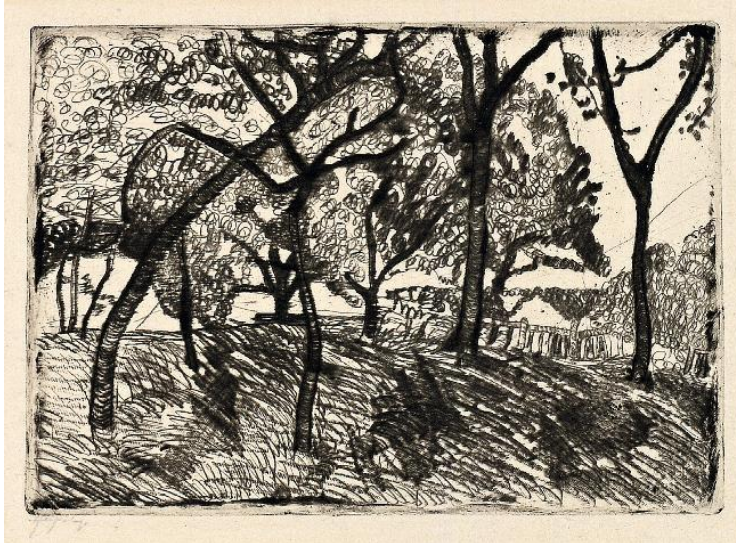


## Etching Brass

Whitney Carter

Etching brass has to deal with a chemical redox reaction. Brass is a copper alloy. I placed the brass in a bath of Ferric chloride after drawing a design with a sharpie as a relief. The brass is etched after the copper ions wash away because the  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  ions get reduced to  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  and



an atom of Cu metal is oxidized to  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ . The part that was not drawn on was oxidized thus making the drawn-on part stand out more.

Etching brass has been around for centuries. It has been dated to the middle ages. The basic methods have not changed all that much in all those years. German expressionist Paula Modersohn-Becker (1876–1907) created the etching below titled “Landschaft unter Bäumen,” or “Landscape with trees,” around 1902. Tracing back to the middle ages, the technique was used on a variety of things like shields guns, armor, cups and plates. The elaborate decoration of armor, which became an art form all its own, emerged a little before etching as printmaking in Germany and Italy.

I created this piece for my mom. In all of my pieces I make use of contrast as my strongest technique. The five sections represent my two sisters, my foster sister, my foster brother and me. The two on the bottom represent my foster brother and sister and they are on the bottom because they are the most recent addition to our family.



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paula\\_Modersohn-Becker\\_Landschaft\\_unter\\_B%C3%A4umen.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Paula_Modersohn-Becker_Landschaft_unter_B%C3%A4umen.jpg)