CARNIVAL AND THE GROTESQUE CANON

The research for the prints began with investigations into Albion Tourgée's two types of fools: the trifling, jesting buffoon and the mortal fool. The research expanded to include Louise Bourgeois' statement regarding the artistic canon versus the grotesque canon, and how the grotesque canon comprised the tumultuous crowd, a topsy-turvy world, comic masks and the grotesque body. Many artists have used the image of the fool: Bruegel, Callot, Tiepolo, Weiditz, Goya, Ensor and Beckman. The research explores how these artists used metaphors of the fool in their work. Arthur Danto stated that a good metaphor must operate on a common level in the two chief modes of representation available to us: pictures and words. The prints create a common level for the modern viewer by bringing past metaphors into contemporary settings, i.e. a mock battle with buckets, mops and antibiotics to fight an Anthrax threat. Aristotle implied that metaphors were riddles, and that a good metaphor can drive the audience's mind to where the rhetorician (in this case, an artist) wants to go. The series' goal was to reclaim metaphors of the fool and the topsy-turvy world in an attempt present the conundrum of our contemporary society.