

Elke Daemmrich

Winner of A Luxe Beat Magazine Award

By Renee Phillips

Elke Daemmrich creates dynamic, colorful paintings in addition to detailed engravings that celebrate the magnificence of the natural world. Sherrie Wilkolaski recently selected Daemmrich to win one of three Luxe Beat Magazine Awards among the 43 finalists in the Manhattan Arts International juried competition: "The Healing Power of ART". The purpose of this online exhibition is to reward artistic excellence to artists worldwide for art that serves as a catalyst for healing.

About the exhibition Wilkolaski stated: "The impact of art on the healing process is very well documented and yet so underutilized. It is all about creating awareness. These three artists create an emotional response, just like a fine wine or delicious meal. Their pieces give us that overwhelming positive reaction."

Elke Daemmrich was born in Dresden, East Germany. She was barred from receiving a formal art school education because she and her parents refused to belong to the Communist Party. "That is why I went to drawing classes, subsidized by public organizations in Dresden," the artist recalls. "I also did research at the Saxon Regional Library, where it was possible to access art editions from all over the world."

In 1993 Daemmrich received a grant from the Foundation Kulturfonds, Berlin, for her project "The Light of the South," which gave her the opportunity to work in Lacoste, Provence. "I became fascinated with landscapes, light and energy. The conditions of life, nature and culture of the Mediterranean region became and remain the most important subjects in my art."

In 1994, Daemmrich moved to the southwest part of France, near Toulouse. She bought a medieval house, the birthplace of an archbishop of Albi, where she lives and works today. She states: "Living in different places can have a big impact on creation."

The award-winning artist brings the microcosm of nature to a macrocosm scale in bold, larger-than-life compositions. They unfold a symphony of flowers, butterflies, seashells and insects with an occasional figure, such as the jogger in the painting above. A single painting or engraving may take several months to complete.

Her artwork is in collections worldwide and she has had more than 90 one-person exhibitions in museums and galleries throughout Europe and the U.S. They include those at the Goya Museum in

Castres; the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Cordes sur Ciel in France; the Museo de la Mediterrania in Torroella de Montgri and the Modest Cuixart Foundation in Barcelona, Spain -- to name a few.

In 2014 she received a grant from the Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation Inc., New York, honoring her extensive career as a professional painter and printmaker. She is also the recipient of the First Prize for works on paper during the International Exhibition of Contemporary Art in Museums in the Latino Art Museum in Pomona, Los Angeles, CA. In 2015 she won the "Prix Moulin à Nef" of VCCA Virginia, U.S., and also the award "Acquisitions 2015" from the Colas Foundation, Boulogne-Billancourt, Paris.

She is a member of the Fondation Taylor in Paris and of the A.I.A.P. Comité Monégasque Auprès de l'Unesco, under the honorary presidency of the Prince Albert II of Monaco.

Daemmrich received the Manhattan Arts International "Critic's Choice" Award for her engraving "Bees," shown above. It was chosen by Jill Conner, a New York-based art critic and curator, who stated: "Elke Daemmrich's eloquent copper

engraving 'Bees' brings viewers up close to an evolving environmental issue that is currently central to sustainability. Daemmrich presents these vibrant insects within a nest of honeycomb and from multiple perspectives. The artist's detailed renderings are so specific, layered and mesmerizing that the lack of color becomes an afterthought. The circular rhythm of representation keeps the eye moving throughout, examining bees up close and at a distance. Elke Daemmrich's utilization of mixed perspectives give rise to an awareness of a life so miniscule yet profoundly significant. For Daemmrich, the truth is in the details."

About her source of inspiration, Daemmrich states: "My creation is always a direct communication with an object that captures my interest. It can be in my garden where a praying mantis will arouse my curiosity, or while swimming in the Mediterranean Sea near Valencia in Spain." It may also be motivated by "a political event or a very personal traumatic situation, like in my new engraving 'Good Protected.'" This work of art is included in "The Healing Power of ART" exhibition through June 30, 2015 at www.manhattanarts.com. Visit Elke Daemmrich's website at www.elkedaemmrich.com