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# THE TAMARIND PAPERS

*A Journal of the Fine Print*

*Volume Thirteen* *1990*

## PERSPECTIVES & REAPPRAISALS

# 1960-1990

## THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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THIRTEEN

1990

THE TAMARIND PAPERS

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## CONTENTS


The Tamarind Citation: George C. Miller & Son *4*

Changes I Have Seen: Memories and Observations, by **Gustave von Groschwitz** *6*

The Absent Discourse: Critical Theories and Printmaking, by **Ruth Weisberg** *8*

Being There, by **Clinton Adams** *11*

Broken Stones and Whooping Cranes: Thoughts of a Wilful Artist, by **June Wayne** *16*

"Originality" Circa 1960: A Time for Thinking Caps, by **Pat Gilmour** *28*

Endangered Species, by **Richard Hamilton** *34*

The Rise of the *Livre d'Artiste* in America: Reflections on *21 Etchings and Poems* and the Early 1960s, by **Lanier Graham** *35*

The Brooklyn Museum's National Print Exhibitions, by **Barry Walker** *41*

Since 1960: Contemporary Prints at the Museum of Modern Art, by **Riva Castleman** *45*

Contemporary Prints at the Victoria & Albert Museum, by **Susan Lambert** *47*

Printmaking Courses in British Art Schools: A Personal View, by **Silvie Turner** *49*

Lithographic Research and the Tamarind Archives, by **Garo Antreasian** *51*

Judith Solodkin and Solo Press, by **Ruth E. Fine** *54*

The Monotype: Printing as Process, by **Nathan Oliveira** *58*

A Living Tradition: Black-and-White Prints in an Age of Color, by **Joann Moser** *60*

*Artists' Impressions*, by **Linda Tyler** *64*

Big Print, Big Screen: W. Snyder MacNeil, Photography, Video, and the Romantic Tradition of Graphic Variability, by **Eugenia Parry Janis** *66*

Black Printmakers and the WPA: A Symposium, by **Ellen Sragow** *73*

Discovery and Process: *Dorziat Reciting* by Arthur B. Carles, by **Barbara A. Wolanin** *77*

A Contrast of Styles: Two Lithographs by Willard Nash, by **Van Deren Coke** *82*

Japonisme Revisited: A Pioneering Exhibition Reexamined, by **Gabriel P. Weisberg** *85*

BOOK REVIEWS: Ruth E. Fine, *John Marin*, review by **Sharyn Udall** *90* / Lise Drost, *Lab Manual of Aluminum Plate Lithography: A Guide to Planning and Printing Limited Editions*, review by **Bill Lagattuta** *92* / Silvie Turner, *A Printmaker's Handbook*, review by **Mark Attwood** *92*

Printers' Impressions: A Tamarind Symposium *5* / MD Litho Stones *5* / Editorship of *The Tamarind Papers* *15* / American Print Workshops: Addenda and Errata *93* / Photo Credits *94* / Contributors *95* / Directory of Suppliers *96*

# THE TAMARIND CITATION

**George C. Miller,** ca. 1943.

**Burr Miller** (holding print) with artist **Adolf Dehn,** 1960.

**Steven Miller** (left) and **Terry Miller** (right) with artist **Robert Kipness,** ca. 1984.

All photographs courtesy Burr Miller.

SEVENTY-THREE YEARS AGO, in 1917, George C. Miller left the American Lithographic Company in New York, where he had worked as a journeyman printer, to establish the first workshop in America to specialize in the printing of artists' lithographs. With the exception of a few months in 1918, when Miller served in the Navy, the shop's work has been uninterrupted. Long before the "American print renaissance" began in the 1960s, through two world wars and the Great Depression, the firm of George C. Miller & Son—George Miller, his son Burr, and, more recently, Burr's sons Steven and Terry—has continued to provide printing services to many of America's most noted artists. We pick but a few names from an illustrious list: George Bellows, Howard Cook, Arthur B. Davies, Stuart Davis, Adolf Dehn, Lyonel Feininger, Marsden Hartley, Rockwell Kent, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Louis Lozowick, José Clemente Orozco, Charles Sheeler, Raphael Soyer, Prentiss Taylor, Stow Wengenroth, and Grant Wood.

Taylor has given us this description of the Miller shop: "It did not take long to learn that one of the great blessings of the place was that George made no aesthetic judgments. He did not show stylistic prejudices. . . . He gave the neophyte, the hack, and the well known the best printing that could be brought from the zinc plate or the stone. He had justified pride in what he could do."[1] Since joining his father in the workshop in 1948, Burr Miller has maintained the family tradition. In recognition of its high and consistent standards, Tamarind Institute has with pleasure awarded *The Tamarind Citation for Distinguished Contributions to the Art of the Lithograph* to the firm of George C. Miller & Son and to its current director Burr Miller.

The Millers are recipient of the fifth Tamarind Citation, established in 1985 on the occasion of Tamarind's twenty-fifth anniversary. Other citations have been awarded to Gustave von Groschwitz (1985), Grant Arnold (1986), Lynton R. Kistler (1987), and John Sommers (1988). *C. A.*

1 Prentiss Taylor, quoted in Janet A. Flint, *George Miller and American Lithography* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1976), n.p.

## PRINTERS' IMPRESSIONS
### A Tamarind Symposium

AT FIVE-YEAR INTERVALS, beginning in 1975, Tamarind Institute has presented a national symposium reviewing the state of American printmaking. "Printers' Impressions," the fourth in this series, was held in June 1990. Well-attended by artists, printers, dealers, teachers, and students from all parts of the country, the symposium honored the accomplishments of four distinguished printers: Robert Blackburn, Kathan Brown, Serge Lozingot, and Ken Tyler. Featured as keynote speaker was artist James Rosenquist, whose impressive print, *Where the Water Goes* (colored paper-pulp, lithograph, and collage, 261 × 147 cm [102 3/4 × 58 in], printed at Tyler Graphics, Ltd., 1989), was included in the symposium exhibition, *Printers' Impressions*, which opened simultaneously at The Albuquerque Museum.[1] Among other speakers were the printers—Blackburn, Brown, Lozingot, and Tyler—and Tamarind's former directors, June Wayne and Clinton Adams (for Adams's remarks, see pages 11–15; for Wayne's, pages 16–27). The printers' presentations, which reflected their contrasting personalities and accomplishments, together provided the symposium's participants with a rich and varied view of America's diverse collaborative workshops.

A panel discussion, moderated by *TTP*'s contributing editor Pat Gilmour, brought together Garo Antreasian, Philip Larson, Rosenquist, dealer Tom Smith, and Tyler to consider issues of "Collaboration and the Contemporary Print." Despite Gilmour's valiant efforts to keep the discussion on track, it wandered far afield, particularly during the question period, when (as is often the case when printmakers get together) some members of the audience preferred, with varying degrees of paranoia, to deplore the plight of the specialist printmaker—a topic discussed by several writers in this issue of *TTP*.

*Print Collector's Newsletter* reported that "the dominant themes of the symposium [were] the effects of the rapid escalation of the art market, the use of new, high technology printmaking techniques, and Congress' imminent vote on the National Endowment for the Arts' reauthorization bill."[2] June Wayne strongly urged all assembled to participate in a grass-roots lobbying effort in support of the NEA.

The final day of the symposium was devoted to three technical sessions: demonstrations of waterless planography, by Jeffrey Ryan, and of drawing with xerographic toner, by Nik Semanoff, followed by an open technical discussion led by Tamarind's Education Director Jeffrey Sippel and Master Printer Bill Lagattuta.

All in all, those who attended "Printers' Impressions" found it to be an enjoyable, thought-provoking, and thoroughly successful event. As the not-so-distant bicentennial of lithography in 1998 may cause the schedule of future symposia to depart from quinquennial regularity, readers of *TTP* should be sure to keep their names on Tamarind's mailing lists.

*C. A.*

## MD LITHO STONES, Inc.

LITHOGRAPH STONES of superior quality are now available from MD Litho Stones, Inc. (see *TTP*'s Directory of Suppliers, page 96). These fine stones are imported from France, where a nineteenth-century quarry near the village of Montdardier has recently been reopened. As these quarries were first operated by a German firm, J. & W. Arauner & Kammerer, founded in Solnhofen, it is likely that many of the stones quarried there in the nineteenth century came to be thought of as "Solnhofen stones." Certainly, they are of a quality equal to those quarried in Germany.

Tamarind Master Printer Timothy Sheesley, president of MD Stones, describes his visit to the quarry "on top of huge moutains" in southern France: "After hours of riding up

*Continued on page 94.*

1 A catalogue of the exhibition, *Printers' Impressions* (Albuquerque: Albuquerque Museum, 1990; 28 pages; statements by Robert Blackburn, Kathan Brown, Serge Lozingot, and Ken Tyler; preface by Marjorie Devon; and introductory essay by Clinton Adams) may be ordered from Tamarind Institute for $10.00 (U.S.) plus 2.00 postage and handling.

2 *Print Collector's Newsletter*, (July-August 1990), 103.

# CHANGES I HAVE SEEN
## Memories and Observations

*Gustave von Groschwitz*

THE STOCK MARKET COLLAPSED IN OCTOBER 1929. Earlier that year, I had entered the New York art world as a neophyte dealer. Although I disliked the commercial atmosphere, I liked prints; it was a new experience for me. There were serious collectors of old master prints, but the popular interest was in the contemporary etchings by American, British, and French artists that were shown in the grand galleries of Fifty-seventh Street and Fifth Avenue. They were usually framed in black—not too bad—and the subjects were dogs, landscapes, and European tourist cathedrals.

A few offbeat galleries sold lithographs (even by Picasso) at low prices. Nobody really knew what lithographs were, but etchings were so popular that (in those pre-feminist days) there was a standing joke about the man who would say to a girl, "Come up and see my etchings." There was even a cartoon in which an adventurous woman replied: "I know all about etchings, but what is a lithograph?"

Somehow, by 1935, lithography managed to get its foot in the door. In that year, the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project (FAP) established a workshop in New York for artists who were employed by the project and who preferred printmaking to painting. In 1935, I was appointed supervisor of the graphic art division. Lithography flourished, as did the FAP.

The project was established for needy artists, and in terms of quality there was an upper echelon and a lower one. Later, a few of the artists, Jackson Pollock among them, became famous. The project had a gallery for exhibitions; prints were also offered to tax-supported hospitals and schools at a low price that covered the cost of materials. Newspaper reviews were generally favorable, art magazines published articles, and prints from the project were included in the annual surveys, "Fine Prints of the Year." The Graphic Art Division established facilities for the making of lithographs and that was successful, too. The Metropolitan Museum of Art now has 126 color lithographs made on the project, some of which have been recently exhibited. Artists were allowed to keep three impressions from each edition. In recent years, a market has developed for these prints and they sell at good prices. They are often excellent prints and represent a period in American history that still fascinates many people. The FAP succeeded because everybody worked hard to make that so. I knew every artist in my division, and I feel sure nobody cheated: they were grateful for the weekly pay of $23.80 that they received from the Federal government. All dreaded the "pink slip," the dismissal notice that came when funds were cut.

The FAP was well administered and nobody went to jail.

In 1938, I left the FAP to become curator of prints at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Those were the days leading up to World War II. I mention that here because I gave a course in prints at 8:30 in the morning, followed by courses in the U.S. Navy's pre-flight program—meteorology and the principles of aircraft engines. In 1947, I took time off to complete a master of arts degree at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. My thesis (inspired by the project) was on nineteenth-century color lithography; an abstract was later published by the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*.

IN THE YEARS SINCE WORLD WAR II, I have seen many changes. Some encourage me: the increasing acceptance of modern art; the important series of print exhibitions at the Brooklyn Museum that began in 1947 and still goes strong today; the success enjoyed by our series of international biennial exhibitions of

**Bernard Childs.** *Morning,* 1958.
Color intaglio, 84 × 133 mm.
Courtesy, Hirschl & Adler, New York.

color lithography at the Cincinnati Museum, where I was curator in the 1950s; the lithographs that resulted from Tatyana Grossman's admirable taste and persuasive determination at her workshop-home in West Islip, New York; the founding in 1960 of Tamarind Lithography Workshop by June Wayne, a fine artist and a skilled proponent of lithography; and the continuing work of Tamarind Institute, first under the direction of Clinton Adams, and now of Marjorie Devon. It is difficult to measure the impact of Tamarind: the many workshops founded by printers trained there; the exhibitions organized and sent on world tour; the important symposiums and publications, including *The Tamarind Papers*.

These are among the many changes that I am pleased to have seen, but I find others disturbing. One I consider dangerous is the great surge in art prices. To offer a print by a living artist for $95,000 is to introduce a boom-and-bust era of speculation, and I link to such high prices the deplorable increase of fake prints in the marketplace. (All the more reason to take care when making a purchase: to read documentation carefully, and to deal only with reputable dealers who are glad to answer questions.)

I remember a comment made by Paul J. Sachs at a meeting of the print curators who put together the exhibition *American Prints Today / 1957* for the Print Council of America. Professor Sachs had begun his career as a banker and art collector before becoming a noted member of the faculty at Harvard University, where he trained a surprisingly large number of students who became outstanding museum directors. He said about our exhibition: "Before everything else, remember quality."

FORTUNATELY, even now, it is possible to make discoveries and to buy fine prints by lesser-known artists. I have been particularly attracted to the power-tool engravings of Bernard Childs (American, 1910–1985).[1] *Morning*, an intaglio print of 1958, is a good example. His twisted, expressive lines have the fierce energy of a windshield cracked by gunfire—or, if you will, of distorted bolts of lightning. From whence does this dynamic vitality come? I believe Childs's hand—and the lines that flowed from it—responded to the power tool that he used in place of the hand graver. The rotating shaft with its drills and burrs provides a flexibility and an ease in engraving lines that is impossible to achieve with the hand graver. I refer those who see Childs's lines only as hen-scratchings in the sand to Rembrandt's drawings, in which lines are often as much abstract as they are descriptive. Think of Rembrandt's well-known etching *Three Crosses* (1653), in which the abstract, straight lines above the crosses create the magical effect of a spotlight; Childs goes a step further toward abstraction.

Art changes, but in certain elements it remains the same. As long as man exists, there will be printmakers. Each century produces great artists. When the astronauts find people on another planet in the next millenium—beginning ten years from now—I hope there will be printmakers among them. □

1 I express my gratitude to Judith Childs and Janet A. Flint for invaluable information about Childs and his technique. Childs was also a painter and made some excellent portraits.

# THE ABSENT DISCOURSE
## Critical Theories and Printmaking

*Ruth Weisberg*

I HAVE BEGUN TO COLLECT the reading lists of instructors in various media at universities and art schools across the country. This has proved to be another way to explore the lack of an underlying theoretical base in printmaking. For example, the readings for intermediate photography courses tend to include selections from the writings of Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Douglas Crimp, Max Kozloff, Susan Sontag, and just lately, Alan Sekula and John Tagg. Reading lists for sculpture range from selections from Rosalind Krauss's important *History of Modern Sculpture* to individual artist's monographs. Reading assignments for printmaking courses, however, tend towards the technical and the historical. Occasionally the inclusion of Walter Benjamin and William Ivins, Jr. signals the instructor's intention to introduce some theoretical framing.

While there are historical studies of exceptional quality, such as Clinton Adams's *American Lithographers, 1900–1960* or Pat Gilmour's *Ken Tyler—Master Printer, and the American Print Renaissance*, I want to emphasize the lack of printmaking references in the ongoing critical discourse, and our passivity in the face of this fact. In *The Syntax of the Print*, I responded to this perceived lack of theory by trying to construct a discipline-based aesthetic.[1] While some fruitful controversy about the role and status of the printer in printmaking collaboration resulted from that article's publication, the silence about theory from those involved in printmaking was deafening.

True, artists who make prints are deeply interested in having their work reviewed and discussed in the art press, but "criticism" in that sense is different from (although related to) the construction of a framework of ideas and concepts that would locate our practice in relation to the larger intellectual paradigms of our time. For better or worse, according to one's point of view, the role of criticism as the pivotal mode which divulges the value of art in the realm of culture is being emphatically established in both the art world and the academic community. Feminism, French literary criticism, and such disciplines as photography and film have generated lively controversies in books, articles, and at conferences. In this article I would like to ruminate on the printmaker's absence from this discussion, and suggest some directions for the 1990s.

IF ONE BEGINS with Benjamin and Ivins, printmaking's loss of centrality as a genre is already proscribed. Benjamin, for example, in his brilliant and seminal article of the 1930s, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, privileges both photography and film over other media:

> With lithography the technique of reproduction reached an essentially new stage. . . . Lithography enabled graphic art to illustrate everyday life, and it began to keep pace with printing. But only a few decades after its invention, lithography was surpassed by photography. For the first time in the process of pictorial reproduction, photography freed the hand of the most important artistic functions which henceforth devolved only upon the eye looking into a lens. Since the eye perceives more swiftly than the hand can draw, the process of pictorial reproduction was accelerated so enormously that it could keep pace with speech.[2]

In relation to film, Benjamin continues by writing that

> . . . the technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence. And in permitting the reproduction to meet the beholder or listener in his own particular situation, it reactivates the object reproduced. These two

processes lead to a tremendous shattering of tradition. Both processes are intimately connected with the contemporary mass movements. Their most powerful agent is the film. Its social significance, particularly in its most positive form, is inconceivable without its destructive, cathartic aspect, that is, the liquidation of the traditional value of the cultural heritage.[3]

By arguing the value of contemporary mass movements, Benjamin essentially democratizes the image and its systems of diffusion. His interest is in the circulation of the image as a consensually consumed ideological artifact. Thus "aesthetic" values are subordinated to a social role defined by reproducibility, accessibility, and political purpose. There is an inferred obsolescence of the tradition of enforced rarity: the limited edition. Given the presupposition that it is a mass society we are involved in studying and critiquing, the necessarily smaller circulatory route of the fine art prints makes it an inadequate object for critical reflection.

THE FACETS OF THE PRINT on which Ivins focuses are the reproducibility and communicative power of images when they are used together with texts or as specific didactic tools. If the value of prints derived from their ability to communicate information, then photography was the obvious heir to the throne as it was ". . . not subject to the omissions, the distortions and the subjective difficulties that are inherent in all pictures in which draughtsmanship plays a part. Here were exactly repeatable visual images made without any of the syntactical elements implicit in all hand-made pictures."[4] Photography is thus envisioned as the goal of all previous printmaking endeavors; part of a continuum of discovery in the realm of communication rather than as a separate art form. Neither of these early critical positions effectively negates the value of the fine art print or the limited edition. They do, however, exclude them from consideration when one is seeking to address the issues inherent to a mass society, as both Benjamin and Ivins were attempting to do. One question worthy of consideration, at least now that we have entered into the homogenizing phase of global mass movement, is: How does the individual, hand-produced image address the relationship between the single creator and the enveloping social and cultural continuum which surrounds us? Perhaps what used to be called "printmaking" has been subsumed into a broad category which ranges from advertising to drypoint, and from hand-set type to FAX-diffused images. What can sensibly be centralized as the critical core of printmaking if we expand its practice beyond the realm of the fine art print?

This tendency of theory to operate on a level of trans-personal effects rather than on a level of personal mythologies has been particularly powerful in relation to Post-modernism. For example, Fredric Jameson, in *Post-modernism and Consumer Society,* argues that classic modernism was

> . . . predicated on the invention of a personal, private style, as unmistakable as your fingerprint, as incomparable as your own body. But this means that the modernist aesthetic is in some way organically lined to the conception of a unique self and private identity. . . .
>
> . . . the social theorists, the psychoanalysts, even the linguists, not to speak of those of us who work in the area of culture and cultural and formal change, are all exploring the notion that that kind of individualism and personal identity is a thing of the past; that the old individual or individualist subject is "dead."[5]

While these positions hardly constitute an exhaustive survey of all the movements in critical theory in the last several decades, they do seem to underlie most of them.

ANOTHER CRITICAL MODEL that has been elaborated by Norman Bryson in relation to French art history and criticism puts the emphasis on the visual image as sign. He contrasts this with perceptualism, which he equates with Gombrich's notions of art-making "in terms of secret and private events, perceptions and sensations occurring in invisible recesses of the painter's and the viewer's mind." In contrast, painting as sign

> . . . is nothing less than the relocation of painting within the field of power from which it had been excluded. The social formation isn't then something that supervenes or appropriates or utilizes the image, so to speak, 'after' it has been made: rather painting, as an activity of the sign, unfolds within the social formation from the beginning.[6]

Bryson also claims that this concept of sign has a powerful political effect: "Above all, it makes clear the need for a form of analysis in art history dialectical enough, and subtle enough, to comprehend as interaction the relationship among discursive, economic and political practices."[7]

Two features of Bryson's analysis strike me. First, his use of the term "painting" as synonymous with "visual art." Is this usage naive or unconscious, or does he know something about the primacy of painting not known to the rest of us? Secondly, the division between art as perception and art as recognition, or sign, seems to correspond to the split between Modernism and Post-Modernism. Among artists who are involved in printmaking, with its emphasis on process, proofs, seriality, and reversals, I would wager that a large number resonate to Gombrich's "perceptions and sensations, as well as to Modernism's insistence on the integrity of the materials and the intrinsic value of process. On the other hand, the history of prints relates to broadside, text, and to popular culture in ways that have always signified the insertion of art into a social formation.

If all of these critical observations and viewpoints are pertinent to printmaking, why have those involved in the print—artists, curators, and teachers alike—ignored the theorists? I can imagine some of my readers asking: What about the experience of the artist in the studio and the viewer in the gallery? Isn't theory mostly in response to theory and doesn't the artist's aesthetic experience in the studio have primacy in the life of the artifact?

I think the answer should be inclusive rather than one which creates a new exclusivity; it is possible to acknowledge a subjective and inward studio practice and at the same time to locate printmaking praxis, teaching, and analysis in a wider critical framework. If observed without parochial blinders or partisanship, one can note the diffusion of printmaking concerns throughout numerous contemporary practices and objects. The relationship of the copy to the original, the issue of translation, and questions of multiples, templates, and self-degenerating images carried through many reproductions—even the return of non-silver printing techniques and direct image-reproduction such as cyanotype—are but a few examples. Vernon Fisher's recent installation in the Museum of Modern Art's project room or Nancy Spero's survey at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles are highly visible demonstrations of both a print logic and a matrix strategy adapted to other materials or formats, In a more orthodox venue, the Brooklyn Museum's *Projects and Portfolios: The 25th National Print Exhibition*, curated by Barry Walker, revealed considerable sophistication in relation to the ideas propounded in this essay.[8] Ideas and impulses that currently are renewing painting and sculpture, such as transcription, repetition, modes of representation, and textual hermeneutics, are all native to us. I am not suggesting that we change our practice in relation to theory; rather, I am proposing that printmaking be rethought by critics, artists, and teachers as a model for investigations modern and post-modern. To that end, I hope that my questions may be part of a process that will transform the term *printmaking* so that it will conjure up familiar images as well as images of which we've never dreamed. □

The author expresses her gratitude to John O'Brien and Kelyn Roberts.

1 Ruth Weisberg, "The Syntax of the Print: In Search of an Aesthetic Context," *TTP* 9 (Fall 1986), 52–60.
2 Walter Benjamin, *Illumination: The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 219.
3 Ibid., 221.
4 William M. Ivins, Jr., *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 122.
5 Fredric Jameson, "Post Modernism and Consumer Society," in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, Wash.: Bay Press, 1983), 112–115.
6 Norman Bryson, ed., *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), xx-xxi.
7 Ibid., xxv.
8 Barry Walker, *Projects and Portfolios: The 25th National Print Exhibition* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum and Hine Editions, 1989).

# BEING THERE

*Clinton Adams*

WHEN LORD ACTON wrote the letter that included his famous sentence, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely," he appended a postscript: "Advice to Persons About to Write History—Don't."

A precarious undertaking at best, the writing of history is all but impossible in the absence of adequate perspective. True, certain compensations exist when one writes about recent events; many of the participants are living and can contribute information. This was certainly true of my research into the history of American lithography,[1] which was aided immeasurably by the memories of men and women who had figured in the events I was studying. I was at the same time reminded of the difficulties that fallible memories present: myth becomes entwined with reality, and events are sometimes embroidered by individuals intent upon embellishment of their tombstones.

Two examples are provided by Grant Arnold and Bolton Brown. On separate occasions I tape-recorded interviews with Arnold. He had begun to print for artists in New York and Woodstock in the late 1920s, so I had much to learn from him. Soon, however, I became aware that he was repeating anecdotes which he had committed to memory. Grant Arnold was a kind and gentle man, without an ounce of deceit in his makeup; even so, such memorized anecdotes were a signal for caution.

Bolton Brown's fascinating memoir of his battles with Joseph Pennell,[2] is suspect for a different reason. Writing in the last years of his life, Brown was secure in his mastery of lithography but bitter that his accomplishments had brought so little reward and recognition. Although much of what Brown wrote about "Pennellism and the Pennells" was factually correct, it was tainted by animosity and by Brown's evident intention to establish *his* position, not Pennell's, as the "true" history of their respective contributions to American lithography.

So it is with the events of the past thirty years, since the founding of Tamarind Lithography Workshop in 1960.

All of us who have been involved in lithography during those years are participants; we have both the advantages and disadvantages that come with "being there."

My reference to the title of Peter Sellers's enigmatic film is, of course, intentional. In *Being There*, Sellers played the role of Chance the Gardener, and the tale that was told in the film can be read on one level as a parable about the nature of understanding. When Chance, a very simple man, was asked questions of any nature, he solemnly answered, "Yes, I understand," or, "If you care for your plants, they will grow"; and his responses were interpreted by others—whether the President of the United States or television pundits—to be observations of great wisdom and profundity. Chance understood what he heard, but in terms different from those intended; his listeners understood what Chance said, but in terms different from those intended. Such are the risks of being there.

ALTHOUGH TIME AND HUMAN HISTORY are continuous, events mark the beginning or the end of identifiable periods. Few are as dramatic as last year's collapse of the Berlin Wall; most often in the history of art a new period is announced by incremental changes that take place over a span of years. Creative American lithography developed slowly during the first decades of the twentieth century, and it was not until after the first World War that it engaged the interest of a substantial

number of leading artists, among them, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, those whose interest was spurred by the Federal Art Projects (see the articles by Gustave von Groschwitz and Ellen Sragow, pages 6–7 and 73–76).

That period ended in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when the conditions under which lithographs had been produced during the first half of the century underwent substantial change as a consequence of the founding of Margaret Lowengrund's Contemporaries workshop, Tatanya Grosman's ULAE, and of Tamarind. Although lithography took the lead in the "American printmaking renaissance," other media soon participated, and by the mid-1970s new workshops across the nation provided artists with opportunities to work in a multiplicity of print processes. Seen in the broader context of printmaking, rather than of lithography alone, a case can be made that the present period had its origins as early as the mid-1940s, when Stanley William Hayter brought his Atelier 17 to New York (see Lanier Graham, "The Rise of the *Livre d'Artiste* in America," pages 35–40). And, as Pat Gilmour reminds us, developments in America were directly paralleled by events in Great Britain, in the workshops of Stanley Jones and Chris Prater (see her article, "'Originality' Circa 1960," pages 28–33). However we choose to define this period, it is clearly still in progress; just as certainly, it will at some point come to an end, perhaps abruptly, although more likely through change and transition.

Catastrophic forecasts have been not uncommon in the past. In 1891, in the aftermath of the etching revival of the 1880s, James D. Smilie wrote an essay for the catalogue of an exhibition of the New York Etching Club. "Etching," he wrote,

> is now being tested in the very house of her friends, or, at least, of those professing to be her friends. She is suffering from a popularity so wide and . . . is the winner of a victory so disastrous that some sorrowing friends are humbly prayerful for the healthy reaction of a wholesome defeat. . . . To supply the art-craving of a people insatiable with the greed of a new appetite, presses with relays of men, working day and night, are laboring to supply the demands. . . . What a brave change from the apathetic ignorance of a few years ago! In contemplating it the old-time friend of the art of etching stands aghast.[3]

In 1924, Bolton Brown struck a similar note:

> One result of the fashionableness of etchings is that never since God made the world were so many of them made that are bad. . . . Lithography is now where etching was forty years ago. If in forty years it likewise becomes popular, it too will reek with trash. Meanwhile, the fact that it is not the fashion leaves the few whose taste is not a bowing to mob rule, but an act of personal perception, to have this amazing art all to themselves. Nobody today practices lithography for any but the most legitimate of reasons—because he likes it.[4]

Since then there have been frequent notices that the sky was falling—and at times it actually was, as when in her 1959 proposal to the Ford Foundation, June Wayne warned that unless a concerted effort were made to "create a pool of master artisan-printers in the United States" and to "develop a group of American artists of diverse styles into masters of this medium," she could see "a foreseeable end to the kiss of an inked stone on a sheet of velvet-white paper."[5] (For Wayne's account of the experiences that led her to the founding of Tamarind, see pages 16–27).

IT IS A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION that these ambitious goals have been so fully achieved. In her Tamarind proposal, however, Wayne took note of the fact that during the 1950s in Paris, "where the lithograph reached its greatest heights, decay is hastened by the fact that art has become involved with big business. . . . American artists," she continued, "thus far are free of the cynicism that contaminates the making of lithographs in Europe. We have the advantage of a short tradition."[6]

That was thirty years ago, and there is ample evidence that American printmaking, having now become big business, is no longer free of such cynicism. The many distinguished print workshops that have come into being since Tamarind's founding in 1960 were long ago joined by assorted grifters and con men—con men and con women, I hasten to add—who have found in the print's new prominence a source of easy money. By the 1970s, a number of articles and panel discussions reflected anxiety about these developments. In 1979, a symposium at the Cranbrook Academy of Art included a panel on "The Crisis in Printmaking,"[7] during which the corruption of the marketplace was a principal concern. And as a part of Tamarind's 1985 symposium, in a panel discussion titled "Into the Crystal Ball, The Future of Lithography,"[8]

I quoted a dire assessment by the eminent critic Robert Hughes:

> Nobody of intelligence in the art world believes that the boom can go on forever. . . . Perhaps it is not the business of critics to predict, but I am going to try anyway. I don't have a date for the crash but I do have a story line. At present the contemporary art market is very extended. It is so extended . . . that the old process of defending an artist's prices may no longer work. . . . [The slide will] not affect every artist, because there are many reputations with the justifiable solidity that will enable them to survive such vicissitudes. But it will shake the confidence of the art market, and of the art world as a whole. . . . Nor will all the effects be bad. One does not lament the . . . sudden collapse of the Tulip Mania.[9]

In a recent issue of *Time* (28 May 1990), Hughes further underlined his worries, noting that despite the stratospheric prices paid for paintings by Van Gogh and Renoir, other auctions have seen an increasing number of items bought in or sold at prices well below their estimates.

Riva Castleman writes in this issue of *TTP* of the unfortunate effect that the "investment psychology" of the 1980s has had upon print collections (see pages 45–47). "Museum purchasing power," she laments, "has been badly diminished." If this is true of the Museum of Modern Art, how much more true is it of lesser institutions? Even Ken Tyler, who has ridden with great distinction the very crest of wave, told Pat Gilmour in 1984 that the juggernaut has to slow down: "The prints are getting too expensive . . . this thing is going to blow itself up eventually. . . . There is a madness to what I do."[10]

Hughes foresees a pricking of the bubble; Castleman fears the more gradual effects of marketplace economics. Whichever it may be, there is a widely shared feeling that economic events may cause the exciting period that began thirty years ago to move toward a close, or, at the very least, into a period of uncertainty and transition.

BYSTANDERS TO THESE EVENTS have been the specialist-printmakers—artists quite distinct from the painter-printmakers who do their work in the collaborative workshops. The specialist-printmakers, for the most part, occupy positions as teachers of printmaking in American art schools or universities, and for them, the move toward prints that are "bigger, brighter, bolder"—to use Ruth Fine's phrase[11]—has been a decidedly mixed blessing. The increased attention that has been given to the print may have brought them peripheral benefits, but they have largely been excluded from the printmaking renaissance. The major juried exhibitions, in which the work of specialist-printmakers was seen during the late 1940s and 1950s, even into the 1960s, have either disappeared or become irrelevant. The Brooklyn Museum's National Print Exhibition, arguably the most important of those events, became invitational in 1968. By the mid-seventies, a preponderance of the prints were coming from the collaborative workshops. When the twenty-first exhibition was held in 1979, Gene Baro made an effort to redress the balance by seeking out artists who had never before been represented in a Brooklyn national—many of them specialist-printmakers. Jacqueline Brody, editor of *The Print Collector's Newsletter*, described the show as "a disaster" and published a discussion among a group of prominent panelists who, over all, took a very dim view of it (see Barry Walker's article, pages 41–44). The fact that many of the seventy-five artists represented in Baro's exhibition came from places distant from New York provoked a discussion of regional art—a discussion that included Brooke Alexander's notorious (and much-quoted) line, "Across the Hudson is the provinces."[12]

When some future historian examines the evidence, Baro's show may well prove to have been the last gasp of specialist-printmaking in the tradition of the late-1940s and 1950s. Not that it is wrong for an artist to specialize in the making of prints; some have always done so. (The prints of Bresdin or Meryon do not suffer because the artists were not also painters.) Never before in history, however, have specialist-printmakers been so separate from the artistic mainstream, nor have they so persistently sounded the lament that the print world, dominated by works made in the collaborative workshops, has come unjustly to exclude them.

This circumstance is clearly linked to what has happened in our art schools since the end of World War II. Until then, printmaking was seldom taught in American universities; as recently as 1940, when I completed my graduate degree at UCLA, printmaking was not taught at any university in Southern California. Following the war, however, and partially as a consequence of Hayter's presence

in New York, printmaking programs became widespread in American universities, and, as so often happens, became institutionalized.

By contrast, the history of art teaches that most of the great prints have been made by artists who are also painters or sculptors, and that artists characteristically move freely from medium to medium at different stages in their work. (Think of Picasso.) My somewhat radical notion is that the anachronistic tenacity of present practices in printmaking instruction has more to do with territorial imperatives and institutional rigidities than with art per se. Ruth Weisberg's equally radical notion, expressed in her article, "The Absent Discourse" (see pages 8–10), is that specialist-printmakers, immersed as they are in technical cuisine, have become intellectually and critically impoverished. Weisberg's observation that such printmaking lacks an "underlying theoretical base" thus indirectly reinforces Castleman's view that artists are ill-advised to concentrate upon printmaking at an early stage in their development. She said in the *PCN* panel: "I don't see printmaking—and never have—as a way of working out the basic problems of art. It's too fraught with other technical problems."[13] For whatever reason, Castleman finds that young printmakers who have made a number of prints are "still not as advanced in their concepts as an artist who is making his first or second print after painting for 15–20 years."[14]

WE CORRECTLY MEASURE the accomplishments of the collaborative workshops by the best that they have produced: prints made by Richard Diebenkorn, Jasper Johns, George McNeil, Robert Motherwell, Frank Stella, Steven Sorman, and other artists who have made a commitment to the print. Simultaneously, we are aware of artists in all parts of the country who do meretricious work—"gun-slingers," as one printer calls them, whose motivation is purely commercial. Such work is often promoted and made popular by expert manipulation of the marketplace, which has seized upon large, colorful prints as surrogates for paintings that are priced beyond the reach of prospective purchasers. But, as Ezra Pound observed, "the history of an art is the history of masterwork, not of failures, or mediocrity"; thus the historian who eventually undertakes the writing of a history of printmaking since 1960 may safely ignore acre upon acre of signature graphics.

In her article, "A Living Tradition" (see pages 60–63), Joann Moser writes of "the need to divorce oneself from the judgments of the marketplace." Taking note of the fact that critical judgments are often altered with the passage of time, Moser contends that the commercial bias in favor of large, color prints has obscured the fact that much of the finest work being done today is in black and white, and that because these prints are seldom shown in the major markets, they "receive little critical attention."

What I have said to this point suggests only a few of the problems faced by the historian who may eventually endeavor to clarify and put in perspective the complex thirty-year period between 1960 and 1990. There are, by Tamarind's recent survey,[15] more than 150 collaborative workshops in the United States, and a large (but uncounted) number of printmakers working independently. Subtracting the kitsch and second-rate work, there still remains an astonishing volume of good work. A historian who undertakes simply to *see* all of the fine prints that have been produced in this period will face a monumental task.

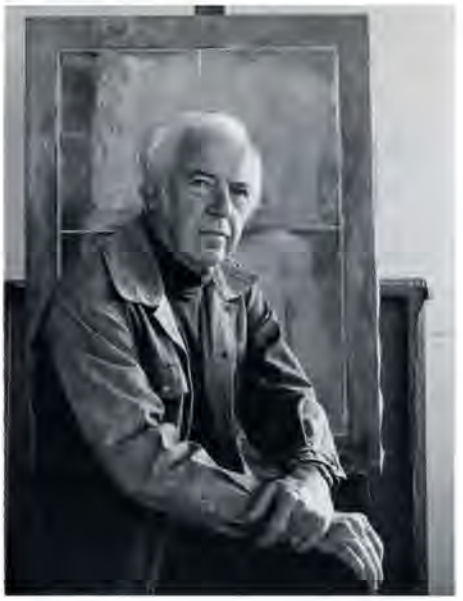
Again, however, there are compensations. Before 1960, printers seldom documented their editions nor kept accurate records; few of the artists were the subjects of serious critical articles, and even fewer of catalogues raisonnés. Exhibition catalogues were seldom more than checklists. That situation is now reversed. Following the lead of Tamarind, virtually all collaborative workshops (and many independent printmakers) document their editions, and a number of archives have been established in which the future researcher can find definitive information. As a spin-off of the print's new status in the art world, publishers have found a market for well-illustrated books, with the result that a substantial bibliography has come into existence.

AT THE END of Sellers's film, *Being There*, Chance the gardener is seen to stroll beside a lake, examining the plants that grow there. Suddenly. he turns and walks across the water, probing its depth with his umbrella. Fade to title. We are given no further clue as to the meaning that is intended; nothing is resolved. This, of course, is precisely the situation in which we find ourselves; nothing is resolved. As of 1990, the print renaissance is still in progress, and if miracles—or disasters—are to come, their form is not

apparent. All that we know is that we have been privileged to participate in the events of an exciting thirty years, during which printmaking in America has undergone historic change. Some events are well defined, some are obscure, and—as if the task of the historian were not difficult enough—some have taken on a mythic existence. As William Allen has observed, "myths multiply . . . like weeds in a garden. Indeed, myths, unlike weeds, are often cultivated."[16]

Perhaps by 1998, the year of lithography's bicentennial, it may be sensible for some brave writer to set Lord Acton's advice aside, to attempt a cohesive account of this fascinating period, and to dispel certain myths that have been carefully cultivated. He or she, like Chance, will need to walk on water. □

1 See Clinton Adams, *American Lithographers, 1900–1960: The Artists and Their Printers* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983).
2 Bolton Brown, "Pennellism and the Pennells," *TTP* 7 (Fall 1984), 49–71.
3 Smilie's essay, paraphased by Sylvan Cole, Jr., was published as, "A Sense of Déjà Vu," in *TTP* 3 (Fall 1979), 4.
4 *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Lithographs by Bolton Brown* (New York: FitzRoy Carrington [1924]), 2.
5 June Wayne, "To Restore the Art of the Lithograph in the United States." Proposal submitted to the Ford Foundation, 1959. Tamarind archives, University of New Mexico.
6 Ibid.
7 "The Crisis in Printmaking: A Panel Discussion," *TTP* 3 (Spring 1980), 44–51.
8 "Into the Crystal Ball, The Future of Lithography: A Panel Discussion," *TTP* 8 (1985), 50–60.
9 Robert Hughes, "On Art and Money," *New York Review of Books* (6 December 1984).
10 Tyler, quoted by Gilmour in *Ken Tyler Master Printer, and the American Print Renaissance* (New York: Hudson Hills Press in association with the Australian National Gallery, 1986), 128, 131.
11 See Ruth E. Fine, "Bigger, Brighter, Bolder: American Lithography Since the Second World War," in Pat Gilmour, ed., *Lasting Impressions: Lithography as Art* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1988), 257–82.
12 Jacqueline Brody, moderator, "New Prints of Worth: A Question of Taste," *Print Collectors Newsletter* 10 (September-October 1979): 115.
13 Ibid., 110.
14 Ibid.
15 Rebecca Schnelker, comp., "American Print Workshops: A Survey," TTP 12 (1989), 86–94.
16 Allen, quoted by Carolyn Lochhead, "On Air at Midnight: It's Economics," *Insight* (11 June 1990), 44.



**Clinton Adams**
in his studio, 1988.

## The Editorship of *The Tamarind Papers*

IT IS WITH REGRET that we announce Clinton Adams's resignation as editor of *The Tamarind Papers: A Journal of the Fine Print*, which he founded in 1974. First published biannually as the *Tamarind Technical Papers*, its title was changed in 1978; in 1988 it assumed its current format: an annual issue which includes historical, critical, and technical articles covering a broad range of topics relating to printmaking.

An artist and art historian, Adams has lent the journal a broad perspective during his seventeen-year tenure as editor. Throughout a total of twenty-eight issues, readers have enjoyed his critical and historical insight as a writer and scholar as well as his keen ability to identify interesting topics and knowledgeable authors. Henceforward, he plans to work in his studio and finish two books currently in progress; Adams also intends to contribute occasionally to *The Tamarind Papers*.

It is, however, with pleasure that we announce Pat Gilmour as guest editor—and Linda Tyler again as assistant editor—of the 1991 issue. Gilmour, who has written regularly for *The Tamarind Papers* since 1985, has held important curatorial positions at London's Tate Gallery and the Australian National Gallery. A prolific writer, she has authored numerous books and articles on printers, artists' prints, and collaborative printmaking.

*Marjorie Devon*

**June Wayne**
with a pile of broken stones,
Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Los Angeles, ca. 1962.

# BROKEN STONES AND WHOOPING CRANES
## Thoughts of a Wilful Artist

*June Wayne*

FOR MY PART, the original print is to painting as chamber music is to the symphony. I get the same pleasure from a print that is brilliantly created as from a Beethoven quartet flawlessly performed. *In neither form can a failure of nerve be hidden.*

In my mind, lithography has been linked to the great white whooping crane which, like lithography, was on the verge of extinction when Tamarind Lithography Workshop came into being. In all the world there were only thirty-six cranes left, and in the United States there were no master printers able to work with the creative spectrum of our artists. The artist-lithographers, like the cranes, needed a protected environment and a concerned public so that, once rescued from extinction, they could make a go of it on their own. If lithography could be revived, all the print media would benefit—as indeed they did. And the Tamarind "preserve" could become a model for other art forms—as indeed it has.

A great deal has been written about me and Tamarind Lithography Workshop. Some of it is true, but much of it is false. I am not going to present a history of Tamarind here; that has yet to be written. Rather I will offer some personal anecdotes which cannot be found in the Tamarind literature, but which, I believe, reveal how the adventures of my life were shaping me to create Tamarind—long before such a project was either needed or possible. Some of these events were serendipitous, some were planned, but none tells the whole story. I can recall a hundred others that played a part as well—too many to write about here.

First, the time: Although the Tamarind workshop officially opened its doors with Ford Foundation money in 1960, its roots reach deep into the history of lithography and are tangled in the condition in which lithographers found themselves at about mid-century in both America and Europe.

Second, the place: Atop Mt. Lee, not the highest peak of the Santa Monica Mountains but certainly the most photographed, the HOLLYWOOD sign smiles down on the Los Angeles basin. Its huge white letters, like a giant's teeth, are familiar wherever films and television are seen. The HOLLYWOOD sign has become an international logo for a global "memory" in which everything and nothing is real. But for me, the sign serves another function as a tom-tom linking me to other creative people. Founded by the movies but now serving all arts, both fine and applied, Hollywood is a giant craft preserve where every sort of creator, technician, and supplier lives and works. Dreaming, making, and hoping are a way of life here. Everybody has an idea, tries to make it happen, hopes it will "go," and starts again. Collaboration is so normal in Hollywood that it goes unnoticed.


Tamarind Avenue is a three-block street that runs from Sunset Boulevard to the Hollywood Cemetery.

 This paper was presented in slightly different form to the National Print Symposium of the Print Council of Australia, Australian National Gallery, Canberra, 25 March 1989; and to the Tamarind Institute Symposium, "Printers' Impressions," University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 9 June 1990.

**June Wayne,** age 3 (1921).

**June Wayne** in shirt and knickers, ca. 1924.

**June Wayne** with her grandmother, 1930.

**June Wayne.** *Merry Widow, State II,* 1980. Color lithograph, 565 × 756 mm, printed by Edward Hamilton.

Tourists who climb Mt. Lee can, by standing between the Y and W of the HOLLYWOOD sign, see my three-block street that starts at Sunset Boulevard and dead-ends at the cemetery where Rudolph Valentino, Douglas Fairbanks, Tyrone Power, and many others are entombed. The Hollywood Cemetery shares a common wall with Paramount Studios—a square mile of sets, sound stages, labs, and thousands of people making films and television programs around the clock. When the shifts change, the traffic is horrendous.

Near the corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Tamarind Avenue there is an auto-body shop, a mortuary, a company that makes TV commercials, a set-builder's factory, a Mexican bakery, a Chinese take-out stand, and my studio, bought in the fifties. In 1959, needing a name for the program I was about to start, I named it Tamarind Lithography Workshop after my street.

"Now I'm going to jump a bit," as Louise Nevelson used to say, so as to connect a few of my idiosyncracies (among many) to a few of the ideas (among many) that flowered at Tamarind. In spite of my historical niche as the creator of Tamarind, I am not an institutional sort of person. On the contrary, I am a high school dropout and a self-taught artist: an introvert with a wilful streak and a long attention span. Once an idea grips me (by a logic often invisible to other people) I tend to keep after it, sprouting the means I need like extra fingernails.

I was born in Chicago in 1918, the offspring of a marriage that lasted a year. By the time I was three, I believed that I could fly if only I could figure out the secret and get enough practice at it. My mother dressed me in dark brown or navy blue knee-length knickers and flat-cut over-blouses of polished cotton which my grandmother had sewn and embroidered handsomely. Matching knee socks and ballet-like slippers completed my "uniform." Ever since then I have worn knee-length pants and shirts, dark hose, and flat slippers or boots which, though assumed to be a Wayne "look," is in fact simply an adult version of their taste. Both women imprinted me like a duckling.

My mother's resolute, even surgical, divorce from my father took him completely out of my life, relieving me of having to choose between warring adults. She resumed her maiden name, Kline, and used it for me as well. From then on, although I noticed that most families had two parents—one of whom was a father—my all-female family was normal to me. This led me to assume that every "given" has alternatives.

My mother and widowed grandmother brought me up, lavishing criticism and love on me in equal measure. Their criticism spurred me to camouflage my faults, and their affection proved that I was lovable nonetheless. My mother, a traveling saleslady, a "drummer" as it was called in those days, supported us, like fathers did, with this "man's job." She sold corsets to department stores all over the Midwest: corsets that oppressed women in the name of fashion, an oddity she failed to notice in spite of her feminist beliefs. Because divorcees were considered "loose" and therefore unemployable, in the presence of strangers I became my grandmother's child, my mother's little sister. The world was one big paradox to me, and we were experts in paradox control.

I was a good and quiet student, skipping grades from time to time, until I got to high school. I found it boring. I dreamt only of returning to the card table in the bedroom I shared with my mother to read or draw. When boredom outran my patience, I became a chronic truant, spending my days at the public library until, at fifteen, my mother

caught me out. "Go back to school or out to work," she ordered. Now, up to then, being a girl had been an asset: an artistic little girl was cute; an artistic little boy would have been taken in hand and "straightened out." But as I matured my gender became a handicap. Women did not become professional artists. Nonetheless, I decided to get out, get my own place, and be an artist. The year was 1933.

I FOUND WORK slapping labels on whiskey bottles, which sometimes broke as they jiggled on the production line. The alcohol soaked into the moving belt and gave off fumes that made me sick and turned me permanently off liquor. An artist's most important tool, her body, can't afford to be sick, I reasoned. Years later at Tamarind, both liquor and drugs were forbidden in the work place. My habit of sniffling for alcohol and marijuana (expanded to include solvents and other fumes) earned me the nickname *"Feinschmecker* June." It was an environmentalist attitude that is taken for granted now.

My next job was in an automobile-parts factory, punching out gaskets on a machine that punched off fingers, too—fortunately not mine. Machines clearly had no conscience. That became another bit of Tamarind mystique: the hand is more important than the machine, the artist more important than the technology.

Needing money, I tried to sell my art door to door. But art was not a necessity to the working class, or even to the upper class for that matter. In 1935, using my first and middle names, June Claire, I wangled my first exhibition: several dozen ink drawings and watercolors made up entirely of colored dots, suggested by the Ben Day dots in the comic strips. Three or four little pieces were sold: twenty-three dollars net after the gallery's commission. Half a month's rent, a windfall.

That exhibition also brought me an invitation from the Mexican Department of Public Education to come to Mexico to paint. In October of 1936 I had a show at the Palacio de Bellas Artes which should have pleased me, but Mexico's macho ways (a story for another time) frightened me, and its homeless, starving people (the grandparents of today's homeless, starving people) made the depression in the United States seem like luxury by comparison. I returned to the States the day the show closed.

Cover of exhibition catalogue, Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City, 1936.

Nonetheless, Mexico left its imprint on me. Leaving aside the great artistic heritage of Mexico, how could such a poor country so generously support the arts in such hard times? There were murals everywhere, a graphic workshop for making prints, textiles and folk arts in every mercado. Rivera, Kahlo, Siquieros, and Orozco were public figures, as were musicians like Revueltas and Chavez. Art was integral to Mexican life. Why wasn't it integral to life in my country?

Returning to Chicago, I sold prints at Marshall Field and Company, where the customers asked the same impossible questions they ask today: "If a painting is an original, how can a print be an original when there are fifty more just like it?" I had no way of explaining. I made many sales by pointing up the finish on the frames.

Twenty-five years later, Tamarind systemized print language, defining what was meant by trial and artist's proofs, numbered prints, states, separations, and progressive proofs. We made documentation into a routine aspect of selling prints. We listed edition sizes, runs, techniques, colors, papers, and dimensions; provided a lexicon of chops; and initiated a hundred bits of language, all taken for granted


Artists holding petition to the Congress, urging "active support of the Wagner-Downey-Pepper ammendments for continued federal sponsorship of cultural projects." **June Wayne** is at right.

today. There was no hype from Tamarind, just data that printmakers and collectors will understand a hundred years from now.

About 1938 I was hired onto the Easel Project of the Federal Arts Project (FAP), which was a part of Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA), designed to help the unemployed. Neither Roosevelt nor Congress foresaw what the WPA would do for the arts in America. *They* had meant to hand out *make-work. Relief.* But *we thought we were hired to make art for the nation!* What a glorious misunderstanding! Writing, painting, dancing, acting, music, flourished for a few extraordinary years. Our meager monthly paychecks symbolized official recognition and I painted happily, thinking that my work had been commissioned by the government for use in libraries, schools, and museums. My place in this imaginary ecological chain seemed so reasonable, so inevitable, that it came as a violent shock when Congress began firing us—in mid-brushstroke, as it were.

We formed an arts coalition to try to save the WPA projects. We painted up a giant petition as though "signed" by Bach, Voltaire, Van Gogh, and many others. I still have a newspaper clipping of three of us displaying that petition. It is amusing to note that fifty years later, in 1988 to be exact, an almost identical petition in appearance, size, content, and legendary signers was reinvented by an artists' coalition protesting the loss of our tax rights: a petition by a new generation of artists unprompted by veterans of older cultural wars, such as myself. In 1988 we artists won our tax battle; but in 1939, when I went to Washington to testify before a Congressional committee, we lost the projects.

The WPA art projects, political aberration though they were, became a partial model for Tamarind. They caused me to think in national rather than local or regional terms. They created a collegial climate among all the tribes of creative people. They provided a stipend, materials for one's art, and access to the public. They were race and gender neutral. Theoretically, at least, they were non-censorious; no one in the project told us what to paint, although Congress did get nasty whenever it noticed us. Partly because of this, I never sought government grants for Tamarind, and even with the Ford Foundation's dependable, long-term support, I factored in a self-earning aspect for Tamarind—just in case.

By 1940 I had moved to New York. Some artist-friends took me into their Twenty-first Street loft where I painted nights and weekends while making my living by designing buttons and jewelry for the garment industry. This meant that I travelled among the jewelry factories of Massachusetts and Rhode Island working with die-makers and technicians. Since I had to create four "lines" a year, one for each season, collaboration could hold no terrors for me after that.

In Europe, Hitler and Mussolini had come to power and news of atrocities reached our shores. The United States converted to war production, which included converting the New England jewelry factories. With the attack on Pearl Harbor, the "Good War," as Studs Terkel would call it, against Hitler and Hirohito was on. For me personally, it was also a stormy time. That I don't go into the war years is not an oversight; I just can't handle that here—except to say that I moved to California in 1942, intending to help the war effort. There I picked up two new skills: production illustration (translating blueprints into three-dimensional drawings) and radio scriptwriting. Both fields enriched my art, and scriptwriting, at which I earned a decent living, eventually helped me write the plan for Tamarind effectively.

BEFORE, DURING, and after World War II, I worked to support my art and had occasional shows, alone or in groups, as artists do. But it wasn't until 1948, when I had been a professional painter for thirteen years—while working on my optical series and certain narrative paintings—that I needed a new medium for a certain aesthetic I was trying to bring off. Now another character enters, a whooping crane named Lynton Kistler.

Less than a mile from where I lived in Hollywood, Kistler had opened a lithography workshop into which he was luring artists. The first floor of his two story, stucco house was filled with the "stuff" of lithography. In the entry hung some matted prints of modest quality, what Donald Bear used to call "knitted" lithographs. In what had been Kistler's living room a clutch of students sketched on little stones with crayon pencils. In the dining room-kitchen area stood a Fuchs and Lang press, an ink slab with rollers, enamel water pans, rags, tins of solvents, and cans of ink. Nearby, stacks of blotters and a paper-damping box sat next to packages of paper and heaps of prints. The stone-graining area was on a porch, overlooking a vista of shingled roofs and leggy palm trees like upended ostriches stalking the Hollywood Hills.

I remember Lynton Kistler as I saw him first: a genteel, pear-shaped man wearing a carpenter's apron. Kistler wanted me to enroll in his litho class, but I just hung around casing the elegant grey-beige stones which gave off a faint aroma, like lemon juice. I persuaded him to let me take one home, left a five-dollar deposit, and bought some crayons and tusche from him. That evening, poking gently at the stone as if it were alive, I thought I heard it sing to me—like a distant oboe. My love life with lithography had begun.

From the beginning, I drew my lithographs in my studio, not at Kistler's. Sometimes the stone loved what I drew; other times it turned sullen. Each encounter was a corrida like those I had seen on Sunday afternoons in Mexico: I the matador, the stone the bull—and sometimes vice versa. Because I needed big stones, Kistler built a four-handled litter onto which he strapped them. Then, with the help of anyone around who had muscles, he loaded them into my station wagon. Meanwhile, I'd ask some men to dinner—so they could haul the stones into the studio. Whenever I started or finished a stone, I gave a dinner.

Kistler and I did some very good prints together, but always under difficult circumstances. He was truly a pioneer in behalf of lithography but, like a pioneer, he had no support system to answer inquiries, schedule artists, clean up, or shepherd his students. There were always people milling about, waiting for him to get to them. Nor could I learn from Kistler because he would only etch or proof without the artist (me or anyone else) being present. Worried about technical secrets? Perhaps. There was no use discussing technique with him, even though it was critical to the aesthetic of my stones. So ours was not a close collaboration as now we understand the term.

We did no color prints; color was impossible without uninterrupted time together. And I disliked the color prints of the other artists—including those by Eugene Berman and Jean Charlot. (There, I've finally said it.) Although I have always loved my print *Shine Here to Us*, which was one of my earliest John Donne pieces, my rubbing-crayon areas were etched away even as the washes were closing in. "For God's sake, Lynton," I used to implore, "hold the middle tones."

Nor were there the inks and papers that we take for granted today.

**June Wayne.** *The Sad Flute Player*, 1950. Lithograph, 457 × 356 mm, printed by Lynton R. Kistler.

**Lynton R. Kistler,** ca. 1950.

**June Wayne.** *The Travellers,* 1954. Lithograph, 641 × 470 mm, printed by Lynton R. Kistler.

In many of the prints of that period you can see the edges turning brown due to the acid content of the paper. And there was a distorting undulation in the paper after printing, caused by printing damp—which was typical of American lithographs until Tamarind came along.

Because Kistler's background was not in art but rather in commercial lithography, he was most at home with the printing of fine books in letterpress or offset, such as those he did with Merle Armitage. It seemed to me that he related to artists' lithographs as if they were book illustrations.

Another difference between us was rooted in prints as multiples. Kistler, like most printmakers then, and many artists still, believed that prints were a "democratic" medium; that printmakers have a sort of responsibility, as it were, to provide the public with "cheap but good" prints as substitutes for paintings. Whereas for me, lithography was a primary art form, every bit as important as painting and different from any other medium. For me, the multiple potential of lithography was a secondary, even irrelevant, characteristic. As for "cheap but good," a lithograph is much more expensive to make than a painting, being labor intensive and requiring much capital investment in equipment, materials, and space. The cost of marketing a print is just as high as marketing a "big ticket" painting, but with a much lower profit percentage per impression.

Another problem: for lack of a better word, let's call it censorship. Where do the rights of the artist end and the rights of the printer begin? Do printers have an obligation to pull images they don't like? Or that conflict with beliefs of their own? Among the three printers I knew of in the United States (Miller in New York, Barrett in Colorado Springs, and Kistler in Los Angeles), two refused to print images in which content went against their beliefs. Miller, a social conservative, discouraged works that conflicted with his political views. Kistler's idiosyncracy was sexual content. Sometimes he found sexual content whether it was there or not, as in my stone *The Travellers,* an important work in my *Justice Series* and a forerunner to my interest in space travel. Kistler refused to pull *The Travellers,* which he called "obscene." We were deadlocked for half a year. When at last he agreed to pull it, his hands literally trembled as he inked the stone, and the edition was quite uneven. My confidence in Kistler was shaken. When added to other difficulties in the medium, I could see an end to lithography—for me, for everybody.

For instance, stones, being a natural material, eventually break. Since they were not being mined anymore, the population of stones was dwindling. And as commercial printing phased into metal plates, stones were being dumped into lakes or landfills or were used to pave patios. Good stones of adequate size were becoming as rare as dinosaur eggs.

The paper we used was ugly as well as unstable. We couldn't just go out and buy beautiful paper that was right for lithography. There was no call for it, the suppliers said. But even if we had had good papers, we would have ruined them by dampening them before printing.

Ink was a devilish problem, too. It came from offset companies and was geared to the printing of billboards. A "lightfast" ink meant that a billboard would be "seeable" for five weeks of daylight in Washington, D.C. I'm not kidding. Winter or summer, rain or shine: five weeks in Washington was the criterion of the Bureau of Standards for a lightfast ink. So the lithos faded or bronzed like an oil slick on

a wet road. You can see why Tamarind searched for and stockpiled stones, developed special papers, and persuaded manufacturers to make hand presses and rollers. Every kind of supply became our problem.

By the mid-fifties, Kistler had become allergic to lithographic materials. He was also going broke trying to hold the unrealistic price structure of the "democratic print." More and more he turned to offset printing in which he saw much virtue but which I thought was thin and cold. Some artists followed Kistler into offset. I tried an offset color print but it was hideous. (I destroyed every impression that the press belched out—hundreds in the space of a minute or two, an indecent rate of reproduction. My recurrent nightmare is that a few proofs escaped my wrath and may still be lying around somewhere like radioactive waste.) Nonetheless, I did my *Fable Series* on Kistler's Miehle Press, capitalizing on the ephemeral potential of offset. Even though I drew the zinc quite cunningly, my heart wasn't in it. Union pressmen pushed the buttons; my lithos could have been restaurant menus for all they cared.

**Mario Avati** and **June Wayne,** ca. 1967.

DURING ALL THIS '50s *sturm und drang,* I saw a lithograph at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, *La Metropolitaine* by Mario Avati. Although Avati is best known for his mezzotints, the lithographic middle tones of *La Metropolitaine* were the best I had seen. I determined to find the printer who had pulled it. He, I believed, would be right for the prints I wanted to do for the poetry of John Donne—for which I had been making wash drawings. In 1957 I set off for Paris where Mario Avati lived.

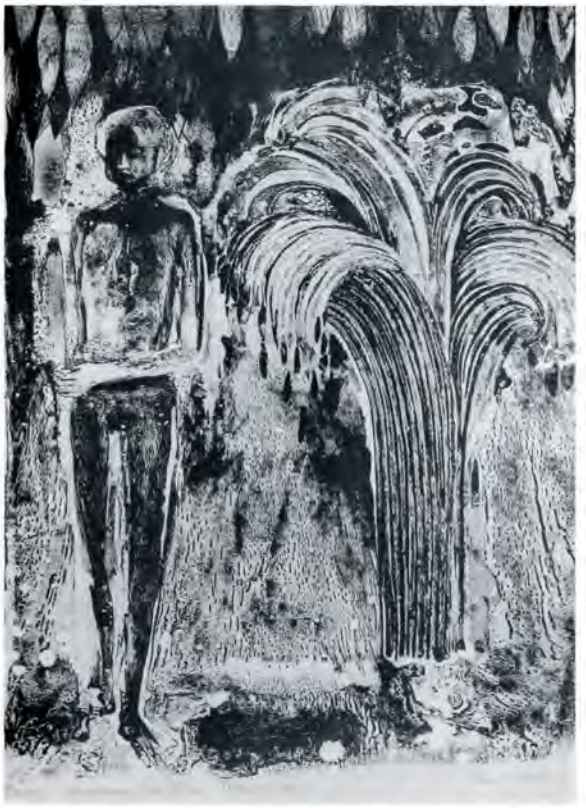
Avati received me warmly and we became great friends. He introduced me to the printer of *La Metropolitaine,* Marcel Durassier, but not before warning me that Durassier's disposition was as bad as his printing was good. Indeed Durassier was a churlish character. He was suspicious of me, a female and an American. Could such a creature be worthy of his time, he who had worked with the greatest artists of Europe? But the immovable had met the irresistible. After several weeks of sparring, our work began.

**Marcel Durassier,** ca. 1956.

At that time Marcel Durassier worked for Fernand Mourlot on the early shift from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. After 3:00 he came to his own workshop in the courtyard of 7 Rue Cassette, a windowless, unheated "cave" entered through a crude door of wooden planks, actually the garage for his Dauphine, which long since had been banished to the streets of St. Germain des Prés. At most the space was eight by twelve feet in size. There Durassier had an ancient star-wheel litho press shoved against the granite wall. A long wooden paddle on a spring, angled upward at forty-five degrees from the floor, worked the pressure bar. The press bed, pulled along by leather straps, was delicately balanced along its underside with tin cans filled with pebbles and suspended from bits of wire.

Opposite the press was a rack of wooden pigeon holes which housed from floor to ceiling a cache of small stones; the big stones leaned against it along the floor. At the back, a miniature stove squatted next to burlap sacks filled with coal. These doubled as a graining area. Marcel would wedge a stone into the coal and put another stone face down on it, spinning them against each other to grain them both at once. A metal douche-can released spurts of water as needed and was replenished from a faucet in the courtyard. A single bulb, as stark as the one in Picasso's *Guernica,* dimly lit the press and a table about

**June Wayne.** *The Climb*, 1957. Lithograph, 467 × 362 mm, printed by Marcel Durrasier.



**June Wayne.** "Twicknam Garden," 1958, from *John Donne: Songs and Sonets*. Lithograph, 378 × 283 mm, printed by Marcel Durassier.

twenty by twenty-five inches in size. We could enlarge the table with a drawing board when I needed to draw while he was printing.

Marcel Durassier resembled the French actor Jean Gabin, but he was bulkier; his chest as deep from front to back as his shoulders were broad. His long arms tapered to graceful wrists and his fingertips had a dainty backward tilt from the habit of his craft. His coarse hair in a brush cut linked him back in time to the Free French Maquis of the German Occupation. The rest of Marcel was concealed by the loose, rumpled clothing of a French worker. Sometimes, holding a pile of stones in his arms as if they were books, a cigarette dangling from his lips, his canny hazel eyes would scan me like radar. In his gruff, Basque accent (which I picked up from him and had to unlearn later) he would start a sentence quietly enough, but then his voice would climb until he reached a shout. The resonating decibels made me quake and I had to learn that the *way* he spoke had nothing to do with *what* he was saying. He took a lot of getting used to.

When Marcel printed, it was a wonder to behold. (Unfortunately, there are no photographs that I know of. We were less conscious then of documenting history.) He inked like a conductor leading a waltz: the roller made a slapping sound on the first beat as it hit the stone, then a faint hissing sound as it lifted off again. The paper floated down exactly in place; then the newsprint and the tympan followed like a bow from the waist. Without losing a beat, Marcel would leap right-footed onto the pressure paddle and ride it down, turning its iron latch as he went. Then, reaching left-handed for the star wheel, hand-over-hand he hauled the press bed smoothly to its end. Silence for about a second—and then the dance reversed, the pressure bar released with a loud thwack while the star wheel spun backwards and the tympan and the newsprint were peeled off. Lifting my print as though it were a butterfly, Marcel would hold it out to me crowing: *"Voilà, Madame l'Américaine! Voilà, maître artiste."* I would take my time about looking and make a mouthy *pouffe* of French derision. *"Quoi? Ça?"* Oh, we had a wonderful time! In that unheated garage in 1957 and 1958 in Paris—now *that* was an artist-printer collaboration.

I would tell Durassier what I was putting on the stone or the zinc and he would suggest—or order—me to do this or that. Often he was surprised, even shocked, and would shout: *"Mais non! mais non! C'est anti-lithographique! On ne fait pas ça!"* Marcel knew all about modern art but he was fixed in his technical tradition, so I ran headlong into opposition over even the smallest inventions of my own.

On one of the zinc plates for my John Donne book, the one called *Twicknam Garden*, he was obdurate. Tears of frustration rolled down my cheeks and that alarmed him. *"En fin! Une ruse des femmes! Ces larmes!"* he shouted. But I had got to him. He set about etching and proofing the plate; bet it couldn't be pulled, grumbled that I would see he was right. But I was mad as hell. In steely silence I bent over my next stone, refusing to look at what was going on—except when he couldn't see me looking. In an hour or so he pulled the first proof. It was exactly what I wanted, but I wouldn't give him the satisfaction of saying so. I went on drawing, ignoring him and the proof as well. Then there was a tug at my sleeve. *"June,"* he whispered, *"Tu a raison. Je m'excuse, June. Si?"*

That was a watershed. We never fought again. As we worked, in streams of chatter both frivolous and profound, Marcel told about the old time, when the word lithographer *meant* the printer—who wore *"un chapeau vernis"* (a high hat) on Sundays. He told about his present

workdays: how he was mostly separated from the artists. How dealers brought artists' sketches or gouaches for him to copy. How some artists would sign a "hand" of blank paper for the image to be printed above. How many editions were really unlimited—just pulled on different papers, or in different colors, gambling that the multiple owners of, for instance, number 16 of 200 would never meet. Marcel sadly referred to himself as a *faux monnayeur*, a counterfeiter. It was bad news whether in the United States or Europe. Lithography was in trouble, for different reasons in each place, but in trouble all the same.

As we worked on my John Donne suite, Marcel and I each imagined a future for lithography, but we didn't have the same snapshots in our heads. He wanted three or four great artists for whom he would be the personal master printer. *"Toi aussi, June. Quelques mois chaque année, tu viendras."* But I imaged many master printers and many artists working closely together, inventing, pushing the medium; an honest market for prints, at prices sufficient to keep things going; and good dealers who would develop good collectors.

Marcel and I did not reach the potential that continuing work together would have made possible. We did only three color prints among the fifteen in the Donne suite: color that conformed to European tradition and that didn't break any rules. I intended to move into color the next time I returned to Rue Cassette, but it was not to be. It was 1959 and events were overtaking me. While preparing to return to California, I didn't realize that a window of opportunity had already opened for me and lithography. If Kistler, Durassier, and I were whooping cranes, I had already met the great conservationist, W. McNeil Lowry of the Ford Foundation. Months earlier I had attracted his attention.

IT HAPPENED THIS WAY: early in 1958 I received a letter from Mr. Lowry (as did many artists) asking what kinds of programs the newly forming arts section of the Ford Foundation should undertake. My reply interested him and he asked me to visit him, which I did, en route to Paris. At the time, the Ford Foundation worked out of rented offices on Madison Avenue in New York. (Their magnificent atrium building on Forty-second Street had not yet been built.) I was ushered into an unimpressive office where, behind an ordinary desk, sat a pale man with thin, pale hair and eyes of indeterminate color. Presbyterian looking, ascetic, black suit, white shirt, black-and-white knit tie. But he had a good smile, and a witty turn of phrase. Soon I was talking freely, lobbing answers to his questions, while he scribbled a chicken-track shorthand of his own devising at which he never glanced.

"Why are you going to Paris?" he asked. "To do an artist's book on the poetry of John Donne. And I have to travel six thousand miles because there are no master printers in the United States. Lithography is dying under your nose," was the way I put it. He asked to see the book when it was finished and I brought it to him straight from Rue Cassette.

Lowry was impressed that I said I was going to do something and actually did it. He liked the John Donne suite and our dialogue deepened. It seemed that he had checked me out. Now he suggested that I write a proposal on how lithography might be restored. This was getting serious, so I made a few inquiries about *him*. Yes, he had the power to help lithography. With Ford money he could do more for

**W. MacNeil Lowry,** ca. 1962.

ABOVE: **Garo Antreasian,** 1961.


ABOVE RIGHT: **"The Champs."** TLW Printers, 1965.

BELOW RIGHT: **The TLW staff,** 1969. RECLINING: *artist Ed Moses.* KNEELING (LEFT TO RIGHT): *Robert Rogers, Linda Shaffer, Maurice Sanchez, Edward Hughes.* STANDING: *Serge Lozingot, Betty Fiske, Anthony Stoeveken, Lillian Lesser, June Wayne, Norma Neiman, Caren Joseph, Eugene Sturman.* BACK ROW: *Clifford Smith, Jean Milant, Dan Socha, Manuel Fuentes, Theo Wujcik, Judy Reilly, Bonnie Barrett, Frank Akers.*

**Clinton Adams,** 1960.

the arts of the United States than the Medicis did for Italy. But most important, Lowry believed *artists* knew more about art than historians, critics, curators, bureaucrats, or philanthropists. I had lucked out; one *rara avis* had found another.

It still surprises me that Lowry and I ever met. I would not have sought him out: I was too much of a loner. It was Mac Lowry who cast his net so wide as to fish me in, and to fish in other artists with whom he funded other programs. He trusted artists when no one else did. The rest is history.

Tamarind opened its doors in 1960 and I was its director. Clinton Adams became associate director for the first year; Garo Antreasian became technical director. With colleagues gathered from everywhere—too many to discuss here; each would take pages to do justice to—I ran Tamarind during its first ten experimental years. The Ford Foundation never wavered in its support and Mac Lowry was unflinchingly helpful; no detail was too small nor any problem too large for him. Lithography grew wings, and the print media gained buoyancy as well, benefitting from the connoisseurship we developed.

By 1970 I felt I had done my part. Tamarind was an experiment that succeeded, a work of art whose concept had liberated lithography. I had new ideas for my own art which had suffered from sharing my time with Tamarind. So I wrote a plan to close Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles and to open Tamarind Institute at

ABOVE: Printer **Edward Hamilton.**

LEFT: **June Wayne.** "Solar Refraction," 1982, from *Solar Flares Suite*. Color lithograph, 438 × 432 mm, printed by Edward Hamilton.

BELOW: **June Wayne** in Otto Piene's parachute, 1988.

**June Wayne** in her Tamarind Avenue studio, 1979.

the University of New Mexico with Clinton Adams as its director. With distinction, Adams carried the stewardship of Tamarind for fifteen years until in 1985 Marjorie Devon became the institute's director. She carries on in our tradition but deals with a more complex ecology than either of us had to face. Tamarind continues to train master printers, to bring artists to Albuquerque to create great projects, to conduct research on the medium, to publish *The Tamarind Papers*, and to look after lithography with a steadfast heart.

I am still in my Tamarind Avenue studio, making art seven days a week. While I paint or make collages or draw or write, there is always a print in progress. Every day I push lithography and it reveals something new. With Edward Hamilton—himself an artist and a Tamarind-certified master printer—who proofed and pulled my lithographs in my studio for fourteen years, I shared an aesthetic empathy that often needed no words. Like concert violinists, we "practiced" every day. We brought color to an intensity that serves my aesthetic involvement with the magnetic fields, stellar winds, and solar flares of interstellar space—the great "wilderness" of the twenty-first century. We pulled minuscule editions and the market be damned. We chattered about the art scene, other artists, aesthetics, techniques, whatever—but always using lithography as a primary medium, which is what I hoped would come out of Tamarind.

Now both Ed and I have expanded our collaborations, he to include other artists and I to include other printers in Los Angeles and elsewhere. My prints increasingly incorporate additional elements—often three-dimensional ones, as though I had touched down on other planets.

Neither you nor I will be around to find out how the great questions of these times will work out. We may be whooping cranes already

*Continued on page 94.*

# "ORIGINALITY" CIRCA 1960
## A Time for Thinking Caps

*Pat Gilmour*

IT IS THIRTY YEARS since a number of official bodies began to codify the "original print" as one for which "the artist alone has created the master image upon the plate, stone, woodblock or other material." They also specifically outlawed photomechanical techniques, an action which amounted to shutting the stable door after the horse had gone. For the rapidly developing screenprint had already moved beyond Carl Zigrosser's concept of "serigraphy"—with hand-cut stencils or tusche and glue manually applied—to less direct strategies inspired by the Bauhaus aesthetic. This was proselytized in America by Josef Albers, who held it was legitimate to use collaborative technicians to achieve a "machine-made" image. Alas for definitions, the early 1960s also saw the emergence of Pop art which, in embracing imagery already processed by the media, welcomed the camera as yet another tool in an artist's repertoire.

The impetus for the flurry of international activity in the late 1960s came chiefly from the Print Council of America (PCA). Formed in 1956, this body, led by Lessing Rosenwald and including practically everybody who was anybody in the American graphic art establishment, aspired to raise public consciousness about prints by fostering an appreciation that although they were multiple originals, they were nevertheless "authentic works of art."[1] Late in 1959, as a part of a well thought out national campaign, the council's first exhibition opened simultaneously in eight different locations.[2] The sixty-two exhibits included a lithograph by June Wayne, then on the brink of founding Tamarind Lithography Workshop, and one by Garo Antreasian, who was to become the shop's first master printer. To back up its broad educational program, the PCA had by 1965 sold fifty-five thousand copies of a pamphlet called *What is an Original Print?*, first edited by its lawyer Joshua Binyon Cahn, and later reprinted, revised, or augmented in various other forms.[3] The PCA's records[4] also reveal that during the first five years of its existence it canvassed other organizations aggressively, not only throughout America but also in Europe, to establish the tenets of "originality" world wide. By late 1964, as a result of extensive correspondence with Berto Lardera, Secretary General of the International Association of Plastic Arts at UNESCO, and Pierre Hautot, President of the French Chambre Syndicale de l'Estampe et du Dessin, several European bodies had also laid down definitions of "originality."[5]

Albers was already making prints by having technically precise drawings machine-engraved for him as early as 1951.[6] Apparently unwittingly, the PCA selected one of these for their second nationwide exhibition in 1962.[7] Although Tamarind broadly supported the PCA's standards and discouraged photographic imagery—it was, after all, resuscitating the hand-pulled lithograph, not photomechanical offset printing—its terms of reference were flexible enough to invite Albers to make prints at the workshop several times between 1962 and 1964. Indeed, Ken Tyler cut his teeth as a printer on the artist's "Day and Night" and "Midnight and Noon" lithographs. And when Albers was depressed by negative publicity about "originality" in the middle of 1965,[8] June Wayne assured him that his prints were originals in every sense of the word, and that there was no way for the Print Council, or anyone else for that matter, to imply that they were not. "I wouldn't fret if I were you," she wrote in answer to his letter expressing some distress. "When Balanchine creates a ballet, must he perform every leap himself?"[9] Nevertheless, when he was later discussing *White Line Squares*, a set of lithographs made at Tyler's own shop in 1966,

Albers told Henry Hopkins that Theodore Gusten, Executive Secretary of the PCA, was

> . . . a fanatic of the right rules . . . that the artist has to make the plate and I confess to him that I never touch the stone, never the rule, never the ink, it's all done by my friend Ken, but I watch him like Hell. So I claim that it is my work and Ken's, and June Wayne supported me in that way very strictly and she said no, what Albers does is absolutely his design, because he is always looking over the shoulder [of the printer]. And Gusten doesn't like that much, no, he thinks you should make the plate as the woodcutter of old style did. . . .[10]

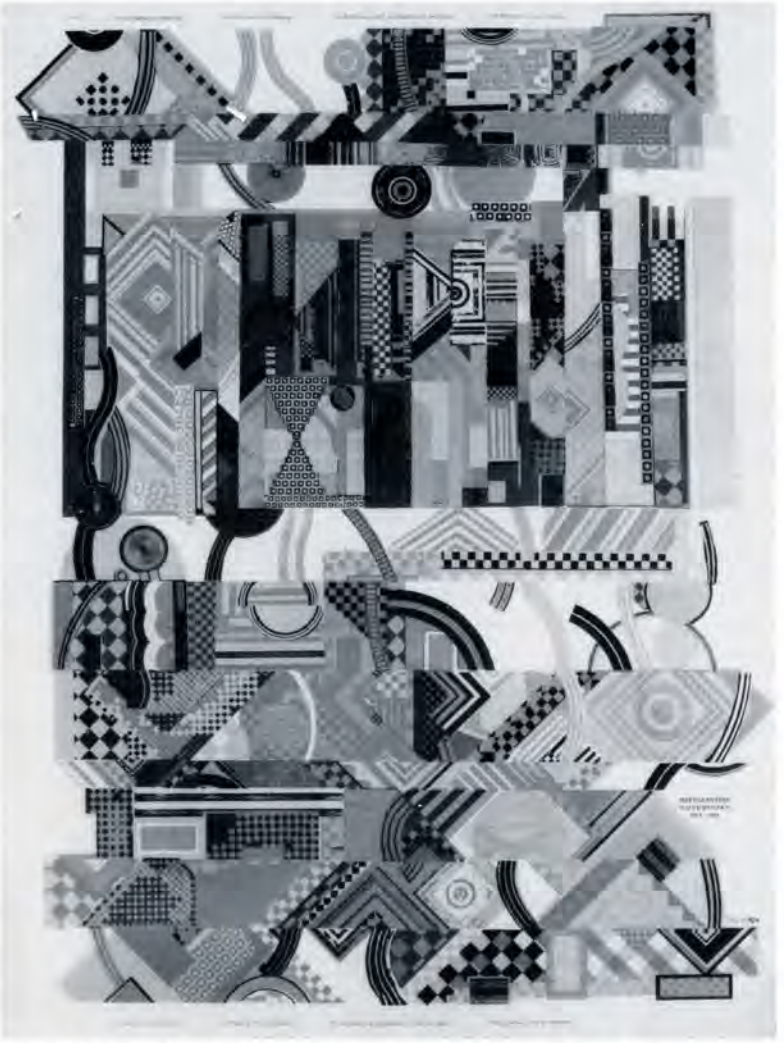
It was Albers's use of screenprinting in 1961, however, that really set the cat among the pigeons and, because it became part of a widespread development, helped to generate a crisis for the PCA concerning "originality." His first screenprint of 1961, *Allegro*, was followed by "Homage to the Square," a portfolio master-minded by two ex-students, Ives and Sillman, who directed commercial screenprinters at the Sirocco Press. It inspired Sam Wagstaff, then a curator at the Wadsworth Athenaeum, to publish the seminal, "Ten Works by Ten Painters," which came out in 1964. The rift in the lute occasioned by this publication is documented by Cahn's 1965 revision of *What Is an Original Print?* In it, innumerable examples of ignorance and confusion concerning originality are capped by references to "a leading museum in New England" which had offered the portfolio of reproductions by ten painters as "ten original plates," and to a second museum exhibiting it which had had the temerity to describe the plates as "original prints." The PCA protested to both institutions, whose directors, according to Cahn, explained "they had blundered more or less innocently." In fact, the PCA files show that C. C. Cunningham, director of the Wadsworth Athenaeum, defended the prints,[11] asserting that, with the exception of the Stuart Davis, the artists involved had all seen and passed proofs. Wagstaff recalls, that his working method was to take the design the artist had provided to the first stage, and then submit it to the artist for approval and/or adjustment.[12] He remembers that Frank Stella, given the $500 fee for his yellow-and-blue chevron based on the gouache *Rabat*, said: "Do you mean you're giving me money for this?" Robert Indiana, who used *Eternal Hexagon* as his model, told Wagstaff that screenprinting was "the perfect medium for him."

**Josef Albers** and **Kenneth Tyler** at Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Los Angeles, 1963.

Ad Reinhardt, who asked for a seamless, machined aesthetic, said: "You do it better than I do." Ellsworth Kelly, who had been rejected by ULAE on the grounds that his approach "was a denial of everything lithography is," realized an intense curved red shape on a brilliant blue ground. Roy Lichtenstein's monochrome drawing, transposed into strong primaries, became *Sandwich and Soda*, and was printed on acetate at Wagstaff's suggestion. Andy Warhol, who had already been making photo-screenprints on canvas for two years, asked if the printer could allow imperfections to accrue, so that each impression of *Birmingham Race Riot* would be slightly different, but Ives and Sillman refused, saying it had taken two years to teach Sirocco that prints in an edition should be identical.

THE WADSWORTH ATHENAEUM PORTFOLIO presented a lexicon of the styles particularly suited to the new vision of screenprinting—hard-edge shapes without the gestural handling typical of Abstract Expressionism, or photographic imagery culled from the media and intriguingly re-processed. The approach was very similar to that of British artists who found their way to the innovative London printer, Chris Prater of Kelpra Studio, between 1961 and 1964. What was so fascinating was that although they may not have satisfied the PCA's requirements for originality, the majority of the prints they made were not adequately described as reproductions either.

Richard Hamilton's *Adonis in Y-fronts* is illustrated on page 34.



**Eduardo Paolozzi.** "Experience," from the portfolio *As Is When*, 1964. Screenprint, 965 × 660 mm.

Prater set up his own business in 1957 with capital of £30, using a kitchen table as a bench, screens of pieced silk scraps, and racks of plaster lath.[13] Because he showed a genius for sophisticated experimentation, even with this primitive equipment, he rapidly attracted prestigious commercial jobs from such organizations as the Arts Council of Great Britain. In January 1963, Richard Hamilton, who had already used Prater's services for minor jobs, made his first fine art screenprint, *Adonis in Y-fronts*.[14] It incorporated vodka and underwear advertisements from *Playboy*, and a muscle man, edited by reference to the Hermes of Praxiteles. In addition to the photomechanical elements, Adonis's chest-expander was drawn by the artist on Kodatrace, while four different shades of silver for the background were printed from direct work on the screen—totalling eighteen separate inkings in all. Prater's ability caused Hamilton to suggest to the Institute of Contemporary Arts that it publish a screenprinted portfolio. As a result, twenty-four of the best artists in Britain, including the American expatriate R. B. Kitaj, were introduced to the medium in late 1963 or 1964. Eduardo Paolozzi, who had begun using Prater's services in 1962 for some two-color images—which looked simple but were devilishly tricky to print—graduated in 1964 to the portfolio *As Is When*, based on a biography of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Prater still marvels at the speed at which ideas flowed from the artist, and *As Is When* was quickly acknowledged as one of the shop's masterpieces. Working from specially-made collages, and allowing Prater considerable latitude to interpret them by knife-cut or photographic stencils as well as the inventive use of commercial zippertones, Paolozzi exhibited an extraordinary ability to think on his feet and work out his ideas in terms of the medium. *Tortured Life*, for example, was sliced into strips to become *Experience*, while spoils from sheets of related imagery were reduced photographically to infill the figure of *Wittgenstein the Soldier*. Some artists capitalized on Prater's ability in different ways: Joe Tilson, for example, created many memorable icons, stretching the imaginative ingenuity of Kelpra's brilliant cameraman, Dennis Francis. But it was Kitaj's prints which offered the greatest challenge to print council definitions, for once the artist got into his stride he provided no finished collage for Prater to work from, but instead integrated onto

one plane fragments—originally quite different in color, scale, and surface texture—drawn from a multiplicity of idiosyncratic sources. Prater, a chameleon able at will to take on the coloring of his surroundings, acted on Kitaj's oral or handwritten instructions, plus his critical response to repeated proofing. *The Defects of Its Qualities*, which won a prize at Bradford International Print Biennale in 1968, was put together primarily as an abstraction, but can also be interpreted as a commentary on print. The title comes from P. G. Hamerton, one of the nineteenth century's best-known commentators on graphic art. The image juxtaposes a printed photograph of Picasso, a printed textile, and a paragraph of printed text about Braque, whose printed signature lies above printed wrapping paper (as subtle as a Reinhardt), next to a printed registration form for a prostitute, which jostles the title page from the Print Council of America's pamphlet *What Is An Original Print?* Many other collage prints were made long distance by post while the artist was teaching in Berkeley, California. By 1969, Prater was so attuned to Kitaj's thought processes that he was able to assemble such complex images as *Die gute alte Zeit*, which required eighty-one separate operations. These prints, of course, aroused the same ire in Europe as had similar prints in America. A furor broke out at the 1965 Paris Biennale over six of the prints Prater had made for the Institute of Contemporary Arts, and which had been submitted by the British Council.[15] The French, who listed the screenprints as *serigraphies* under the general heading of *gravure*, denounced them in an official statement and insisted that they be separated from the traditional prints. Since France had just banned photomechanics, one can well imagine the dismay occasioned by Kelpra's first trichromatic halftone for Peter Blake's *Beachboys*, Allen Jones's *Dream T-shirt*, and Richard Smith's progressively enlarged cigarette packs entitled *PM Zoom*.


**R. B. Kitaj.** *The Defects of Its Qualities*, 1967. Screenprint with collage, 900 × 610 mm.

This stale biennale issue was still being debated in the *Guardian* over a year later in an article which aroused a spirited defence from Paolozzi and Jones.[16] Paolozzi argued that just as the iconography of the sculptor could be extended beyond the traditional scope by industrial methods, so commercial processes could "provide a complexity and range of possibility impossible by normal art/craft printing. . . ." Jones cogently reasoned that a society to protect art's boundaries "was intrinsically in opposition to creative activity" and that the crux of originality in printmaking was to conceive the print in the medium of execution.

Although some artists were violently opposed to the new developments in screenprinting, Michael Rothenstein, long admired for his bold relief prints, wrote several elegant appreciations of Prater's work.[17] Despite differentiating between the coolly impersonal camera-aided image and the warmer one made by the artist's hand, he concluded that Prater's contribution was "one we could ill afford to lose merely upon the strictures of an out dated definition. . . ." Nevertheless, because

he posed the problems from several points of view, the artists making screenprints enjoyed a few jokes at his expense. Kitaj signed some of his letters to Prater "M. Rothenstein" (and others "Stanley W. Hayter"),[18] and Paolozzi gave the title *Formika-formikel* (Formica for Michael) to one of the sheets in his loose-leaf book *Moonstrips Empire News;* it showed an elephant of texture-patterned plastic doing a delicate balancing act amidst brightly colored baubles.

Eventually, it became impossible to ignore Kelpra's achievements. When in 1972 Richard S. Field mounted an exhibition to chart the history of screenprinting,[19] no less than one-third of the contemporary exhibits were made at Prater's studio, and the following year the same historian expressed the view that Prater had "almost singlehandedly . . . metamorphosed screenprinting into a fine art."[20] In London, the Arts Council had already given Kelpra a major showing at the Hayward Gallery in 1970.[21] Ten years later, after Rose and Chris Prater had presented all their printer's proofs to the Tate Gallery (having decided they were taking too much room under their bed), a second London showing of Prater's work was held in celebration of this gift.[22] By then, the Queen—showing how thoroughly respectable photoscreenprinting had become—had awarded the printer the Order of the British Empire.[23]

EARLY IN 1966, Carl Zigrosser, the PCA's vice-president, sent out an S.O.S. warning that an important decision had to be made at the April annual general meeting regarding the definition of "originality."[24] Its integrity, claimed Zigrosser, was "being whittled away by special interests and ignored by artists who cannot or will not see the principles involved." Among those cited by Zigrosser as having undermined the PCA's work were Albers, "Victor Vasarelly (*sic*) and others of the 'op art' group," Andy Warhol, the artists of the Wadsworth Athenaeum portfolio, as well as "many large editions of silkscreen prints by Paolozzi who prepared a drawing or collage which was photomechanically transferred to the screen and printed by an expert craftsman." The last straw, however, had clearly been a recent exhibition announcement from New York's Museum of Modern Art, which had referred to photomechanical screenprints as "original prints."[25] This semantic lapse was defended by the curator William S. Lieberman—a founding member of the PCA, no less—who, in response to an urgent phone call, told Gusten "he saw no reason not to class such prints as original prints."

Arguing at length that a print for which the artist allowed others to make photomechanical screens could not be termed an original print, Zigrosser rhetorically asked why the makers or publishers of such prints could not honestly call them reproductions and, irritably answering his own question, opined: "It is because there is an age-old prestige to original prints, and they are fraudulently trying to cash in on that difference." Predicting that the vogue for "pop" and "op" art would see more and more such prints, Zigrosser examined some options for PCA action. One was "no compromise: to stick to the original definition, denounce any use of photomechanical means, and remain "ideologically and semantically pure . . . knowing full well that any compromise leads to further compromise and eventually [to] no standards at all." But, he conceded, rigidity of principle might permit the PCA to "remain pure, but . . . end up by becoming a bunch of 'old fogies'." Perhaps photomechanical methods could therefore be accepted as legitimate in certain circumstances—if, for example, the printmaker created a design for the express purpose of making the print. Alternatively, the established definition could be retained and another name invented to cover photomechanical prints.

"No doubt there are other alternatives," concluded Zigrosser—who clearly couldn't think of any. "Please put on your thinking cap and send your ideas to Mr. Gusten as soon as possible."[26] □

1 From the preface of *American Prints Today / 1959* [exhibition catalogue] (New York: PCA, 1959).

2 The show opened simultaneously in September 1959 in Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington; and moved on to exhibition in Chicago, Detroit, Hartford, Manchester, Memphis, Minneapolis, Norfolk, and St. Louis between November 1959 and January 1960. The 62 exhibits were chosen from 639 artists who submitted over 2,050 works. Artists were asked to supply twenty of their print to the PCA, which sold them at prices ranging from $22.50 to $123.50.

3 Cahn first edited the pamphlet for the PCA in 1961. It was reprinted in 1964 and appeared in *New York State Bar Journal* (vol. 37, no. 5) in December 1965. A revised and augmented text in book form by Carl Zigrosser and Christa M. Gaehde, *A Guide to the Collecting and Care of Original Prints,* was published in America by Crown and in London by Arco in 1966.

4 On 19 August 1981, the PCA gave records dating from 1956–1981 to the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

5 The definition of an original print was agreed at the Third International Congress of Artists, Vienna, September 1960. In 1963, the UK National Committee of the International Association of Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers (Association Internationale des Arts Plastiques) reprinted the definition with a few "additional explanatory points and modifications of the Vienna definition" (which, as a matter of fact, almost completely negated it). The French National Committee on Engraving under Marcel Guiot at the International Exposition of 1937 had ratified the judgment of the French Customs Service that only prints "conceived and executed entirely by hand by the same artist shall be considered as original engravings, prints and lithographs, regardless of the technique employed, with the exclusion of any and all mechanical or photomechanical processes." On 18 December 1964, a meeting of La Chambre Syndicale de l'Estampe et du Dessin endorsed this earlier definition and circulated a report of its proceedings in *Nouvelles de l'Estampe* in Paris in February 1965.

6 See catalogue nos. 78–94 in Jo Miller, *Josef Albers Prints 1915–1970* [exhibition catalogue] (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1973).

7 *Duo F* of 1959, described as "inkless intaglio," was shown in *American Prints Today / 1962*, which opened in three successive phases, each having eight locations, between September 1962 and January 1963. The show included 55 prints from 48 artists, selling from $40 to $200. There were a number of lithographs from ULAE and Tamarind, the former including Jasper Johns's *Coathanger*, the latter two by George Miyasaki (then a Tamarind printer), and *Skies of Venice I* by Adja Yunkers.

8 Katherine Kuh in *Saturday Review*, 26 June 1965.

9 Wayne to Albers, 6 July 1965. Albers file (1963–1971), Tamarind Archives, University of New Mexico.

10 Typescript of recorded conversation, Albers with Hopkins (then of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art) and Ken Tyler in New Haven, Conn., undated, but probably mid-1966 (courtesy of Ken Tyler).

11 Cunningham to Gusten, 12 April 1966. PCA archives (cited note 4).

12 Sam Wagstaff, in conversation with the author, New York, 9 March 1983.

13 Prater actually set up shop as a commercial screenprinter in partnership with his wife Rose Kelly (hence Kelpra) in late 1957, but his first workbook (six of which he gave to the Tate Gallery Archive in 1986) dates from 1958. Prater made his first artist's print for Gordon House in 1961 and went over to full-time production of artists' prints in 1963.

14 As early as 1956, Hamilton had made a half-tone screenprint himself from the tiny collage *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* Now accepted as one of the seminal works of Pop art, few realize that this collage was created for reproduction in the catalogue and on the poster for the exhibition "This Is Tomorrow."

15 Fourth Biennale of Paris, 29 September–3 November 1965.

16 M. G. McNay, "Minting Prints," *Guardian*, 15 February 1967. The artists' letters were both printed on 6 March 1967 under the heading "Minting Prints: The Meaning of Originality."

**Chris Prater** of Kelpra Studio (left) with German artist **Gerd Winner.**

17 Michael Rothenstein tackled the subject in *Frontiers of Printmaking: New Aspects of Relief Printing* (London and New York: 1966). A reprint of an unidentified periodical article by Rothenstein entitled "Look, No Hands!" is among the PCA records (cited note 4). Although the introduction to the article states that it had appeared previously in *Art and Artists*, I have been unable to trace it.

18 Hayter, the great advocate for original engraving, defined no less than five degrees of originality in chapter 11 of *About Prints* (London: 1962), 123–35.

19 Richard S. Field, *Silkscreen: History of a Medium* [exhibition catalogue] (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971).

20 Field in the introduction to *The Prints of Richard Hamilton* [exhibition catalogue] (Middletown, Conn.: Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, 1973).

21 R. Alley, et al, *Kelpra Prints* [exhibition catalogue] (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, Hayward Gallery, 1970).

22 Pat Gilmour, et al, *Kelpra Studio: An Exhibition to Commemorate the Rose and Chris Prater Gift* [exhibition catalogue] (London: Tate Gallery, 1980). My introduction, pp. 11–48, is the longest text yet to appear on Kelpra.

23 The citation for Prater's O.B.E. read "For Services to Art" ("whoever he is," quipped Prater disrespectfully).

24 Zigrosser to present and former members of the board of directors, members of the dealers' advisory committee, and members of the artists' advisory committee, 20 January 1966. A four-page memorandum in the PCA archives (cited note 4).

25 The MoMA exhibition announcement was for *Prints in Series*, 17 January-10 March 1966.

26 There is no space to discuss the legislation requiring full disclosure in the description of prints or the endless debates about originality which have continued since 1966. However, Zigrosser's book, presumably embodying the PCA's thinking on originality, which came out after the crisis, bewailed what he saw as gimmickry in contemporary work, and accused the artists of falling back on photomechanical processes because they were "impatient of the 'drudgery' involved" in handwork. His chapter on "The Historical Background of Originality," commented that "'Mass-Man' would not balk at mass-produced images," and he ended with the plea that the term "original print" be reserved "to describe the masterpieces of our own age."

**Richard Hamilton.** *Adonis in Y-fronts*, 1963. Screenprint, 690 × 845 mm.

# ENDANGERED SPECIES

## *Richard Hamilton*

IT HAS LONG BEEN A WORTHY CUSTOM that artist-printmakers stay close to the press. No doubt the ball on Rembrandt's palm was often smooth as parchment and his lifeline was ingrained with ink; the tradition of the craft lives on, but the old practice of the artist-printer is now exceptional.

Maybe Picasso never laid a ground nor inked a plate, but his stature as a master of the medium of etching—as of every other medium—is undisputed. Picasso, in common with many other artists of the School of Paris, dropped into Roger Lacourière's atelier to avail himself of its resources, and his later association with Aldo Crommelynck would not have encouraged him to become proficient in the delicate art of depositing a resin ground and melting it to the plate. As a student, I dreamt of owning a press and loved the idea of pulling a star wheel; now I see great advantage in being an itinerant printmaker. Acquiring the wide range of skills required in many different print media would be absurdly time-consuming, if not impossible. My habit is to go to the craftsmen who can best serve the requirements of any given project.

In the course of a search for great technicians, I noticed that the most admirable print craftsmen were often those who had been involved in some reproductive endeavor. The Dietz screenprint shop at Lengmoos, near Munich, was founded with the intention of manufacturing reproductions of eighteenth-century Bavarian landscapes—astonishing facsimiles achieved through a multiplicity of screenprintings on canvas, with all the crazing and impasto faithfully echoed. Working with Dietz opened possibilities for a richness of surface that I had not supposed possible. Christopher Prater of Kelpra Studios developed an uncanny flair with a knife while cutting stencils to translate the complex collages of Eduardo Paolozzi into printable form; he was stretched beyond credibility.

Aldo Crommelynck has an extraordinary repertoire of skills, and I had no reason to question where they came from—supposing that they were an inheritance from Lacourière. After some years of close acquaintance, I began to learn that Aldo had spent a great deal of time on a few breathtaking achievements in the field of reproduction. He created an astonishing colour print from intaglio plates after a pastel by Picasso, another from a Picasso gouache, and accomplished similar feats with unlikely sources from Braque. These extraordinary labours confirmed my conviction that the great inventor-craftsmen in the print world polish their genius on the mundane task of translating between media. Making plausible a semblance of marks which could only be expected from hand application is a most testing and educative labour.

COLLOTYPE AND HELIOGRAVURE are two exquisite processes which have been relegated to a backwater of art publishing; their status is seen as "reproductive" because the means by which the image is fixed to the printing element is by exposure of a light-sensitive gelatine. Yet the most subtle tonal gradations ever pressed from copper are to be found in the heliogravure prints made at the end of the nineteenth century.

No pundit of the mystique of stone lithography can approach the control available to a great collotype plate-maker like Heinz Haffner from Stuttgart. No press I have used is as capable of the interactive response practised by Werner Kind (Haffner's printer-partner) on a collotype machine. Haffner and Kind reached retirement age six years ago, without

*Continued on page 94.*

# THE RISE OF THE *LIVRE D'ARTISTE* IN AMERICA
## Reflections on *21 Etchings and Poems* and the Early 1960s

*Lanier Graham*

SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WORKS in the history of Western art have been illustrated books—an art form that has been with us for thousands of years.[1] A comprehensive historical survey would begin with creations of our tribal ancestors, and continue through the ancient world and the illuminated manuscripts of medieval Europe to the printed masterpieces of the Renaissance, Baroque, and Romantic eras. In modern times the traditional concept of literal illustration has been joined by the new concept of metaphorical evocation.

The work of the modern era was presented brilliantly by Philip Hofer and Eleanor Garvey in *The Artist and the Book, 1860–1960,*[2] an exhibition catalogue which has become the standard reference for what are widely considered the most important illustrated books of this one-hundred-year period. Books illustrated or "illuminated" with original prints by painter-printmakers were an integral part of the development of early Modernism in Europe. Important work was done throughout Western Europe, particularly in the England of William Morris and the France of Ambroise Vollard.[3]

The books which eventually would most influence American developments were produced in Paris. This visual-literary tradition took on its modern form in the 1890s and has continued through the twentieth century. Books by such artists as Bonnard, Maillol, Matisse, Kirchner, Rouault, Arp, Ernst, and Miró rank with their work in any other medium of expression.[4]

Few American books are illustrated in Hofer and Garvey, however, since a continuous tradition of fine books by major artists did not develop in North America during the first half of the twentieth century. Noble efforts to transplant the European tradition to the United

***21 Etchings and Poems***
as catalogued by Eleanor Garvey in
*The Artist and the Book, 1860–1960.*

21 etchings (with text) printed in black: 1 each by Pierre Alechinsky ("Poem" by Dotremont, signed Alechinsky on the plate); Fred Becker ("To Yeats in Rapallo" by T. Weiss, signed F. Becker on the plate); Ben-Zion ("The Faithful One" by David Ignatow, signed Ben-Zion on the plate); Letterio Calapai ("To a Poor Old Woman" by William Carlos Williams); Willem de Kooning ("Revenge" by Harold Rosenberg); Peter Grippe ("The Hand that Signed the Paper Felled a City" by Dylan Thomas); Salvador Grippi ("Mind" by Richard Wilbur); S. W. Hayter ("Poem" by Jacques-Henry Lévesque, signed Hayter on the plate); Franz Kline ("Poem" by Frank O'Hara); Jacques Lipchitz "Gedicht" by Hans Sahl); Ezio Martinelli ("The Blue Waterfall" by Horace Gregory, signed Ezio Martinelli on the plate); Ben Nicholson ("Tenement" by Sir Herbert Read); I. Rice Pereira ("Omega" by George Reavey); Helen Phillips ("Poem" by André Verdet, signed Phillips on the plate); André Racz ("Aubade-Harlem" by Thomas Merton); Kurt Roesch ("Underworld" by Alastair Reid, signed K. Roesch on the plate); Attilio Salemme ("Tiresias" by Morris Weisenthal); Louis Schanker ("Most Often in the Night" by Harold Norse, signed with initial S in a circle on the plate); Karl Schrag ("Fiercely, Lady, Do We Ride" by David Lougee); Esteban Vicente ("Nostalgia" by Peter Viereck); Adja Yunkers ("Praise to the End!" by Theodore Roethke); all signed in pencil on margin; texts etched from authors' originals handwritten on copperplates; page size $19^3/_4 \times 16^3/_4$ inches.

This essay is dedicated to Eleanor Garvey and Riva Castleman, who guided my understanding of the history of illustrated books when I started to study the subject in the 1960s.

States took various forms during the 1930s. Books such as Rockwell Kent's *Moby Dick* (1930) and Thomas Hart Benton's *We, The People* (1932) continued the Anglo-American tradition of artist-illustrators using photomechanical reproduction to bring well-illustrated books to a relatively wide audience. Those books were not *livres d'artistes*, according to the usual definition: books with images which are fine prints, not reproductions. The *livre d'artiste* (also known as the *livre de luxe* and the *livre de peintre*) did not take root in the United States at that time.

Two important experiments were made by George Macy in New York. Under his direction, the Limited Editions Club published *Lysistrata* (1934) with etchings by Picasso, and *Ulysses* (1935) with etchings by Matisse. Even so, the idea of books by European artists for Americans did not catch on. Neither did Monroe Wheeler's effort to have American artists make books for European collectors. His publication of *The Fables of Aesop* (1931), with illustrations by Calder, did not start a trend. Other efforts during the 1940s were equally isolated.[5]

During the 1950s, a growing number of American artists were determined to transplant the modern tradition of the *livre d'artiste* to American soil. One of the early efforts, organized by Adja Yunkers at the University of New Mexico, was *Prints in the Desert* (1950), with prints, poetry, and essays. It was long, slow work, with little hope of sales. Nevertheless, artists of the woodcut, such as Leonard Baskin and Antonio Frasconi, and of the lithograph, such as June Wayne, did want to make books. Indeed, it was Wayne's work on John Donne's *Songs and Sonets* (1959) that "led directly to her proposal to the Ford Foundation,"[6] the proposal which generated Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles. From TLW would come such outstanding illustrated books as Romas Viesulas's *Toro Desconocido* (1960), printed by Garo Antreasian; and Robert Hansen's *Satan's Saint* (1964), printed in large part by Kenneth Tyler.[7]

In these early years of the American print renaissance, however, books from the West Coast had limited influence. The more influential *livres d'artistes* were published in New York during the 1960s. The most significant illustrated book in this early stage of contemporary sensibility was *21 Etchings and Poems* (1960). This remarkable portfolio of pictured poems has had a curious history. Among those who know this book well, it is regarded with almost mythological reverence, while for many it is a title that has almost been forgotten. Morris Weisenthal, the publisher of this illuminated book, recently recalled in conversation[8] how it all began; my questions are in italics:

*Tell me how it all got started, and how the process of choosing poets and printmakers developed over the years. I know about the printing technique, because I discussed it with Hayter, but tell me about the conception, and editing, and publishing.*

Well, it all started with Hayter, really, and the enthusiasm he stimulated in all of us. Most of us who were there, at Atelier 17, did not realize how expressive printmaking can be. I didn't spend a lot of time there myself, nobody did. But just being there and making a plate or two was a very stimulating experience. Anyway, after he went back to Paris, a number of people wanted to keep the workshop going, and one of the projects was what ended up as *21 Etchings and Poems*. The main idea was to join the best possible poems and the best possible etchings as a portfolio of fine prints. Peter Grippe was at the center of it all during the early phases of the project, and then I was at the center during the middle and final phases.

*Did you decide which artists would go best with which poets, or did they decide among themselves, or what?*

Well, you have to remember that it was a long, drawn-out process. First Grippe, then I, had the final say on each combination, but we didn't do that in a vacuum. There was lots of back-and-forth, give-and-take, over a lot of years. Sometimes it would be a poet who wanted to associate with a particular artist. Sometimes it was an artist who wanted to work with a particular poet. Sometimes, two of these guys would get together on their own, then make a suggestion to me. Sometimes, I'd suggest a combination and those two people would get together and select the poem, and so on.

*Did every poet write down his own words?*

Yes, almost every one. Except for a few who couldn't do it. It was a little bit tricky, you know. . . . One of the poets just couldn't do it, so that artist did it for him. But almost all of us did it ourselves.

*I know almost all the artists also did their own work on the plates, but there's a rumor that at least*

*one of the etchings is a photo-etching taken from a drawing.*

Yes, that's true. The Kline was done that way, but that's the only one.

*How much was the book when you published it?*

$300. It's gone up a little since then, hasn't it?

*Yes, about a hundred times that amount now. The highest-priced plate, the de Kooning, is going at auction for about $3,000 to $4,000.*

Well, I wish I had one of those left. But I only have some of the less famous ones.

*What is the date of the printing?*

I opened this gallery in 1954. The printing started about a year later, in 1955, then I had them printed as I needed them. I showed a group before they were all finished, about '56.

*Tell me about the printers.*

Anderson and Lamb, two guys in Brooklyn. Good printers. These artists would look at the proofs I sent them, then say yes or no. I let the artists keep a proof or two, and each of the printers kept one or two, so besides the edition of fifty there are a number of proofs around.

*Any idea how many?*

No, not really.

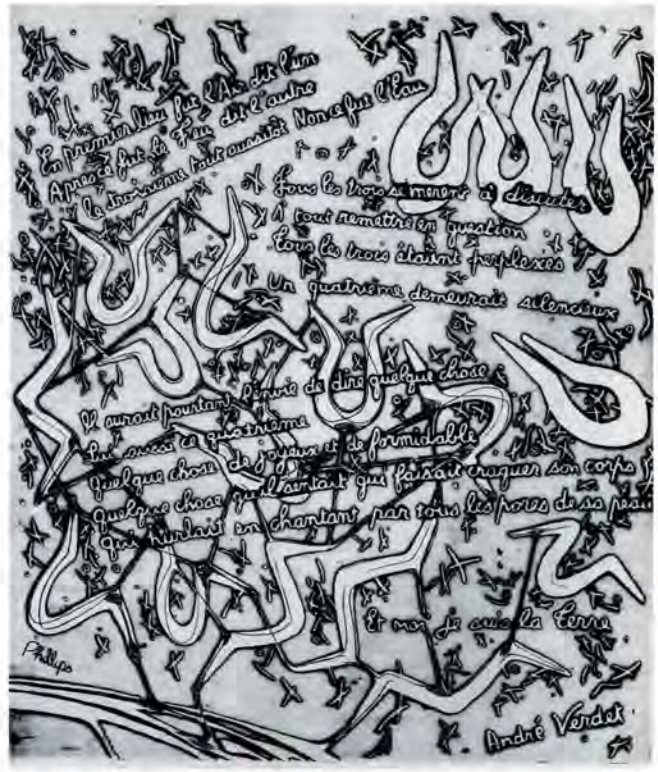
*Tell me about the so-called introduction by [James Johnson] Sweeney.*

It never happened. He was supposed to write one . . . but he never delivered an introduction. . . .

*All the printing was finished by 1958? All by Anderson and Lamb?*

Yes, that sounds right. Except for the guy who printed his own plate. Let me look up his name . . . yes, it was [André] Racz at Columbia. But there wasn't really a market for all this until a few years later. I didn't bring out the whole thing until 1960. . . .

THE ORIGINAL VISION behind *21 Etchings and Poems* was that of Peter Grippe. His idea, in 1951, when he took over the directorship of Atelier 17 in New York, was to assemble a collection of the best work being done on those etching presses, and to publish them with contemporary work by invited poets from America and Europe. It was natural for the international spirit of Hayter's print shop to extend to an international selection of poets. One of the most interesting aspects of Grippe's concept is that each page is a technical and formal synthesis of a poem and its "illustration."



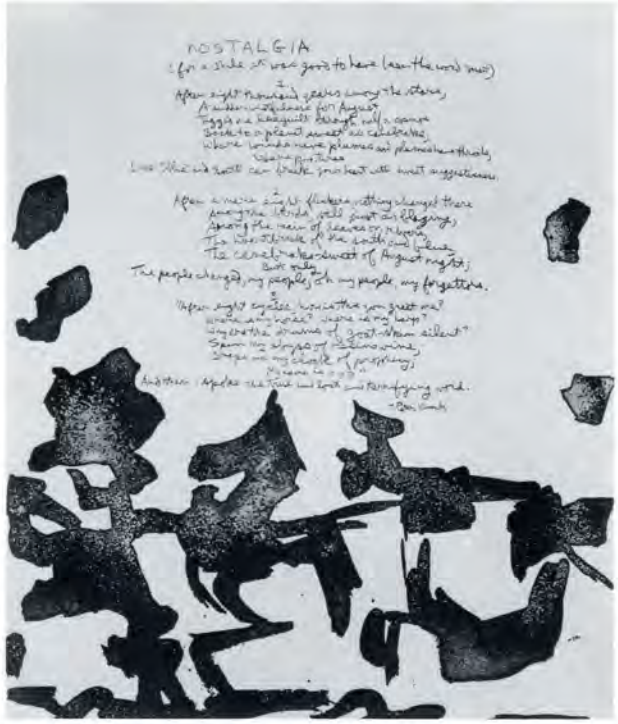

**Helen Phillips** and **André Verdet,** "Poem," from *21 Etchings and Poems,* 1960. Intaglio, sheet 502 × 415 mm. Courtesy, Associated American Artists, New York.

Grippe wanted to make use of Atelier 17's research into William Blake's "secret" method of combining the written words of a poem with its visual illumination. How Blake reversed his text is a question that has puzzled print historians for many years. Working with Joan Miró and the poet Ruthven Todd, Hayter discovered the method he believed Blake used:

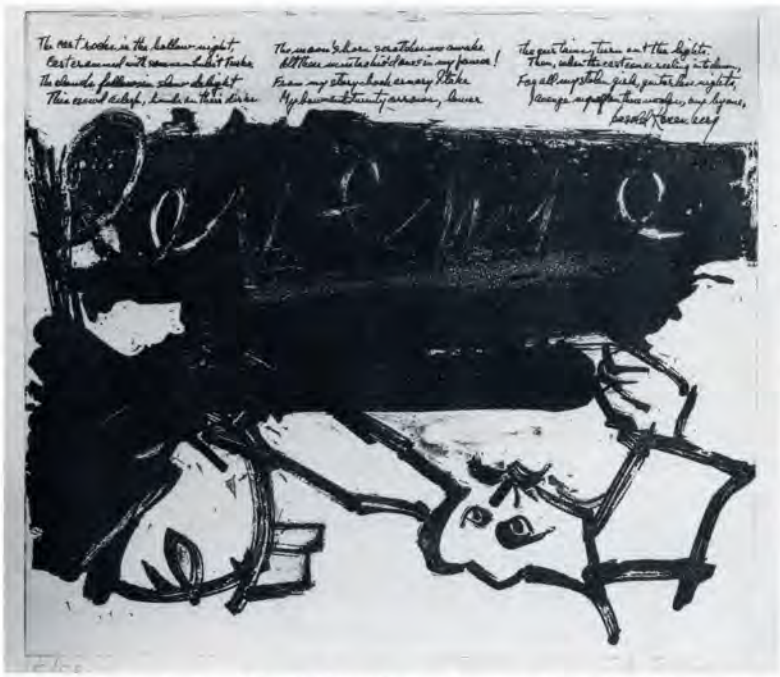
> A poem was written in a solution of asphaltum and resin in benzene upon a sheet of paper previously coated with a mixture of gum arabic and soap. . . A clean [copper] plate was well heated and the paper laid upon it and passed through the press. The back of the paper was then soaked with water and peeled off, leaving the resist on the copper in reverse. The designs were then drawn with a brush and asphaltum solution by the artist.[9]

The work was then bitten as a relief etching. This is the method Grippe decided to employ for *21 Etchings and Poems.* The process made it possible for the poems to be written in the poet's hand.

Grippe's dream took almost a decade to realize. During the mid-fifties, after the closing of Atelier 17, Grippe continued to work on the project in his own studio. The edition was printed by Anderson and Lamb in Brooklyn




**Esteban Vicente** and **Peter Viereck,** "Nostalgia," from *21 Etchings and Poems,* 1960. Intaglio, sheet 502 × 415 mm. Courtesy, Associated American Artists, New York.



**Willem de Kooning** and **Harold Rosenberg,** "Revenge," from *21 Etchings and Poems,* 1960. Intaglio, sheet 502 × 415 mm. Courtesy, Associated American Artists, New York.

in an edition of fifty impressions, with an unknown number of proofs.[10] The printing started in 1955 and was finished during 1958. When *21 Etchings and Poems* finally was published, it was recognized as a monumental achievement.[11] In a second conversation,[12] Weisenthal reflected on the influence of this powerful portfolio:

*. . . Your book needs to have more written about it. It's important both for what it is, as the first major* livre d'artiste *in America, and for what it inspired. I understand from Hayter and others that your book was a direct inspiration for both* Stones *by Larry Rivers and Frank O'Hara, and* 1¢ LIFE.[13]

Well, yes, all that is more or less correct. Hayter should know. He inspired so many of the artists who were involved with both *Etchings and Poems* and *1¢ LIFE*. Some smaller projects were done during the forties. George Wittenborn did a book during the war. And Hayter did an extraordinary collection of poems with Miró and my friend Todd just after the war.

*Yes, I know. Hayter told me the Miró work was the prototype for Etchings and Poems.*[14]

That's right! Those beautiful sheets inspired all of us: myself, Grippe, de Kooning, Kline, Dylan Thomas, all of us. Those sheets still come up at auction now and again. As for *Stones,* that's true, too. Tanya Grosman heard about the prints when they first appeared, and came over from Long Island to see them. She said she wanted to make books like this, if she could find the right artists. Well, she certainly did, didn't she? First there was Rivers working with O'Hara, then Rauschenberg, and so on.[15]

*1¢ LIFE?* Yes, that's true. That energetic Chinese poet, [Walasse] Ting, came to see our prints early on. He was so excited by what he saw that he drew a huge poem all over the pages of my guest book!

*Yes, Ting is a very energetic painter-poet. And Tanya Grosman was a brilliant publisher. What you published, what she published, what June Wayne and company published, and what Kornfeld published, was the start of the* livre d'artiste *in America.*

AS THE AMERICAN PRINT RENAISSANCE developed during the 1960s, it was primarily a lithographic renaissance. For a number of years, etching tended to be left in the dust. Except for those particularly interested in etching, the "good old days" of New York's

Atelier 17 became a vague pattern of distant memories. Nevertheless, the concept of a book as a major work of art took root. In large part, this happened because of *21 Etchings and Poems*, and the illustrated books it inspired during the early 1960s.

Looking back, from the end of the twentieth century, one finds that the tradition of the *livre d'artiste* is alive and well in America. Many major painter-printmakers became deeply involved with the art of the book. The quality of the commitment was such that any number of books created since the 1960s hold their own beside other famous masterpieces in the century-old history of the *livre d'artiste*. Among the best-known books of the 1970s is the first book illustrated by Jasper Johns. Working with essays written by Samuel Beckett in 1972, Johns illustrated *Foirades/Fizzles* with thirty-three etchings (published by Petersburg Press, London, 1976). Another important book of the 1970s is Robert Rauschenberg's *Traces Suspectes en Surfaces* with a text (in French) by Alain Robbe-Grillet, on which the artist worked from 1972 to 1978, when it was published in New York by ULAE. In this lithographic work, the text has also been rendered, by means of lithographic calligraphy, in the writer's hand. From the decade of the 1980s came such masterpieces as Jim Dine's *Apocalypse, The Revelation of Saint John the Divine* (San Francisco: Arion Press, 1982) and Robert Motherwell's *El Negro* (Bedford Village, N.Y.: Tyler Graphics, 1983). In the thirty years since 1960 both the *livre d'artiste* and its offspring, the artist's book, have become organic parts of contemporary art.[16] □

1 The bibliography of illustrated books is very large. The most comprehensive history is H. D. L. Vervliet, ed., *The Book through Five Thousand Years* (New York: Praeger, 1972). For the European tradition of the last thousand years, the best general surveys include David Bland, *A History of Book Illustration: The Illuminated Manuscript and the Printed Book* (London: 1958; Berkeley: 1959); and John Harthan, *The History of the Illustrated Book: The Western Tradition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1981). For the modern tradition in Europe and America, see note 2 below. The full history of the illustrated book in America has yet to be written; for two excellent partial surveys, see Joseph Blumenthal, *The Printed Book in America* (Boston: Godine, 1977); and G. W. R. Ward, ed., *The American Illustrated Book in the Nineteenth Century* (Winterthur, Del.: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1987).

2 The introduction to this catalogue was written by Philip Hofer, who, with Eleanor Garvey, also selected the exhibition and donated many of the books to Harvard College. The exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston was drawn largely from the book collection of Harvard College and the MFA. The catalogue was written by Garvey. The table of contents for *21 Etchings and Poems*, which appears on the first page of this article, was compiled by her and published in *The Artist & The Book*, p. 101; the catalogue itself contains a separate entry for each of the twenty-one artists. The first edition of that catalogue was published in 1961 by Harvard College and the Museum of Fine Arts; they published a second edition in 1972; and that edition was reissued by Hacker Art Books, New York, in 1982.

3 A comprehensive history of the *livre d'artiste* (for which there is no adequate English translation) has yet to be written, although the general outlines of its development as a new kind of art object are well known. When such a book is written, the early chapters will focus on Morris and Vollard. For Morris, see H. Halliday Sparling, *The Kelmscott Press and William Morris, Master-Craftsman* (London: 1924); and Paul Needham, et al., *William Morris and the Art of the Book* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1976). For Vollard, see Una E. Johnson, *Ambroise Vollard Éditeur* (New York: Wittenborn, 1944; 2nd ed., New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977). The concept of the *livre d'artiste*, as that term is used today, was defined about one hundred years ago by the work of Vollard, then continued by other great publishers of the first half of the twentieth century, particularly Kahnweiler, the Cassirers, Skira, Tériade, Maeght, and Cramer. Until the end of the nineteenth century, illustrated books usually were regarded as a minor art form and, as a rule, major artists did not participate. Thanks to these and like-minded publishers, major artists did become involved with the art of the book. By the time the concept of the *livre d'artiste* reached American artists in the middle years of the twentieth century, the illustrated book had become a major vehicle of artistic expression.

4 The extensive literature that has been devoted to the modern illustrated book is made up primarily of exhibition catalogues and sales catalogues, most of which focus on individual artists, publishers, and art-historical eras. That bibliography is too large to be recorded here. The bibliography of general surveys is not large, however, and serves as a useful introduction for those who wish to study the subject further; following are the titles used most often by collectors, curators, dealers, and booksmiths.

The bibliography most readily available is in Hofer and Garvey (cited note 2). The most comprehensive bibliography is Raymond Mahé, *Bibliographie des livres de luxe de 1900–1928* (4 vol., Paris: Editions Kieffer, 1931–1943). The following catalogues are listed in chronological order:

Monroe Wheeler, ed., *Modern Painters and Sculptors as Illustrators* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1936 and later editions); Frank Crowninshield, *The Frank Crowninshield Collection of Modern French Illustrated Books* (New York: Parke-Bernet Galleries, 1943); *An Exhibition of French Book Illustration, 1895–1945* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, [1945]); Albert Skira, *Anthologie du livres illustré par les peintres et sculpteurs de*

*L'École de Paris* (Geneva: Skira, [1946]); *French Art of the Book* (San Francisco: California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1949); *Modern French Illustrated Books* (New York: Parke-Bernet Galleries, 19 November 1951); Erardo Aeschlimann, *Bibliografia del libro d'arte Italiano, 1940–1952* (Rome: [1952]); Nicolas Rauch, *Les Peintres et le livre* (Geneva: Rauch, [1957]); E. W. Kornfeld, *Illustrierte Bücher* (Bern: Klipstein and Kornfeld, 13–14 May 1958); *Modern Illustrated Books from the Collection of Louis E. Stern* (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, [1959]); H. P. Kraus, *The Illustrated Book* (New York: Kraus Gallery, 1964); Eleanor M. Garvey and Peter A. Wick, *The Arts of the French Book, 1900–1965: Illustrated Books of the School of Paris* (Dallas: Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1967); W. J. Strachen, *The Artist and the Book in France: The 20th Century Livre d'Artiste* (New York: Wittenborn, 1969); Gordon N. Ray, *The Illustrator and the Book in England from 1790 to 1914* (New York: 1972); Susi R. Bloch, *The Book Stripped Bare, A Survey of Books by 20th Century Artists and Writers: An Exhibition of Books from the Arthur Cohen and Elaine Lustig Cohen Collection* (Hempstead, N.Y.: Hofstra Univ., 1973); E. W. Kornfeld, *Les Peintres et le livre* (Bern: Kornfeld and Klipstein, 13 June 1974); Breon Mitchell, *Beyond Illustration: The Livre d'Artiste in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Lilly Library, Indiana Univ., 1976); Antoine Curon, *Le Livre et l'artiste: Tendances du livre illustré Français, 1967–1976* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1977); Riva Castleman, *Modern Artists as Illustrators / Artistas Modernos como Ilustradores* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1981); Gordon N. Ray, *The Art of the French Illustrated Book, 1700 to 1914*. 2 vol. (New York: 1982); C. Hogben and R. Watson, ed., *From Manet to Hockney: Modern Artists' Illustrated Books* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1985); Harriett Watts and Carl Haenlein, *Das Buch Des Künstlers* (Hannover: Kestner-Gesellschaft, 1989); Donna Stein, *Contemporary Illustrated Books: Word and Image, 1967–1988* (New York: Independent Curators, 1990).

5 Near the end of World War II, two of the earliest American *livres d'artistes* were published in New York: Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Sonnets of Orpheus*, with nine engravings and etchings by Kurt Roesch (New York: Wittenborn, [1944]); and Meyer Schapiro, trans., *The Myth of Oedipus*, with six etchings by Kurt Seligmann (New York: Durlacher Brothers, 1944). S. W. Hayter had created several *livres d'artistes* in Paris during the 1930s before moving to New York in 1940. There he established the American Atelier 17 and encouraged many forms of printmaking, including the art of the book. Twenty or thirty artists could work simultaneously in his workshop. Among them were many European Surrealists and some young Americans who later became famous as Abstract Expressionists; the list includes Antreasian, Calder, Chagall, Kadish, de Kooning, Lasansky, Lipchitz, Masson, Matta, Miró, Motherwell, Moy, Peterdi, Racz, Riopelle, Rothko, Schrag, Tamayo, and Tanguy. The literature by and about Hayter is extensive. Many exhibition catalogues provide surveys of his work from various perspectives. Among the most readily available introductions to Hayter and his circle are Joann Moser, *Atelier 17: A 50th Anniversary Retrospective Exhibition* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1977); P. M. S. Hacker, ed., *The Renaissance of Gravure: The Art of S. W. Hayter* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); and S. W. Hayter, *New Ways of Gravure*, first published in 1949. A revision of the second edition was published in New York by Watson-Guptill in 1981. On pages 76 and 77 of that edition, Hayter reproduced two versions of a Joan Miró-Ruthven Todd collaboration which Hayter printed in 1947. This illustrated poem from *The Ruthven Todd Album* was rendered using a technique which would be used for *21 Etchings and Poems*. Following is a general description of that technique from page 108 of the Oxford catalogue: "With Miró and Ruthven Todd, Hayter employed a method, devised in 1944, of printing in colours from a plate etched in relief. This was in part an experiment to recreate Blake's method of relief etching. Using poems by Todd, Hayter and Miró produced plates etched to different levels in the manner of Blake. It was found possible to ink both relief (as Blake had done) and the intaglio with contrasting colour, and to print them simultaneously."

6 Clinton Adams to Graham, 6 November 1989.

7 Kenneth Tyler was the principal collaborating printer; pages of *Satan's Saint* were also printed by Bernard Bleha, Kaye Dyal, Jeff Ruocco, and Clifford Smith.

8 Weisenthal, in telephone conversation with Graham, 10 March 1990.

9 S. W. Hayter, *New Ways of Gravure* (1981 ed.), 75. See also note 5.

10 Weisenthal does not remember how many proofs were made. At least one was given to each artist, as he recalls. He and the two printers also had a few proofs.

11 In *The Artist & The Book*, 101, Garvey describes this *livre d'artiste* as probably "the first American collaboration of such magnitude between artist and author. . . . The idea recalls *Sonnets et eaux-fortes* (Paris, 1868), an epoch-making publication" (on page 50, Garvey has described *Sonnets et eaux-fortes* as "perhaps the first clear example of book illustration treated as an important artistic medium by a group of major 19th century French artists"; it included etchings by Corot, Daubigny, Doré, Hugo, Jongkind, and Manet). The following bibliography records references to *21 Etchings and Poems* in periodical literature of 1958 and in later histories of printmaking: Dore Ashton, "Morris Gallery Exhibits a Portfolio That Links Words with Engravings," *New York Times*, 7 November 1958; Sonya Rudikoff, "Words and Pictures," *Arts* (November 1958), 32–35; Morris Weisenthal, "Twenty-one Etchings and Poems" [letter to editor], *Arts* (December 1958), 7; Hofer and Garvey, *The Artist & The Book* (cited note 2); Riva Castleman, *Prints of the Twentieth Century: A History*, 130 (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1976 and 1988); Moser, *Atelier 17* (cited note 5); Judith Goldman, *American Prints, Process and Proofs*, 47, 50–51 (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1981); James Watrous, *A Century of American Printmaking, 1880–1980*, 216 (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1984); Riva Castleman, *American Impressions: Prints Since Pollock*, 7, 22, 47 (New York: Knopf, 1985); Lanier Graham, *The Spontaneous Gesture: Prints and Books of the Abstract Expressionist Era*, 20–21, 58 (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1987; Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1989).

12 Weisenthal, in telephone conversation with Graham, 17 March 1990.

*Notes continued on page 53.*

# THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM'S NATIONAL PRINT EXHIBITIONS

*Barry Walker*

THE HISTORY of the Brooklyn Museum's National Print Exhibitions, while far from a perfect paradigm, provides an interesting encapsulation of American printmaking since World War II. The print nationals not only reflect the aesthetic and technical development of the medium, but also provide a social and economic narrative of the art, its practitioners, and the way in which it has been perceived by both trained observers and the general public. As American printmaking grew from a specialist to a collaborative activity, so the structure of the exhibitions, their documentation, and their underlying philosophy evolved.

The First National Print Annual Exhibition (the first ten shows were annuals) opened in the Prints and Drawings Galleries on 19 March and ran through 4 May 1947. It was accompanied by a sixteen-page unillustrated pamphlet. The checklist provided the artist's name, city of residence, and the title and medium of the work. In the one-page foreword, Una E. Johnson, who entered the Department of Prints and Drawings in 1936 and served as Curator from 1941 until her retirement in 1969, succinctly stated: "The purpose of this exhibition is to recognize and encourage artists who are working in the graphic arts and to stimulate public interest in fine contemporary printmaking."

In 1947, American printmakers needed both encouragement and recognition. Through the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration and the presence in New York of Stanley William Hayter's Atelier 17, artists had been stimulated to make prints. Many were now teaching at universities thronged by veterans studying under the GI Bill. A few venues existed where contemporary prints were shown; there were regularly scheduled exhibitions at the Library of Congress, the San Francisco Art Association, the Print Club of Philadelphia, as well as smaller printmaking organizations. Most major museums and private collectors, however, focused on European prints made prior to 1900.

The general public then had little access to, and hence virtually no interest in, contemporary American prints. Most exhibitions were held in the context of various printmaking societies, so that printmakers were showing their work to other printmakers and a small body of the already-converted. The few dealers who showed American art had an uphill battle even convincing the public to collect unique work.

In organizing the first print national, the only models Johnson had to draw on were the juried exhibitions of the printmaking societies and the Library of Congress. Contemporary print shows at the time were always selected by juries, and Johnson assembled a formidable one. In addition to herself, it consisted of A. Hyatt Mayor, Curator of Prints, the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Elizabeth Morgan, Curator of Prints, the National Gallery; Hermon More, Curator, the Whitney Museum of American Art; and Bertha von Moschzisker, Director, the Print Club, Philadelphia.

Interestingly, in determining who was eligible to submit work, Johnson faced a problem that has also troubled recent organizers of the exhibition. The show was a "national," so did that mean that it was open only to American citizens? Many wartime refugees remained in this country. Should they be included? How could you possibly organize an authoritative show of contemporary American printmaking and exclude Hayter? The center of the international art market was just beginning imperceptibly to shift from Paris to New York. Today, when so many European and Asian artists live at least part of the year in this country, curators constantly have to

decide whether an artist can be considered American. Fortunately, Johnson set the precedent for Brooklyn's shows by stating in the prospectus: "All artists working in the United States may enter graphic work."

Once the "who" was decided, the next hurdle was to get artists to submit work. Art departments at universities were notified, but the best resources were the membership lists that printmaking organizations throughout the country were more than willing to supply. Through them, artists were invited to submit up to three works executed within the past year in any graphic medium except monotype. Nearly six hundred responded.

Prints were mailed or hand-delivered to the museum for the jury's review. With very few exceptions, e.g., Thomas Hart Benton's *Back from the Fields*, these prints were editioned by the artists. In printmaking as in painting, scale was just beginning to become an issue. Prints were still of manageable size. Since hardly any publishers or dealers were involved, prices were manageable too. Insurance was barely an issue. The idea of jurying a print show by slides was unthinkable in 1947. Connoisseurship focused on nuance and detail. Not until well into the 1960s did slides of prints become a distributional tool for publishers who had established a network of galleries and collectors.

The jury for the first print national selected 210 works. The list ranged from such established printmakers as John Taylor Arms, Clare Leighton, and Stow Wegenroth to painters like Paul Cadmus and Robert Gwathmey, who made the occasional print, to young unknowns. Although most artists were represented by one print each, the jury exercised its option to include two works by such artists as Grace Albee, Werner Drewes, Hayter, Boris Margo, Louis Schanker, and Karl Schrag, among others. With funds donated by the collector Samuel Golden, the jury was enabled to distribute thirty-five purchase awards.

The First National Print Annual Exhibition was successful in the terms Johnson stated in her foreword to the pamphlet. Beginning with the second, the American Federation of Arts circulated a representative selection from each annual. By the third, the number of artists submitting prints had doubled from the initial exhibition.

As with any juried show, the quality of the exhibition depended on the strength of the work submitted. The submissions for the ninth print national in 1955 were particularly disappointing, leading Johnson and her cojurors Mauricio Lasansky and Louis Schanker to select only eighty-five prints from the thousand submitted. In the catalogue foreword, Johnson summarized the jury's concerns:

> The unsure technical statements and the seemingly fuzzy thinking reflected in so much of the work led the jury to question the causes. Among the more obvious, the following were most apparent:
>
> (1) Artists and students were sending for the jury's consideration their early, if not their first efforts in printmaking. Thus they were unsure of the medium employed. The desire to exhibit seems to take precedent over the need for any positive statements or basic technical accomplishments.
>
> (2) Professional artists, often well established in the graphic arts field, seemingly did not enter their best work.
>
> (3) Some artists submitted one representational and one non-representational piece which merely weakened the individual statement and unfortunately left the jury unimpressed.

The third point reflected a general confusion among artists who were not in the vanguard of American art at the time, but who were trying to absorb ideas promulgated primarily in painting. The jury's concern with technical ineptitude illustrated that printmaking was still the province of the specialist-printmaker. Eighteen years later, in her introduction to the Eighteenth National Print Exhibition, Jo Miller's complaint was just the opposite: "Technically, the quality of printing in this show is the finest I have seen, due perhaps to the high standards of the professional presses that have sprung up across the nation in the past few years. . . . I can't remember coming across a smudgy thumb print in the margin. I wish I had found a few to convince me that the artist is still totally involved in the making of his print."

Johnson raised two more important issues in her foreword to the ninth exhibition: "The now familiar question arose as to whether a juried exhibition ever calls out the best work and whether the stated purpose of this particular exhibition might better be served as a biennial rather than as an annual presentation."

The second issue was addressed the following year when the tenth and last annual was celebrated with "Ten Years of American Prints 1947–1956." In an expanded catalogue that included a revised edition of her 1952 article

"New Expressions in Printmaking: Ideas, Methods, Materials" (first published in the Brooklyn Museum *Bulletin*), Johnson identified developments within that decade, particularly the growth in scale, the increased use of color, and the preoccupation with surface in American printmaking. She summed up the prevailing attitude in printmaking circles at that time: "One of the distinguishing features of prints in the United States is that the majority of them are printed by the artist himself and not by a professional craftsman-printer as is so often the case in France. Thus each print is uniquely and completely a creation of the artist. . . ."

In 1958, the exhibition became biennial and "Annual" was dropped from the title. For another five editions, however, it remained a juried show. The catalogue reverted to pamphlet format. Artists' addresses were now included, and of the 136 artists in the eleventh national, only 5 used gallery addresses. Printmaking was still a cottage industry. Another addition to the checklist was the selling price of the work. In that exhibition, only four prints were priced at $100 or more.

The fourteenth national (1966) was the last to be circulated by the American Federation of Arts; the fifteenth was the last juried exhibition, with Johnson acting as sole juror. For her final print national in 1968, she changed the selection process to an invitational. In this sixteenth exhibition, as in the tenth, she summed up developments in the field since 1947, and in her introduction to the expanded catalogue, she explained the structure of the show:

> This large review, composed of approximately two hundred prints, is arranged in two sections. The first presents two works by each of eighty selected artists, one print exhibited in a former Brooklyn Museum National Print Exhibition and a second work issued within the past two years. The second section is composed of a single work by each of forty-four artists who have never before been represented in this national show. Many in the latter group are newcomers to the print field.

Included among the newcomers were Lee Bontecou, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Larry Rivers. Prices were no longer included in the listings.

The artists were listed alphabetically at the back of the catalogue with either their home, gallery, or publisher's address. Of the 124 artists, 34 were represented by works lent from sources other than themselves. Prints by ten artists came from workshops: three from Universal Limited Art Editions, two from Gemini G.E.L., and five from Hollanders Workshop. Although by 1968 the new workshops were becoming a powerful force, the field was still dominated by the specialist.

Jo Miller succeeded Una Johnson as Curator of Prints and Drawings in 1968 and held that position until 1975. In the three print nationals that she curated, she followed the example set by her predecessor in the sixteenth, trying to maintain a balance between work of the specialist-printmaker and that of the painter-printmaker. In recognition of the new stature prints had attained, she undertook a much more ambitious catalogue, with an introduction ranging between 500 and 1000 words. Each print was illustrated on its own page in black and white. Her checklists contained the name, city, and year of birth of the artist along with the title, date, medium, plate or composition size, and lender of the print. In her introduction to the Nineteenth National Print Exhibition (her last) in 1974, Miller stated her ambivalence about the current state of printmaking:

> More than one-half of the artists in this exhibition have publishers. The print has indeed become a desirable and marketable item. Despite the various commercial connotations, the artist benefits from these new business enterprises, for the publishers are men and women of taste and sensibility who work closely with the artist to produce fine prints. But my deepest admiration remains for the artist who produces his own work from beginning to end.

Miller's remarks reflect the quandary of many people at that time who had been influenced by Hayter's theory that the artist should be involved in every step of the printmaking process, from composition to editioning.

Ambivalence was not Gene Baro's style. Baro was guest curator for the 20th National Print Exhibition (1976); he then continued at the museum as Consulting Curator of Prints and Drawings until his death in 1982. In addition to the twentieth, he also organized the twenty-first and twenty-second print nationals.

The official title of his first show was "30 Years of American Printmaking Including the 20th National Print Exhibition." Although he used the structure of the sixteenth national's

survey of twenty years of graphic arts as a model, Baro's exhibition was much more loosely structured. Containing 330 prints, it sprawled throughout the first floor of the museum. The 160-page catalogue contained a director's foreword, an approximately 3,000-word essay by Baro, statements by the artists, a glossary of printmaking terms, an index by medium, and an index to lenders. For the first time, the checklist and illustrations were integrated, with at least one work by each artist illustrated in black and white, and with color illustrations spread throughout. For each entry, Baro wrote a one-paragraph commentary, sometimes stressing aesthetics, in other cases, technical issues. For artists previously represented in the series, a numeral, indicating the first print national they had shown in, followed their names in the listing. Although he sometimes selected an image shown in a previous national, Baro did not restrict himself; he showed what he thought to be a significant work (or works) by each artist.

Any print not shown in a previous national was listed as a "20th National Print Exhibition selection." In these selections, however, Baro did not limit himself to work created within the previous two years; he ranged throughout the thirty-year period. For instance, Milton Avery's 1948 drypoint *Nude with Long Torso* and 1954 woodcut *Sailboat* were both listed as "20th National" selections. Baro used such selections to rectify what he rightly perceived as oversights, including prints of various dates by artists as diverse as Raphael Soyer and Andy Warhol, neither of whom had been included in earlier exhibitions.

Whereas most artists were represented by one or two prints, Baro emphasized the work of artists he thought to be of major consequence by multiple inclusions. Jasper Johns and James Rosenquist were each represented by six pieces, Claes Oldenberg and Robert Rauschenberg by five, and Roy Lichtenstein by four. The list of artists represented by three works each indicates Baro's wide-ranging taste: Jim Dine, Vincent Longo, Peter Milton, Robert Motherwell, Robert A. Nelson, Frank Stella, Mark Tobey, Tom Wesselmann, and Richard Claude Ziemann. Because of its freewheeling unorthodoxy and inclusiveness, the show was hugely successful with both critics and the public.

For the Twenty-First Print National (1978), Baro decided to follow the spirit of the early annuals and highlight new talent. The show consisted of two prints each by seventy-five artists who had never previously exhibited in a print national. Since he had included almost every major painter-printmaker in the previous show, the great majority of artists in the twenty-first were young specialist-printmakers. It was a generous gesture, and the artists he included loved it. Unfortunately, hardly anyone else did.

Jacqueline Brody, editor of *The Print Collector's Newsletter*, termed the show "a disaster" (vol. 10, no. 4), but she considered Baro's premise—to seek out "new artists of worth"—an interesting basis for a panel discussion, a transcript of which was published in that issue. Brody moderated a panel consisting of two curators, Riva Castleman and Richard S. Field; one art consultant/independent curator, Janice Oresman; two dealers, Brooke Alexander and Kathryn Markel; and one artist, Alex Katz. Brody, in her headnote to the discussion, stated: "Baro used a phrase in his 21st National catalogue essay—'worthies of the art world.' PCN prefers the Open Establishment to describe this panel. Theirs are the criteria—like it or not—artists must meet."

The panel, with Field partially dissenting, seemed to agree that the best prints were made by artists who had established their ideas and vocabulary while working in unique media and who, on this solid basis, had come to printmaking in their thirties. An unstated assumption was that the best prints were collaborative. Such an idea would have been anathema in 1947. Since 1960, printmaking workshops had so established themselves in the fabric of American graphic art that such an assumption could be a "given" to the panelists thirty-two years after the First National Print Annual Exhibition. Today—like it or not—that's the way things are. □

# SINCE 1960
# Contemporary Prints at the Museum of Modern Art

*Riva Castleman*

THE SPATE OF ACQUISITIONS, mainly European, made by the Department of Drawings and Prints of the Museum of Modern Art in 1961, created a set of problems that has not entirely abated some thirty years later. This was not the traditional case of a great private collection arriving all at once, producing conservation and cataloguing headaches that were happily anticipated and slowly resolved. On the contrary, these acquisitions were the beginning of what was to become the daily challenge of dealing with contemporary prints—often works by artists about whom there were few if any published references. Extensive correspondence was required to discover such basic facts as the artist's nationality and date of birth, the date and title of the work, and information about idiosyncratic printmaking techniques. Because the sizes of many works, when suitably matted, did not conform to the standards already established within most museum collections (16 × 22, 22 × 18, and 25 × 32 inches), large numbers of works now had to fit into the few shelves that formerly had housed only a small number of prints by Picasso and the German Expressionists, and smaller Lautrec posters. Manufacturers of mat board had to be encouraged to produce 100% rag board, since board of the larger sizes we needed had, until that time, been pulp with rag sides. There had been some large prints in the 1950s (Leonard Baskin's large woodcuts printed on Shoji screen paper, which were kept rolled or mounted on painting stretchers, for example), but, as prosperity encouraged publication of prints everywhere, it was the sheer quantity of unusual sizes flooding the print room that created the greatest difficulty.

A building program was underway at the museum in the early 1960s which was to alleviate some of the crowding of the collection. While construction was going on, many works were piled up on tables, awaiting the large cabinets that would allow some order to be made from the chaos that had been created not only by the lack of space for prints, but also by the lack of working surfaces for use by newly appointed cataloguers, of whom I was one. Most notable among the problems was the question of what to do with the Willem de Kooning lithograph that had recently been acquired. (My recollection is that it was the most expensive print we had purchased to that date, that it was as large as a poster, and that we had to store it on top of a series of cabinets.) I imagine there was a premonition that the de Kooning was a portent of future directions the print media would take: large and expensive.

In 1964, when the new print facilities were ready, traditional ways to handle prints were seen to be extremely inappropriate. All prints had been housed in the same room where they were studied, and, as an increasing number of visitors had to be monitored, some prints disappeared. Storage arranged by nationality, a necessity for collections with anonymous masters, became impossibly complex once there were more than three sizes of cabinets to search, and that system was replaced by a simpler one: alphabetically by artist's names. Prints that formerly had been removed from portfolios and matted were now kept in their original housings (often an important element of the publication) because of the constraints of space and an emerging realization of the escalating cost of matting. Such relatively minor problems only grew more severe as a new form of publication, the "multiple," was invented.

Shortly before we moved into new facilities, Tatyana Grosman brought in a box filled with what she referred to as a "book" by Robert Rauschenberg. It consisted of several Plexiglass plates mounted together on a metal

frame, and a light bulb which illuminated the whole; the plates had six different lithographic images housed within them, and five could be moved around to create different compositions. *Shades*, although not the first of the so-called "multiple" works, was our first; eventually it was joined by Claes Oldenburg's *Airflow*, a large lithograph with a vacuum-formed urethane relief covering it; Rauschenberg's *Cardbird Door*, literally a full-sized door made of cardboard; and dozens of other three-dimensional pieces that required a type of storage entirely different from that for either prints or illustrated books.

In 1964, with the donation of the Louis E. Stern Collection, the museum became a major repository of fine books illustrated with prints by Europe's foremost artists. With those 450 books we had a foundation for the present extensive collection and a valuable source of reference which stimulated the interest of American artists in producing books.

The subsequent decade saw the proliferation of print workshops and the consequent drafting of more and more artists to work in the print media. With exploration in those media came interest in paper, and an entirely new concept—paperworks—developed. Part of the impetus to this development was the desire of publishers and artists (in that order, I believe) to make bigger prints, which required use of sheets of paper larger than were normally manufactured. Simultaneously, women artists were trying to find some factors within their natures that would not be solely those exploited by male artists, and working with paper seemed one appropriate possibility. For the most part, paperworks have been neither multiples nor printed, and only those that utilize a matrix associated with printmaking (such as a stencil) have been added to the print collection (Kenneth Noland's works made with Ken Tyler in Bedford Village, for example).

Because of burgeoning size, compositions made of several sheets, and environmental print projects that necessitated showing sets of prints in isolation (the folded aquatints of Dorothea Rockburne, for example), exhibitions of prints also took on a different character. Before 1964 the museum almost always exhibited prints on corridor walls (as they were shown until recently at the Tate Gallery in London); the new exhibition galleries for prints and drawings were covered up to eight feet high with natural Belgian linen, creating a quiet, elegant salon well suited for the old masters of modern art, but not very flexible for showing some of the more typical works of the 1970s. Nevertheless, it was finally possible to display publicly many of the facets of the collection, encouraging interest in it. What was lacking was a community of friends to support it.

In 1972 the print and drawing collections were separated, producing a new Department of Prints and Illustrated Books and a new acquisitions committee. For this committee it was vital to find print collectors, since up to that time those trustees and members of auxiliary organizations who supported the print collection were primarily interested in painting. With the assistance of local print dealers, the department found enough people interested in modern prints to form a group in 1975. The Associates of the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books have contributed substantial funds for acquisitions, encouraged a vigorous exhibitions program, and provided the acquisitions committee with several enthusiastic, well-informed members.

In 1984, as the museum expanded once again, the department was moved, and was provided with closed storage facilities, north light for cataloguing, computers (with a software system that was fairly simple to use), and galleries that were appropriate for the newer prints as well as the older ones. No longer shared with the Department of Drawings, these galleries provided more opportunities to exhibit recent acquisitions, thus presenting an ongoing attraction and gaining a larger audience. Unfortunately, the 1980s also saw the tremendous power of investment psychology applied to prints; it was not primarily inflation or incredible technical demands that started the prices of prints on an upward spiral. Artists who make their first prints after having exhibited for only a few years no longer find it important to have them sold at reasonable prices: the first prints of some of these artists have been offered at publication for several thousand dollars each. With this situation prevailing for contemporary prints, museum purchasing power has been badly diminished. In a collection such as the Museum of Modern Art's, consisting primarily of prints by artists who do not specialize in printmaking, the problem continues to grow. For a while, the European print market lagged behind and efforts were made to concentrate buying there. As with most museum curators,

ours spend many hours that could have been devoted to research, cataloguing, or writing, either raising money, finding donors, or working out payment terms with artists, publishers, and dealers.

In 1985, with the assistance of a grant from the The Henry Luce Foundation, we were able to publish a catalogue of our American prints made between 1960 and 1985. More than eight thousand entries demonstrated the extraordinary flourishing of the print media in America during that quarter century. The listing included all the prints published by two organizations: Universal Limited Art Editions and Tamarind Lithography Workshop. Unquestionably, these workshops provided the nurturing of other workshops, of public awareness of prints, and of many subsequent developments, both in America and abroad. Shortly before June Wayne founded Tamarind in 1960, Sam Francis made lithographs in Switzerland which we acquired, as well as those made by Ellsworth Kelly in France. Now we have many prints made by European, South American, and Japanese artists in American workshops; these have been included in our catalogue of American prints, since we documented not only the art and artists, but also the artisans.

One of the most important ideas promoted by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the first director of the museum, was the traveling exhibition. In the 1940s and 1950s that idea resulted in multiple versions of print exhibitions of woodcuts and other artist-printed works touring the United States. The museum continues to present traveling exhibitions, but now on a considerably larger scale and in more places, since there are now more institutions to show them and better means to ship them throughout the world. Such presentations as *Jim Dine's Etchings; Modern Art in Prints; Tamarind: Homage to Lithography; Latin American Prints from the Collection; Printed Art: A View of Two Decades; Prints from Blocks; Jasper Johns: A Print Retrospective;* and *Committed to Print* have all included prints made since 1960. They have been seen on regional campuses in America, in national galleries in India and the Far East, and in many of the museums and exhibition institutions that have proliferated in Japan and Germany since the 1960s. With their assorted brochures and catalogues, they have offered people in nearly every area of the world an opportunity to learn about and enjoy the prints of our time. □

# CONTEMPORARY PRINTS AT THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

*Susan Lambert*

THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, set up in 1852 with the basic aim to improve the design of manufactured articles, is the only museum in Britain to have collected prints from living artists since its foundation. The relationship between printmaking and a museum of the applied arts is a fascinating one. It is frequently pointed out that before the invention of photography, printmaking was the only means of making exactly repeatable visual images. This meant that the majority of prints produced had the character of applied art rather than fine art and, therefore, that they fitted naturally into a museum with the V & A's aims. If at first glance the museum's activity in the print field now appears anomalous, it is a result of the changing nature and status of the print rather than any change in the collecting policy of the museum.

The cult of "original" prints, and the development of a serious market in them, was based first in the revival of etching—the medium traditionally favored by painter-printmakers. The movement was spurred on by what was seen as the threatening competition provided by new technology. A typical venture was that of the Société des Aquafortistes, founded in 1861, which claimed in the preface to its first portfolio: "In these times, when photography fascinates the vulgar by the mechanical fidelity of its reproductions, it is nec-

essary to assert an artistic tendency in favour of free fancy and picturesque mood."[1] In spite of these high-minded ideals and the evident quality of many of the prints, the Société's etchings were not greatly valued at the time. They did not carry the same weight with the public as did other original art forms and they were not marketed with the confidence of individual works of art. Published in sets, they sold remarkably cheaply. The V & A acquired the complete portfolios for 1862, which consisted of 120 prints (including several by Manet, Corot, and Daubigny) for less than half the price of a single engraved reproduction of a painting by Landseer.[2]

On this basis, however, the prestige of printmaking as a vehicle for important and original expression asserted itself. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, print collecting was a craze that had broadened from etching to encompass the traditionally reproductive techniques of engraving on metal and wood. But it was not until the 1960s that printmakers began to press contemporary commercial techniques to serve their own ends, thus producing an aesthetic doctrine which enshrined the techniques of popular communication at the heart of contemporary culture. For the generation of Rauschenberg, Warhol, Paolozzi, and Hamilton, printmaking was so significant that the Tate Gallery, which had previously shown no interest in acquiring prints, altered its policy on the grounds that the contribution of these artists could not be appropriately represented except through inclusion of their graphic work. The V & A, however, remains the only collection where such work can be studied in a historical context beside the commercial work to which it is technologically and visually related.

Viewed through the perspective of time there seems very broadly to be a sameness in terms of scale, technique, and even subject matter about the contemporary prints acquired at any particular moment of the Museum's history. Taken together they seem also to have shared a subtext about the status of the print in relation to the fine arts. The etchings, produced in signed and limited editions, with an artificial number of states, first created a market for something rarified and precious and then pandered to the collector who saw himself as outstripping the connoisseur of painting in the aesthetic sensitivity of his appreciation. In 1921, in his inaugural speech as president to the British Print Collector's Club, Martin Hardie, amateur etcher and heir apparent to the post of Keeper at the V & A, expressed a hope that the organization would serve its members as a "loophole of retreat from the insistent clamour of daily life." Not until after the Second World War did prints begin to compete with other forms of fine art as public works. The lithographs of the 1950s made a statement about the print's potential scale and palette; the silk-screens of the 1960s added immense versatility; while in the 1970s the passion for traditionally handcrafted printing surfaces stressed the sculptural quality of the genus.

WHAT SEEMS, by contrast, to distinguish our acquisitions of the 1980s from those made earlier (Is it simply that enough time has not yet passed?) is their difference. In the V & A's current exhibition *Collecting for the Future, a Decade of Contemporary Acquisitions*,[3] which includes the full range of objects that the Museum collects, from Levi's 501 jeans to Memphis furniture, three works were selected to represent acquisitions in the print field: Daniel Buren's *Framed/Exploded/Defaced* (1979),[4] an untitled self-portrait of 1984 by Francesco Clemente,[5] and Conrad Atkinson's *Daily Consumernica*,[6] issued as a page of *The Guardian* newspaper on 19 November 1988.

*Framed/Exploded/Defaced* consists of twenty-five abstract fragments, the installation of which is a fundamental part of the work. The principle is that the block of fragments should expand to fit whatever wall is chosen for their display, with each fragment retaining the same position relative to the others. Fragments are omitted if they coincide with permanent fittings such as lights, radiators, and windows, or even another work of art. The work thus addresses the interaction of works of art with their surroundings.

Clemente's self-portrait, produced while he was artist in residence in Kyoto, draws on the tradition of Japanese woodblock printing. The image is printed on soft, absorbent, Tosa kozo paper in fourteen transparent pigments, from twenty-two linden woodblocks, printed forty-nine times in order to build up the density of the color. The subject matter is common to many of Clemente's paintings and prints, but the rendering is specific to the technique.

Conrad Atkinson's *Daily Consumernica* is one of a series of oil paintings, prints, and posters in which Atkinson has taken the format of the newspaper and manipulated the news to his

own ends. Juggling the names of statesman and politicians with those of artists, musicians, and philosophers, he draws our attention to the marginalization of culture and drives home its powerlessness in a humorous but nonetheless lethal fashion.

Each of these three pieces relies on characteristics inherent to printmaking. The editioned nature of the print is essential to *Framed/Exploded/Defaced*, for part of its point is the fact that the work never looks the same; the artist is collecting a dossier of photographs of each installation. The iridescent washes of the Clemente could not be obtained by any other technique. The different media in which Atkinson's "newspaper works" are executed suggest different locations and conduct different dialogues with their different audiences. The oil paintings and limited-edition prints are "gallery works" destined for private collectors; the poster versions look at first glance like advertisements for the newspapers they parody. *Daily Consumernica* has taken the idea full circle and reintegrated it with its source, making the work of art available to *The Guardian's* million-and-a-half readers. Its marketing as a page of a real newspaper is part of the print's raison d'etre.

At last it seems that printmaking has broken free of its history. After years of defining itself in relation to the fine arts and then competing with them, it is now emerging as a mature medium which artists active in many other media select when it suits their purpose. The works produced have in common their use of a printing surface, but the statements they make are independent of the medium and are of universal interest, just as are the statements made in other fine art media. □

1 The author was Théophile Gautier.
2 For the portfolio (V & A numbers E.1320–1624—1901) the museum paid £4 3s 4d; for the Landseer engraving, *Monarch of the Glen*, £10 10s.
3 6 June to 12 August 1990.
4 Color aquatint, printed in an edition of 46, each set in a different colorway, by Lilah Toland and Nancy Anello at Crown Point Press. Each fragment, including frame, 204 × 204 mm (V & A numbers E.147a-y—1981).
5 Printed by Tadashi Toda, Shin-un-do Print Shop, Kyoto. Published by Crown Point Press in an edition of 200. 428 × 574 mm (V & A number E.427–1985).
6 Color rotary letterpress (V & A number E.17—1989).

# PRINTMAKING COURSES IN BRITISH ART SCHOOLS
## A Personal View

*Silvie Turner*

IF YOU HAVE FOLLOWED British newspaper reports; if you have seen debates on TV; or if you work in a British art school, you might be forgiven for thinking that British art education has been sinking into an abyss. Indeed, the changes over the past five years have been dramatic and, to many, disillusioning. Last April, with the coming of the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), most art colleges in Britain experienced a dramatic rationalisation, which forced a greater independence. Financial responsibility and self-help are the names of the new games in which each British art college must now participate.

A new stratum of management is coming to art schools—one in which business management, fund raising, and sponsorship are prime objectives. In the background, the British government, urging that higher education become part of the enterprise culture, demands that industry plough back some of its huge profits. These changes have affected the teaching in many art schools with, it could be argued, a generally detrimental effect; the morale of many longstanding and worthy lecturers is at a very low ebb, and consequently many are leaving the teaching profession, with their vacant posts increasingly hard to fill. They have also affected the students on the college printmaking floor. The change in emphasis has meant constantly reduced budgets, few (if any) visiting lecturers, minimal local gallery or workshop contacts, and diminished options—plus increased charges to students that could shift the emphasis of their expression. Student/teacher ratios have increased and

look likely to continue in the same vein. Taken as a whole, it could mean that expensive-to-run courses such as printmaking may face special pressure within the Fine Art area. I have recently surveyed all the under- and post-graduate printmaking courses in art colleges, polytechnic institutions, and universities in Britain today.[1] I have been struck, despite this upheaval, by how strong printmaking has become in the fine art area; by how firmly established and well structured the courses now are; and by the quality of the students. I have realised, also, that here, in the art schools of Britain, the activity of printmaking has been nurtured in the form of the training of students for a profession. The teaching of the craft of printmaking and its process-skills continues to evolve alongside the development of each student's personal initiative and imaginative experimentation, as the student constantly directs his or her collective knowledge and experience into an expressive end. The days when courses were broken down on the basis of different techniques—when students were simply taught a craft—are past, and this movement away from a confined approach has strengthened the fine art aspect of the medium.

Expensively equipped workshops for etching, lithography, screen and relief printing—plus associated darkrooms and computer-aided technology—now exist in most colleges throughout the country, and students are committed to printmaking. Specialist printmaking courses leading to the masters degree have been realigned and finely tuned, and now provide a more acute emphasis and intense level of study, often coupled with an approach to professionalism in integrated "Professional Practices" seminars.

It is in the British art-school print workshops that many students with a vocation for printmaking begin their experience of professional activity. There are no other formal training institutions in Britain for artists wishing to become printmakers. There are virtually no workshops where apprentices can learn the trade as such. This important and possibly unrecognised aspect of (Could it be called a responsibility for?) the continuation of British printmaking lies in our British art schools. Not only has it a heritage and history but it is also where much of the future lies. This dilemma of change at the beginning of a new decade may adversely affect the course of printmaking in Britain—or it may bring a new aspect of professionalism that is essential for survival in the nineties. □

1 Lists of British art schools and descriptions of their courses can be found in Silvie Turner, ed. *A Printmaker's Handbook*, reviewed on page 92.

# LITHOGRAPHIC RESEARCH and the Tamarind Archives

*Garo Z. Antreasian*

THOSE WHO ARE YOUNGER than fifty years of age cannot know from direct experience how lithography was practiced by artists in the United States during the first half of this century. Most of the materials and procedures that are accepted as standard today—from cellulose sponges to systems of precise color registration—were unknown or nonexistent then. Though frequently accomplished in execution, most of the black-and-white lithographs from that time (and the few printed in color) were simply made, more often than not over a framework of conventional drawing techniques. Imaginatively daring and innovative uses of the medium were relatively rare. Many of the lithographs were either printed collaboratively in European workshops, or self-printed by the artists, who made use of whatever limited knowledge and resources were available to them.

Quite apart from a shockingly limited understanding of lithographic technology, artists and printers were faced by ever-diminishing sources of supply for the specialized materials suitable to hand-printing. By 1960, many venerable suppliers had ceased to exist or had changed names and product lines, among them such companies as Senefelder, Alfred P. Metzger (stones, plates, and chemicals), Sun Chemical, International Printing Inks, Fuchs and Lang (inks, rollers, and presses), Japan Paper Company, and Harry Lindemeir (fine and imported papers). The few staples of the process that remained in use were outdated, limited in variety, well worn, or in sad repair, and were for the most part difficult to find on the open market. Serious lithographers were doubly frustrated by such impoverished materials because they were aware that a hundred years earlier both the materials and the skills had been far superior to those of the supposedly sophisticated Sputnik-era.

From the moment of organization, the founding staff of Tamarind Lithography Workshop (TLW) recognized that a sustained research effort was absolutely essential if lithography were to survive. Indeed, within the first month of operation in 1960, a rudimentary exposure chart had been prepared to test the relative lightfastness of inks that were to be used in the workshop. From that modest beginning, research became a rapidly escalating activity, central to TLW's multifaceted objectives. By 1963, research had also become an integral component in the instruction of printer-fellows, who were given assignments that required independently conducted studies and written reports on their outcome. In the ensuing thirty years, these painstaking projects, undertaken by numerous Tamarind printer-fellows, have come to comprise a substantial archive—little-known, but of incalculable practical and historical value for the serious student of lithography.

Two duplicate archives covering the period 1960–1970 were prepared when Tamarind moved to the University of New Mexico—one for permanent storage, the other for use as a reference at Tamarind Institute. Subsequently, some of these materials have been photographed for inclusion in the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. In addition to documentation of research projects, folders in the Tamarind Archives include reports on materials and equipment; costs; production records; surveys and general information collected on relevant subjects; and examples of Tamarind's educational publications, exhibition catalogues, and media publicity. Altogether, 360 information folders and an accompanying index record the first decade of activity in Los Angeles. The more significant studies from that period were incorporated in *The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art & Techniques*, published in 1971.

In the twenty years since 1970, Tamarind Institute has generated an equally important body of research. The most interesting of these studies have been published in *The Tamarind Papers* (volume 1 was titled *Tamarind Technical Papers*), and a cumulative index to volumes 1 through 10 was published in 1985. The following, all-too-brief account of three decades of Tamarind research will serve to illustrate its extraordinary breadth.

IN THE EARLY 1960s, study was focused on solidification of an understanding of traditional, nineteenth-century workshop practices. Etch tables, processing techniques, and tusche-wash tests were perfected; the intricate inter-relationships between artist, printer, and press assistant that exist within the collaborative endeavor were studied and developed. Meanwhile, the commercial graphic arts industry was moving very rapidly toward an ever-more sophisticated technology. Many of the new products designed for industry had little relevance for hand-printing; others required careful testing and/or adoption of new procedures so as to incorporate them into traditional practices. Both zinc and aluminum plates were researched extensively at that time. Zinc, which had been all but phased out of commercial printing, had become increasingly unreliable in quality; aluminum, with new precoated surfaces, required development of new processing techniques. Simultaneously, new supply networks had to be organized and key manufacturers enticed to fabricate needed materials (special inks, inking rollers, etc.) which were unavailable at the time.

A major effort was made to search for and make available fine papers specially suitable for lithography. Discussions held with representatives of European paper mills led to improved quality control, new varieties, and to papers of heavier weight and larger dimension such as those in use today. Meanwhile, coordinated tests were conducted to compare various brands of German, French, and American inks, using precise instrumentation to measure the relative permanence of an extended palette of colors and to evaluate their performance on an expanded variety of papers. As a result, most of the products and procedures of the drawing studio, pressroom, and curating area were under constant reexamination, and were later followed by studies having practical benefit for preservation of gallery, museum, and archival collections.

It is not surprising that Tamarind's specialized, multi-pronged research projects, which often had simultaneous deadlines for completion, seldom proceeded in a predetermined sequence. Actually, it was a somewhat chaotic program, driven in those early years by the exigencies of the moment. It was not unusual—indeed, it was encouraged—for research to be generated by the curiosity of individual technical directors, shop managers, printer-fellows, curators, or other staff members, all of whom responded to daily encounters with their work. The goal was always to find a better and more reliable way to do things.

By the late 1960s, it was apparent that the supply of lithograph stones in this country could not meet the expected needs of emerging workshops and school programs. Domestic limestone, Carrara marble, and Mexican onyx were examined as potential substitutes for traditional Solnhofen limestone. When, as was sometimes the case, the outcome of this research was not altogether promising, Tamarind purchased a quantity of Solnhofen stones in Europe and distributed them to selected master-printers who had opened workshops or accepted teaching positions. Fortunately, not long after that, the availability of newly-quarried Solnhofen stone was markedly increased in response to an expanding world market.

AFTER THE FORMATION of Tamarind Institute in 1970, the thrust of research somewhat shifted. By then, vastly improved processing and printing procedures had become routine, and a basically new generation of inks, papers, and other staples had been incorporated reliably into the process. Attention now turned to the design and fabrication of new machinery, improved hand- and power-driven presses, plate grainers, tympans, scraper bars, and inking rollers of large diameter. Since the mid-1970s, frequent studies have also investigated various aspects of photolithography, seeking to develop improved methods for use in hand-printing from stone and metal plates. Recently conducted research has yielded very promising results in a new form of planographic printing (sometimes called dry or waterless lithography) which is adaptable both to photographic and hand-drawn imagery and can be used with extremely fine half-tone screens.

The testing of fluorescent inks, improved

adhesives for *collé* printing, alternative lithographic crayons, and imaging techniques on translucent Mylar are but a few of the other research activities undertaken by institute personnel in the past decade.

On another front, health, safety, and the working environment have always been subjects for periodic review at Tamarind. These have ranged from time-and-motion studies that analyzed physical stress in the workshop—conducted twenty-five years ago—to present-day evaluations of workshop ventilation and of toxic materials and improved methods for their handling and storage.

Inasmuch as the results of the more significant Tamarind research projects have been absorbed by the field and are now part of standard practice, one may well ask, "What more can be gained, aside from historical insight, from an examination of the Tamarind archives?" In that regard, an interesting parallel may be drawn to a comparable examination conducted for Tamarind in the 1960s by Robert Gardner, who then taught at Carnegie-Mellon University. With great diligence, Gardner compiled a list of late nineteenth-century or turn-of-the-century United States patents for lithographic machinery and processes destined for commercial printing. Most of these inventions were never utilized because of the rapid and almost universal conversion of the industry to offset printing. Even so, there remains an enormously intriguing potential for their application to artists' lithography. Likewise, there is much that thirty years of Tamarind studies can yet provide. Some projects were inconclusive; some suggested residual benefits which were never explored; some were superseded by newly available materials or by the changing needs of the moment; and some were incompletely documented or abandoned because of the periodic turnover of personnel. Reexamination of Tamarind documents that record—often in highly personalized accounts—the rescue of a faltering art may reward a keen researcher by suggesting tantalizing new directions to be followed, and in so doing, may perhaps lead to even better and more reliable methods. □

***LIVRE D'ARTISTE***

*Continued from page 40.*

13 Hayter, in conversation with Graham, Paris, 15 July 1985. For Larry Rivers and Frank O'Hara, *Stones* (New York: ULAE, 1960), see Castleman, *American Impressions*, 25 (cited note 11). For *1¢ LIFE*, edited by Sam Francis (Bern: E. W. Kornfeld, 1964), see ibid., 55–56.

14 Hayter, in conversation with Graham, Paris, 15 July 1985.

15 Weisenthal refers to Rivers and O'Hara, *Stones*, and Robert Rauschenberg and Alain Robbe-Grillet, *Traces Suspectes en Surfaces* (New York: ULAE, 1978).

16 *Livres d'artistes* and *artists' books* have many things in common, but they are two different kinds of books by artists. The literature of and about artists' books is considerable. As usually employed since the 1960s, the term *artists' books* identifies a wide variety of bookworks which have expanded traditional definitions of "art," "book," and "non-book." Since the late sixties, in the United States alone, there have been thousands of such books created, and hundreds of exhibitions organized in galleries, museums, and alternative spaces. Proliferation of such books as an ongoing part of contemporary art has been so dynamic that the art world is still trying to develop a critical language with which to discuss this new mode of expression/communication/experience. Most operating definitions are wide enough to range from unique, book-like objects, to "books" printed in large editions using offset or xerography. These graphic objects have art-historical roots in the graphic productions of Cubo-Futurism and Dada-Surrealism. To a large degree, however, artists' books have been a post-modernist development. They await an appropriate critical vocabulary. For a bibliography of the first decade of artists'books, see Lanier Graham, "Artists' Books: A Bibliography, 1969–1977," *BOA: Bulletin of the Archives of the Art Information Center* (1977). An excellent general survey of the first quarter-century is Joan Lyons, ed., *Artists' Books: A Critical Anthology and Sourcebook* (Layton, Utah: Peregrine Smith, in association with Visual Studies Workshop, 1987). This book includes an international list of major public collections of artists' books and a long bibliography compiled by such well-known specialists as Helen Brunner, Janet Dalberto, Judith Hoffberg, and Clive Phillpot.

Master printer **Judith Solodkin** in the Solo Press shop.

# JUDITH SOLODKIN AND SOLO PRESS

*Ruth E. Fine*

JUDITH SOLODKIN, the founder of Solo Press, was the first woman to become a Tamarind Master Printer. This was in 1974. While it is not unusual today to see women printers across the country at work on lithograph presses, in 1975, when Solodkin's New York shop was opened for business, it was hardly a common sight. It is true that women, like men, could study lithography in various universities and colleges, but to become a serious, professional, lithographic printer was quite another matter.

As it happened, Solodkin did get her introduction to lithography as an undergraduate at Brooklyn College, essentially teaching herself. Officially, she was studying painting and drawing, not printmaking. Intrigued by the college's lithography press and the materials stored around it, she "just charged ahead . . . using gum arabic so thickly it was like a paste . . . we're talking primitive."[1] Solodkin completed two prints in this inventive way, one in black and white, and one—ambitiously—in color. It was a start. And the daring curiosity that initiated her into the mysteries of grease and water on stone has spurred her on ever since.

Solodkin, a born-and-bred New Yorker, went from Brooklyn College to Columbia University. In 1967, with an M.F.A. in painting in hand, she embarked on a brief career of teaching in the city's junior high and high schools. While working in her own studio also, she discovered that her real love was drawing, not painting. In fact, she found that she didn't especially like the particular physicality of painting. Already tempted by lithography, however primitive her early approach had been, and trying to sort out how to proceed as an artist, Solodkin decided to take printmaking courses at Pratt Graphics Center, studying mainly with Jeffrey Stone.

She immediately felt at home. First of all, her approach to drawing seemed more comfortably suited to printmaking than painting. In addition, in printmaking she could more successfully explore aspects of color, changing it from one proof to another of a particular

image. And the fact of works in editions satisfied her as well: "I could give one away and have one."

Jeffrey Stone was a most sympathetic supporter, encouraging Solodkin early on to buy her own roller and before too long to purchase her first press, a small Fuchs and Lang. Over time, she discovered that she didn't appreciate the social activity—"the club-like atmosphere"—at Pratt. By 1970, she had set up her own shop at Twentieth Street and Eighth Avenue in Chelsea. There, from 1970 to 1972 she printed her own images, becoming increasingly committed to printing while continuing to teach as a means of support.

Solodkin credits her acceptance at Tamarind Institute in part to her good friend Joyce Kozloff with whom she had gone through Columbia. Kozloff, who completed a group of prints at Tamarind in 1972, wrote enthusiastically in support of the application of her talented friend. Upon admission to Tamarind, Solodkin, who had been thinking for some time about printing as a profession, stored her treasured Fuchs and Lang in a corner and sub-let her apartment, temporarily exchanging the cavernous spaces of downtown New York for the vast openness of the distant desert.

While Solodkin was the first women to succeed as a Tamarind Master Printer, she wasn't the first to try. It is not off the mark, however, to say that she entered a pressroom that essentially was an "all-male enclave," and learning how to deal with that situation was no small part of her education. Her description of the experience is enhanced by her sense of herself as a New Yorker, having grown up with an awareness that fighting for survival could be an important part of daily life.

She remembers the paternal manner in which she was taught, the concern not only with her ability not only to deal with the physical demands of lithography (which can be enormous) but with the technical demands as well (which while also enormous surely have nothing to do with physical prowess).

One has a sense that at first she tried to fit in with the guys. Eventually, however, her attitude changed and she decided: "The hell with this—I'm going to do it my way . . . to work hard and learn as much as I can." Today, mixed with the references to the condescension, she speaks with confidence and appreciation for her Tamarind experience, not only for the skills she achieved in a technical sense, but for more deeply rooted insights into what she obviously considers the wondrous nature of printmaking.

From the start, one factor in Solodkin's success undoubtedly has been her sense of humor, often combined with her sense of sexual politics. Who else at Tamarind in the early 1970s would have donned a Betty Crocker apron, replete with a very frilly border to keep printing ink off her (or his) clothes? The ironic point was reinforced when she painted the floor of her first professional shop, as well as one or two of the press parts, a memorable shade of pink.

THE FIRST SOLO PRESS space was, in fact, the one Solodkin had left in Chelsea, when she set off for New Mexico. It was in a two-story walk-up, with the shop housed in the larger room of what was a two-room apartment. It was 1975. Solo Press was underway, with a blindstamp of a hand, index finger pointing, which served as Judith Solodkin's printer's chop. For the next four years, all of life's other activities were squeezed into the smaller of the apartment's two spaces.

At first, almost all of the work done by Solo Press was contract printing. Among Solodkin's early jobs were several of the twenty prints included in the *A.I.R. Portfolio*, published in 1976 by A.I.R., a New York women's cooperative gallery. The project established relationships with several artists with whom the printer has continued to work—among them Dotty Attie, Howardena Pindell, and Nancy Spero. Other important supporters in the early years were Dorothy Pearlstein (whom Solodkin met through Pearlstein's husband Philip, one of her painting teachers at Brooklyn College) and her partner, Nancy Meltzer, who had started publishing as 724 Prints. Lithographs by John Button, Lois Dodd, and Altoon Sultan (another artist with whom Solodkin has worked in recent years) were among the early publications she printed. Brooke Alexander came to Solo Press for some editions, too—prints by Susan Crile and Richard Haas. So did Holly Solomon.

In these early years, and to some extent even today, the preponderance of Solodkin's work has been with women artists, less by design than by happenstance. "My old boy network was the old girl network," she explains. "Women are more apt to work with women," she feels, although she also mentions several exceedingly good working re-

**Komar & Melamid.**
*Head of Worker, Bergen Point Brass Foundry,* 1988.
Woodcut on brass leaf, lithograph, brass stamp on leather, 61 × 223.5 cm.

lationships with artists of the other gender: Howard Hodgkin, Robert Kushner, and Michael Mazur, to name only three.

For about six months in the mid-1970s, Solodkin worked for Petersburg Press. By the time they began to cut back staff, she had managed to order a new press, a larger Brand, and with that in house was able to set up a better printing situation for herself. Indeed, by 1979 Solodkin's workload had outgrown the Chelsea shop. After moving to larger quarters at Thirty-first Street and Park Avenue South, she immediately began the process of outgrowing the new space by agreeing temporarily to store a friend's Griffin press. After a few years, the Griffin was replaced by her new, larger Takach and Garfield press, to which a second one, with a yet larger bed, 45 × 92 inches, was eventually added.

As in Chelsea, Solodkin's living and working spaces were side-by-side. The emphasis in the division, as one would expect, remained on the working space. This move to her second shop corresponded with one of Solodkin's major decisions: it was at about this time that she stopped making her own images, fully committing her creative energy to printing. Solodkin speaks most persuasively about the creative aspects of her work, and her belief that the artists for whom she prints anticipate her knowledge, personality, and opinions as part of the interaction. She also emphasizes her sense of responsibility to listen closely to their aims and, as the proofing evolves, to provide input about technical possibilities.

Throughout the 1970s and until 1984, Solodkin was also teaching lithography, either at Pratt Graphics Center, the School of Visual Arts, or Rutgers University in New Brunswick. She recalls with no small amount of horror the brief period in which she was teaching at all three at once—along with running Solo Press.

When she set up to print professionally, Solodkin hired one assistant; and during the years in her first shop the Solo Press staff grew to four. At times since it has included as many as nine people (currently there are six). Not only are they involved in the printing; but also paper-tearing, hand-coloring, sewing, and other physical tasks on the varied publications, as well as curating the finished products. At first, when Solo Press was more of a "mom-and-pop" operation, Solodkin was eager to get "unformed" printers whom she could train according to her own specifications. In recent years, however, she has come to hire professionals who bring their own experience into the shop—"things I don't know and that interest me." Also, she has less time to spend on training and more money to pay for skills. Interestingly, she has never managed to hire a Tamarind Master Printer.

In 1986, another move took place, this time to 578 Broadway, a lively, centrally located building which houses a number of galleries that specialize in prints. For the first time, Solodkin's living space is separate from her work space—about a ten-minute walk away.

While in the Park Avenue South shop, Solodkin had added a letterpress operation, called Solo Letterpress, and hired a printer part-time. With each expansion of space there came an expansion of activity, and with the move to Broadway, this part-time printer's involvement expanded into a full-time position, to work not only on contract jobs, but on Solo Letterpress publications as well. For this part of its activity, Solo Press now houses three Vandercook proofing presses, each different in size (the largest has a 28-by-30-inch bed), as well as a Washington Hand press, the most recent of the equipment additions. Solodkin's enthusiasm for the book projects is vivid, and she indicates that her earliest interest in prints actually stemmed from a love of illustrated books as she was growing up.

One of Solodkin's more short-lived diversifications was her addition of an etching shop. Managed by Dan Stack, who leased space at Solo Press, this in-house etching facility lasted from 1987 to 1989. Solodkin then conceded that her real love is lithography, and that she could better serve her more circumscribed interest in etching by contracting with other shops, for example, with Harlan and Weaver Intaglio in New York.

Solodkin has, however, been working in woodcut and just published five prints, titled *Oxygems*, by John Torreano. Other new woodcuts have included prints by Conrad Atkinson, Petah Coyne, Steve Kiester, and Ursula von Rydingsvard.

Although she had done limited publishing on and off, she has expanded this in recent years, to account for about sixty percent of her work at Solo Press. For both financial and distributive reasons, Solo Press has engaged in a variety of co-publishing: "If I can work with other people to enable me to get things done, that's great." For example, with Ronald Feldman she co-published Ida Applebroog's *Promise I Won't Die?*; with Diane Villani, Susan Shatter's *Zion*; and with Joe Fawbush, *Warm and Cold*, a *livre de luxe* written by David Mamet with images by Donald Sultan.

Several co-published ventures, as well as many independent Solo Press publications, reflect Solodkin's propensity for humor; for example, *The Nixon Series*, four lithographs by Pat Oliphant, and *HAND 'N' HAND*, a portfolio of works by *New Yorker* cartoonists.

As her publishing career has grown, Solodkin has necessarily extended her personal passion for humor and moved into areas that have more broad public appeal. In 1988, she added another string to her bow: Solo Gallery, adjacent to her 578 Broadway workshop. Conceived essentially as a showplace for Solo Press prints, books, and related works, Solodkin plans also to have one show a year with works selected by a guest curator. This year's offering, "Writ in Water," was curated by Christopher Sweet and included prints and drawings by Lynda Benglis, Vija Celmins, Rackstraw Downes, Eric Fischl, John Hejduk, Yvonne Jacquette, Michael Mazur, and Joan Nelson, among others. The last two artists had worked at Solo Press, and Solodkin is about to publish a series of Hejduk's lithographs of visionary sights. With all of her expanded undertakings, Solodkin admits, "[I'm] "happiest when . . . proofing with an artist, when I'm on the press." And despite the variety of demands on her, she estimates that she still devotes two-thirds of her working time to printing, with all of the other obligations squeezed into the third that is left.

**Ida Applebroog.**
*Promise I Won't Die?*
1987. Lithograph, linocu
and watercolor washes,
91.4 × 121.9 cm.

On setting up shop in New York, Solodkin seems hardly to be able to imagine being any place else. She was born in the city, and except for the Tamarind experience has lived there all of her life. Printing in New York has allowed her work to evolve through what she refers to as a "self-generated process." Almost all of the resources of the art world are there or come there. By being in New York she has had access to other workshops, to suppliers of all sorts, to small papermills such as Dieux Donne (right down the street when handmade sheets are needed), to steel engravers, and to various fabricators. Artists are either in town or they come to see shows, enabling the sorts of personal interactions that are essential to her business.

Having broken boundaries in her professional life, Solodkin has also broken the ice for others. Since her tenure at Tamarind a number of women have done what she did first—become Tamarind Master Printers. This is good for all of the obvious, universal reasons. What seems significant to Judith Solodkin is that in her present shop, she no longer needs the symbolic irony of a pink floor and pink press parts. The overall colors on the sixth floor of 578 Broadway are grey and tan. Except for the ceiling. It's blue—symbolic of the sky. One senses that's where Solodkin sees her limits. □

1 All quotations are from several conversations with Judith Solodkin in February and March 1990.

# THE MONOTYPE
## Printing as Process

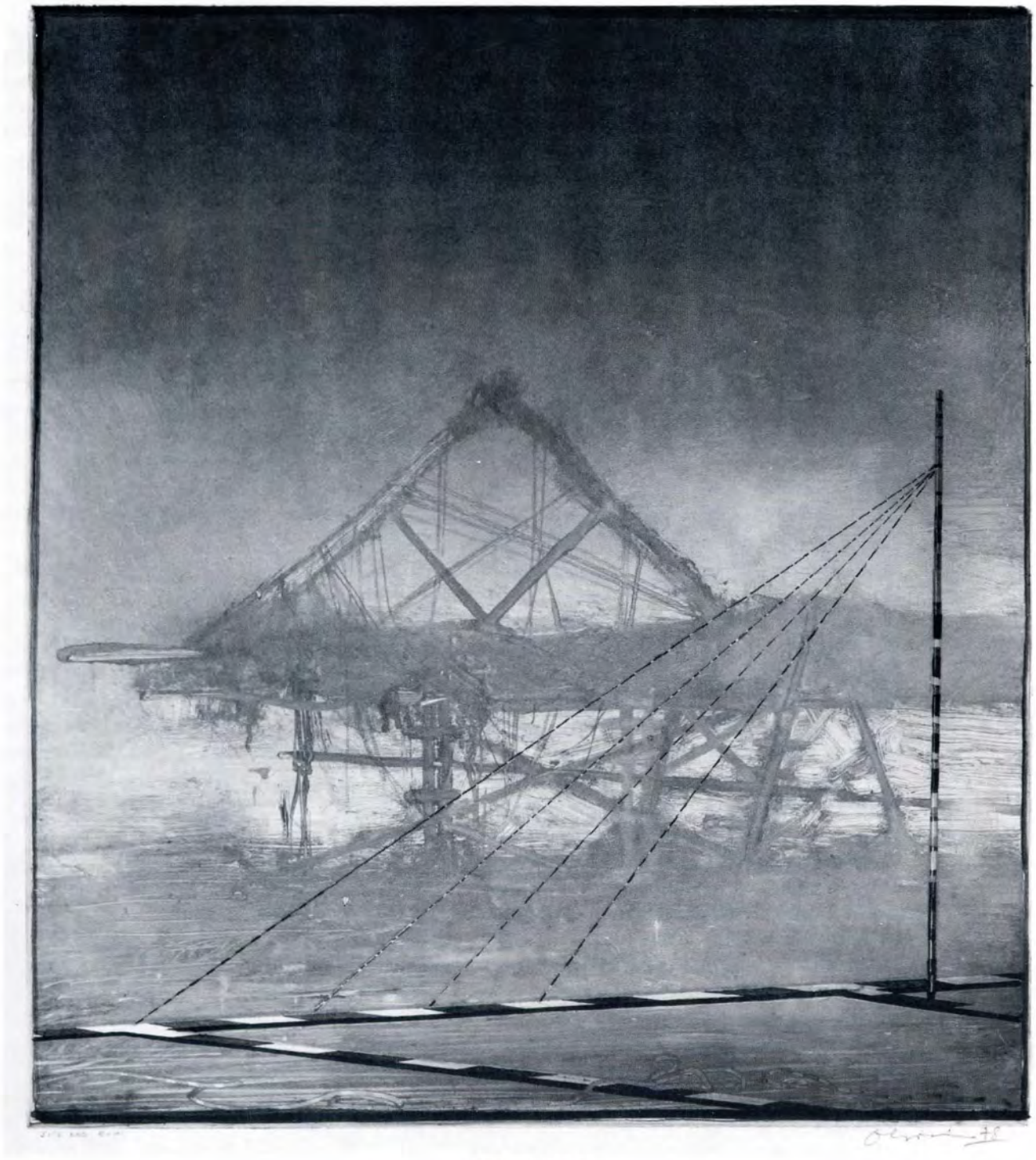
*Nathan Oliveira*

AS WITH MANY YOUNG ART STUDENTS, my interest in graphics grew out of my admiration for the prints of artists I admired as painters. In emulating my masters, I had to learn enough about a print process—in my case, lithography—to achieve similar visual qualities. In so doing, I found that once I formed and decided on an image, after an ongoing series of progressive proofs, I was not interested in producing an edition of any size, or, indeed, any edition at all. My interest was in those progressive proofs, where one moves a visual idea from a beginning to an end through a series of related states. It was obvious to me that I was a painter and not a printer. My ideas grew out of the lithographic drawing materials—as the ideas of the Abstract Expressionists grew out of their paint. I was satisfied with a singular visual event, and as a result, my editions were limited or even nonexistent; furthermore, I took great liberties with drawing effects and materials that were generally unprintable. On this basis, I considered myself a hand proofer—but unknowingly, I was a monotypist.

The experience I have described defines many American printmakers of the forties and fifties: those who made their own prints, before Tamarind made possible the collaboration of artist and printer. My work at Tamarind as an artist-fellow in 1963 made clear the identity of high quality, edition printing, and I never again confused it with hand proofing.

In my memory, I recalled those special moments by myself at the press, when I had discovered qualities that were intimate to the printing process: I saw the agreeable and unique act of transferring an image from stone to paper to be different from painting, drawing, or any other process that I had experienced. In my endeavors, the press became a tool; and the drawing, once charged with specially ground black ink and printed on handmade paper, was transformed into a statement that only the term *graphic* could describe. A sheet of paper was no longer merely a white surface: it became, in fact, a sheet of light that could be affected by the orchestration of drawing values on its surface.

The abstract nature of drawing on a surface from left to right, only to have it reversed in printing, creates an element of surprise. When I create an image, this reversal detaches me from it, thus I can be more objective, more able to criticize my effort. Even more important, I am able then to imagine, and to visualize more freely about my image—and, not being restricted and bound by the idea exactly as I have drawn it, I can change it at will, and, hopefully, move it to another state. These characteristics are unique to artists who understand printmaking. These, too, are the essential characteristics of the monotype, which is why I have come to use it. □



**Nathan Oliveira**
*Site and Ruin*, 1978
Monotype, sheet 762 × 559 mm.

# A LIVING TRADITION
## Black-and-White Prints in an Age of Color

*Joann Moser*

TAKE TWENTY PEOPLE knowledgeable about contemporary prints—collectors, dealers, artists, curators—and ask each of them to compile a list of the twenty best prints of the past three decades. Doubtless you would have twenty different lists. Some choices would be fairly predictable; others subjective and surprising. I suspect, however. that the number of black-and-white prints selected would be a revelation.[1] During a period characterized by the proliferation—nay, the explosion—of color prints, there remain many artists who choose to explore the graphic possibilities of black ink on white paper—possibilities that have attracted printmakers throughout the centuries.

In a clear, succinct survey of some of the main issues of contemporary printmaking, Clifford S. Ackley observed in 1987 that "although color remains a viable means of expression in graphic art . . . the last decade has seen a reaffirmation of the potency of black and white."[2] I would assert that even in the 1960s and early 1970s, black-and-white prints remained a vital medium of expression for a number of important artists. Despite the present profusion of technical possibilities unavailable before 1960, as well as on overheated market for the most desirable prints, many artists have consciously resisted the temptation to make prints in color. Instead they have chosen to make prints in black and white, continuing to explore the creative possibilities and expressive subtleties which have distinguished the graphic tradition during many centuries.

Since the early 1960s, with the proliferation of skilled printers, collaborative workshops, and print publishers, artists have had the opportunity to create large, colorful, technically complex prints with the encouragement and assistance of master printers. Persuaded to make prints by such dedicated and forceful people as Tatyana Grosman and June Wayne, many painters came to regard printmaking as an extension of their painting. The increased size of prints, made possible through the development of new types of presses, greater varieties of papers, and more highly skilled printers, allowed these works to become surrogates for paintings, displayed in frames on walls rather than stored in boxes. A strong decorative tendency in the art of the late 1970s and early 1980s further promoted the prodigious use of bright and varied color. The market for contemporary prints boomed, with color prints leading the way.

One of the major challenges in evaluating contemporary art is the need to divorce oneself from the judgments of the marketplace to determine which artists, what ideas, and what developments are significant outside the world of commerce. In principle, this task falls to critics and art museum curators whose impartial judgments might counterbalance the more promotional activities of art galleries and auction houses, where the skills of the promoter are often as important as the quality of the art. In practice, the distinction is not always so clear; several museums that show contemporary art have been accused of capitulating to commerce, favoring artists represented by certain galleries and ignoring less-fashionable artists or styles of expression. Critics, as well, often confine their commentary to artists being shown by prominent galleries or museums. In a recent assessment of contemporary art, critic Jane Adams Allen wrote that the rising influence of commercial values represented "a massive shift of influence and power, over the past thirty years, from dealer to auction house and from critic and curator to collector."[3] In today's atmosphere of record prices, speculative investment, and the extraordinary financial and critical success of well-hyped artists, it is es-

**Frank Stella.**
*Swan Engraving Square I*, 1982
(from the Swan Engraving Series).
Etching, 135.9 × 132 cm.



pecially important to consider significant aspects of contemporary art which depart from the commercial values that propel the art market.

FROM A HISTORICAL STANDPOINT, one need only look to the first half of the twentieth century to see that works of art acclaimed in their own time might not be the ones judged to be the most important by posterity. Although the market for contemporary American prints was negligible before the 1960s, there were many juried exhibitions and prizes were awarded for the best prints. In his survey of twentieth-century American prints, James Watrous devotes significant attention to the prints that won prizes and awards soon after they were made.[4] It is clear from our current perspective that the prize-winners were not necessarily the prints we now consider to be the best or most important prints of the time.

Similarly, one might assume that the prints valued most highly in the current art market may not prove to be the ones recognized as most significant by future generations. For example, are there any major prints being made by artists who do not have a New York dealer? The cost of doing business in New York, or any other major art center, is so high that even the sale of a modestly priced edition of prints will not cover the dealer's overhead. Hence, many prints are never shown in this major market and as a consequence receive little or no critical attention.

To counterbalance the attention paid to certain artists and movements by the media and the market, it is informative to consider the entire range of art being created, not only in the major art centers and workshops, but all across the country. (The current market and critical consensus favor artists whose primary medium is painting or sculpture rather than printmaking.) Is this an accurate assessment

of the state of contemporary printmaking? Does it reflect a subtle bias against specialist printmakers? As one reviews the important black-and-white prints being made by such prominent artists as Jasper Johns, Jim Dine, Robert Rauschenberg, Sol LeWitt, Mel Bochner, Donald Sultan, Frank Stella, Willem de Kooning, Susan Rothenberg, and Robert Motherwell, it is important also to consider prints by less well-known artists such as Anthony-Petr Gorny, Michael Hafftka, Nona Hershey, Daniel Leary, Craig McPherson, Elizabeth Peak, and Carole Seborovski, among others.

THE REASONS FOR MAKING PRINTS in black and white have varied from artist to artist. Elizabeth Murray explained that she was inspired to make prints by a series of eleven Minotaur prints by Picasso that she saw in a retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art.[5] Although she added a bright red color to the image in the fourth and fifth states of *Untitled, States I-V* (1980), the image was conceived in black and white, and each of the first three states functions independently as a complete and powerful composition. Determined that her first print would be black and white, Murray seems intuitively to have wanted to establish a link with the graphic tradition that inspired her print.

Other artists as well have found inspiration in the prints of the masters. For his recent portfolio, *Continuities,* Robert Morris looked to Goya's *Disasters of War;* and George Segal paid homage to Rembrandt's etched portraits in his recent *Portraits.* Despite their geometrical clarity, Al Held's *Straits of Magellan* and *Straits of Mallaca* recall the architectural fantasies of Piranesi's imaginary prisons.

Some artists look to the more recent past for inspiration. In the early 1980s, a revival of interest in the German Expressionists reawakened an appreciation of the power of the crudely cut, emotionally charged, black-and-white images of their woodcuts. Richard Bosman, for one, has revitalized the broadly cut relief print for his powerful images of the human figure in moments of crisis. William Wiley looked to the tradition of broadsides and to the satirical prints of such artists as José Guadalupe Posada, with their potent and direct expressions of social and political concerns, for such a powerful work as *El Salvador.*

FOR OTHER ARTISTS, the value of making a print is less the varied and subtle effects intrinsic to printmaking than the identity of a print as a multiple original. Sue Coe has revived the tradition of the modestly scaled black-and-white broadside, proclaiming provocative social and political messages in large editions. For others, printmaking in black and white represents a return to basics: a temporary rejection of the complex techniques that characterize so much contemporary printmaking. Many painters have been attracted to the direct, autographic experience of making a line on a stone or plate. The strong, linear expression of Philip Guston's lithographs with Irwin Hollander, or his later prints at Gemini G.E.L., retain the immediacy and graphic impact of a drawing, as do Ellsworth Kelly's eloquent plant lithographs of the mid-1960s.

Other artists have turned to printmaking in black and white as an extension of their interest in the more contemporary imagery of photography, film, or video. Chuck Close's large, close-up portraits of his friends retain a strong sense of the black-and-white photograph from which he derives his image; and Robert Longo's stark, writhing figures, caught in stop-action stillness, convey the dramatic immediacy of a large-scale movie frame. For the minimalists, line and form devoid of color have satisfied their reductive expression. For such artists as Sol LeWitt, Brice Marden, Agnes Martin, Edda Renouf and others, the purity of the black-and-white print distinguishes the medium from painting in a very basic and significant way. In LeWitt's series *The Locations of Lines* (1975), blocks of text in the image create grey forms, introducing a tone created solely by a network of black lines that recall the complex engraving patterns developed by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century reproductive printmakers.

Conceptual artists have often found the directness and immediacy of a black-and-white image the most effective means to embody their vision. Concerned primarily with ideas, conceptual artists value the abstract qualities of black-and-white prints that allow them to express their ideas in their purest form.

On the other hand, black has always had connotations of mystery, menace, or death; and artists such as Susan Rothenberg, Robert Motherwell, and Craig McPherson have explored its symbolic associations and nuances

of tone to suggest atmosphere and meaning. Implicit in each artist's choice of black ink is his or her sensitivity to the various "colors" of black ink, from cool blue-blacks to warm, almost-sepia tones.

Why artists should choose to eliminate color from their palette and place limitations on their means of expression is a question that has significance beyond the prints of the past three decades. Rudolph Arnheim explains the consequences of Picasso's decision to paint his monumental *Guernica* with a monochrome palette:

> In relation to the colorful world of everyday experience . . . monochrome gives a picture the character of a reduction. . . . By comparison to a work in many colors, a monochrome is always strongly abstract, less substantial materially, closer to a diagram—the visual representation of an idea. . . . [Monochrome] tends to move the image in the direction of a disembodied statement of properties rather than a rendition of objects. It emphasizes the detachment of the "epic" presentation.[6]

From another perspective, the painter Barnett Newman remarked that "when an artist moves into black, it is to clear the table for new hypotheses."[7] For many artists, the issue of renouncing color in favor of black and white marks a significant new direction in their artistic development. Consider, for example, the significance of Frank Stella's *Swan Engraving* series of 1984. Known primarily for his innovative and influential abstract painting, Stella began in 1967 to make prints based on compositions already developed in his painting. Transformed by the change in scale and the surface qualities characteristic of the printmaking medium, Stella's earlier prints were actually graphic variations on ideas he had already developed in his paintings. In the *Swan Engraving* series, Stella developed the composition directly on the plate. Stella described his change in attitude: "I was into the business of painting with printmaking techniques . . . [using] the printing ink as though it were a painting medium. . . . Now I'm using the process to make prints about printing."[8] Relying strictly on the rich and varied tonalities of black ink on white paper, virtuoso draftsmanship, and subtle surface effects achieved by a combination of relief and intaglio printing, Stella emphatically asserted the independence of his *Swan* imagery from the brightly colored, boldly three-dimensional constructions he had just completed. Although Stella returned to making brightly colored prints, the black-and-white images of the Swan series marked a turning point in his attitude toward printmaking.

To consider the validity of black-and-white prints during a period when color prints by prominent artists dominate the market, exhibitions, and critical reviews is to recognize that artists have values and concerns other than the financial success of their art. What is especially interesting about the continuing tradition of black-and-white prints is that its attraction for artists transcends any single movement or style. From minimalism to expressionism, from abstraction to representation, many of the best contemporary artists continue to look to this rich graphic tradition for a broad range of expression. □

1 A recent exhibition and catalogue of black-and-white prints from the collection of Reba and Dave Williams, *Black and White Since 1960* (The City Gallery of Contemporary Art, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1989), is indicative of this predilection among knowledgeable and sophisticated collectors.

2 Clifford S. Ackley, *70s into 80s: Printmaking Now* (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 4.

3 Jane Adams Allen, "Pluralism and Postmodernism: Assessing a Decade," *New Art Examiner* (January 1990), 21.

4 James Watrous, *A Century of American Printmaking 1880–1980* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984).

5 Elizabeth Armstrong, *First Impressions: Early Prints by Forty-Six Contemporary Artists* (New York: Hudson Hills Press in association with Walker Art Center, 1989), 114.

6 Rudolf Arnheim, *Picasso's Guernica: The Genesis of a Painting* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962), 27.

7 Barnett Newman, quoted in Thomas B. Hess, *Willem de Kooning* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1968), 50.

8 Frank Stella, quoted in Robert Hughes, *Frank Stella: The Swan Engravings* (Fort Worth: Fort Worth Art Museum, 1984), *v*.

## *Linda Tyler*

"What is especially interesting about the continuing tradition of black-and-white prints is that its attraction for artists transcends any single movement or style."

Joann Moser's observation (page 63) reveals the essence of *Artists' Impressions*, a commemorative suite of lithographs in progress that will embody the aesthetic diversity encouraged by collaborative printmaking while recalling the merit of the small black-and-white print. In anticipation of this thirtieth anniversary year, Tamarind began in 1989 to invite its visiting artists to contribute a twelve-by-twelve inch, one-run print to the project, which will conclude at the close of 1990. Each artist enthusiastically embraced the idea as a way to "share the honors" of his or her own aesthetic achievement with the technical and collaborative traditions that Tamarind represents. With equal enthusiasm, each artist welcomed the opportunity to work—in this era of "bigger, brighter, bolder"—in the small, single-color format.

To date, sixteen artists have evidenced the attraction of which Moser speaks: Clinton Adams, Garo Antreasian, Walter Askin, William Brice, Larry Brown, Robert Colescott, James Davis, James Drake, Margo Humphrey, Gendron Jensen, Roberto Juarez, Joy Laville, George McNeil, Mary Ristow, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, and Italo Scanga. The six prints illustrated characterize lithography's adaptability to style, from the sensuous tonality of Adams's *Transition* to the linear clarity of Antreasian's *Abra*, from the figurative, abstract expression of McNeil's *Mishap Place* to the associative, formal synthesis of Brice's *Untitled #4*, and from the earthy crayon drawing of Juarez's *Before 17 Days* to the iconographic, xerographic-toner drawing of Drake's *Fun Gun Laser*.

*Artists' Impressions* will be available for purchase early in 1991 at a yet-to-be-determined price. In keeping with the commemorative spirit, each edition will consist of thirty numbered impressions. □

ABOVE: **Clinton Adams.** *Transition*, 1989. Lithograph, sheet 305 × 306 mm, printed by Anya K. Szykitka.

BELOW: **William Brice.** *Untitled #4*, 1989. Lithograph, sheet 305 × 305 mm, printed by Bill Lagattuta.

ABOVE: **Roberto Juarez.** *Before 17 Days,* 1989. Lithograph, sheet 310 × 310 mm, printed by Eric Katter.

BELOW: **George McNeil.** *Mishap Place,* 1989. Lithograph, sheet 307 × 307 mm, printed by Eric Katter.

ABOVE: **James Drake.** *Fun Gun Laser,* 1989. Lithograph, sheet 310 × 307 mm, printed by Anya K. Szykitka.

BELOW: **Garo Antreasian.** *Abra,* 1990. Lithograph, sheet 306 × 306 mm, printed by Julie Maher.

# BIG PRINT, BIG SCREEN: W. SNYDER MacNEIL
## Photography, Video, and the Romantic Tradition of Graphic Variability

*Eugenia Parry Janis*

TO CONSIDER THE DEVELOPMENT of contemporary printmaking over the past thirty years without including contemporary photography—and even video's susceptibility to the graphic arts' explosive technical liberties—hardly does justice to the dynamic and expressive use of graphic media today. The bold execution and large scale that characterize printmaking since Abstract Expressionism have imposed painting's grand fluency upon older notions of the print as a carrier of exactly repeatable information, and has created an arena of enormous imaginative flexibility. Thus, painterly freedom, which would have seemed antithetical to the idea of the print as a faithful mechanical reproduction (since it alludes to spontaneity, accident, and even a failure to communicate accurately) is now a well-established tradition harboring the cult of temperament.

Before the 1960s, large, painterly prints came to symbolize artistic dissent from an academic norm. Today they are the very norm through which contemporaneity is expressed; they stand for the fusion among various branches of visual language that marks artistic genius in the late twentieth century. That photography and electronic technologies such as video now lay equal claim to graphic pictorialism (broadly applied) is not as strange as it might seem; especially if we regard expressive painterliness in the graphic arts as part of a vital romantic tradition which is still playing itself out, and of which photography and video may be regarded as nothing less than latter day manifestations.

It is instructive to reflect on the history of the graphic arts from a romantic point of view because it illuminates tendencies in the careers of certain contemporary artists for whom graphic art as a primary focus of exploration has evolved with particular clarity—from painting to printmaking to a highly conscious artistic use of photography and painterly use of video. The work of W. Snyder MacNeil provides a perfect example of this fluent progression, as it allows us to examine the relationship between graphic art and contemporary technologies in the context of a romantic exploitation of painterliness. We see that in diverging radically from the mere replication of images, such devices fulfill a progression established from the moment artists decided to submit their ideas to a transferring process.

PAINTERLY PRINTMAKING is as old as printmaking itself. Initially, it amounted to the escape of ink from the system of lines created to hold it. Soon it became the conscious application of ink outside the engraved or etched pattern. Many great print rooms boast of exceptionally inked "atmospheric" examples of cool, linear intaglios from the fifteenth century by unknowns or by masters such as Dürer, which resemble scenes taking place in cloudy weather. In the work of artists such as Ghisi, ink may cloak the engraved plate with leaden tones, the suffocating density of which perfectly reinforces sixteenth century Italian Mannerism's aristocratic, esoteric goals. Through variable inking, which simulated spiritual auras to resonate against literally interpreted biblical texts, Rembrandt in the seventeenth century elaborated an attitude of expressive possibility. His entire graphic output may be thought of as a personal campaign, waged within printmaking itself, against the exacting ethic of mechanical transfer.[1]

A fairly rapid sequence of technical inventions, since the seventeenth century, answered a demand for more permanent means to subdue printmaking's indomitable linearity. The modifying nuances of mezzotint, stipple engraving, wood engraving, aquatint, lithography (by the early nineteenth century),

and the photographic negative (by 1840) together demonstrate a beautiful evolution in the history of graphic techniques, which extols a poetics of tonal ambiance in the art of transfer and an accompanying obfuscation to which such romantic painterliness alludes. It is interesting to consider Delacroix's lithography, inspired in the late 1820s and early 1830s by Achille Dévéria's liberal brushing of dark fields of liquid tusche on bavarian limestone, in relation to the appearance in the 1830s of the darkling photographic negative on paper, regarded even at the time as a graphic work in its own right.[2]

Variability and obfuscation were hardly the primary aims of photography's inventors, although in the beginning experimenters could hardly avoid them. Their ambition for the new process lay in the virtues of the camera lens' ability to describe, really to mirror, its subject matter with as much precision as possible—just as a printmaker's impressions are made to "prove" the information on the engraved, etched, or lithographic matrix. Scientists, such as Samuel F. B. Morse, held magnifying glasses to daguerreotypes in order to count the cobblestones recorded on a Paris boulevard. It was artists who began to test the new medium's variability. With the coming of the paper negative ("calotype" in England), in which magnification was ultimately beside the point, to photograph was, significantly, to record by managing light and shade into a kind of tonal map. Painter-photographers thus almost came to conjure their subject matter, even as they collected its data with their chemistries; but they did this with the freedom for inventive fancy that only the paper negative's opaque blacks—"resting places for the eye,"[3] Delacroix called them—could provide.

With the insecure chemistries of paper negatives, the artistic claims of early French photography on paper in the 1850s gave the murky forest-interior effects of the Barbizon painters a run for their money. Many photographic artists owe their great achievements to this sensibility, which made a virtue of variable tonality and chance in camera impressions. These qualities lie at the heart of Julia Margaret Cameron's staggering inventiveness in English portraiture, which during the 1860s and 1870s was notorious for the blurred focus, faithless chemicals, and barely grasped darkroom practices, with which Cameron expanded the breadth of her dramatic intentions. Just as lithography and the paper negative seemed born from the same family of interests, Cameron's photography, for all of its Pre-Raphaelite highmindedness, evolved alongside the self-conscious manipulation of technique by painter-engravers of the etching revival in England and France in the 1860s, when inky soft focus suggested an incipient Impressionism without color. By the mid-1870s, Degas, Pissarro, Cassatt, Whistler, and many others working in the *peintre-graveur* tradition throughout Europe and America pursued an expressive inky fluency for its own sake in heavily inked etchings and in monotype.

This sensibility, another arm of Impressionism, was nurtured by a frame of mind in which ink, freely manipulated, stood for spontaneous feeling that expressed spontaneous changes in natural light and in the gaslight of boulevards, theaters, and cafés.[4] The paler, more translucent shading in what came to be called "pictorialist" photography from the 1880s was neither the brainchild of the photo clubs nor of Alfred Stieglitz nor of other photographic impressionists such as Frederick Evans or P. H. Emerson, both of whom turned to platinum metals in order more fully to expand the principle of "modulation" in their romance with tonal nuance. Such effects in art-conscious photographic naturalism were more likely attributable to the "moss-like" gradations of Whistler's rhapsodically inked "Nocturnes" of the 1880s, which critic Sadakichi Hartmann discussed with the same insight that he did pictorialist photographs.[5]

The desire to "paint" through the considered interpretation of photographic technique seems to reflect a romantic attitude that contradictorily wants to rescue a process from the very jaws that give it life. The history of the graphic arts amply demonstrates that experimentalists in all media rarely hesitate to confront the flexible alternatives offered by techniques developed primarily to convey resolved images of linear clarity. In the past thirty years we have seen how Rauschenberg, Johns, and others have practically redefined what it is to draw on stone. Anselm Kiefer has elevated woodcut to the status of a mural. Michael Mazur has taken monotype to a monumental scale.[6] In those same thirty years, photography, for the sake of art, repossessed its old billboard scale; and, doubtlessly taking courage from Pop Art, reconsidered methods only used commercially. Cindy Sherman's huge beach still lifes of the late 1980s, their sand strewn with contemporary debris and

FIG. 1.
**W. Snyder MacNeil.**
"John M. Snyder,"
from *The Snyder Family Portraits*, 1980–84.
Platinum/palladium print,
597 × 502 mm.

detritus, have the irony of Pop Art's parody of the "big picture" grandeur written all over them—a far cry from the keepsakes that photography's inventors pasted into albums or carried in their pockets to the halls of the Académie des Sciences.

IN THE MORE MERCURIAL ART of video replication, with its broadcast camera effects on a television monitor, it is possible to examine the work of artists who approach it with deliberate ignorance regarding its already rich history. W. Snyder MacNeil, a well-known still photographer trained in painting and the graphic arts, has, since 1985, completely given herself over to video. Taking up this medium as if it had been born yesterday—forced to deal with fluid, nearly ungraspable imagery which seems to paint itself—she awakened in herself a new capacity for creative imagination. That this medium represents for her an explosive liberation can only be appreciated by examining the kind of work that preceded it.

MacNeil studied photography with Minor White at MIT in the mid-1960s. Since that time she has refined the art of the portrait in a series of graphic tone poems, wherein the photographs, which strongly resemble their sitters, reach beyond mirroring toward arrangements of physiognomy-into-symbol. This she achieved through larger-than-life-sized heads printed onto translucent tracing vellum, which she had brushed by hand with platinum and palladium metals in accordance with recipes that she could hardly reproduce from one day to the next, despite notations as precise as those of a geneticist. Success had more to do with the season of the year and the relative humidity of the air on the printing day. The results, each wrenched with great difficulty from the darkroom cocoon like a moth struggling toward the light, were gorgeous human documents. Above all, their chaste serenity alluded to ancient sculptures and the stern rectitude of the gothic figures of Chartres or Notre-Dame cathedrals—monuments which still fill her with shameless emotion.

MacNeil's photographic portraits are incisive, stunningly clear in their cool light, even as they seem to stand for emotions beyond those that the sitter's face conveyed. To further abstract this language, she began to replace the heads with her subjects' arms and hands, thereby carrying on the romantic tradition of a pleasure in discontinuity through the suggestive fragment. An image of "John M. Snyder," from a series called *The Snyder Family Portrait*, 1980–84 [FIG. 1], allows everything we might deduce about the sitter to speak through a map of fine lines and contours, a puzzle usually reserved for the decoding palmist or student of body meridians. Here "John" is a sculptural bas-relief; the hand's contour and subtle modulation through platinum and palladium begin to assert a new dimension of resemblance. As we meditate on this open palm, we realize the degree to which insight into a person in a portrait has been limited by the conventions of a facial formula, and that the hand is a perfect physiognomic "equivalent"—a new geography of less familiar, more intriguing signs. Within this beautiful conception alone lies MacNeil's link to her teacher Minor White, who asked of a photographed subject "what else it is."[7]

After more than twenty years of exploring and challenging the secure tradition of classic portraiture in this way, MacNeil decided that she had mastered the demands of the big print, and solved the problems of still imagery, not only as a photographer, but, literally, in the process, as a consummate graphic artist. It was as if she had crossed the majestic mysteries of Cameron's floating heads with the gossamer veils of Whistler's late etchings and lithotints. Her platinum/palladium impressions were hardly photographs in the ordinary sense. The information from her negatives seemed suspended in the butterfly-wing translucency of the precious metals on vellum. The portraits were strong, exquisite to

behold and to touch. They were memorable and infinitely collectible, but for MacNeil by 1985, a dead end.

ON THE DAY THE WRECKERS came to her house in 1988 and knocked down her darkroom, she used a video camera to record the scene, highlighted by the moment when the photographer's handmade wooden sink was heaved from the second-story window, landing on a pile of rubble like a crustacean's cast-off shell. The new camera was no different from that which has become a staple of entertainment in many American homes, especially those with growing children whose parents record their every step and cry. MacNeil, who became the mother of two after 1985, a rather late moment in her life and work, armed herself with the parental instrument and began filing away her children's lives on tape. The new focus was simply life at home, which she discovered was so complex and rich with events and metaphorical "scenes" as to be totally consuming. She exposed hundreds of hours of tape and built new video monuments to each family member by closely following her husband and children in order to register new subtleties in the continuities that she had failed to grasp with the still camera. She played and reviewed the tapes endlessly. Minute by minute, second by second, armed with a jog dial for making stop-action stills, she became a connoisseur of life unfolding digit by digit.

From this she created a body of work that partakes both of still photography and of the strictly video pieces that followed. It is interesting to examine this transitional period as we explore the elision between a graphic artist's big-print phase and the image on the big screen.[8] Just before MacNeil destroyed her darkroom she returned for the last time to the exquisite printing techniques that had practically driven her crazy. In mining the tapes for more nuanced expressions of the symbolic fragments she had previously established in stills, she used the jog dial to stop motion into compositions of faces and hands. From the endless games that her husband played with their daughter Jazimina, she found she could extract fragments that alluded to darker themes, to myths of temptation and betrayal as told in the great stone cycles of romanesque and gothic sculpture, notably that of Gislebertus in the church of Saint-Lazare at Autun where Eve, positioned horizontally on a great lintel, thoughtfully ponders the words of the serpent.

MacNeil lifted these digital moments from the limbo of the tapes, froze them on the screen, and then rephotographed them with a 35mm camera. She printed them, as she had done her previous portrait stills, in the patina of precious metals, allowing the grosgrain ribbing of the television monitor to betray their source. This translation of color video back into earlier, strictly photographic hues and tonalities not only had the effect of dissolving the contours of the figures and subjecting them to a softer, slightly more obscuring painterliness; it also made a clear distinction between the video in color as "raw material" from life and the "extracted" character of the work of art.

In *Jazimina and Ronald*, 1987 [FIG. 2], hands, a foot, and the child's surrendering expression are caught in the midst of a playful scene, which, by virtue of being lifted out of the context of the tape, has become an awe-filled meditation on touch. Both the moment and its pictorial expression would have been inconceivable with the still camera alone, for MacNeil has allowed her machines to reveal the poetic flow of interrupted movement that lies in virtually imperceptible hiatuses between one moment and the next, never to be retrieved in exactly the same configuration again. Thus, by interpreting her new instruments as not mere recorders but as revealers of inexplicable mystery, the photographer began to deepen her language of body fragments and gesture, a major theme in her work as a whole. In such imagery the selection was always guided by themes of timelessness in the great monuments of the past. Perhaps she fixed on such beacons in the process of reviewing the daunting quantities of video tape that flowed past as she edited. An exhilarating task was not far from becoming a nightmare of choosing. But the TV monitor revealed new ways to convey symbols as well as greater fluency and translucency in the "documents" than she had achieved through darkroom work alone. The image, held in the fabric of electronic lines, was further abstracted from the tapes' chronological unfolding. Finally, converted back into platinum prints, the pictures transcended not only their original themes; but, held in the fiber of the TV screen as well as being suspended in light-sensitive chemicals on the tracing vellum, they also partook of an older printmaking tradition, even as they were born from a new technology.

RIGHT: FIG. 2. **W. Snyder MacNeil.** *Jazimina and Ronald,* 1987. Platinum/palladium print, video still, 464 × 584 mm.

BELOW: FIG. 3. **W. Snyder MacNeil.** *Untitled Video Still,* 1988–90. Cibachrome transparency, 101.6 × 152.4 cm.

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ABOVE: FIG. 4. **W. Snyder MacNeil.** *Untitled Video Still,* 1988–90. Cibachrome transparency, 101.6 × 152.4 cm.

BELOW: FIG. 5. **W. Snyder MacNeil.** *Untitled Video Still,* 1988–90. Cibachrome transparency, 101.6 × 152.4 cm.

IT WAS AFTER the first major exhibition of this transitional work in 1988 that MacNeil decided to destroy her darkroom. Now she works only to create video pieces from reams of color footage, which she edits with the same ferocity and attention to detail and nuance that she exerted as a still photographer. From 120 hours of tape she produced a six-minute, forty-six-second *Nuclear Portrait,* with which she made her debut as a video artist in February 1990 during Fotofest at the Houston Center for Photography. With this piece MacNeil continues to develop as an artist of abstractions by avoiding anything that might be associated with narrative. Through an almost imperceptible use of slow motion, she helps us view the action with more attention. But also she has begun to play with the blur and obfuscation of the sound in the process. While reviewing the raw footage, she found that the sounds made in relation to a particular sequence of movement were another manipulatable variable, and she began to regard the tapes' dense, noisy activity as a kind of multidimensional palette. In *Nuclear Portrait* part of the sound track is simply the echo of children's feet on wooden floors as they run through the house. By slowing down the sound in sections showing the games played by father and daughter, she was able to "invent" a monstrous "voice" for the tempter in her "passion plays." At Fotofest MacNeil had the viewers of *Nuclear Portrait* sit on a formal settee or lie down on a double bed. As far as she is concerned, her work is, above all, domestic, and must be received in surroundings that recall its origins. Although it is her aim to leave for good the world of images or collectibles affixed to museum walls, even now she occasionally extracts stills from the video footage. These are in the form of enormous Cibachrome transparencies, measuring forty by sixty inches, from 1988–90, which a lab prints for her [FIGS. 3, 4, 5].[9] She regards these monuments to the big screen of TV and the movies as sketches after the fact; that is, monumental extracts acting only as referents to the mobile footage that presently consumes her. Rather than contradict her aims as a video artist, the extracts further fortify them. The chaos, narrative incompleteness, and discontinuity of the fragments clarify the realm of possibilities that exploded into view as soon as she left the still image behind. In their very contingency, their narrative and pictorial ambiguity dissolves and transforms the subject matter into a poetics of pure gesture, and, in the process, reminds this graphic artist/photographer/video experimentalist of the still unmined directions of her search as a visual artist. They also recall the romantic tradition of graphic variability in which she finds herself so firmly embedded. □

1 For an elaboration of this story of inking in relation to the revival of etching in the 1860s, see my "Setting the Tone—The Revival of Etching, the Importance of Ink," in *The Painterly Print: Monotype from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980), 9–28.

2 This is developed in André Jammes and Eugenia Parry Janis, *The Art of the French Calotype, with a Critical Dictionary of Photographers 1845–1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), xiii-xiv and 137, which attempts to create a picture in which photography's appearance is a natural fulfillment of the process of technical invention in the graphic arts before the middle of the nineteenth century.

3 Ibid., 98.

4 Janis, "Setting the Tone," 22.

5 *The Whistler Book* (Boston: L. C. Page and Company, 1910), 168. This remarkable series of essays, which remains relatively obscure today, establishes the connecting links between the painterly principles of Impressionism and pictorialist photography. Hartmann published the first of the essays, "Introduction: White Chrysanthemums," in Stieglitz's *Camerawork* in 1903.

6 See my "In the Halflight: Michael Mazur's Monotype Murals," in *Wakeby Day/Wakeby Night: Monumental Monotypes by Michael Mazur* (Cambridge: Committee for the Visual Arts, Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1983), n.p.

7 Peter Bunnell, et al., *Minor White, The Eye That Shapes* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, in association with Bulfinch Press/Little Brown and Company, 1989), 5.

8 This work was exhibited in 1988. See my "Passion Play: Recent Family Portraits by W. Snyder MacNeil," in *W. Snyder MacNeil: Daughter/Father* (Boston: Photographic Resource Center at Boston University, 1988), 4–15.

9 MacNeil exhibited three huge Cibachrome transparencies along with selections of the raw footage of her video tapes at Ryerson Polytechnic Institute in Toronto in November 1988, and several in "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle," an exhibition that was curated by Debra Heimerdinger and included work by Judy Black, Sally Mann, Bea Nettles, and Elaine O'Neil. It was shown at Camerawork Gallery, San Francisco, September October 1989; and Rose Art Gallery, Brandeis University, January 1990.

# BLACK PRINTMAKERS AND THE WPA
## A Symposium

*Ellen Sragow*

ON 25 FEBRUARY 1989, a symposium was held in conjunction with the exhibition "Black Printmakers and the WPA" at the Art Gallery of Lehman College, a campus of the City University of New York located in the Bronx. The exhibition, consisting of more than fifty prints, illuminated the achievements of black artists during the Great Depression. In reporting on these events, I can only highlight the power and emotional impact of the speeches and artists' statements, during which they revealed their personal feelings about that period and about one another. Many of the artists had not seen each other for fifty years. Many of them had not seen their prints during those fifty years. This was a reunion.

Three distinguished educators—Dr. William Seraile, Department of Black Studies, Lehman College; Dr. Eleanor Traylor, Department of English, Montgomery College, Rockville, Maryland; and Dr. Leslie King-Hammond, Dean of Graduate Studies, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore—opened the symposium by reviewing the historical background of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and reflecting upon the changes that have affected black culture.

King-Hammond, who was also curator of the exhibition, explained that the Lehman events resulted from an earlier symposium at the Smithsonian Institution, which had examined the status of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Afro-American artists. She had at that time presented a paper on the WPA.

The WPA was created by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935 to provide jobs for some of the twenty-five percent of the working population who were then unemployed. The various art projects provided jobs for thousands of artists who were out-of-work. Some taught in community art centers and schools; some produced murals and sculpture for public buildings; some made paintings, others made prints. Everyone earned the same amount, $23.86 a week; all enjoyed equal rights. It was a productive period in American art. The Graphic Arts Division of the Federal Art Project (FAP) set the stage for an era of printmaking which allowed for experimentation and new discoveries, and black artists had an opportunity to participate fully. As King-Hammond said, however, "The government did little at that time to protect or further the overall civil rights of the Black American, but it did make certain opportunities available to all. And Black artists around the country took full advantage of every possible chance to provide history with a visual legacy of their times, their culture and their ideals."[1]

William Seraile spoke of the late 1920s as a flamboyant time for the dance, music, and poetry of the African American. The art was alive and there were art patrons. Then, in 1929, with the stock market crash, fortunes declined and the patrons disappeared, leaving the artists to struggle for survival. The 1930s were a time of racism, prejudice, and discrimination in this country. During the period of the New Deal, there were 119 lynchings, and although the NAACP tried to push through an anti-lynching bill, President Roosevelt did not support it. (The United States still has not passed an anti-lynching bill.)

It was a period of job discrimination and boycott movements that proclaimed, "Don't shop where you can't work!" Blacks could not get jobs in war production until the Fair Employment Practices Act required equity on the part of companies that had government contracts. Seraile referred to two lithographs in the exhibition which were especially pertinent: a print by Norman Lewis that shows the despair of a man, sitting with his head down, while a sign above his shoulder reads, "We Are Americans Too" (the title of his print); and *Lovers*, a print by Ernest Crichlow, which

**Ernest Crichlow.**
*Lovers*, 1938.
Lithograph,
381 × 349 mm.

portrays a young black woman "embraced" by a member of the Ku Klux Klan: a metaphor of America, the rape of a culture and a soul.

Eleanor Traylor then conducted a blues-journey through the literature of the Federal Writers Projects and the "Blueprint Years" of black writing. In a most eloquent and moving presentation, she read from blues and spirituals, poetry and literature—fragments of a literature filled with drama, passion, sadness, and hope. People were migrating from the South to cities of "hope" in the North, which were slowly becoming cities of depression. Writers on the Illinois Writers Project were referred to as the "voices of the new tide." The sounds changed from the blues of the South to the politics of the cities.

"In the WPA years the martial songs were written, the dirges disappeared, and a race of men and women rose to control the direction of their cultural expression."[2]

THE ARTISTS then proceeded to tell their stories. There were six on the panel—Robert Blackburn, Ernest Crichlow, Riva Helfond (the only non-black), Ronald Joseph, Hughie Lee-Smith, and Raymond Steth—which was moderated by Deidre L. Bibby, Curator of the Collection at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York. They all agreed that the WPA years had been a special time—a time of freedom of expression and freedom of style, without discrimination or censorship. Instead, there had existed a great camaraderie among the artists and their supervisors, a spirit of cooperation, friendship, and love, and an abundance of rich, warm experiences that they would never forget. Gustave von Groschwitz, who had been supervisor of the Graphic Arts Division of the WPA/FAP in New York, summarized his feelings following the panel discussion: "The experience on the project was the nearest to heaven that I have met so far."

Helfond played a significant role as a teacher of lithography at the Harlem Art Center, where Blackburn and Joseph had been among her students. They had produced their first lithographs (included in the exhibition) under her supervision, this at a time when she was just beginning to learn the medium herself. Crichlow, Lewis, and Romare Bearden were also at the center then. All developed their knowledge together, and, while dealing with the same problems, subject matter, and style, achieved a unity. Helfond recalled that they made a trip to Washington, D.C., to protest the possible end of the WPA and to fight for its extension. Busloads of artists drove south, stopping in Baltimore for lunch. When her black friends were not served at the lunch counter, they all got up to leave, and ended up in jail. The next day a headline in a Washington newspaper read, "Reds Storm Baltimore"!

Joseph described the Harlem Art Center as a "healthy and lively" place. He had made wonderful friends, only to leave them behind when he moved to Europe. He had mixed feelings about this. On the one hand, he feels guilty for having left during a period when blacks were struggling for their civil rights; on the other, he feels "lucky" to have been able to live and work in a place where he did not feel discrimination. Joseph returned to the United States after an absence of thirty-three years to attend the Lehman College exhibition and symposium and to renew his old friendships.

Crichlow told how the WPA had given him a chance to associate with artists, since he had grown up not in Harlem but in Brooklyn. He taught at the Utopia Children's House, which was a great influence upon his life as an artist. He said he had learned from the children, whom he felt to be greater artists than he was. He recalled some of the first exhibitions by black artists, held in the 135th Street Library or in people's apartments. Artists who taught at the Art Students League provided free in-

struction; other artists who had travelled to Europe came and talked to them, which was very important, since most of the black artists had never even been out of the city. Crichlow felt that he had participated in a cultural revolution, a great period of artistic involvement and dedication.

Lee-Smith described the period as one in which artists were responding to the needs of the people. It was the role of the artist to be radical. The so-called "establishment" could not prevent the strong work done on the WPA from being shown; there were WPA exhibitions in museums all over the country, and it was through these exhibitions that Lee-Smith had his first opportunity as a professional artist to exhibit his prints. There was constant communication between the various art centers: the Karamu Settlement House in Cleveland, where he studied and taught; the Harlem Art Center in New York; and the Southside Community Art Center in Chicago. "We artists got along . . . as human beings creating art. There were no black projects or white projects. There were WPA Federal Art Projects, and that was one of the good things about that whole period."[3]

Steth had participated in the Graphics Division in Philadelphia, an important project which was the only WPA community center designated as a fine print workshop. Steth worked with Dox Thrash, who, as head of the division, was instrumental in discovering and refining a new printing process: the "Carborundum print." Other artists who worked to perfect the process were Samuel Brown and Claude Clark (both black), Michael Gallagher, Hugh Nesibov, and Roswell Weidner. Because Carborundum was a trade name, Gallagher changed the name of the process to "carbograph." (Thrash, its discoverer, later called his prints "Opheliagraphs," naming them after his mother!) In 1948, Steth went on to open his own printmaking workshop in Philadelphia—the Philographic Workshop—where artists learned to print lithographs, etchings, collographs, and screenprints. The workshop had a mixed faculty and mixed student body, and it sponsored a monthly lecture series called "Art Is for Everybody" in which such prominent artists as Philip Evergood, Robert Gwathmey, and Ben Shahn participated. The workshop remained active for seven years (through the McCarthy era) despite claims that the artists were "too far to the left." When it closed down in 1955, Steth went on to become the first black instructor at the Philadelphia College of Art.

**Raymond Steth.**
*Beacons of Defense*, n.d.
Lithograph,
478 × 638 mm.

After the symposium, I spoke further with Steth about the development of the print during the thirty years since 1960. It was his view that the technical aspects of printmaking have changed dramatically and that there has been, overall, a departure from the "basics" of printmaking. There are now so many more processes—including photomechanical ones—and so many "glamorous" techniques; in the past, he feels, more was done by hand, directly by the artist. But recently, he feels, many artists are returning to basics. The last lithographs of Romare Bearden, for example, were freehand tusche-wash on zinc plates; Jacob Lawrence cut by hand the film for his screenprints. "Lawrence has emerged as one of America's top artists, and we can use this as a barometer."[4]

Blackburn, like Steth, opened a workshop in 1948—the now well-known Printmaking Workshop in New York. (Too young to be on the WPA/FAP, Blackburn had produced his first lithographs while working with Helfond in Harlem.) Blackburn's shop, like those of the WPA/FAP, is a place where artists can explore together the diversity of printmaking by sharing their ideas and technical expertise. He has also followed in the WPA's footsteps by reaching out to schools and community centers, thus carrying on a tradition. Grace Glueck, art critic for the *New York Times*, has called his workshop "a magnet for third-world and minority artists that reflects Mr. Blackburn's warmth and encouraging personality. . . . In an era of high pressure workshops that tend to produce pricey, made-for-mar-

**Ronald Joseph.**
*Bob Blackburn*, ca. 1935–37.
Lithograph, 305 × 400 mm.
Collection, Dave & Reba Williams.

**Robert Blackburn.** *Checker Game (Club Room)*, ca. 1935–37. Lithograph, 400 × 524 mm. Collection, Dave & Reba Williams.

**Hughie Lee-Smith.** *Artist Life, #3*, 1939. Lithograph, 254 × 305 mm.
Fine Arts and Special Collections Department, Cleveland Public Library.

keting print editions by big name practitioners . . . the Blackburn atelier is still one where artists can go to turn out prints for the love of it."[5]

At the end of the panel discussion, Blackburn addressed a question about the survival of art made on the WPA projects. Why was so much of it lost?

The WPA, he said, "was a people's movement . . . it was not the elite that was moving. The interest in that kind of art was shifting to another level . . . some of the artists went along with the shift . . . but also the establishment did not necessarily want to propagate this kind of art . . . we can see why these things would disappear. It was a renegade art and there was a concentrated effort to wipe it out. It also happened with the blues and jazz. They wanted to push something that is different, something that other people can participate in and not necessarily work that is of the people, and, in this instance, of black people. . . . This has happened throughout history, and if we forget to see that, we have missed a very important point."[6]

Now, fifty years after the WPA, there is a resurgent interest in the work that was produced and in its social, cultural, and political imagery. Over the past several years, there have been numerous exhibitions of this work in museums and galleries, making available to the public an art that seems particularly appropriate as we enter the 1990s.

Artistic freedom and absence of censorship were principal issues addressed during the symposium. While such freedom from censorship is growing in Eastern Europe, it is ironic that artists in the United States are confronted with legislation that sets limits on freedom here. □

1 *Black Printmakers and the WPA* [exhibition catalogue]. Essay by Leslie King-Hammond. (Bronx, N.Y.: Lehman College Art Gallery, 1989), 11. Artists included in the exhibition but not mentioned in this article are Charles Alston, Elmer Brown, Fred Carlo, Wilmer Jennings, Sargent Johnson, William Henry Johnson, Richard Lindsey, Charles L. Sallee, Jr., and Hale Woodruff.
2 Traylor, transcribed from symposium held at Lehman College Art Gallery, Bronx, N.Y., 25 February 1989.
3 Lee-Smith, ibid.
4 Steth, in telephone conversation, March 1990.
5 Grace Glueck, "Printmaking for the Love of It." *New York Times*, 12 July 1988.
6 Blackburn, transcribed from symposium (cited note 2).

# DISCOVERY AND PROCESS
## *Dorziat Reciting* by Arthur B. Carles

*Barbara A. Wolanin*

IN THE DRYPOINT *Dorziat Reciting*, the American modernist painter Arthur B. Carles, Jr. (1882–1952) recorded a process of discovery and change which anticipated his later prophesies of Abstract Expressionism. Only now, nearly four decades after his death, has it become possible to examine the development of his images through a comparison of various states and to study his techniques and processes in detail. In April 1989, when fifty of his works (of which seventeen were versions of *Dorziat*) were exhibited at the Print Club in Philadelphia,[1] a reviewer wrote: "The show reveals that as a printmaker Carles played a previously overlooked role heralding the recent surge in printmaking."[2]

My interest in Carles's work was first stimulated by the dynamic compositions, expressive brushwork, and vibrant hues of his canvases, by his connections to the circle of Alfred Stieglitz and to French modernism, and, as I have said, by his role as a forerunner of Abstract Expressionism.[3]

Carles's prints are worthy of attention both for their visual appeal and for their relationship to his paintings. Primarily known as a gifted colorist, Carles painted sensuous nudes, lush still lifes of flowers, and dynamic abstractions. He lived with intensity and passion rather than with order and predictability. Despite personal problems heightened by drinking, he made an unforgettable impression on friends and students, and enlivened the artistic life of Philadelphia.

Primarily a painter, and by no means a professional printmaker, Carles experimented with prints for personal enjoyment. He never pulled an edition and rarely inked two proofs in the same way. Except for a handful of impressions given to close friends, all of his intaglio prints (and many of his copper plates) remained with his papers in storage after his studio was closed following an incapacitating fall and stroke in 1941.

**Arthur B. Carles.** *Self-Portrait in Studio*, ca. 1915. Drypoint and etching, 94 × 130 mm. Collection, Dr. & Mrs. Perry Ottenberg.

With the exception of one monotype exhibited in 1921 and three in 1946, Carles's prints were seen while he was alive only by his family and a few friends. No prints were included in his 1953 memorial exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts or in the 1959 retrospective at the Graham Gallery, New York. The first studies of Carles's work in 1965 and 1970 did not mention his prints.[4] A dozen monotypes and forty drypoints and etchings are now known, some in several states. Copper plates exist for half of the known prints. Over time, the prints have been dispersed into various collections.[5]

A life-long Philadelphian, Carles may have been introduced to the intaglio processes by his father, who worked as an engraver of watch cases. Carles enrolled at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in December 1900 and took classes there until 1907. One of his teachers, William Merritt Chase, who stressed that painting should be a spontaneous and lively process, may have shown him the technique of monotype. Carles travelled to Europe in the summer of 1905 and later lived in France for a total of three years between 1907 and 1912.

In Paris, Carles responded most strongly to the work of Manet, Cézanne, and Matisse. He admired Degas's paintings and may have been inspired by his etchings. He was familiar

**Arthur B. Carles.** *Flowers,* 1914. Monotype with pastel, 508 × 430 mm. Collection, Dr. & Mrs. Perry Ottenberg.

with the prints of his friend John Marin; he encouraged Marin to turn from making etchings of picturesque buildings to an exploration of color. Marin's watercolors were later exhibited regularly by Alfred Stieglitz at The Little Galleries of the Photosecession, called "291."[6]

Carles's first datable prints were made in 1914 and 1915, after his return to Philadelphia, while he was working to establish himself as a painter. Although he described himself as a "Post-impressionist," espoused theories of abstract art, and exhibited at "291" and at the Armory Show, his paintings and prints remained figurative. His nudes and portraits won prizes at national exhibitions, and in 1917 he was hired as "Instructor of the Costume Sketch Class" at the Pennsylvania Academy. His involvement with black and white in his drypoints and etchings corresponds to the way he created structure through value contrasts in even his most vividly-hued canvases. The drypoint technique may have appealed to Carles because of its directness, which enabled him to make changes without going through complicated technical steps. The small number of prints that can be produced with drypoint was apparently not a concern for Carles, who was not printing editions.

Carles began experimenting with monotype—the transfer onto paper of an image painted on a solid surface—by 1914, the date given to several monotypes exhibited during his lifetime. Only a few examples of nudes or portraits in monotype have been found; most are floral still lifes reminiscent of Redon. In one case Carles used a painting on canvas, *Floral Fragment,* 1914 (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts), to create two monotypes, one of which is reinforced with pastel [FIG. 2]. It is surprising that more monotypes by Carles have not been found, for the medium's spontaneity, freedom of brushwork, and coloristic possibilities would have seemed to make it natural for him.

THE SUBJECTS of Carles's first drypoints, made early in 1915, closely reflect those of his paintings. His first series can be dated by his enthusiastic inscription on the back of a proof of State IV of *Dorziat Reciting* [FIG. 5], which he intended to mail to his father or a friend:

> These are two of my first prints—they're pretty punk but I have better ones. I have to keep them to tell what I'm doing—but will send you samples soon. The subject is Dorziat reciting. . . . Cleopatra is coming out in Vogue. This print is an earlier stage than the other but the other is a rotten print.—Have you started yet? It's very puzzling at first—but you get on to a lot of things very quickly. Wish we could work together for a few days. Love Art. Am doing another plate—but no prints are dry tonight. Will send one soon.

One can visualize Carles working in a fever of excitement late at night, quickly inking and printing the plate to see the effect of his changes, essentially teaching himself. Since the painting *An Actress as Cleopatra* (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts) was reproduced in *Vogue* on 15 March 1915, this inscription serves to date Carles's first efforts in drypoint.[7]

In 1915, printmaking was on the minds of many American painters such as Daniel Garber in Philadelphia and Edward Hopper in New York. Carles's sister-in-law Mathilde de Cordoba, with whom Carles may have shared technical information, exhibited her delicate drypoint portraits of society figures and children in New York in March.[8] Carles's friend Earl Horter showed etchings at the Pennsylvania Academy and the Panama Pacific Exposition in 1915 and gave a printing press to the Philadelphia Print Club, established in 1916. Carles could have seen exhibitions sponsored by the Print Club at the Art Club and the Art Alliance.[9]

**Arthur B. Carles.** *Dorziat*, ca. 1915. Drypoint, 247 × 196. Collection, Sara Fletcher Swanson.

Dorziat (1879–1979) was a French "emotional actress" who performed in Paris and abroad.[13] Carles's first wife, Mercedes da Cordoba Carles, an aspiring actress herself, probably met Dorziat while working as a fashion illustrator in Paris. When Dorziat visited New York in 1914, Mercedes wrote an illustrated article about the actress's wardrobe.[14] Carles apparently joined his wife in New York for a soiree at which Dorziat gave a recitation, with Mercedes providing accompaniment on the piano. The drypoint captures the dramatic climax of the recital. With her head arched back, arms raised like a ballerina, and toe pointed, Dorziat appears to be dancing. She wears a white evening gown with a draped skirt similar to the dresses inspired by the Zouave trousers described in Mercedes's article.

It is possible that the portrait painter Leopold Seyffert taught Carles etching as he did their mutual friend, the conductor Leopold Stokowski.[10] Carles made an etching of Seyffert drawing or working on a plate in the studio (Janet Fleisher Gallery, Philadelphia; plate in the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Perry Ottenberg).[11] From stylistic evidence, it appears that Carles sporadically made etchings into the 1920s. Some could have been made even later, as there was an etching press in Carles's last studio at 191 East Evergreen Avenue in Chestnut Hill.

Carles's first print *Dorziat Reciting* was the most ambitious and complex he ever attempted. In his oeuvre, it lies between two important paintings, *Interior with Woman at the Piano*, 1912 (Baltimore Museum of Art)—a scene of Carles's wife Mercedes playing the piano as she does in the print—which he exhibited at the Chicago version of the Armory Show, and *The Marseillaise*, 1918–19 (Philadelphia Museum of Art). A celebration of the end of the First World War, *The Marseillaise* won the place of honor and the Stotesbury Prize at the Pennsylvania Academy's 114th Annual Exhibition. The central figure recalls the image of Dorziat in the heroic gesture, with head turned back and arms spread overhead. A direct connection is the fact that the painting was inspired by Gabrielle Dorziat's singing of the French national anthem at the end of the war,[12] shown by the inscription on the oil sketch (Philadelphia Museum of Art): "To Dorziat: with appreciation—Carles."

CARLES SEEMED OBSESSED with capturing the image of Dorziat. He first sketched her in a pastel (Ottenberg Collection) in which she is posed gracefully in her white dress, encircled with an arc of light blue. He then scratched her outline on three separate copper plates. The largest drypoint depicts Dorziat with both arms curved upwards, showing the angle of the wall, an arm chair, a statuette on a pedestal, and the piano [FIG. 3]. A smaller figure of Dorziat (Priemon Collection) was lightly scratched onto a small plate, which was later cut down and reused for *Self Portrait with Pipe* (Ottenberg Collection); outlines representing the actress appear faintly in the background, upside down.

Carles developed the third version through ten states on a small, almost square copper plate, which became a stage on which actors were added and subtracted and lighting redirected. In State I (Private Collection), Dorziat's arms are spread more horizontally than in the pastel or in the large drypoint. An indistinct bearded man, who resembles Carles himself, sits with his elbow on the back of the armchair at left, and the back of the head of a male listener appears at the lower right. The figure of Mercedes at the piano has not yet been scratched into the plate, but is sketched in pencil on the proof. In State II [FIG. 4], the pianist appears faintly, with lines scratched over her. In State III, the man at the lower right begins to disappear; by State IV [FIG. 5], he is gone and Mercedes is playing the piano. Carles made only slight additions of hatching

RIGHT: **Arthur B. Carles.** *Dorziat Reciting, II,* 1915. Drypoint, 108 × 95. Collection, Mr. & Mrs. Philip Jamison.

FAR RIGHT: **Arthur B. Carles.** *Dorziat Reciting, IV,* 1915. Drypoint, 108 × 95. Collection, Dr. & Mrs. Perry Ottenberg.

in the background of State V, of which he made the most proofs in various inkings. Now the three figures are in balance, with Dorziat creating a light vertical in the center which contrasts with the dark around her. In State VI he added further hatching.

In the last four states the painter experimented with radical changes. In State VII, Dorziat is silhouetted against a dark "spotlight," suggestive of an opening in the curtains. The bearded listener at left has now disappeared. In a pencil sketch on a proof [FIG. 6], a vertical element on a round table appears at the lower left. Next the chair begins to return, then the ghost of the man, and finally in State X [FIG. 7] the bearded listener comes fully back to view. This final version is the same as the restrike print (Ottenberg Edition). The three figures, with Dorziat standing out in white against the dark wedge, are part of a simple, almost architectonic composition. Throughout the changes, Carles appears concerned to find the best means to express the impact of Dorziat's dramatic presence.

Carles used *Dorziat Reciting* as a self-teaching device; no other image by him included as many figures or underwent as many changes. Most of his drypoints are single figures, often nudes, or portraits of friends or family. Stylistically, he moved toward greater simplicity and economy of line.

Around the same time that he was working on *Dorziat Reciting,* he created a drypoint of *Cleopatra,* based directly on his prize-winning and widely reproduced painting of Mercedes in costume, *An Actress as Cleopatra,* 1914. He created different effects in several proofs mostly through selective inking.

The subjects of some of his portrait prints can be identified. In *Self-Portrait in Studio* [FIG. 1], a combination of drypoint with etching, Carles shows himself drawing or working on a plate, surrounded by his paintings. Another drypoint depicts Helen Seyffert, wife of Leopold, of whom Carles also painted five portraits. Carles's nudes show the range of poses and stylistic variations that are seen in his paintings. He varied the contour lines from delicately scratched to heavily bitten. A few of the prints and some of the monotypes can be dated to the 1920s because of similarities with paintings of the period.

Carles's printmaking activities were concentrated in the middle part of his career. As he returned to exploring pure color for expression while in France in 1921–22, the black and white of intaglio may have held less appeal for him.

The prints Arthur B. Carles created reveal his experimental approach to the process of developing an image through a series of spontaneous changes, applying the ink in a painterly way, not knowing in advance what the final results would be. In this sense, the Dorziat series anticipates Carles's great late works, such as *Abstraction (Last Painting),* 1936–41 (Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden), which began as a reclining nude but whose form disappeared under layers of change. The canvas was exhibited and photographed as an abstract painting, which Carles later enlarged with strips of canvas, continuing to add glowing color and rhythmic line. His ability to see a composition as a process of discovery was foretold in prints such as *Dorziat Reciting,* thus adding a new dimension to our understanding of the artist and his work. □

FAR LEFT: **Arthur B. Carles.** *Dorziat Reciting, VII,* 1915. Drypoint with pencil, 108 × 95. Collection, Mr. & Mrs. Philip Jamison.

LEFT: **Arthur B. Carles.** *Dorziat Reciting, X,* 1915. Drypoint, 108 × 95. Collection, Susan Jaffe.

1 Barbara A. Wolanin, "Arthur B. Carles: The Painter as Printmaker" [exhibition essay and checklist] (Philadelphia: The Print Club, 1989).

2 Victoria Donohue, "On Galleries," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (22 April 1989).

3 My research on Carles's life and work, which began in 1974, was summarized in Barbara Ann Boese Wolanin, "Arthur B. Carles, 1882–1952: Philadelphia Modernist," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1981. My ideas were refined in the exhibition catalogue *Arthur B. Carles: Painting with Color* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1983.) I am continuing work toward publication of a catalogue raisonné of Carles's paintings and prints.

4 Elizabeth C. W. O'Connor, "Arthur B Carles, 1882–1952: Colorist and Experimenter," M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1965; and Henry G. Gardiner, "Arthur B. Carles: A Critical and Biographical Study," *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Museum of Art* 64 (January-March 1970), 139–185.

5 Many of the papers from Carles's studio have been microfilmed by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as A); they were loaned for microfilming by Stephen J. Casamassima (roll 1052) and by Dr. and Mrs. Perry Ottenberg (rolls 4270–4273, restricted). The Ottenberg Collection includes many etchings, most of the extant copper plates, a group of plates printed posthumously as the Ottenberg Edition, some plates by other hands, and some etchings of ships which I believe to be by Arthur B. Carles, Sr. Many of Carles's monotypes were in the estate of his widow, whose papers were donated to the A by Mrs. Sara F. Swanson (roll 3667). Despite the amount of material that he saved, Carles did not make the task of researchers easy, for he never organized or catalogued his work. Most of his paintings are unsigned, and almost none are dated. Little mention of his printmaking activities has been found in his correspondence.

6 One of Marin's 1909 etchings of a French cathedral was found among Carles's papers on the verso of a proof of a delicately shaded portrait of Carles's mother (Ottenberg Collection). Carles may have tacked up Marin's print in his studio and made use of inadvertently.

7 Carles shared the discovery of drypoint with his father, who wrote him in early 1915 (in a letter dated only "Sunday"), "I have devoted my time to scratching the copper plate." The reference is to the reproduction of *An Actress as Cleopatra* in the March 1915 *International Studio* (A roll 4272).

8 Mathilde de Cordoba's exhibition at the Goupil Galleries from 16 March to 4 April was reviewed in *Vogue* 9 (1 May 1915), 124. The review was illustrated by *Her First Portrait,* depicting her sister with Carles's newborn daughter. Mathilde wrote Carles (31 December 1915) asking him if he knew a place to have copper cleaned off (A roll 4271). Mathilde de Cordoba's drypoints are in the collection of the Library of Congress.

9 "A History of the Philadelphia Print Club," 1932. Print Club files.

10 Bruce Chambers, *Leopold Seyffert (1887–1956): Retrospective Exhibition* (New York: Berry Hill Galleries, 1985), 9.

11 Carles at this time had a studio at 1523 Chestnut Street. In 1920, Seyffert's press was moved to Carles's new studio at Tenth and Walnut Streets (Mrs. Daniel Garber to Carles, 26 May 1920, A roll 4271). This press appears in the painting *Studio Interior with Printing Press* (Jerry Ingram). Emma Rea, to whom Carles gave the painting of the press, recalled that it depicted the Walnut Street studio (interview with the author, 23 January 1976).

12 Gardiner, "Arthur B. Carles," 158.

13 An undated letter from Dorziat to Mercedes is preserved in the Carles correspondence (A roll 4270). Dorziat later became a film star and continued acting into the 1960s. See *Enciclopedio dello Spettacolo* (Rome: Casa Editrice Le Maschere, 1957), IV, 902–3.

14 Although there is no byline for "What a Well Gowned French Actress Wears," *New York Tribune* (20 September 1914), Mercedes mentioned her article in a letter to Carles, September 1914 (A roll 4270).

# A CONTRAST OF STYLES
## Two Lithographs by Willard Nash

*Van Deren Coke*

WILLARD NASH (1898–1943) first came to Santa Fe in the fall of 1921 to carry out a mural commission for a Detroit patron. He remained in the city for less than three months, which was sufficient time for him to become acquainted with the pictorial possibilities of the region.

When he left Santa Fe in January 1922, Nash promised himself that he would return as soon as possible. In part, this decision was based on the generous treatment he had received as a visiting artist, having been provided one of the artists' studios in the Palace, the historic government building on Santa Fe's plaza. In addition, at the end of his stay an exhibition of the work he had done in New Mexico was held in the newly opened Museum of Fine Arts and one of his paintings, a nude, was added to that institution's collection. Soon after Nash returned to Detroit in 1922, a small exhibition of his Santa Fe work was held at the D. J. Healy Gallery. A local critic saw hints of John Sloan's style in some of these pictures, especially in ones titled *Canyon Road,* painted in Santa Fe, and *After Mass,* based on an incident he observed in Alcalde, a village north of Santa Fe near the Taos highway. Sloan, who in the 1910s and early 1920s was considered to be a modern artist, spent each summer after 1919 in residence in Santa Fe. Nash could very well have seen some of Sloan's New Mexican work and could have been influenced by his style of drawing and his selection of subjects.

Nash was certainly no novice when he came to New Mexico, having been a successful commercial artist since the age of sixteen. He was venturesome and open to new influences, and he realized that he must take into consideration the changes in direction art was taking. He had been trained by John P. Wicker, considered to be the best teacher at the Detroit School of Fine Arts. Wicker had studied for seven years in Paris under such famous academicians as William Bouguereau, Robert Fleury, and Fernand Corman (whose school attracted American students as well as promising young artists from all over Europe). Wicker favored as subjects women surrounded by large floral plants and vines, painted in bright colors with emphasis on the formal integration of the plants and the figure. His work had a modern feeling, which indicated that he had progressed much beyond his staid schooling in Paris. He was aware of Gauguin and used a modified flattening of space and pools of bright colors that caused the eye to move about the surface of a picture, thus fostering a sense of growth and of vital forces. To students such as Nash he passed on his belief that it was necessary to be independent-minded, and to think about the essentials of form before applying brush to canvas.

In mid-1922, Nash returned to Santa Fe and soon put himself under the tutelage of Andrew Dasburg, who introduced him to some of the innovative techniques used by Cézanne to evoke a feeling of space and convey a sense of surface vitality. Using both oil and watercolor, Nash began to explore what he had learned. A prolific and skilled draftsman, he also created a few etchings and perhaps two dozen lithographs during his years in New Mexico. His subjects include landscapes that range from bright to brooding, athletes in action, performers (a clown and a trained seal) with a circus that visited Santa Fe, and the rituals of *Los Hermanos Penitentes.*

In New Mexico, during the Holy Week before Easter, members of this somber brotherhood trudged up and down the steep hills in the northern part of the state, flagellating themselves and carrying on their shoulders life-size crosses, thus to recreate Christ's march to Golgotha. While this type of penance had

been part of the Holy Week rituals in Spain during the Middle Ages, self-flagellation was discouraged by Papal edicts in the nineteenth century. After Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, the new government, as one of its first acts, banished the clergy from the country because they had been so involved in politics and had been so often arrogant and avaricious. When most of the priests left New Mexico, the Third Order of St. Francis, a lay order, assumed responsibility for many of the Catholic Church's ceremonies and rituals. The mostly uneducated members of this order stressed a strict reading of the Bible as essential in matters of faith. This led to a renewal of the practice of self-laceration, with *disciplinatas* made of horse hair embedded with cactus spines, and of a form of crucifixion. The laborious march of *Los Hermanos Penitentes,* one of the brothers carrying a hugh wooden cross and the other two torturing themselves with whips, was the subject of one of Nash's most accomplished lithographs.

We can sense Dasburg's understanding of Cézanne in this print—an understanding which freed Nash from his early, more pictorial style, and which made him appreciate the achievements of Picasso and Braque in the early years of Cubism's evolution. in *Crossbearer,* Nash's debt to their ideas can be seen in the way he treated the buildings that frame the activities of the penitentes. The adobe walls lean awkwardly to the left and right. This sets up a cadence in our minds, and our bodies respond with a chill to the self-whipping of the men's bare flesh and the repeated application of embedded cactus spines to the back of the staggering cross-bearer. Cross-hatched marks of a crayon, meant to indicate shadow areas, reverberate with the cutting action of the whip as it digs into the flesh above the short white trousers worn by the men.

In a painting of about 1930, Nash depicts the culmination of this ritual, during which a man is roped to a large cross while it lies on the ground in front of one of the brotherhood's chapels. After the man has been tightly bound to the cross, it is raised and sunk in a prepared hole. The man soon loses consciousness because the ropes restrict the flow of his blood. When his head hangs over, indicating his loss of consciousness—a symbol of death—the cross is lifted out of the ground, with the man still bound to the timbers, and is taken before the altar of the chapel,

**Willard Nash,** *Penitentes,* ca. 1930. Oil on canvas, 610 × 762 mm (24 × 30 in). Collection, Museum of the Southwest, Midland, Texas.

**Willard Nash,** *Crossbearer,* ca. 1930. Lithograph, image 292 × 394 mm. Collection, Mr. & Mrs. Van Deren Coke, Santa Fe.

which is in total darkness. Candles are lit on the altar, and the man's head can be seen to move in the dim light as the blood once again revitalizes him. This is seen as a return to life, affirming Christ's rise from the dead. Thus is cleansed the soul of the man on the cross, as the act of crucifixion relates life to death and gives assurance of resurrection. Which came first—Nash's disquieting print or the painting—is not known, but the painting seems more involved with the gory details than with the symbolic event of the Passion; it lacks the starkness of the monochromatic lithograph, which reflects (without a need to present the bloody results of the whippings) the Spanish heritage of certain fundamental religious beliefs in New Mexico.

**Willard Nash,** *Untitled,* n.d. Lithograph, image 381 × 279 mm. Courtesy, Hansen Gallery, Santa Fe.

MARKEDLY DIFFERENT is Nash's vertical lithograph of trees. Here, his transmutation of reality, based on a kind of shorthand response to nature, seems much freer. When we consider that Nash was working among the conservative artists of Santa Fe and Taos, this image can be seen as a daring step. His ideas for this print did not come from an intellectual analysis of the motif but from new interpretations of visual stimuli, along with sophisticated insights into what Cubism meant. He probably worked from a sketch taken from nature, but the challenge of representing volume with line, without dependence upon Renaissance conventions of linear perspective, carried his work to a new level (for him) of abstraction and vitality. In this lithograph, his collection of sharp thrusts, like points of fractured glass shards, stress angularity which in turn evokes energy. Yet while there is not much in this image to relate to naturalistic elements, we still sense it to be an equivalent to a tree-dominated landscape. Nash's stuttering and slashing lines represent tree limbs vibrating and trunks swaying: sensations we can feel in our bodies, much as we feel the pain in the lithograph of the penitentes. Also surviving Nash's vigorous mark-making are sensations of open space, with rays of light breaking through the overhead canopy of branches.

The contrasting styles of these two lithographs probably reflect the artist's greater sense of freedom when dealing with the landscape subject—the sensation of fluctuating light screened by tree branches—as opposed to the theme of a ritual that signified Christ's agony. In the landscape, Nash was in pursuit of a means to symbolize a kaleidoscopic and hypnotic experience of shifting light patterns, as one looks up at bright light through moving saplings. He gained much by his boldness of approach, and more successfully possessed the moment than if he had used a more conventional, detailed depiction. While rooted in the actual world, his robust drawing ingeniously achieved a greater elaboration of his responses to nature than would have been possible if he had included in his image a multitude of small details.

We do not feel that Nash had extensive knowledge of *Los Penitentes* or their sacred rituals. Like B. J. O. Nordfeldt, William Penn-hallow Henderson, and other artists who worked in Santa Fe in the 1920s and 1930s, Nash had observed from afar the activities of the religious sect and had been impressed by the pictorial possibilities of such a subject. In his painting, the dramatic richness is conveyed, but we feel that we are observing a staged spectacle rather than witnessing the harrowing road to salvation for a group of resolute and devout men. In his lithograph of the tortured journey, we are beholders of a representation of an event that transcends normal experience: a feeling that Nash found difficult to convey while using a structural approach that reduced his motif to simple, expressive forms.

Dasburg's tenet that the artist accepts a challenge to reduce things to their formal essentials—a tenet reflected in Nash's lithographs—works well with landscapes and buildings, where subtle and personal emotional intensity is the aim, but not as well when used in relation to a melancholy and violent subject: one that was sure to provoke extreme and contradictory psychic responses in a man of Nash's background. □

# JAPONISME REVISITED
## A Pioneering Exhibition Reexamined

*Gabriel P. Weisberg*

WHEN THE EXHIBITION *Japonisme: Japanese Influence on French Art, 1854–1910* opened at the Cleveland Museum of Art in the summer of 1975, such a comprehensive study of the subject had never before been undertaken in the United States.[1] In fact, as an independent field of cultural research within the larger sphere of Western art and culture, Japonisme had scarcely been considered a topic for independent investigation. It remained the domain of specialists who were often mired in explanations of how or why Japanese influence had fired European imaginations during the closing years of the nineteenth century. Admittedly, Japonisme as a phenomenon had gained some exposure in Europe, and during the 1970s some attention had been paid to the exotic Far East in the context of Western fascination with primitive cultures; even so, this exhibition rightfully can be credited with having put studies in Japonisme squarely on the scholarly map in the United States.[2]

Widely reviewed in newspapers, popular magazines, and the scholarly press, the exhibition also proved to be extremely popular with the general public at each of its three venues—the Cleveland Museum, the Rutgers University Art Gallery, and the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore. The installation utilized a number of educational aids, displayed in chronological time frames that coincided with shifts in the appreciation of Japanese art and culture, thus expanding its scope and placing the art objects in an interpretative matrix. The chronological framework also helped viewers to comprehend the vast sweep of Japanese influences over a sixty-year period. Wall labels, archival photographs, and an educational guide to the exhibition [FIG. 1] productively channeled the imagination and curiosity of museum visitors and contributed to their understanding of history.

Most important, the wide array of objects—


FIG. 1. Cover of educational guide for the Japonisme exhibition, modeled after Siegfried Bing's fabled *Artistic Japan*. Cleveland Museum of Art, July 1975.

320 were included in the installation—provided convincing evidence of the profound impact of Japanese art in the west. Through well-chosen pieces, the exhibition demonstrated that Japonisme was not a faddish manifestation, but one that led European artists to modify their outlooks and to be creatively inspired by all types of Japanese art objects, from ukiyo-e prints to ceramics. It made evident the response of French painters, craftsmen, designers, and printmakers as they developed new motifs, new shapes, and, ultimately, new ceramic glazes, thus enriching the scope of European art. Equally well chronicled throughout the installation were the ways in which French printmakers, particularly etchers, lithographers, and artists working with woodcuts, had reacted to specific Japanese prints and artists. The presentation lifted these artists out of obscurity by making the point that the influence of Japonisme was all-pervasive.

High art and popular images were equally affected by the interest in the Far East. Juxtaposition of European and Japanese works in the installation reinforced this point visually as well as didactically, and helped to recreate the enthusiastic atmosphere that


Three views of the introductory section of the Japonisme exhibition. Cleveland Museum of Art, July 1975.

FIG. 2.
Introductory wall.

FIG. 3.
Preparatory etchings by Felix Bracquemond, Japanese print sources, and photographs by Felice Beato.

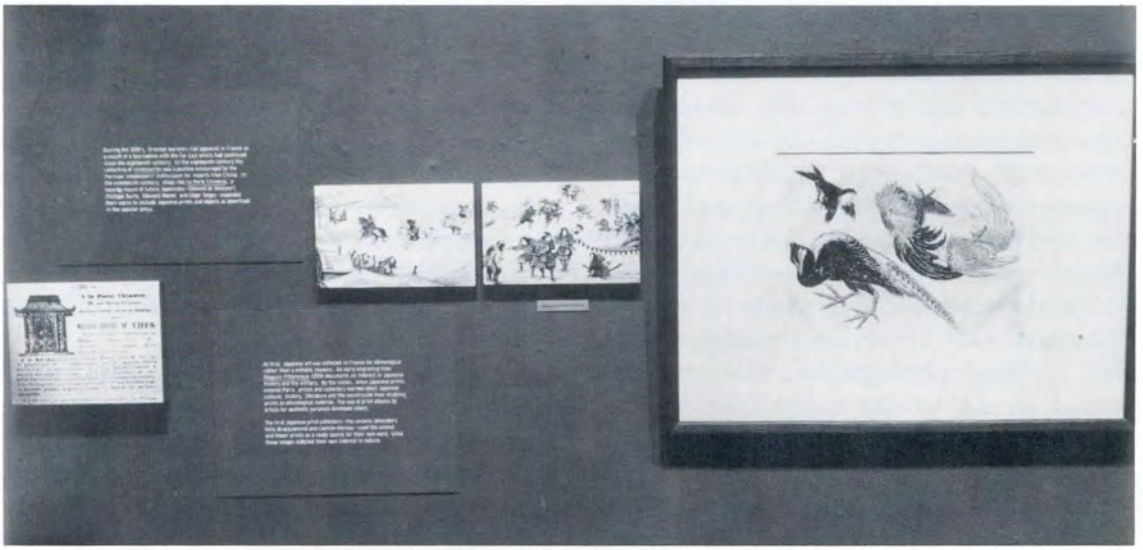


FIG. 4.
Introductory material, with wall text on early illustrations and advertisements.

All photographs, courtesy of the author.

permeated French artistic culture at the time.

The truly inventive and, by 1975 standards, novel character of the Japonisme exhibition was revealed by the selection of objects used to relate its narrative. Since almost all earlier attention had focused on painters' reactions to Japanese prints, other fields had scarcely been investigated. As John Russell wrote in his *New York Times* exhibition review:

> To demonstrate all this in terms of outright masterpieces would have cost big money. It would also have beaten ground long cleared by students of the individual artists concerned. What "Japonisme" does is something more original. It treats the subject primarily in terms of artists of whom only the specialist has ever heard. . . .[3]

For Russell, Japonisme became a major assault on preconceived conventions of Western creativity. He wrote in the same review that it was "a full-scale attack in which paintings, prints, theatre programs, bookbindings, wall paper, furniture and the decorative arts all play a part. Russell was incisive in calling attention to these aspects of the exhibition; one of its most significant contributions was its effect on the way subsequent students of Japonisme would look at the historical record.

The exhibition's catalogue, which captured the installation's sense of discovery, has become a primary text for study of Japonisme, with the result that it has been reprinted several times and remains available.[4]

### The Installation in Cleveland

FROM THE MOMENT the exhibition opened in Cleveland, it was clear that the organizers intended both to challenge conventional ways of examining Japonisme and Western art and to utilize selected art objects as a means to balance historical and didactic points with aesthetic issues. The exhibition's introduction relied on small-scale historical photographs, appropriate wall texts, and actual works of art to establish a temporal context and to demonstrate that paintings and prints (in this case, works by Camille Pissarro) could be juxtaposed. This introduction established the fact that paintings and prints were influenced simultaneously by the art of the Far East [FIG. 2]; prints and (later in the exhibition) the decorative arts were placed on an equal footing with painting. A challenge was issued to conventional ways of thinking about art objects; they were no longer perceived as independent, compartmentalized entities, to be studied without reference to other works. History and aesthetics, as well as the ways in which certain nineteenth-century artists responded to the Far Eastern impulse, were keynoted, and perceptive viewers were thus prepared for the remainder of the exhibition.

The next section further documented the significance of prints in the evolution of Japonisme by exhibiting prints in which Félix Bracquemond (1833–1917), one of the first printmaker-designers to derive his creative works from Japanese art, copied motifs directly from illustrated Japanese books or from single prints by artists such as Hokusai or Hiroshige. When the actual Japanese prints could not be located or borrowed, the exhibition made use of photographic reproductions. Viewers could thus compare one of Bracquemond's preliminary etchings of fish, used for the design of Rousseau's ceramic service of 1866–67 (parts of which were included in the installation), with a photograph of the Japanese source; and could see how French printmakers first copied motifs and later assimilated design concepts.

The exhibition turned to period photographs to verify the process through which Westerners had increased their knowledge of Japan and its people. A series of small-scale photographs taken by Felice Beato in the 1860s served as the archival reference for the fascination with the Japanese countryside and its people [FIG. 3]. Since these photographs had also been collected by Japonistes of the period, they became an accurate and effective reflection of the atmosphere of nineteenth-century Japan, and further helped to situate the prints in context.

Sections of the installation elaborated the all-pervasive tendency of Japonisme and demonstrated that it attracted a broad audience—more than just artists, writers, and critics. An advertisement that extolled *La Porte Chinoise*, an early emporium that sold Japanese objects, was placed next to a reproduction of a Japanese image from *La Magasin Pittoresque*, a popular periodical of the time [FIG. 4]. Such devices drew attention to the means by which Japanese art objects had been made available commercially. Hence, when a print by Bracquemond was placed next to these photographs, it became clear that he derived the motifs for Rousseau's ceramic service from disparate sources in Japanese art, that he was not alone in his preference for and awareness

FIG. 5. Ceramic service designed by **Felix Bracquemond** for **Eugene Rousseau,** 1866–67, and Japanese print sources.

of Japanese objects, and that the diffusion of Japonisme had ensured the commercial success of his project.

Albums of Japanese prints were placed near diverse pieces of the complex table service, [FIG. 5] which was reissued several times throughout the nineteenth century.[6] Albums by followers of Hokusai (in this case, Hokusen) or Hiroshige were used to illustrate the transference of motifs, which effectively showed viewers how prints and the decorative arts simultaneously drew from the same sources, and indicated that printmakers and decorators communicated with one another. Interest in Japanese art closed the gap between media and forced artists and craftsmen to work together to meet the public's need for mass-produced objects. Although it was not specifically stated, the subtext that ran through the exhibition reiterated that the practical arts forced the removal of an isolationist stance.

Similar to the way Hiroshige's fish series was instrumental to the design of the Braquemond/Rousseau table service, was the utilization of prints once owned by the early ceramist Camille Moreau. By including prints and albums from Moreau's collection in the exhibition, the Japanese influence was further rooted in contextual history. The fact that Moreau had purchased some of the Japanese print albums in department stores or tea parlors again documented the movement's popularity and its rapid dissemination on a broad public level. Japonisme was everywhere by the mid-1870s, a point the exhibition made quite tellingly.

As time sequences changed throughout the installation, visitors had the opportunity to see how the interest in Japonisme led ceramists and printmakers to ever more inventive and even abstract solutions. Late glass objects by Eugène Rousseau, who had supported the Bracquemond/Rousseau service in 1867, verified that creative assimilation was taking place in the world of design [FIG. 6]. The use of posters by Toulouse-Lautrec and other artists from the 1890s, with their flattened shapes and simplified color zones, contributed to the an understanding that poster design had become an important field as the Japanese aesthetic fully flowered in the West [FIG. 7].

### The Contribution

AWARENESS OF THE JAPONISME EXHIBITION continued to grow after it closed in 1976. The catalogue entries and interlocked essays concentrated on the Japanese impact in a variety of media, one of the exhibition's main thrusts, and transmitted a sense of the movement's chronological intertwinement. Not only did the installation prove popular with the public, but numerous professionals and historians also visited the exhibition and took part in a range of educational programs. Undoubtedly the exhibition's significance in probing and understanding issues impressed visitors, as did the untraditional way in which it gave equal, if not greater attention to the so-called minor arts in an effort fully to explain a cultural phenomenon that had occurred a hundred years earlier. This exhibition and its catalogue remained a permanent record of scholarly achievement, and—more so than any other presentation or publication before or since—conclusively convinced scholars that *all* the arts had to be assessed if Japonisme were to be properly recorded and evaluated.

The exhibition underscored the central importance of printmaking in the Far East and the West, thus helping to move the study of nineteenth-century prints out of the domain of curators and print galleries and into context with other arts of the period. Since this tendency has been maintained in subsequent print exhibitions (although not always with the same degree of success), the Japonisme exhibition helped to redefine the way in which prints should be studied. Prints no longer had to be viewed solely as aesthetic objects; they could be used to solve or reveal historical issues, or to facilitate the understanding of primary

FIG. 6. Interior of Japonisme exhibition, with cases displaying pieces by **Camille Moreau** and **Eugene Rousseau.**

FIG. 7. Interior of Japonisme exhibition, with posters by **Toulouse-Lautrec.**

concepts linked to cultural interchange. That was no small accomplishment.

Since 1975–76, the outpouring of studies on Japonisme in the West, and now in Japan, has been overwhelming; a recently published bibliography partially documents this literature and provides an overview of what has been happening over the course of fifteen years.[7] Studies in Japonisme have far exceeded a mere investigation of events in France; they now assume an international focus—a world view abetted by international conferences where ideas and information are shared.

Still, what has not been adequately accomplished (and has only been tentatively suggested here) is an assessment of the importance of exhibitions. Far too often, a publication serves as the only means through which attitudes are modified. That was certainly not the case with the Japonisme exhibition. The visual archival record of the exhibition indicates that the force of the installation itself challenged preconceived ideas and opinions. In conjunction with an extensive amassing of objects, a scholarly publication, and educational programs, the installation of the Japonisme exhibition in Cleveland became a highly effective way to stimulate individuals to change their views and to reconsider the parameters of the topic. The successful integration of prints into this ever-evolving discourse helped to shape the history of prints into a field that, as a consequence, is more challenging than it previously had been. □

1 The exhibition was held at the Cleveland Museum of Art (9 July-31 August 1975), the Rutgers University Art Gallery (4 October-16 November 1975), and the Walters Art Gallery (10 December 1975–26 January 1976). Five individuals worked together to develop the exhibition and its thesis: Phillip Dennis Cate, Martin Eidelberg, William R. Johnston, Gerald Needham and Gabriel P. Weisberg.

2 A small exhibition by Colta Feller Ives, *The Great Wave: The Influence of Japanese Woodcuts on French Prints*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1974), preceded this installation but covered a smaller span of time and media. An exhibition in Munich, *World Culture and Modern Art* (1972), examined Japanese contacts amidst the larger aspects of all exotic influences. Although these publications called attention to the tendency of Japonisme, they did not deal with the topic either as deeply or as broadly as did the exhibition in 1975.

3 John Russell, "On Art: 'Japonisme' Stirring Cleveland," *New York Times*, 23 August 1975. See also Douglas Davis, "Japonisme," *Newsweek*, 28 July 1975.

4 See *Japonisme: Japanese Influence on French Art, 1854–1910* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, Rutgers University Art Gallery, and Walters Art Gallery, 1975). This catalogue is still available,

5 Felice Beato's photographs are briefly discussed in *Japonisme* (1975), 213–14.

6 It is unclear how many times the service was reissued. Later in the century, the reproduction process resulted in far less exquisite pieces. The use of decals on mass-produced pieces implies that the service became a strong commercial icon.

7 See Gabriel P. and Yvonne M. L. Weisberg, *Japonisme: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1990).

# BOOKS & CATALOGUES IN REVIEW

**John Marin.** By Ruth E. Fine.
*Published by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and Abbeville Press, New York, 1990. 312 pp. $29.95 (paper).*

PUBLISHED TO ACCOMPANY the National Gallery's exhibition, *Selections and Transformations: The Art of John Marin*, Ruth Fine's study of the artist's career, is both a visual feast and a useful reference. The exhibition, the first comprehensive Marin show in twenty years, will not travel, so the publication is an especially important record. Its 300 illustrations, 175 in color, include all the works in the exhibition, many of which have been uncovered since publication of Sheldon Reich's catalogue raisonné. Information drawn from previously untapped family archives, excerpts from Marin's writings, and photographs of the artist give the reader a vivid sense of his fifty-year exploration of etching, watercolor and oil.

By the time Marin died in 1953 he had produced more than 3000 works—2500 watercolors, 500 oils and 185 etchings—and had secured a firm place in American art. His reputation today is based chiefly on his vibrant watercolors, but it was as an etcher that Marin first achieved artistic recognition.

It was not until the age of thirty-four, when he traveled to Europe, that Marin's professional career began. Armed with volumes of Charles Blanc's catalogue raisonné of Rembrandt's etchings and Maxime Lalanne's *Treatise on Etching*, Marin arrived in Paris in 1905 with a newly awakened interest in prints. As Fine points out, he was already familiar with the work of Meryon and Whistler. With the help of his younger stepbrother, painter and etcher Charles Bittinger, Marin settled into the Ile-de-France and began to hone his printmaking skills. Provided by Bittinger with materials and a press, he took easily to the medium and began to make etchings of city scenes. For the next five years Marin lived and traveled in Europe, making etchings in Amsterdam and Venice (two of Whistler's favored sites), in Germany, and in the cathedral towns of France.

Given his training in architecture, it is not surprising that the mass and the detail of Gothic cathedrals captivated Marin. His drawings and prints of the great medieval edifices anticipate many of his future subjects, especially the skyscrapers of New York. But also appearing in these European etchings are some of Marin's nascent formal concerns: active skies, varying effects of light, spontaneity of line. In the early prints (1905–1906), Whistlerian painterly effects predominate. Fine emphasizes Marin's adoption of selective tonal wiping to achieve effects that vary from one impressionn to another. Remarkable is the contrast between certain tourist views of Paris (commissioned in 1908 by New York printseller Louis Katz) and the smaller, more intimate views such as *Notre Dame, Paris* (1908, Plate 29) and *Cathedral, Rouen* (1909, Plate 33), which are worlds apart in mood and rendering. The former, with its balance of vertical and horizontal elements and detailed surface treatment, conveys the weighty symmetry of the Parisian landmark; at Rouen a year later, however, Marin's growing taste for expressive freedom lets light and atmosphere dissolve surfaces and obscure linear structure. The cathedral's celebrated late-fifteenth-century "Butter Tower" appears swathed in gauzy veils.

What Fine does not consider here are possible visual antecedents to Marin's *Rouen*. She wisely discounts as "disingenuous" Marin's claim that he knew little of the Parisian art world while he was there. Given the fact that his work appeared in the Salons of 1907 and 1908, it is highly unlikely that he could have been innocent of the work of Cézanne, Matisse, or Monet. Marin's highly impressionistic rendering of Rouen cathedral summons at once the memory of Monet. Who could forget that this is the same facade painted thirty times by Monet some fifteen years earlier? Were not Monet's paintings Marin's precedent for Gothic architecture without lines, rendered as meltingly (in the words of Robert Hughes) as ice cream? Marin's Rouen façade is all shimmer and shadow—substance reduced to veils. In Monet's paintings they are veils of color; in Marin's etching they are veils of delicate line.

Fine correctly acknowledges concurrent changes in Marin's prints and watercolors; she quotes the artist:

> Some of the etchings I had been making before Stieglitz showed my work already had some freedom about them. I had already begun to let go some. After he began to show my work I let go a lot more, or course. But in the watercolors I had been making, even before Stieglitz first saw my work, I had already begun to let go in complete freedom (p. 42).

It is this book's discussion of the interplay among print, watercolor and oil that lends new understanding to Marin's artistic development. Fine cites a number of illuminating examples. To his etchings, she argues, can be traced his propensity to control the edges of his work. In his prints Marin had sometimes incorporated emphatically drawn margins or called attention to plate edges by leaving a layer of ink on their bevels. These framing devices became increasingly important in Marin's paintings, beginning in the early 1920s and continuing for decades.

Marin's centrality to the American modernist tradition has been rightly acknowledged, and his pronouncements, even today, evoke the studied purism of that moment: "Kindly look at the picture—and think of nothing else—give the picture that chance—let what comes after lookings come of itself—for—it should represent nothing but itself—being itself—being a creation in its own right—"(p. 148).

Upon Marin's return to New York in 1910, Alfred Stieglitz drew Marin into his circle, providing friendship and long-term financial support. The legendary group surrounding Stieglitz, including O'Keeffe, Hartley, Weber, Maurer, and Dove, were given regular exhibitions at Stieglitz's galleries. Through him, too, they engaged the artistic and intellectual currents swirling through New York at this time. Yet Marin's interaction with prevalent theory has been downplayed (as has O'Keeffe's) in the literature. To be sure, Marin fancied himself a rugged Yankee individualist, immune to the effete and the ephemeral. Though she argues for European influences on his early work, Fine has, perhaps unintentionally, perpetuated the myth of Marin's

studied self-reliance in America, ignoring obvious relationships between certain of his works and those of his New York colleagues. For example, one sees in Marin's drawing of *Trinity Church, Downtown, New York* (c. 1919, Plate 45) clear echoes of Dove's organic abstractions from nature; in Marin's undulating *White Waves on Sand, Maine* (1917, Plate 169) are strong reminders of O'Keeffe's sensuous charcoal abstractions from 1915–16. Marin's early studies of the Brooklyn Bridge (Plates 39–42, 116) call out for comparison with those of Joseph Stella, for example.

Rather than diminish any originality of Marin's vision, such comparisons would accomplish two things. First, they would acknowledge the inevitable and enriching cross-influences within the Stieglitz circle. Second, in each case, they would establish what is distinctive in Marin's approach: his always-rhythmic, always-moving conception of subject. O'Keeffe, Dove, even Stella, let the tight shapes of their abstractions stand for serenity and stability. Marin's much-looser forms resist stasis. For Marin, no two views of the same subject could ever be alike; everything—trees, buildings, water, sky—was alive and in flux. This is as clear in his paintings as in his words: "One responds differently toward different things: one even responds differently toward the same thing. In reality, it is the same thing no longer; you are in a different mood, and it is in a different mood" (Fine, p. 176, quotes Marin's 1916 Forum Exhibition catalog statement).

In Herakletian fashion (though he wouldn't have called it that) Marin believed that everything is changing, flowing, unfixed. Between *now* and *now* it is no longer the same.

Marin's studies of New York bridges and buildings grew out of his European prints. In France he was deferential to the motif of the cathedral, seeming to respect its age and dominance within the townscape. In New York the sharper angles and smoother surfaces of skyscrapers invited less deference, more experimentation. Marin etched, drew, and painted the city on his own terms. He tracked the changing skyline of the city over several decades and from many vantage points—at street level, from neighboring buildings, from the ferry and looking across the Hudson, from Weehawken, New Jersey.

Compared with the relatively slow pace of European cities, New York stunned the returning Marin with its bewildering speed. He described the drastic changes he saw after a five year absence:

> The Woolworth Building was under construction; two new bridges had been swung across the East River; horse and cable cars were now almost entirely replaced by electric ones; there was an elevated railway rattling overhead and a subway growling underfoot. Time seemed to be moving faster and more raucously. Even the tugboats in the river were more boisterous. The city was passing through a corporate convulsion, a frightening and bewildering kind of high-tensioned life. It was like watching the first days of creation (p. 119).

In a juxtaposition of photograph, sketch, and watercolor of the New York Telephone Building (Plates 127, 128, 129), Fine has provided a close look at some of the "corporate convulsion" that preoccupied Marin in many works. It is clear from the aerial photograph that the tower portion of the telephone building is oriented on a different axis from that of its lower stories; large surfaces are thus canted at different angles. Here was ready-made cubist simultaneity in modern architecture—an opportunity Marin couldn't resist. His blocky, inelegant rendering of the building in the 1926 watercolor suggests the viewer's sidewalk-level attempt to cope visually with unexpected planes and angles. A few pages later we are shown Marin's reprise of the telephone building (plate 152), a watercolor made a decade later. Here the prominence of the building, seeming still to rock on its foundations, is challenged by pulsating activity in sky, water, and surrounding structures. New too are Marin's pen-and-ink enhancements and areas pounced or stamped with a sponge. Curious, impatient, willing to take risks, Marin was indeed an artist who celebrated movement. What kind of movement didn't always matter; to a very loose 1947 oil he gave the title *Movement—Sea or Mountain—As you Will* (Plate 257).

The city, the sea, the mountain—these were Marin's great subjects. But, as this volume reveals, there were others. At times he interested himself (as did Picasso, Calder, Kuhn, and many others) in circus themes; he even ventured, with limited success, into the realm of the figure.

After 1920, Marin wintered in Cliffside, New Jersey, but ranged widely in summer pursuit of landscape. From Maine to the White Mountains to New Mexico, (where he spent two prolific seasons in 1929 and 1930) he tracked the great and small forces of nature, responding freshly to its surprises, subtleties, and nuances.

The strengths of Fine's volume include careful research and documentation, the documentation of previously unpublished examples of Marin's work, insightful discussion of the artist's working processes, and the significant overlaps between mediums. She dispels some widely believed myths about the man and his work. We see, for example, methodical preliminary drawings for what appear to be utterly spontaneous paintings or prints. That established, however, we are also offered new testimony to the contrary. Marin's was the two-fisted attack of an ambidexterous painter who advised a young admirer never to be afraid of the paper. Marin's vaunted speed of working is verified by a gouache (Plate 93) which retains, stuck to its surface, the inner cardboard lining of a watercolor tube cap. Squeezing his paint directly onto the paper, Marin rushed to fix the color of forces in motion.

Such descriptions bring to life the creative vigor of Marin's painting. Less well realized are Fine's incursions into symbolic interpretation, as when, for example, she remarks tantalizingly on the artist's use of box-like enclosures around figures to "suggest a feeling of psychological aloneness that Marin might have been considering not only as a personal experience, but also as a growing characteristic of the modern world" (p. 136). This is a suggestive analytical beginning, left to languish without needed amplification.

If Marin's reputation dwindled in the years following his death, perhaps, as Fine suggests, it was because of the small size of Marin's work (especially as contrasted with the scale of the paintings made by the Abstract Expressionists who followed him) or because of the coolness of 1960s and 1970s Pop and Minimalist tendencies. Recently Marin's work has attracted new interest; its still-dynamic vigor satisfies eyes hungry for renewed richness and visual complexity. This publication and the exhibition it accompanies will do much to encourage that welcome rediscovery.

*Sharyn Udall*

# BRIEFLY NOTED

**Lab Manual of Aluminum Plate Lithography: A Guide to Planning and Printing Limited Editions.** By Lise Drost.
*Published by the author (4410 S.W. 102 Avenue, Miami, FL 33165), 1990. 92pp. $15.00 (hardcover), $10.00 (paper, spiral bound).*

LISE DROST'S LAB MANUAL is a comprehensive book for beginning students of lithography. Its low cost should make it accessible and attractive to such students.

The manual explains the procedures used in aluminum plate lithography thoroughly and completely in a step-by-step format. Drost covers all the bases, from preparing the plate for drawing to the editioning of prints. Her section on how to set up to print is very methodical, and even though her procedure—the steps she proposes to get all necessary things together—might seem like too much work, it will save the student quite some time in the long run. Printing is an activity that is based on repetition, and the sooner the student sets up a comfortable system of repetition the more consistent the prints will be and the less of an uphill battle the activity will become.

Drost's troubleshooting section is also quite good and should be helpful in handling most problems encountered by students. Her emphasis on a systematic approach to problem-solving is important in assisting students to cope with Murphy's law of lithography: that is, anything that can go wrong will go wrong, especially for a beginner. (It always amazes me that anyone gets past Lithography 101!) It can be very frustrating to spend days drawing an image on a plate only to see it roll up too dark—or not at all—because of some technical mishap, although I suppose the challenge of overcoming technical hurdles may often serve to push students past that first lithography class. Personally, I feel a student needs to have firm control of the technical aspects of the process so that he or she can concentrate on the more important matters of aesthetics.

If students will take the time to read Drost's manual thoroughly, it will save them many agonizing hours in the shop later. Even though some things must be learned by trial and error, this manual will make mistakes easier to correct and will often prevent them from occurring in the first place.

I do have some minor criticisms of the manual. First among these is its recommendation that lacquer thinner or Hancolite be used, rather than acetone, to wash out a plate. Hancolite and lacquer thinner both have TLV (threshold limit value) ratings of 100 ppm (parts per million), whereas acetone's TLV rating is 750 ppm. Acetone is thus a safer alternative when a strong solvent is needed. Second, I feel that the manual should have addressed the topic of pH in discussing etches for plates. Over the years, we at Tamarind have observed that different containers of gum arabic have different pH readings, and that this affects the strength of all etches, whether made with phosphoric or tannic acid. I realize that at the beginning level the use of pH test papers might seem too much to deal with, but their use should at least be explained briefly in the section on etching.

I highly recommend Lise Drost's manual to beginning students of lithography. It is well written and well organized, and it is priced within the range of starving art students. *Bill Lagattuta*

**A Printmaker's Handbook.** By Silvie Turner.
*Published by estamp, London, 1989. 142 pp. £10.95 (paper).*

SILVIE TURNER has produced a book which is destined to become one of those well-thumbed and dog-eared reference books on the printmaker's shelf. It is a manual not on how to make prints (as the title leads one to expect), but rather on how to make a living from printmaking.

Turner endeavors to cover all aspects of professional printmaking which are important to an artist-printmaker's survival—from technical definitions and the care of prints to managing the financial and business side of printmaking.

The book is systematically divided into clear, well-defined sections with an easily followed table of contents. A number of chapters are important primarily to those working in Britain, such as those about legal matters and study opportunities, but there is still a lot of material which has significance for printmakers in other countries. The chapters on selling prints and setting up a workshop contain much common-sense information which will save the entrepreneurial printmaker a lot of time and exasperation. By following up on the publications listed as "Further Reading," one can find specific information on most subjects. This thoroughly researched list is an important asset.

An area which deserves special mention is the listing of international workshops (with addresses), competitions, and magazines. These are often difficult to obtain and can be invaluable to one seeking work or study opportunities abroad. I certainly hope the book is updated and reprinted in the years to come, and I encourage anyone who can amend or add to this information to write to its publisher: estamp, 204 St. Albans Avenue, London W4 5JU.

I am surprised not to find, in such an otherwise encompassing manual, a list of suppliers. The cost of supplies is always a concern for printers, and a listing of the most direct way to buy materials would be most helpful.

*A Printmaker's Handbook* is a well-designed and neatly laid-out book, punctuated by some interesting graphics between the chapters. Silvie Turner is to be commended for filling a much-recognized gap in the literature on printmaking. *Mark Attwood*

# AMERICAN PRINT WORKSHOPS
# A Survey

These addenda and errata supplement the survey of American print workshops compiled by Rebecca Schnelker and published in *The Tamarind Papers*, volume 12 (1989), pages 86–94. Workshops are listed by state, and alphabetically within each state.[1]

## Addenda

**ARION,** a division of Wieman Hinte, Inc. 17044 Montanero Ave, Ste 2, Carson CA 90746, (213)764–5997. *Pres* Gary E Hinte. *Ptrs* Daniel Mendoza, Hector Mendosa, Artura Navarro. *Media* Mylar, E, WC, Lino, Seri, Paper. *Presses* 2 max 52 × 76, Screen. Contract, publish.

**BRIGHTON PRESS** 320 G St, San Diego CA, (619)234–1179. Est 1978. *Dir* Bill Kelly. *Ptrs* B Kelly, Michele Burgess, Hal Truschke. *Cur* Stephanie Rowe. *Binder* Nancy Kelly. *Media* E, WC, Lino, LP, Binding, fine books. *Presses* 5 (LP, E). Contract, publish. Gallery.

**DAVIS-BLUE ARTWORK INC** 3820 Hoke Ave, Culver City CA 90232, (213)202–1550. Est 1979. *Dir* Brian Davis. *Ptr* Tim Dickson. *Media* Seri. *Presses* Screen, 2 OS. *Educ* training. Contract.

none

**SELF-HELP GRAPHICS & ART INC** 3802 Brooklyn Ave, LA CA 90063, (213)264–1259. Est 1982. *Dir* Sister Karen Boccalero. *Ptr* Oscar Duardo. *Media* E, WC, Lino, Seri, Mono. *Presses* 2 (E), Screen. Publish. Gallery.

**CHICAGO PRINTMAKERS COLLABORATIVE** 1101 N Paulina, Chicago IL 60622, (312)235–3712. Est 1989. *Dir* Deborah Maris Lader. *Ptrs* Kim Laurel, Anne Karsten, Calvin Moore, Lynda White, Stacey Pearl. *Media* SL, PL, ProColor, E, Engr, Mezzo, WC, Lino, LP, Mono, books. *Presses* 5 (L, E/L, LP, R, Book). *Educ* classes, demos, slide registry. Publish, membership.

**FULL COURT PRESS** 1124 Darrow, Evanston, IL 60202, (312)869–5246. Est 1987. *Dir* Eric N Robbins. *Ptrs* E Robbins, Nancy Robbins. *Media* SL, PL, E, WC, Mono. *Presses* 2(L, E). *Educ* classes. Contract.

**EES ARTS** (Experimental Etching Studio Inc.) 34 Plympton St, Boston, MA 02118. Est 1970. *Dir* Deborah Cornell. *Media* SL, PL, ProColor, E, Engr, Mezzo, WC, Lino, Mult, Mono, collograph. *Presses* 3 (L 26 × 38, E 30 × 52, Engr 15 × 36). Publish, artist co-op.

none

1 Our questionnaire permitted an ambiguous response with respect to flatbed and offset lithography; unclear responses are listed as OS (offset).

A key to abbreviations appears in *TTP* 12, 86.

Tamarind Institute has made no judgments with respect to the services provided by the workshops that are listed.

**LOWER EAST SIDE PRINTSHOP INC** 59–61 E 4th St, NY, NY 10003, (212)673–5390. Est 1968. *Dir* Maria Mingalone. *Asst Dir* Charles Foster *Prog Coord* Susan Rostow, *Artists/Instr* Diogenes Ballester, Andrew Roberts-Grey, Melvin Clark, Elizabeth Smith, Clarissa Sligh. *Media* PL, Collo, PL, ProColor, E, Engr, Mezzo, Phgrav, WC, Lino,Th)TSeri (water base), Mult, Mono, artist's books, alternative photo techniques. *Presses* 3E max 28 × 50. Limited contract, membership, individual artist residences.

**OBERON PRESS INC** 480 Canal St, NY, NY 10013, (212)274–0560. Est 1990. *Dir* Raymond W Bligh. *Media* PL, PhL, Mylar, OS, WC, Lino. *Presses* 1 OS max 41 × 57. Contract, publish.

**BRANDYWINE WORKSHOP** 1520–22 Kater St, Philadelphia PA 19146, (215)546–3657. Est 1972. *Pres* Allan L Edmunds. *Ptrs* Robert Franklin, Jim Hughes. *Art Dir* Phyllis Thompson. *Media* OS. Seri, Mult, Mono, Paper, constructions, 3–D. *Presses* 5(E 20 × 30, 4 OS max 24 × 36). *Educ* on-going intern program. Contract, short term artist residences awarded.

none

**THE FABRIC WORKSHOP INC** 1100 Vine St, 13th Fl, Philadelphia PA 19107, (215)922–7303. Est 1977. *Dir* Richard Siegesmund. *Ptrs* Robert Smith, Mary Anne Friel, Rebekah Lord. *Dye consult* Betsy Damos. *Media* Seri, Mult, Mono, Paper, fabric experimentation. *Presses* 3 Screens max 75'. *Educ* apprentice training program. Contract, Gallery.

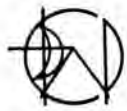
none

## Errata

**SAMPER SILKSCREEN,** Los Angeles, CA, is incorrectly listed as Sampler Silkscreen.

**STEWART & STEWART,** Birmingham, MI does not offer contract printing.

**WATSON PAPER CO. AND GALLERY,** Albuquerque, NM, chop mark reads correctly as shown:



**ARCH PRESS,** Steilacoom, WA, corrected zip code is 98368.

## Chop Marks

The chop mark of **CIRRUS,** Los Angeles, CA is:

The chop mark of **SAMPER SILKSCREEN,** Los Angeles, CA is:

## MD STONES

*Continued from page 5.*

steep one-lane mountain roads, past medieval ruins, chateaus, and silk factories, we arrived at a huge old quarry. It gave off a cool, reflected, blue-grey light, bouncing off of nothing but pure grey limestone. This awe-inspiring sight gave me a tremendous feeling that only a lithographer could understand. I knew that these stones were the best litho stones in the world."

Currently being quarried under the direction of stone master Maurice Dumas, the stones vary in color from grey to blue-grey. Typical prices (FOB Philadelphia; prices in U.S. dollars) are 14 × 20 in (35.5 × 51 cm), $535; 18 × 24 (46 × 61), $850; 22 × 28 (60 × 71), $1,510; and 24 × 36 (61 × 91.5), $2,470.

*C. A.*

PHOTO CREDITS:

**Associated American Artists, New York.** Pages 37–38.
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**Hansen Gallery, Santa Fe.** Page 84.
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**Lehman College Art Gallery, Bronx, New York.** Pages 74–76.
**George C. Miller & Son, New York.** Page 4.
**Museum of the Southwest, Midland, Texas.** Page 83 (above).
**Solo Press, Inc., New York.** Pages 54–57.
**Tamarind Archives, Albuquerque.** Pages 16, 26, 29.
**Tyler Graphics, Ltd., Mt. Kisco, New York.** Page 61.

**Damian Andrus, Albuquerque.** Pages 64, 65, 83 (below).
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**Julius Shulman, Los Angeles.** Page 27 (below).
**Steven Sloman, New York.** Page 61.
**Fred Swartz, Los Angeles.** Page 21.

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## ENDANGERED SPECIES

*Continued from page 34.*

the opportunity to pass on their knowledge, so collotype of the quality they were heirs to no longer exists in Europe.

I know of no lithographer capable of rendering an extreme range of contrast with the subtlety that Kurt Zein can maintain with heliogravure. Zein has delved into the technical libraries of Vienna to recover skills that were in the hands of thousands just two generations ago. He feels some embarrassment about using films drawn by artists to expose on the plate, yet stone lithography, with all its inadequacies, is treated with reverence: a transfer print by Matisse or Giacometti is granted a standing that can't be justified either in terms of print quality or devotion to craft.

It is not my wish to promote reproduction to a more exalted position in the print world, but having found cause to value the possibility of using the rich qualities of both gravure and collotype in combination with more autographic procedures, I am loath to lose them. Heliogravure, yielded from an aquatint box in the nineteenth-century manner, mixes naturally on copper with any and all other intaglio methods. Collotype permits work by the artist on films and negatives, and supervision of the press produces results not achievable by any other means; allied with screenprint, it works wonders.

The pity is that these fragile skills are disappearing. If these crafts are not supported and used, they will, like any endangered species, be lost to our culture. □

## BROKEN STONES

*Continued from page 27.*

and just not know it. Clearly, the earth is wounded and our species is at risk among galaxies that do not love us. So I scan the future through my art. To steady myself, I try to be as clear as Leonardo whose interests I share. I have bet my life that every work of art adds a bit of paradox control, even though, finally, paradox is uncontrollable. □

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Clinton Adams** began his association with Tamarind in 1960–61 as associate director of Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Los Angeles. Subsequently, he served as program consultant (1961–70), director of Tamarind Institute (1970–85), and editor of *The Tamarind Papers* (1974–90).

**Garo Antreasian** served as Tamarind's first technical director in 1960–61. A painter, lithographer, and author (with Clinton Adams) of *The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art & Techniques*, he is professor emeritus at the University of New Mexico.

**Mark Attwood,** a South African printer, worked in England before coming to Tamarind, where he is now a senior printer.

**Riva Castleman** is director of the department of prints and illustrated books, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. She is author of *American Impressions: Prints Since Pollock* and many exhibition catalogues.

**Van Deren Coke,** former director of the department of photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, is author of *The Painter and the Photograph, From Delacroix to Warhol* (1964), as well as many books and articles about the artists of New Mexico.

**Ruth E. Fine** is curator of modern prints and drawings at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. She is author of *Gemini G.E.L., Art and Collaboration* (1984), and *John Marin* (1990).

**Pat Gilmour** is author of numerous books and articles on varied aspects of collaborative printmaking, including *Ken Tyler, Master Printer, and the American Print Renaissance* (1986). She is contributing editor of *TTP* and will serve as its guest editor in 1991.

**Lanier Graham,** former curator of prints and illustrated books at the Australian National Gallery, specializes in the graphic arts of the twentieth century. His article, "The Prints of Willem de Kooning: An Illustrated Catalogue of His Editions, 1960–71," appeared in *TTP* 11 (1988). He is completing catalogues raisonnés of the prints of de Kooning and Pollock.

**Richard Hamilton** has been a key figure in British art since the early 1960s. His work is discussed in many books and articles, among them Stephen Coppel, "Richard Hamilton's *Ulysses* Etchings: An Examination of Work in Progress," *Print Quarterly* 6 (March 1989).

**Eugenia Parry Janis** has written extensively on prints and photographs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She is a principal authority on the monotypes of Edgar Degas, the subject of her doctoral dissertation at Harvard University (1971), and is professor of art and art history at the University of New Mexico.

**Bill Lagattuta** is master printer and studio manager at Tamarind Institute.

**Susan Lambert** is curator of prints, drawings, and paintings at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, and author of *The Image Multiplied: Printed Reproductions of Paintings, 1480–1980* (1987).

**Joann Moser** is curator-in-charge, graphic arts, at the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Her article, "The Ideal and the Practical: Some Thoughts on Recent Catalogues Raisonnés," appeared in *TTP* 12 (1989).

**Nathan Oliveira** has for many years been among the most significant painters and printmakers resident in California, where he teaches at Stanford University. "The Personality of Lithography: A Conversation with Nathan Oliveira," appeared in *TTP* 6 (1982–83).

**Ellen Sragow** is director of Sragow Gallery in New York, which specializes in works from the 1930s and 1940s as well as contemporary American prints. She is a member of the International Fine Print Dealers Association.

**Silvie Turner** is a printmaker and author (with the late Birgit Skiöld) of *Handmade Paper Today* (1983) and of *A Printer's Handbook* (1989).

**Linda Tyler** is assistant editor of *TTP* and gallery director at Tamarind Institute.

**Sharyn Udall** is author of *Modernist Painting in New Mexico, 1913–1936* (1984), and numerous articles on the art of the Southwest.

**Gustave von Groschwitz** has had a distinguished career as a curator and museum director. In 1985, he was first to receive the Tamarind Citation for Distinguished Contributions to the Art of the Lithograph.

**Barry Walker,** associate curator of prints and drawings at the Brooklyn Museum, ably maintains the traditions of the museum's National Print Exhibitions, which remain today, as they have for more than forty years, among the most significant surveys of contemporary printmaking in America.

**June Wayne** founded Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles and served as its director throughout the 1960s. A painter and printmaker, she has commented forcefully on critical issues affecting contemporary art and artists. In February 1990, she was convocation speaker at the annual meeting of the College Art Association of America, held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

**Ruth Weisberg,** a printmaker and writer, is professor of art at the University of Southern California and president of the College Art Association of America. Her provocative article, "The Syntax of the Print: In Search of an Aesthetic Context," appeared in *TTP* 9 (1986).

**Gabriel P. Weisberg,** author of numerous books, articles, and catalogues on nineteenth-century French art, is chairman of the Department of Art History, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. He is contributing editor of *TTP*.

**Barbara A. Wolanin** wrote her doctoral dissertation at the University of Wisconsin (1981) on the work of Arthur B. Carles. She curated an exhibition of his work at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (1983) and is presently completing a catalogue raisonné of Carles's paintings and prints.

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