



SUSAN WHITE

Fire is one of the four elements, arguably the most destructive of the group. Though water can wreck just as much havoc when it is tidal, it also puts out the fires that burn down forest and field, city and town. Burning, however, is itself not always destructive, at least not in a purely negative sense; it cleanses forests and returns necessary nutrients to the soil. In her "pyrographs", drawings made through the act of putting torch to paper, Susan White seems to be balancing both sides of this yin yang. The process calls for an extremely delicate touch, and White obliges, using fine man-made tools to

create surprisingly controlled lines and grids which taken together form human busts. Control is imperative here-it is, after all, the out-of-control fire that does the most damage. "Controlled burns" forest managers conduct more and more often, in an effort to keep natural wildfires from occurring-are most akin to White's process, revealing just how much fire can be a tool of man and woman. How fitting then that White's subject matter, at least in these pictures, are people. The process, in being so tied to human need to control natural elements, thereby speaks worlds about its very subject.

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