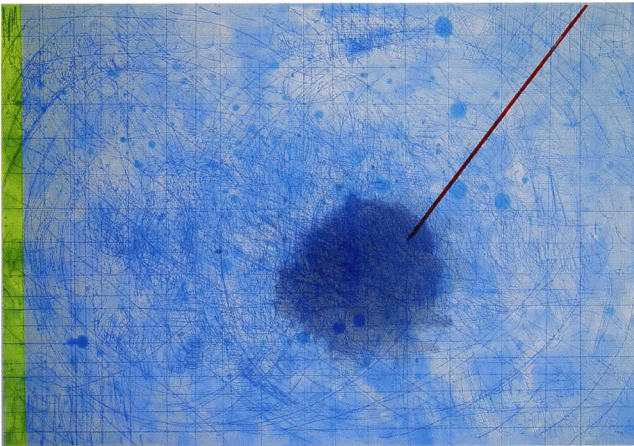
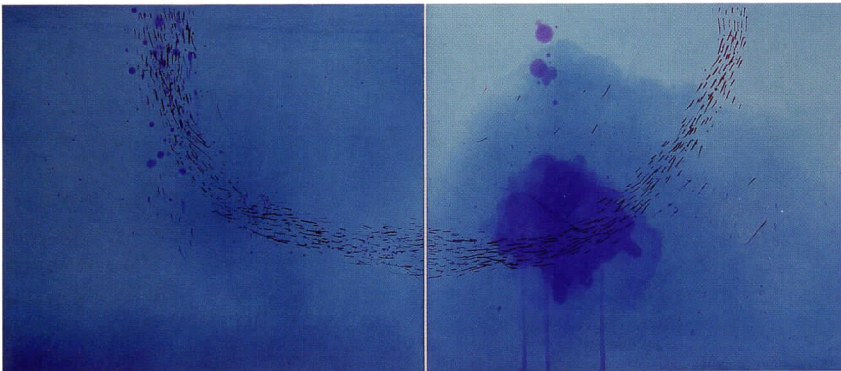




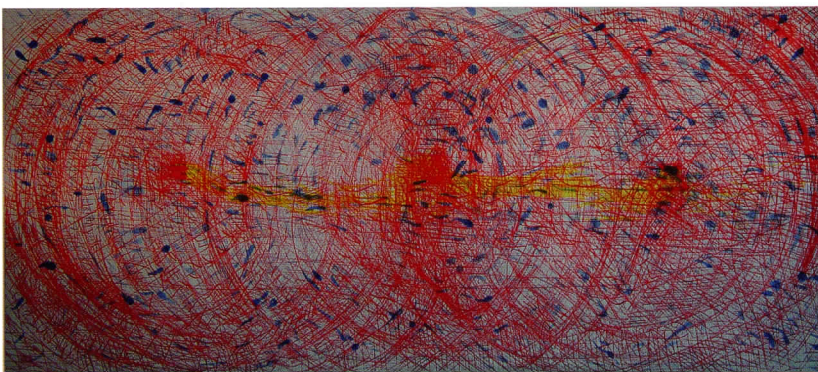
Deep River, 2003. Color soap ground aquatint with water bite aquatint and drypoint. Paper size: 21 x 54"; image size: 13 x 44". Edition 35. Printed by Rachel Fuller.



Summer Pond, 2003. Color hard ground etching with spit bite aquatint and drypoint. Paper size: 21-1/2 x 37"; image size: 13 x 29". Edition 35. Printed by Rachel Fuller.



Moon Lake, 2003. Color water bite aquatint with spit bite aquatint and drypoint. Paper size: 21-1/2 x 38"; image size: 13 x 30". Edition 35. Printed by Rachel Fuller.



Shape of Water, 2003. Color soft ground etching with aquatint, spit bite aquatint and drypoint. Paper size: 21-1/2 x 37"; image size: 13 x 29". Edition 35. Printed by Rachel Fuller.

Pat Steir

"[The sage] blends everything into a harmonious whole. He blends together ten thousand years, and stops at the one, the whole, and the simple."

This quote from an ancient Chinese document, the *Zhuang Zi*, caught my eye in an article in *Art in America* (November 1999) about Asian influences in Pat Steir's work. It might seem grandiose to apply it to individual works of art; certainly it would be difficult for an artist to say she hopes to put ten thousand years into colors and marks on paper. But anyone who has drifted away from the present, even for a moment, in meditation or in art-contemplation, knows something of the "harmonious whole" the quote describes. These four prints, active yet still, with titles that speak of lakes, ponds, and rivers, have for me the gentle power of that whole.

Deep River, the largest of the four prints, follows directly from Steir's *From the Boat* series done at Crown Point in 2002. It is the same size as the *From the Boat* prints, but seems larger because it is so energetic. Over the turbulence of the blue water are just a few stabilizing lines—light refractions on the river, perhaps. *Moon Lake*, divided in two by a white embossed line, is as still as *Deep River* is active; it has a purple spot in the depths of it. A similar spot, not exactly the same, appears in *Summer Pond*, along with linear refracted colors of the sort used in *Deep River*, but even more restrained. Finally, in *Shape of Water*, the linear refractions become pure energy. This series is at once old and new, complex and simple, fragmented and whole. Ten thousand years is the approximate time-span that human beings have been on the earth. Perhaps there is that much time in works of art like these; probably there is even more.

—Kathan Brown