molas I bought first, in the 1980s.

3 unframed molas

Molas are made by the women of the Cuna Indian tribe off the coast of Panama. They sew a front and back panel (often matching or somehow related) into their bodices, then at a certain point, they rip them out and sell them. Some of them have mangled English phrases (very charming) and many relate to outer space or aliens. They are part cutwork and part embroidery and the technique used to make them is distinctive.

East Wall

Eight dreams from "My Coma Dreams"
Audio files and text of dreams

The texts of these dreams were written six weeks after I emerged from my coma on August 6, 2008. These texts were given to Herschel Garfein who used them to write the libretto.

Viewing booth

"My Coma Dreams"

music by Fred Hersch

written and directed by Herschel Garfein

animation and graphic design by Sarah Wickliffe

lighting by Aaron Copp, video realization by Eamonn Farrell

Premiered May 7th-8th, 2011. Commissioned by Peak Performance@Montclair State University with the generous help of Linda and Stuart Nelson in honor of Fred Hersch

South wall

Influences

Playlists of music that has influenced me and my work

Personal favorites

Playlists of music that I've recorded and/or written that are some of my favorites

South wall continued

Red section

Scores for "My Coma Dreams"

The first and second drafts and final score for the 8 dream pieces in "My Coma Dreams." The top version is the first draft, my initial scribble. The middle version is the draft as the piece was coming together, and the bound version on the shelf is the finished score. Feel free to take them down and look at them while you listen to the tracks on the back wall. The first drafts on the lower shelf can be taken.

Entry

Poster from Automatic Musical Instruments. The happiest piano imaginable.