

M            A            R            G            A            R            E            T  
T            H            A            T            C            H            E            R  
P            R            O            J            E            C            T            S

## DRAWN/TAPED/BURNED

Abstraction on Paper

### Mary McDonald on Tad Mike

MARY MCDONALD



**Tad Mike**, *Bonyon Preserve, Westport Island, Maine, September 29, 2007 VII*, 2007, Walnut ink on paper, drawn with hemlock new growth and needles, 22.25 x 18 inches



**Tad Mike**, *Bonyon Preserve, Westport Island, Maine October 1, 2007 I*, 2007, Walnut ink on paper, drawn with lichen, 22.25 x 18 inches

The composer Cornelius Cardew wrote an instruction in his 1969 Nature Study Notes (HMSIR43) for the participant-performer to walk down the street, "...picking up en route odd items, such as driftwood, scrap metal, etc. Make sounds in any way with the items picked up."

**Tad Mike** walks in wooded areas, such as the Maine woods and Florida forests. He picks up bits of organic matter as he walks. Using what he finds, these accumulations become mark-making tools. He likens his selection to combing a beach for shells – one shell sparkles, sings out, is swooped up. What impulse determines this particular selection?

*Bonyon Preserve #1* and *Bonyon Preserve #7* are part of a series of ink drawings executed in Maine on Westport Island, "a beautiful preserve," during an artist's residency in 2007. In these works Mike's hand guides the tool in a continuous sweep from left to right across the page. The marks form a thick horizontal band, like a progression, movement, or musical score of sorts.

In *Bonyon Preserve #7*, a hemlock branch was dipped and re-dipped in walnut-colored ink and slid across the paper. There is a slow curve in the band – a hump, a lazy rise, an elevation – then it descends again before leading you off the page. Two contrapuntal paths are recorded as a hand's steady sweep, and the tools' evolution and decay become evident.

In *Bonyon Preserve #1*, the marks are denser, with a heavier ink concentration in the central core suggesting a spine – prone, supple, with a crescendo in the middle. Tidbits, fragments of the action, leave traces; spits above and below elucidate verticals like a conductor's wild motion, or like embers ascending, snapping as they ride the summer night's air.