



Illustration by Anna Avelson The Clackamas Print



By Isaac Soper
Arts & Culture Editor

Quarters slam into coin slots and lights and sound emerge. You push the power button on your new Star Wars-themed Xbox 360 and R2D2 lets you know what time it is: it's time to close your school books, ignore your friends and family, stop showering and play some video games.

With the opening of Stryker's Main Street Arcade in downtown Oregon City last month, it brings to my attention the love/hate relationship I have with video games. On the one hand, I get to be a character that changes the world, whether it's a super-spy chasing down your former partner turned nemesis, a miner digging to the core of the Earth while fighting for survival or an Italian plumber stomping on mushrooms and innocent turtles, I get to be somebody that I'm not. On the other, while I am hunting down Stormtroopers with a lightsaber, I could be writing, I could be hiking, I could be living.

When I take the role of a video game character, I feel no pain, I am invincible, I am capable of great things: I can save the world. In the real world I am weak, there's no "soft reset" for me. Healing doesn't come in the form of potions or med-packs, it comes from expensive hospitals.

As a kid, I grew up with the knowledge that my older brother hid a Sega Genesis in the attic with a copy of "Mortal Kombat." Though I had never played a video game at the time, the dragon logo on that plastic cartridge beguiled me. "Play me," it hissed.

I didn't own a gaming console or a decent computer until middle school, when a friend gave me his outdated Nintendo 64 and I bought a Super Nintendo from the now-defunct GameCrazy that was in Oregon City. Gaming followed; home-

work did not. While I became a whiz at playing "Super Mario World" and "The Ocarina of Time," my grades suffered, which was to be expected. The ensuing "need" to play was not. All I thought about was getting home to unlock a new secret level or cheat code. My name was Bond, James Bond.

For many years, video games have been my secondary life, some days they were even the primary. My mind has been stuck in a constant yearning to play, to get my hands on a controller or a mouse and run, jump and shoot.

My goal as of the end of last summer was to stop my button-mashing during the school year. That lasted most of fall term. As the end of the term neared, I thought I could get away with playing some console emulators on my laptop, which turned into playing nearly every day.

During winter break, "L.A. Noire" was finally released for PC, a game that I was literally waiting for since its announcement in 2006. I couldn't play it enough. I am a huge fan of the film noir genre and being able to "live" in that world was fun while it lasted. Then "L.A. Noire" ended and what did I want? More. As the Rolling Stones said long ago, "I can't get no satisfaction."

Playing video games, albeit entertaining and usually an instant source of pleasure, always gives me the feeling that I've done something wrong afterward, that I've wasted so much time; I've lived as this video game character for two hours when I could have been living my own journey, my own adventure.

One week ago, I made the decision to stop playing video games. So I'm not a detective, nor am I a Jedi. The longing to play is still there but that's okay, because I am a human. I have weaknesses that I have to keep in mind. I have powers that I can build upon. I am not limited to 30 pre-defined skills that I can acquire over a period of 20 levels. I am better than any video game character. My adventure is real and the challenge is astounding. I don't know the end yet, because this quest has more gameplay than "Skyrim."

INTAGLIO: Printmaking exhibit presses artistic style

Continued from Page 1

In etching, an image is etched into a plate and ink is pressed in, then after rubbing away the excess ink, a wet piece of paper is pressed onto the plate. The plate and paper are covered by a thick blanket to ensure even pressure and a rolling press applies very high pressure to the plate. The blanket is then lifted, revealing the paper and printed image. It is a process that requires focus and detail, but can produce some great artistic results in the end.

The gallery really seemed alive and abuzz with excitement as curiosity piqued people's interest, with some people just stopping by to see what the commotion was. Art students seemed taken by the presentation and many hovered around Prior like honey bees. They asked her a few questions about her work, which she was glad to answer.

"It's great because printmaking is an antiquated process that uses images, textile, wax, metal and machines. It's very satisfying work," said Prior. "I would encourage others to pursue this form of art. It can be very gratifying."

Students and community members who were in attendance at the gallery's opening seemed entranced with the art, studying it and trying to derive a meaning from it, to interpret it for themselves. They even got see Prior do a live demonstration of printmaking right in the gallery, which was a very unique and interesting process.

"It's pretty great that you can look at the art while you see a live demonstration at the same time. Simply fantastic," said Clackamas student Ryan Otnes.

It seemed to be a hit amongst those who were there and the free refreshments were a plus. "It's very interesting. The art is excellent and pretty



Joshua Dillen The Clackamas Print

Artist Nancy Prior wipes ink off of a sheet of copper with a sponge.

impressive. Not to mention the food really made my day," said Otnes.

So whether it was the food, the art or just the general commotion that drew viewers in, the show had a very pleasant opening day and hopefully will continue to hold people's interest during its run. Everyone should take a look, if just to see the art. It couldn't hurt to take a chance. One may come to find a new love for the art of intaglio printmaking.



Joshua Dillen The Clackamas Print

Prior's intaglio press was used to demonstrate the careful process of printmaking to her audience during the opening of the gallery on Jan. 19. The show will remain open until Feb. 16.

EVERY WEDNESDAY!
FREE
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Need your taxes done so you can file your FAFSA forms?

Trillium Tax Service
Your Mobile Tax Solution

Call us at 503-688-9507 or
Email us at nancy@trilliumtaxservice.com

B15476

We are your mobile tax solution with affordable prices!

NURSERY FLATS WANTED

Clackamas Community College
Horticulture Department
would like your **NURSERY FLATS**
Have any you don't need?

If you are unsure what they are, bring them to Clairmont Hall.

WE WILL USE OR RECYCLE THEM FOR YOU!

CONTACT TJ @ 503-594-3293