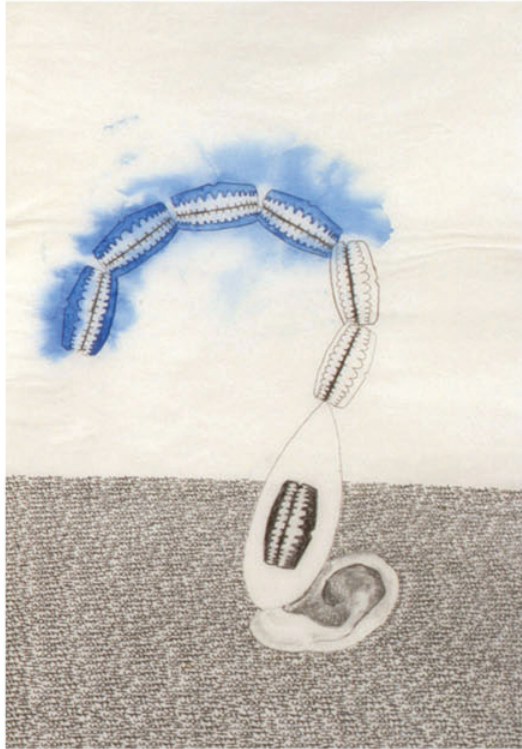


# Living Arts

THE BOSTON GLOBE • THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 1998

RONA PONDICK: WORKS ON  
PAPER AND ARTIST'S BOOKS

At: *Howard Yezerski Gallery, 14  
Newbury St., through June 20*



Rona Pondick's mixed media drawing "Ear to Mouth, No. 6."

## Drawing on the mantra 'I want'

By Cate McQuaid  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

If Descartes were thinking and writing today, he might change his premise for existence to "I want, therefore I am." Rona Pondick explores the great maw of yearning in her new show at the Howard Yezerski

### Galleries

Gallery. The New York artist has always operated at what Freud would call the level of id, that inarticulate, brutish, toddler realm of impulse and desire. Now she has made the dumb urge speak, and what it has to say is "I want."

The artist's books and drawings here crawl with those words, like carpenter ants marching over each

page. Amid the words hover teeth bared in their gums, not quite gritted, each mouth hissing its longing. In the artist's books, "I Want," Pondick showers the words with blue, like the feeling the yearning evokes. The mouths creep through, sometimes emitting great blank balloons, obliterating the endless murmur of desire. It's a contrast to the mantra, grid, pulse of "I want," yet it also gives picture to the sentiment, to the great emptiness from which such longing emerges.

Pondick's mixed-media drawings, executed on many layers of extraordinarily thin tissue paper, give a sense of fading echoes to her language. In this series, "Ear to Mouth," the omnipresent teeth cozy up to one or two stray ears, perhaps whispering sweet nothings. Sometimes, the long columns of "I want" parade over the page; sometimes not. The presence of the ear changes the message from one of pure desire to one in which there's somebody to hear the wish, and perhaps act on it.

The gallery has published Pondick's limited edition book, "12345," also on view, where the delicate "Ear to Mouth" drawings intersperse with pages of those handwritten numerals. The numbers read like the pulse of existence going on monotonously under the swells and squeals of desire expressed by every other image in this exhibit, just as in life the heart keeps beating under the rage and rasp of longing.

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