

# THE TAMARIND PAPERS

*Technical, Critical and Historical Studies on the Art of the Lithograph*





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**Charles Stroh**. Pages 10 through 15.

**Tamarind Archives**. Page 33.

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on the Art of the Lithograph*

Editor: Clinton Adams  
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### **Print Review and the Pratt Graphics Center**

The editors of *TTP* last year learned with sorrow of the decision of Pratt Institute to discontinue publication of *Print Review*, effective with issue number 20. Under the able editorship of Andrew Stasik, *Print Review* made an outstanding and invaluable contribution to the field of the fine print. It will be deeply missed.

We now receive word from Stasik that the Pratt Graphics Center in Manhattan has been closed. As successor to Margaret Lowen-Grund's Contemporaries Graphics Center, founded in 1952 (see *TTP* 7 (1984): 17-23), the Center has had a long and distinguished history. It is sad to see it end.

### **International Graphic Arts Foundation**

Coincident with his departure from the Pratt Graphics Center, Andrew Stasik announced formation of the International Graphic Arts Foundation, "a new organization founded by a group of concerned curators, artists, and dealers." IGAF will publish prints and seek to stimulate interest in contemporary prints through exhibitions and a slide registry. For information, write IGAF at P.O. Box 2399, Darien, CT 06820; telephone (203) 327-7456.

### **The Tamarind Papers: Editorial Policy**

When *TTP* was founded in 1974 as *Tamarind Technical Papers* its editorial aim was limited to publication of articles on technical aspects of lithography. In 1978 that policy was broadened to include publication of critical and historical studies on the art of the lithograph. Now, in the changed artistic climate of the late 1980s, when artists are making increasingly complex prints in mixed media, it no longer seems appropriate to limit *TTP's* scope to lithography. The unfortunate demise of *Print Review* provides further reason to extend the range of *TTP*. While continuing to give emphasis to lithography, *TTP* will begin in Volume 10 (1987) to publish articles on all aspects of the fine print, including intaglio processes, relief printing, screen printing, monotype, mixed media, etc.

**Manuscripts on technical topics are particularly invited.** We welcome inquiries by telephone or letter prior to submission of manuscripts. We also invite submission of

manuscripts on historical and critical topics. Though our primary focus will continue to be on printmaking during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historical studies need no longer be limited to lithography.

### **Tamarind's Summer Workshop Program**

Because of building renovations, Tamarind Institute will not offer a summer workshop in 1986. The summer workshop program, designed to meet the needs of artist-teachers and other professionals in the field of lithography, will be resumed in 1987. Inquiries and suggestions as to specific content are welcome; they should be directed to Lynne Allen, Tamarind's master printer.

### **Safe Practices**

The second edition of *Safe Practices in the Arts and Crafts: A Studio Guide* by Julian A. Waller, M.D., is now available from the College Art Association of America, 149 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016; telephone (212) 889-2113. The price for single copies is \$7.00, including postage and handling; for bulk orders (ten or more copies) the price is reduced to \$5.50 each. Checks must be drawn on a U.S. bank.

### **A New Workshop in Philadelphia**

Tamarind Master Printer Timothy P. Sheesley has opened the Corridor Press in Philadelphia. Sheesley, who has extensive experience in lithography both as an artist and a printer, reports that Corridor Press will both publish prints and provide contract printing services. The workshop is equipped to print either from stones or aluminum plates on a Griffin Press (32 × 60 inch bed). Facilities are available for positive and negative photo processing. Sheesley will also undertake the printing of monotypes. The workshop is located in a spacious carriage house; the mailing address is 6139 N. Seventh Street, Philadelphia, PA 19120; telephone (215) 924-4715.

### **Used Lithograph Stones**

Editions Press has a number of used lithograph stones which are available for purchase at prices ranging from \$300 (approximately 23 × 30 × 2¼ inches) to \$1,025 (25 × 32 × 3 inches). For further information, call or write Brian Shure, Editions Press, 444 Natoma Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; telephone (415) 543-1818.

## The Tamarind Citation for Distinguished Contributions to the Art of Lithography

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GRANT ARNOLD, honored as the 1986 recipient of the Tamarind Citation, began his career in lithography in 1928 as a student in Charles Locke's classes at the Art Students League of New York. In 1929, at the invitation of Arnold Blanch, he worked as lithographic printer at the Woodstock Artists Association; shortly thereafter he was appointed first staff printer at the Art Students League. There and in Woodstock during the 1930s he printed for many leading American artists, among them Thomas Hart Benton, John Carroll, Konrad Cramer, Adolf Dehn, Karl Fortess, Don Freeman, and Yasuo Kuniyoshi. During the depression years, he served as printer for the Federal Art Project in Woodstock. His book, *Creative Lithography and How to Do It*, published by Harper & Brothers in 1941, was the most comprehensive book on the subject then available to American artists; after forty-five years, it is still in print (Dover Publications). Active as an artist, Arnold's lithographs were shown in museum exhibitions throughout the 1930s; one was selected by Albert Reese for inclusion in *American Prize Prints of the Twentieth Century* (1949); others entered the collections of the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library.

Arnold did not return to printing after World War II. Instead, he completed a graduate degree at Syracuse University and taught in New York public schools from 1950 until 1971. He then moved to Oswego, New York; became adjunct professor at the State University of New York; and established the Grant Arnold Collection of Fine Prints in the university's Tyler Art Gallery—a collection of more than 350 prints, including many printer's proofs.

Grant Arnold is the second recipient of the Tamarind Citation, established in 1985 on the occasion of Tamarind's Twenty-fifth Anniversary and first awarded to Gustave von Groschwitz. □



Grant Arnold at his press, c. 1935.



Director Marjorie Devon presents the 1986 Tamarind Citation to Grant Arnold.



## THE FAKE AND THE FAUX-GRAPHIQUE

### A Distinction without a Difference

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Clinton Adams

IN FEBRUARY 1986, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* carried a series of articles by staff writer Lee Catterall questioning the authenticity of prints marketed by Honolulu galleries as lithographs by Dali and Chagall. In March, first Albuquerque's Channel 13 (CBS) television news and then the *Albuquerque Journal* reported that the police had seized 130 possible Dali fakes from the galleries of Shelby Fine Arts, a dealer who operates in several western states. Soon thereafter, police in Colorado Springs seized eleven Dali prints from the Shelby gallery there.

A lithograph based upon Chagall's final study for the ceiling mural in the Paris Opera and drawn entirely by chromists was sold by Center Art Galleries of Hawaii though full-page color advertisements in the *New Yorker* magazine. According to the *Star-Bulletin*, the gallery purchased 2,000 impressions of the lithograph from the Paris printer Leon Amiel, who claimed that the lithograph was made with Chagall's permission. Mme. Chagall denied this in an interview with Catterall: "It's definitely a fake," she said.

Such incidents support the belief of New York Attorney General Robert Abrams that widespread art fraud continues to exist. "I think it's endemic in the entire [art] industry," a spokesman told Catterall: "It's not a local problem and it's not limited to Dali."

The sale of fakes is illegal. A New York grand jury recently returned indictments against sellers of "Dali lithographs" produced by counterfeiters. But the question that should be asked is whether a Dali fake is essentially different from a *faux-graphique* produced by chromists with the complicity of the artist? Aesthetically, if not legally, is not the distinction between a fake and a *faux-graphique* a distinction without a difference? As June Wayne wrote in 1972: "Eyes, common sense, knowledge, experience are the best protection against a fake, and my definition of a fake is anything that pretends to be something it isn't."

Unfortunately, the law is not that simple,

with the result that most of those who make and sell the *faux-graphique* stay beyond its reach. In Hawaii, for example, a print may be sold as an "original" work of the artist if he or she "conceived or created" the image. Chagall conceived the image for the Paris Opera ceiling; ergo, it is claimed, any lithograph based on that image is an "original" print.

In February 1986 the Hawaii Office of Consumer Protection drafted a bill requiring that any print sold as an "original" must be drawn by the artist who signs it. Not surprisingly, the *Star-Bulletin* reports, the bill was opposed by Center Art Galleries, which contended that such legislation would impose "competitive disadvantages [on] Center Art and other Hawaii companies so that they cannot effectively compete with [mainland] galleries." Legislators were asked to be "exceedingly careful" to avoid affecting Center's 250 employees." The bill was subsequently defeated in the Hawaii legislature and the law remained unchanged.

It is common knowledge in the print world that lithographs drawn by chromists are routinely produced in workshops throughout the United States. Prints that are no more than reproductions are routinely signed by artists. Not without justification did Attorney General Abrams speak of the "art industry" that produces them. The estimated take from sales of Dali fakes in America is \$625 million. How many millions more have been "invested" by unwary purchasers in the *faux-graphique* lithographs of Norman Rockwell and other popular artists? Is there an essential difference?

Until artists learn to be wary of promoters like Björn Loser (see Robert Vickrey's article on the facing page) and until purchasers of prints learn to be wary of the dealers who purvey their wares, the print swindles will continue. Inevitably, all makers of fine prints will suffer from the suspicion and uncertainty produced in the marketplace; all will feel the effects of the sting. □



# WHAT'S AN ORIGINAL PRINT?

or

## Two Million Dollars Down the Drain

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*Robert R. Vickrey*

A FEW YEARS AGO, in the country's leading print magazine, I read an article entitled, "What's an Original Print?" After about twenty pages of labyrinthian prose, the author came to the conclusion: "Nobody knows." There are, of course, thousands of fine printmakers throughout the country who create their own works with their own hands. More power to them! Even so, many strange things go on in the print netherworld.

I was myself lured into this netherworld a few years ago. My framer told me all about it: "You don't have to do a thing," he said. "Chromists will copy your paintings onto plates or silkscreens. You'll get a fee of several thousand dollars per image, plus royalties. How can you lose?"

"But is it ethical?" I asked naively. "Ethical, smethical," he said. "Who knows? Everyone is doing it." He named a popular artist famous for his sporting prints. "Do you think he makes his own prints? His paintings are transferred to silkscreens by colorists. *Do it*," he said, "you'll make a fortune."

Greed conquered conscience in my case, and I decided to give it a try. Strict moralists will be pleased by the outcome, which tends to sound something like *Star Wars*. I, the naive artist—think of me as Bob Skywalker if you will—signed a contract with an agent, Björn Loser (all names will be slightly changed). He showed me around his beautiful print gallery and his spacious office. I was very impressed. Then he introduced me to E-2-D-2, who was to execute my original Vickreys. "Execute," in this instance, has more than one meaning.

"E-2 is the fastest chromist in the business," said Björn. "And the *best*," he hastily added. "You should see his Norman Rockwells—and his Picassos are even better." "Picassos?" I questioned. "Sure," said Björn, "you don't think all those Picassos were done by Picasso? Of course, he's been dead for years. In some cases I know of, prints are executed by students just out of art school. But yours are to be the very best. We expect to have eight Vick-

rey prints ready by the end of the year." "But it's already October," I said. "Trust me," he said confidently, as he drove off in his beautiful new car.

E-2 produced two prints quickly. One was fair. The other was so bad that Björn refused to pay the printer's bill. E-2 had illegally authorized the printing of the entire edition without the permission either of Björn or myself. Evidently he thought that if he presented us with a *fait accompli*, we would be forced to accept his work. The printer still has this edition, unless he is selling them as illegal "pirated" prints.

MEANWHILE, E-2 and Björn (yes, Björn himself, who has had no training as an artist) were working on the other plates together. "Don't worry," he said. "We'll still have eight of them out by the end of the year." "But it's December," I said. "Look at Andy Warhol," said Björn. "He can turn out a whole edition in a few days. He simply takes a Polaroid photograph of the subject and has the image mechanically transferred to silkscreens; these are then printed onto any surface he chooses in his studio, which he calls 'The Factory.'" "Do you seriously expect to have eight editions by the end of the year?" I asked. "Trust me," said Björn, as he strolled off in his beautifully tailored clothes.

Björn and I finally agreed that the one print available needed more work. I agreed to try it myself. "Good," said Björn. "Your royalties will go up two-and-a-half percent. I figure you should make about two million dollars altogether." Tell me about the tooth fairy, I thought.

After I had worked on the image for several months, I agreed to sign it. After all, I had spent more time on it than had E-2-D-2, who had by then left the country. It was rumored that he had been making Georgia O'Keeffe prints without consent.

A different printer in New York ran off this edition of my work—then held it hostage for several months until Björn could pay his bills.



"When do I get some royalties?" I asked. "Trust me," he said, adjusting his expensive hi-fi.

At this point, I taped two aluminum plates to the wall of my studio and drew on them with a crayon. The results were better than I expected. Remember, however, that they were single-plate drawings. At any rate, my original Vickreys were *much* better than E-2-D-2's original Vickreys. A Boston printer, H-3-P-0, complimented me on my plates and said he would print them as soon as Björn paid his bill. This, of course, took another six months.

Meanwhile, Björn was in touch with a tax-shelter agency, which we will call Darth Vader Fine Arts. "They plan to produce twenty-two Vickrey tax-shelter prints. You'll get a big fee, half in advance, half when you finish. You don't have to do a thing except sign them and pick up your check. You know, Salvador Dali signed thousands of sheets of *blank* paper. The prints were executed by somebody else at a later date. We should both make a fortune out of this," said Björn. "Umm," I said, greed and disbelief vying for supremacy in my mind. "By the way, where's your car?" "That was a rental," he said. "I don't dare own anything."

A few weeks later, he announced that I should go to Boston and start the first tax-shelter print with H-3-P-0. "What happened to the skilled chromist who was supposed to do it?" I asked. "Remember, you'll get an extra two-and-a-half percent if you do it yourself," said Björn quickly. "Besides, Darth Vader hasn't come up with our advance, but it's due any day." "Well," I sighed, "I'll give it a try. But I don't know what I'm doing." "Trust me," said Björn.

It soon turned out that Darth Vader Fine Arts was a quite notorious organization. Rumor had it that their profit margin was based on the fact that they never paid their bills. They allegedly owed millions of dollars to printers, artists, and credit card companies, some of whom had been waiting for years. Björn had to deal with a Darth Vader agent named Blarney Sans Soulo, who singlehandedly—like the Dutch boy with his finger in the dike—held back vast seas of angry artists and printers. When Björn tried to get our promised advances and expenses, Blarney came up with excuses like:

"It's in the mail";

"We don't have a proper address";

"We sent it to the wrong address";

"My answering service never tells me anything";

"All checks must be signed by two Darth Vader executives at the same time—and they

just haven't been in the office";

And (the secretary speaking): "Blarney's in Paris." (His voice could be heard clearly in the background.)

Blarney organized these few simple themes into a full symphony of deceit. Years passed. The print I was working on was unsuccessful, since I had no experience in this area. Blarney came through about eight months late with the wrong amount of money sent to an inaccurate address. Eventually, this print was made from scratch by somebody else.

Meanwhile, back in New York, Björn had found a new printer, Jabba the Hutt, Inc., who was willing to produce the next edition. "They are the most disreputable company in the United States," Björn confessed, "but they will do it for nothing, as long as we use them for future editions." "When do I get my two million?" I asked. "You won't get that much all at once—but Blarney says your check is in the mail." "Okay," I said. "By the way, where did you get that bright red hair?" "I was feeling bored," he said, "so I went to the barber. I gave him thirty-five dollars and told him to do anything he wanted while I took a nap."

Several months later, the printers at Hutt came up with a moderately acceptable silk-screen print and agreed to run off the whole edition—at almost double the amount that was in the budget. When Björn refused to pay, the printers washed out the screens, thus destroying several months of work. "He has probably run off a pirated edition to be sold at a low price—which will do your reputation no good." Björn thought for a moment: "Maybe we can have your prints done as photographic reproductions. After all, before he died, Nelson Rockefeller had his collection of paintings photographed, and the reproductions that were made sold for very high prices. Even Andrew Wyeth has prints on the market which are photographic reproductions of his paintings, signed by him. He gets as much as five thousand for one of those," said Björn. "Oh, well," I mused, "as long as I get my two million. I'll call you in a few days." "Don't call me at the gallery," said Björn. "I'm no longer associated with it."

I next heard from an entirely different agent and printer in Colorado. The owner of the business had a rather violent temper, so because he reminded me of Rocky in the movies, I'll call him Dino Mite. He agreed to produce all of the remaining editions (their number had now shrunk from twenty-two to five). "As long as we get our advance from Darth Vader," said Dino. "Lots of luck," I said.



Robert Vickrey confers with printer Lynne Allen at Tamarind Institute, 1983.



A year passed. "Your work is too difficult to reproduce," said Dino. "You'll have to come out to Colorado to work on the silkscreens. Blarney says Darth Vader will pay all your expenses." And if I clap, Tinkerbell will come back to life, I thought.

Eventually, I ended up at Dino Mite, Ltd., where I worked from nine in the morning until (sometimes) ten at night, without pay, much less my two million. I was constantly chastised by everyone at the print shop because I wasn't cheerful. Each day I heard hot-tempered Dino on the phone, pleading with Blarney in New York for his promised money. He was told: "It's in the mail. . . . Blarney's in Paris. . . . We don't have your proper address. . . ."

After two weeks, I finished and signed three editions. Blarney showed up in Colorado and promised several more things. When he left, Darth Vader had still not paid Dino, who had a gun and threatened to shoot anyone who tried to take the finished prints from him. Meanwhile, H-3-P-0 (that's the printer in Boston, in case you've forgotten him) refused to answer the phone when Darth Vader called. He stalled for several months after not receiving *his* promised payment. We were *all* learning.

Eons later, Blarney made several more promises, some of which he kept—after long delays. I mentioned all of this to my lawyer, Marty Ben Kenobe. "Don't be hard on Blarney," he said, "he's really a pussycat. He only does these things because it's a part of his job." You are what you do, I thought, with a singular lack of originality.

It was at this point that I was invited to make lithographs at Tamarind Institute. The Tamarind staff were properly horrified by my stories. I made three prints, all done the old-fashioned way, entirely by my own hand. I felt human again.

Soon, Dino Mite went bankrupt and disappeared with one of the editions. Well, at least he didn't shoot anyone. The government then tried (more or less) to put Darth Vader out of business, claiming that all of their enterprises were of questionable legality. Tax-shelter owners started to sue the company.

We artists and printers now find ourselves in an unusual position. Darth Vader needs something from *us* more than we need something from *them*. I tried to contact Björn about this, but his office phone has been disconnected. He is presently working out of his apartment. He does not respond to phone calls or letters.

Blarney's secretary calls to find out where the prints are and what condition they are in. Lean and hardened fighters now, we respond:

"They're in the mail";

"They must have been sent to the wrong address";

"H-3-P-0's answering service never tells him anything";

"Bob Skywalker is in Paris"; or

"It takes two persons in the room at the same time to sign prints, and Mr. Skywalker's assistant is away."

We have been taught by masters. □



## ARTISTS' LITHOGRAPHY IN INDIA TODAY

*Charles Stroh*

*Charles Stroh, professor and head of the department of art at Kansas State University, spent six months in India during 1985 under a grant from the American Institute of Indian Studies and the Smithsonian Institution. While there, he conducted a survey of contemporary print-making and recorded interviews with a number of leading artists. This report is based upon one small part of his Indian research.*

### *A Brief Historical Background*

THE HISTORY OF PRINTING IN INDIA began in 1556 when Portuguese Jesuit missionaries brought two wooden printing presses and moveable type to Goa.<sup>1</sup> The earliest known intaglio printing dates from 1714. Lithography was introduced into India in the mid-nineteenth century. It is probable that *Tunnel Below the Thames*, published in Rajendralal Mitra's (ed.) *Bibidarthā Samgraha* (1852) is the earliest lithographic print made in India.<sup>2</sup>

The early history of printing in India is almost exclusively a history of book illustration and publishing, although single-sheet, display prints of religious subjects became popular in the late 1850s and 1860s. Single-sheet prints were usually made either as woodcuts or as lithographs at the Royal Lithographic Press and Calcutta Art Studio or the Chore Began Studio in Calcutta [FIG. 1]. Annada Kumar Bagchi, who is remembered as an important early artist who worked in lithography, was publishing an illustrated monthly in the 1860s as well as numerous single-sheet prints of gods, goddesses, and Puranic themes. He was also known for portraiture in lithography and was one of the founders of the famed Calcutta Art Studio.<sup>3</sup>

As the main political and economic outpost of the British Empire in India, Calcutta was the center for much of the publishing industry. As a result, printing presses were abundantly available: by 1859 an account of presses run by Indians in Calcutta listed their number at forty-six—an astonishing number, given the dominance of the British.<sup>4</sup> As most of these presses were letterpress, woodcuts were most often used for illustrations. After 1860 lithography was widespread; presses existed in Calcutta, Lucknow, Lahore, Amritsar, New Delhi, Bombay, Pune, Madras, and elsewhere [FIG. 2].

Though he did not make color lithographs, the artist who did the most to popularize them in India was Raja Ravi Varma [FIG. 3]. His prints were hand drawn but commercially produced copies of his paintings, reproduced by craftsmen who made the color separations using a stippling technique he developed for the purpose. Although these prints were first printed in Germany, Ravi Varma eventually established his own very successful press in Maharashtra. His prints received wide distribution but did not contribute to an increased interest in creative fine art lithography.



FIG. 1. *Sant Ramdas* (Maharashtran Saint). Color lithograph, c. 1900. 476 × 350. Collection: R. P. Gupta, Calcutta.



The first Indian artist to approach printmaking creatively is generally thought to have been Mukul Dey, who made etchings and drypoints from 1916. Other artists who made prints before 1950 include Nandalal Bose, Surendrenath Kar, Binode Bihari Mukherjee, Haren Das, A.R. Chugtai, Y.K. Shukla, and Chitta Prasad Bhattacharjya; among them Mukherjee was the only one to produce lithographs of interest [FIG. 4].

#### *Availability of Lithographic Equipment*

Although lithography was introduced into India slightly later than in Europe, the availability of presses, stones, plates, rollers, inks, and papers has never been a problem. Equipment was available and the technology of lithography was known. Because the presses were controlled by foreigners, however, creative printmaking was slow to develop. Illustrators were often brought from Europe, and even when local artists were hired, they were required to work in the prevailing European styles rather than in indigenous Indian styles.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, large numbers of printing presses of all types were to be found throughout India. Lithography was especially popular in northern India because Urdu (the language of Pakistan, parts of northern India, and of cities such as Hyderabad, which have large Muslim populations) could not be printed from movable type, as Urdu type fonts were not available. Urdu newspapers, journals, books, and posters all came from the skilled hands of calligraphers who worked directly on lithograph stones or

1 For further information about printmaking in India, see Charles Stroh, "The Fine Art Print in India Today," *Print Collector's Newsletter* 16:6 (January-February 1986): 206-08; and Anant Kakba Priolkar, *The Print Press in India: Its Beginning and Early Development* (Bombay: Maratha Samashodhana Mandala, 1958).

2 *Tunnel Below the Thames* is a lithograph with text, not a single-sheet print. Its relatively sophisticated execution suggests that earlier lithographs may have existed; if so, they are not now known. See Pranabranjan Ray, "Early Graphic Arts in Bengal," *Lalit Kala Contemporary* 18, New Delhi, pp. 16-66.

3 Jagdish Mittal, "Graphic Art of the Bengal School," *Lalit Kala Contemporary* 1, New Delhi, pp. 70-72.

4 Nikhil Sarkar, "Calcutta Woodcuts: Aspects of a Popular Art," in Ashit Paul (ed.), *Woodcut Prints of 19th Century Calcutta* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 1983), p. 17.



FIG. 2. *Durga Killing the Buffalo Demon*. Color lithograph, early 20th century. 483 × 356. Collection: Rasaja Foundation, New Delhi.

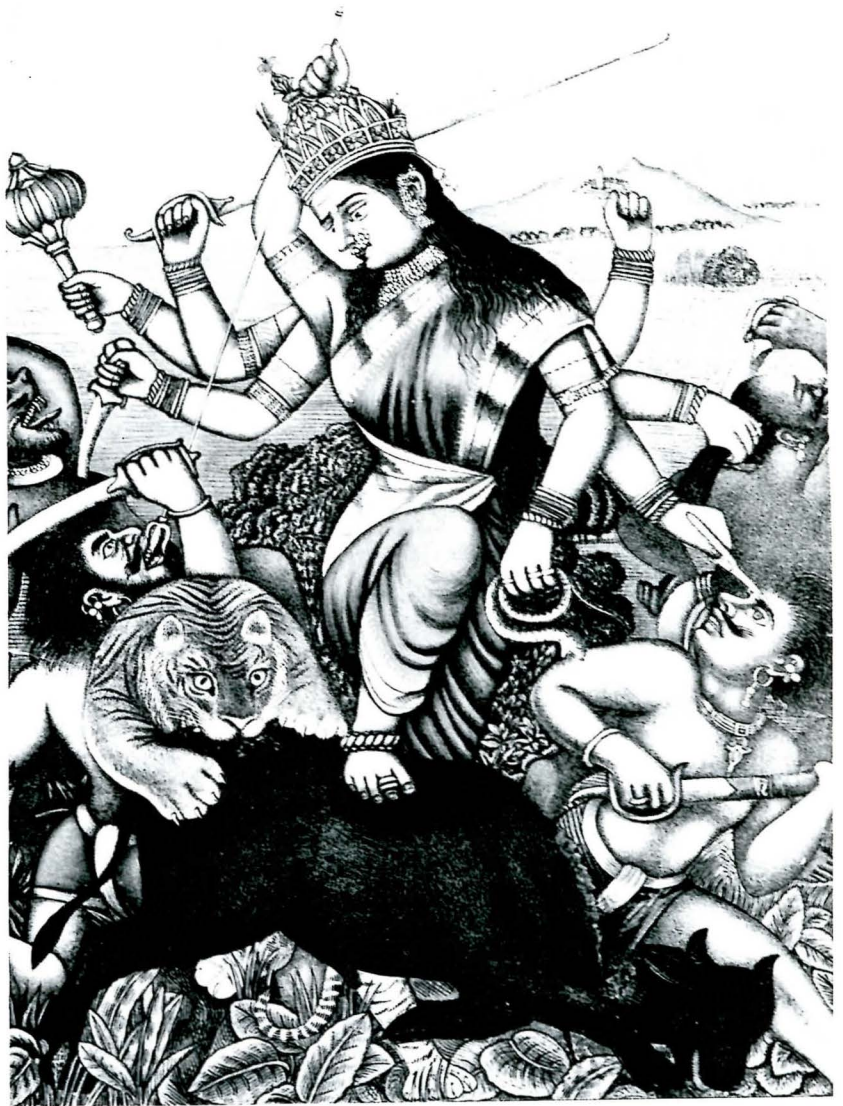


FIG. 3. **Raja Ravi Varma.** *Pururava and Urvashi*. Oleograph, 1898. 489 × 337. Collection: R. P. Gupta, Calcutta.

The term *oleograph* was widely used in Germany and the United States, as well as in India, to describe varnished chromolithographs. See Peter Marzio, *The Democratic Art: Pictures for a 19th-Century America* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1979), pp. 10–11.

on transfer paper. Even today, the Urdu presses still print much work that is drawn by hand [FIG. 5].<sup>5</sup>

Because many lithographic presses and stones were required for Urdu printing, as well as for other publishing endeavors in Bombay, Pune, Madras, Delhi, and Calcutta, there is no dearth of equipment in India today. In the art schools and regional academies there are, for the most part, very old German and English cast iron presses with heavy, wooden lattice beds [FIG. 6]. Some are quite large, such as the press at the Calcutta Regional Lalit Kala Akademi which could accommodate a stone 48 × 60 inches if it were available. Presumably, at one time, there must have been stones of that size to warrant building such a press. Most, however, are comparable to Fuchs and Lang presses with 24 × 40 inch beds.

As in the United States, a large number of stones disappeared while printers were changing from stone to offset printing; even so, many are still available, often of large size. A visitor from America is amazed to run across storage rooms, such as the one at Lucknow College of Art, where there are perhaps fifty stones of very large size. One can also see at Lucknow lithograph presses which were once operated by engaging and disengaging the large belts which run from a motor shaft above to clutches on the presses below [FIG. 7]. These are typical of one kind of motorized press used in northern India early in this





FIG. 4. Binode Behari Mukherjee. *Mother and Daughter Ringing the Temple Bell*. Color lithograph, 1914. 416 × 314. Collection: Art History Department, M. S. University of Baroda.

century and still in use in a few places today.

The major schools in Delhi, Baroda, Bombay, Santineketan, and Calcutta all have lithograph presses, as do the Lalit Kala Akademies in Lucknow, Delhi, Madras, and Calcutta [FIG. 8]. Presses are available in smaller art schools as well. There are Indian manufacturers of lithograph inks, crayons, tusches, leather and rubber rollers, hand-made rag papers, and all necessary gums, powders, and acids.

The single most prevalent complaint heard from Indian printmakers is the lack of good printing paper. The government of India adheres to protectionist economic policies and the tariff on imported paper is so high as to make its use by artists prohibitive. There are about 130 paper factories throughout India where paper is made by hand from cotton rags and/or alternative materials.<sup>6</sup> The factories which supply most artists' papers are located near Jaipur, Pune, and Pondicherry. The Sri Aurobindo Ashram Handmade Paper Unit of Pondicherry produces the paper favored by most printmakers [FIG. 9]. A new factory, Mira Papers, located in the south Arcot district of Tamil Nadu province is already producing paper of the best quality—a paper which is expected to rival the best handmade European papers. Unfortunately for Indian artists, Mira Papers plans to export its paper and to hold back only a very limited number of second-quality sheets for sale within India.



FIG. 5. Kajal Das writes directly on a stone at J. B. Litho, Calcutta.

5 The illustration shows a craftsman working on a stone but the "initiated" will recognize that the script is Bengali, not Urdu. Calligraphy done by hand was not limited exclusively to the Urdu language or to northern India and Muslim areas.

6 Indian papers are made from a wide variety of materials, including cotton rags, straw, hemp, dried grasses, and flax. As waste papers are commonly recycled, many papers are made from mixed materials. Because of the inconsistent quality of alternative materials, printmakers prefer to rely on cotton-rag papers.



FIG. 8. Lithograph studio, Kala Bhavana, Visvabharati University, Santineketan, West Bengal.



### *Artist-Lithographers and Lithographic Education*

Despite a tradition of hand lithography and the availability of tools and equipment, there are few artist-lithographers in India. Print-making by artists is a fairly recent phenomenon in India, with the most intense activity occurring only during the past fifteen years. Most work being done today is in intaglio. There are various reasons for this preponderance of intaglio, not least of which are strong influences originating in the 1950s and 1960s: the work of Krishna Reddy and the continuing influence of Atelier 17. Krishna, who received his diploma from Santineketan in 1946, later studied at the Slade School in London and worked with Stanley William Hayter at his Atelier 17 in Paris. By 1957, Krishna was associate director of Atelier 17; in 1958 he brought his viscosity intaglio prints to India, an exhibition which stimulated much interest in the process. With few exceptions, art schools in India were not then teaching print-making, so despite the growing excitement about printmaking there were few places to learn the techniques or to practice them. Print-making was taught at Delhi Polytechnic (Delhi College of Art), at M.S. University of Baroda, and at the Government School of Arts and Crafts, Calcutta, but it was very early, tentative, and experimental. Lithography was taught only at M.S. University of Baroda by technician N.B. Joglekar, who is usually given credit as the person who interested artists in lithography. Although lithography had been introduced at Kala Bhavana in Santineketan in the 1920s by Surendrenath Kar, his efforts and those of his colleague Nandalal Bose were not successful; not until Somnath Hore was hired in 1969 was lithography taught seriously there. Jagmohan Chopra reports that lithography was also taught at Delhi Polytechnic (Delhi College of Art) in the early 1950s. Jagmohan says:

We had Morlana Abdul Hamid Sahib, a technician, who had probably been working in some Urdu press, and he knew the techniques of preparing transfer paper and writing on it with ink, but, since he was used to working only in black and white with the Urdu script, it was always etched with too strong a solution, and we always got only black and white. There was no question of middle tones.<sup>7</sup>

Joglekar succeeded in attracting one important person to the process and that person, Somnath Hore, is still the only artist in India

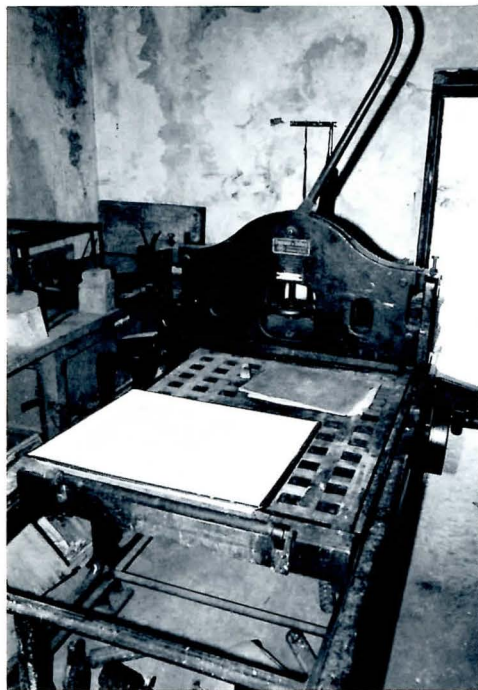


FIG. 6. Lithograph press at Old Goa College of Art, Panjim, Goa.

7 Interview with the author.





FIG. 9. The vatman passes a mold with a formed sheet to be couched. Handmade paper unit, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

who has mastered the process. Somnath directed the printmaking program at Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan, from 1969 through 1982; he established what is, today, the best printmaking program in the country. His own art is predominantly in intaglio and cast-paper pulp, but he has made many lithographs and has taught the process to numerous students. The print program at Kala Bhavana is now directed by Sanat Kar. The only other educational institution where lithography is taught seriously is M.S. University of Baroda in Gujarat, where the program is directed by V.S. Patel and P.D. Dhupal.

#### *Government Studios for Lithographers*

In 1976, Garhi Artists' Studios were opened in New Delhi. These are cooperative studios run by the National Lalit Kala Akademi for artists in printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, and painting. The National Akademi also sponsors regional workshops in Madras, Calcutta, Lucknow, and (in 1986) Bhubaneswar. Each of the workshops has facilities for lithography, and artists can work there without being attached to an educational institution and, in most cases, at no expense to themselves. Grants are available—and relatively easy to get—which pay artists a monthly, middle-range salary for a period of two years, so that they can leave their other jobs and concentrate on their art at one of the regional academies. Each of the regional academies also has residential facilities for artists who want to live at the academy while they are working there. The print studio at Garhi is supervised by Dakoji Devraj, in Madras by Rm. Palaniappan, in Calcutta by Swapan Das, and in Lucknow by Saroj Kumar Singh and Jai Krishna Agarwal. These studios are well equipped for lithography, although the facilities are used irregularly.

All the necessary tools, materials, and facilities are thus in place, but India awaits someone of the stature of Krishna Reddy to create the excitement necessary to activate all the dormant lithograph presses around the country. A printer-training program such as the one begun by Tamarind in the 1960s would probably be ideally suited to India's needs today. Although there would be cultural problems in making the system work, anything short of such a program—or of a personality such as Krishna's—is not likely to get the Indian presses rolling soon. □

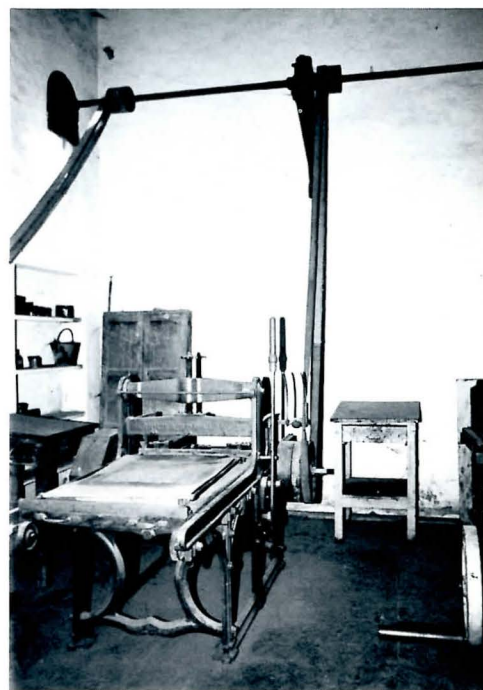


FIG. 7. Motorized lithograph press with belt drive, Lucknow College of Art.





Margo Humphrey. *The Night Kiss*, 1985.  
Color lithograph, 560 × 762.  
Printed at Tamarind Institute by Tom Pruitt [T85-308].

## ART AS A TESTAMENT

### A Conversation with Margo Humphrey

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*Clinton Adams*

*The lithographs of Margo Humphrey, one of the most original and forceful artists making prints today, have been exhibited throughout the United States, as well as in Europe, South America, and the Orient. Writing in the catalogue of her 1980 exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Allan M. Gordon observed that Humphrey has come "to the realization that participation in, knowledge of, and day-to-day living within Black reality can be the mold and raw material of a telling Art-is-Life-is-Art. Humphrey has learned how to make it into exciting Art."*

*On 3 February 1986, I visited Humphrey in her Oakland studio, to see her work and to talk with her about her experiences in lithography. I opened the conversation by asking when she first began her study of art:*

How did I begin? As a small child, I always made art. I became especially interested when I received a lot of praise for work I did while in kindergarten and in elementary school. By the time I was in junior high I began to realize that art might become something valuable in my life. Even in elementary school I had been doing drawings and winning contests; that was the first indication that among all the things I studied—including geography, math, and other subjects—art was the area in which I showed promise. I liked the feeling, I liked the reward and praise. That made me really get involved.

I think my parents took over at that point. They enrolled me in Saturday art classes at recreation centers and parks, then in Saturday classes at the California College of Arts and Crafts [CCAC].

*That was before you graduated from high school?*

Right. I enjoyed it, I liked it, and even there I excelled, among peers in my own age group. From then on, things just fell into place. I continued to work at home—amazingly enough, with paint-by-the-number kits and

coloring books as well as on plain paper—and continued to go to the Saturday classes in addition to high school. I graduated from Oakland High School in 1960. At this point I was confused about my artistic direction because some art teachers were telling me that my work was good, and some were saying that it wasn't. I remember one instructor in particular who told me that I would never be an artist. Two years later we were both in the same show at the Oakland Museum; it was an annual statewide show, open to all, and my painting hung right next to his. So I said, Aha! I began to see that unless artists believed in their talents, they would encounter many contradictions in the art world. That was a pivotal point for me—when I discovered that I couldn't always believe what instructors told me about my work or about myself. I saw my work in competition with that of my teachers and peers; I learned who I was, as opposed to what other people were telling me.

*Was the work you did then already related to what you are doing now?*

No. My work didn't start to take shape until after I graduated from high school. When I attended Merritt College in Oakland I knew I wanted to take art along with the other subjects. I enrolled in the art department and discovered, surprisingly enough, that everything happened in one room, including print-making. So all my work was done right beside the printing press. I mean, I never looked at it as a creative tool; it was just an object. But finally the instructor—her name was Helen Dozier, I'll never forget her—said: "Why don't you try some lithographs?" When I asked how they were done, she said: "Well, you use this press and these stones. The stones are on the counters and you draw on them with asphaltum. It won't be the same as painting on paper or canvas but it will be similar." So I



Margo Humphrey,  
1977.



followed her instructions and I liked the result. I didn't do any kind of narrative work at that time because the experience was new and it was easier not to think about subject matter; all of my images were abstract then. I just drew the image directly on the stone.

*You put images on the stones and processed them?*

I processed and printed them; I did everything myself.

*Black-and-white lithographs?*

Yes. Then I went from black and white to color. I made some lithographs that I then thought were very fine. That was in 1962. We worked on our own, with very little technical instruction. Miss Dozier would come in and show us how to etch the stones. In retrospect, I realize that, unbeknownst to us, the acid wasn't full-strength, so we were using these incredible fifty-six drop etches, made with diluted acid, on asphaltum drawings. It only took fifty drops to get effervescence—but then we'd add another ten drops just to be sure, because the drawing might fill in.

*Even so, it's quite remarkable that you were able to make lithographs at Merritt College. Not many schools were teaching lithography in the early 1960s. And I gather from what you say that Helen Dozier provided a lot of encouragement.*

Yes, she encouraged me as an artist. She gave me paper and paint—everything I needed. I didn't have to pay for the supplies, because she took the better students under her wing and divided supplies amongst us. She gave us lockers—big storage lockers—and tubes and half gallons of paint, a roll of canvas, and

boxes of litho pencils—everything we needed. It was paradise. She was the first person to recognize that she could nurture my career by giving me access to supplies and materials, and to equipment as well.

*Were you still taking classes at CCAC while you were at Merritt College?*

Yes. The two schools are within walking distance, so I attended both simultaneously, taking academic classes and art classes, until 1969, I think. I made numerous prints at CCAC. Later on, when I left Merritt College—I'm not sure what year—I had a scholarship to CCAC and I took some academic classes.

The next big milestone for me came when a woman by the name of E. J. Montgomery—Evangeline Montgomery—was working to get some visibility for black artists in the Bay Area.

*She was herself a black woman?*

Yes. E. J. was trying to organize black artists in the Bay Area through AWAN (Art-West Associated North). The organization's aims were to promote the work of black artists through museum exhibitions and to encourage corporate support. E. J. discovered my work during the organizational period, and when she invited me to participate in an exhibition, I was able to contribute several prints and paintings. This show was to be at the Oakland Museum—they weren't in their new building yet, so it opened at the Henry J. Kaiser Center in Oakland.<sup>1</sup>

It was an important event for me, in that I got my work out on a professional level and actually had my first major show in a museum. And the response was something! I got a beautiful writeup about my work in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The *Oakland Tribune* also ran a story. But I don't think I fully realized what was happening, nor did I understand how to take hold of the energy that came from that show. People told me they loved my work, but I was still a student; I hadn't received my B.F.A., and I had every intention to go on to graduate school. I was working part-time and paying my way through school. I simply didn't have time to find a gallery and do that whole thing. I knew the importance of it, but it was still out of reach. I didn't know how to capitalize on that show and wasn't sure that I needed to.

*Was your work in that show related to your present work?*

1 The exhibition *New Perspectives in Black Art* was shown at the Kaiser Center Gallery, October 5–28, 1968. Margo Humphrey's lithograph *A Second Time in Blackness* was illustrated as the frontispiece in the catalogue; her lithographs received a purchase award.



I think so, yes. The images had begun to come together; the narrative had begun to start. The symbol I used was a zebra. . . . I'll come back to that—but first, there's something very important. In 1968, at the time of that show, civil rights issues were being addressed by the black community throughout the nation. All of a sudden, critics and art historians began talking about black art. I'd been making art all along, but I didn't know what "black art" meant—as it was then defined. When people spoke about black art, I had to look around: Who are they talking about? What is it? What are its components? Is it using red and green in a certain way or is it a certain kind of style? I think those issues really made me push for a personal style and image.

I made a print of a record player that my grandmother gave me; it was a "print object," but I didn't see it then; I was dealing with it as an object on another level. I wanted to do black imagery—whatever I thought that was—but I didn't **know** what it was. So I thought that a subject like this was the only way I could get to the source of a personal image. I printed it while I was at CCAC and Merritt College and I called it *James Brown's Sounds of Escapism*.

People were then making intensely symbolic paintings and prints. Ben Hazzard, who was then a student, but later a curator at the Oakland Museum, did a lithograph called *Bird with a Dead Mate*—about blacks who were being killed in the South. Robert Colescott got a lot of attention for a work that satirized Colonel Sanders Kentucky Fried Chicken. At that time most black artists were making strong social statements.

My work may have been more difficult to categorize because I didn't want to be blatant about my subject. I felt that if the symbolism was too pronounced, the time would come when the work would be rejected because it would only fit a certain period. The symbolism would not be profound or lasting enough. In my print of the record player, *James Brown's Sounds of Escapism*, I was talking about blacks escaping not just from the physical bonds of jail but from prejudice and all the other things that come with it. This print established for me the fact that narrative symbolism was the direction I wanted to take.

But I've digressed from what I started to say about the zebra. I'd seen zebras in a nature film; I knew their spirit couldn't be tamed; I had heard they couldn't be domesticated. So by using a zebra as a symbol I was saying that black people will not be domesticated: as



Margo Humphrey. *The Persistent Reflection*, 1967–68. Lithograph, 557 × 352. Printed by the artist.



Margo Humphrey. *The Queen Anne and Her Contents*, 1967. Lithograph, 459 × 591. Printed by the artist.





**Margo Humphrey.** *James Brown's Sounds of Escapism*, 1972. Color lithograph, 489 × 368. Printed by the artist.

a people we are still a nation, however diverse, and we won't be suppressed. So back then, at the height of the civil rights movement, when I used the zebra as my symbol—with a boy on top of a zebra symbolizing black humanity and spirit—I was saying that our spirit was free, even if we were not. Since then I've continued to use the zebra, although along the way it has changed. It has become a signature for my spirit.

*So after that 1968 exhibition, while you were still a student at CCAC, you were actively making lithographs and printing your own work.*

Right. The more I printed, the more I wanted to print. And since it was all new territory and the Tamarind book had come out . . .

*The book was published in 1971.*

Yes, in 1971. There was so much information in the book. It made me realize that I wanted to do more than I had done; I wanted to learn how to make prints the way printers make prints. I knew I had the ability to undertake complex ideas and images—but **technically**, I didn't know how to do it the Tamarind way.

I was getting out of school then. Big prints were becoming standard, no longer exceptional; metal plates were coming in . . . and I was caught in transition—leaving school and knowing that I had to go on to graduate study. I knew I couldn't postpone it; things were getting tighter and tighter. So I applied to

Mills and Stanford. When I heard from Stanford first, I dropped everything else. I knew that Nathan Oliveira was there. Perhaps through misinformation, I thought that during my first year at Stanford I would learn technical printing and that afterward I would go on to artistic work. That didn't turn out to be true; there weren't any technical courses; there were just magnificent stones—stones that gave me an incentive to do new work.

*Nathan wasn't teaching the techniques of lithography?*

He wasn't teaching advanced techniques, but that was lucky for me because it gave me the freedom to concentrate on image-making. I asked Nathan if I could take a year off from graduate school and go to Tamarind—but he felt that I should stay in school and continue to develop my imagery. Imagery was my strong suit. Nathan saw that I had the flexibility to work with brushes and canvas and that I did not need to do anything but make images.

So although I didn't go to Tamarind, I gained essential experience in developing concepts and making strong and powerful images. I had no doubts about my ability to print my own work—nor did anyone else. There is a difference between intuitive printing—in which discoveries are made while working—and printing that requires perfection of technique and process. In intuitive printing, there is room for the human element to ebb and flow in response to the artist's creative intentions. In technical printing, there is less of a chance that the human element of fault can be transformed into art, although the ability to produce an edition is greatly increased. It was for the latter reason that I wanted to go to a printer's school.

[Humphrey points to a print on the table.] I call this print *Louis XV Versus Making Do*. Nathan was always taking us to visit collections in people's houses—incredibly lush houses in Menlo Park. I'd see incredible collections, then I'd go back to my student apartment. . . . [She points to a second print.] I was doing a lot of experimenting. This is called *The Great Yam*. I look back at these prints now and I think, how raw they were.

*It doesn't worry me that the ink layers are a bit heavy—that they are technically less sophisticated than your later prints.*

*During the time you were at Stanford there were only six or eight graduate students there?*





Margo Humphrey. *Sketch for The Getaway*, 1977.  
Crayon, ink, and collage, 167 × 217.



Margo Humphrey. *The Getaway*, 1977. Color lithograph, 559 × 762. Printed at Tamarind Institute by Toby Michel [T77-130].



Right.

*And you were the only black student.*

I think I'm the only black woman so far—I mean before and since.

*You worked principally with Oliveira?*

Yes. Nathan was very nice to me; he was very warm. I got to graduate school very late. I was in my late twenties, so I wasn't like some of the younger students who needed a lot of emotional support. I just concentrated on finishing my degree.

Nate was making masterful monotypes then; he would do eight prints and have six that were just breathtaking. He looked at my work and said: "You're really a painter as well as a printmaker, you do both equally well." Then he invited me into his studio, to work alongside him. That was wonderful. I turned to monotypes because I could develop images much faster. Nate taught me how to do monotypes in the most refined kind of way, and I finished my study at Stanford with both lithographs and monotypes. Later, after leaving Stanford, because I didn't want to lose my skills, I studied printmaking with Kenji Nanao at Cal State, Hayward.<sup>2</sup> That is when at last I obtained the technical information I had wanted.

*Did you begin to exhibit your work while you were at Stanford?*

Yes, but the prints I showed then were the prints I had done at CCAC. They were far superior to the work that I did at Stanford—I don't know why—maybe the pressure of graduate study. Thomas Allbright wrote a beautiful piece about my work when it was exhibited at the CCAC Gallery.

I got a teaching position right out of graduate school, at the University of California at Santa Cruz.

*There was already a lithographic shop at Santa Cruz when you joined the faculty there?*

Yes.

*And you taught lithography?*

I taught beginning, intermediate, and advanced classes in lithography as well as drawing. It was an experience.

That's where I discovered grants. I was de-

termined to get a major grant. I knew I had the ideas to make fine prints on a collaborative level. I just hadn't yet had the chance to be in the right environment to do it. So I wrote you that I wanted to come to Tamarind on my sabbatical leave.

*How did you respond to your first experience at Tamarind in 1977?*

At first I was scared. I didn't know what to expect, although I had heard a lot of rumors about what it would be like. I walked in with my sketch for *The Getaway*—a little six by eight inch sketch—and I was taken to one of the printers, Toby Michel. He asked me what I wanted to do. I was nervous—but I **knew** that print by instinct, I could have printed it in my sleep; I knew how it was supposed to go. I knew everything about it.

I was pleasantly surprised how it came out—happy and elated by the whole experience. Everybody really liked it, and I felt good. Because here I was, an unknown artist walking into Tamarind. The pressure was on, but I had made a beautiful print—more beautiful than I had ever thought possible. I had never worked on that scale and when I saw it finished, well, it was just breathtaking! I was thrilled and delighted, and so was everyone else.

For years I'd been dying to do a "big print," and now I had done it. Back at CCAC in 1964 we hadn't had big stones, so when I had wanted to make a big print I had to roll the paper up at one end of the stone, tape it down, and print it section by section, until the whole sheet was printed.

Everyone at Tamarind was waiting for me to get excited. But I showed no emotion at all. I was so pleased and excited I didn't want to talk: I wouldn't say a word. I was too busy tap dancing in my head. It was a great experience for me; it was wonderful, and I was too stingy to share the moment.

*That was the first time you made lithographs collaboratively?*

Yes, but I didn't look on it as a collaboration. I was doing the print . . .

*But have you sometimes been receptive to ideas that printers have brought to your work?*

Oh, sure, particularly after I began to relax and see how much of a help the printers could be, in terms of ideas. I think the most intense

<sup>2</sup> Kenji Nanao, who had been at Tamarind as a printer-fellow in 1968–69, was teaching lithography at California State University, Hayward.

collaboration I had was with Yashi [Yasutoshi Ishibashi] on *The House*. We went back and forth with that one; we really had to work on it.

*Did the Tamarind experience change your approach to work you did thereafter?*

Yes, it helped me exploit my talent. It made me realize that everything I thought I had going in my work—my understanding of what I was doing—was really there. I had mastered the concept. If you can't execute it, you're not really sure you know it. You have to build it like a model. My work at Tamarind made me realize that now was the time to enrich my ideas and get things going.

*When you spoke of the record player your grandmother gave you, you called it a "print object." You mean that there are objects which stimulate the idea of a print?*

Yes. The record player was a print object—by which I mean a vehicle for what I want to say: the source of an idea. I take the object and put it in its own world. It's like a separation mechanism, to put it in its own kind of creative space—an environment that is sealed in. It's a boundary, like the frame, from which it can't escape. The isolation then becomes the actual projection of the object.

Sometimes an image comes first, sometimes a title comes first. I usually build the components from whichever materializes first. *Queen Anne and Her Contents* came from a desire to show the life of a house as a living thing, with people living inside of it. *The Persistent Reflections* addresses the fact that we cannot run away from ourselves. In developing ideas I make use of many things—clippings, illustrations, old postcards, toys, puppets, dolls—and I read magazines and art books. I put everything in my notebooks, and make trial-and-error drawings until I get the right combination of symbols. The rest is easy after that. Then the fun begins. I make the print and go on to the next one.

*Aside from your teachers, Helen Dozier and Nathan Oliveira, what have been the principal influences upon your work? Things you've looked at, things you've seen?*

I like the work of the Haitian artists—the way they put forth ideas and tell stories—though there's sometimes too much story in their work for me. I'd have to isolate it even more; I'd

have to hone in on a specific thing. Before I do a piece, I often find that I'm looking at a lot of the Haitian and Brazilian artists, like Wilson Bigaud, Rigaud Benoit, or Hector Hipolite. The primitive people, the so-called native artists, are the people who influence me—everyone from Masaccio to Rousseau, Gauguin, and the German Expressionists. And TV. Lots of TV. All of this and more.

It's like the unexpected kind of jolt that you get when you see a cat with eyes that aren't right, or when you see that a background, rather than having perspective, really has none at all; it creates the illusion of things projecting, not receding. That kind of work excites me. I like the jolt of the unexpected, it's a source of energy in my work.

*At CCAC and later at Stanford, did you often go to exhibitions in galleries and museums?*

Not a whole lot. I have seldom looked at art for trends. I have found that when I like current work I ingest it too well; it becomes hard for me to do my own work. I pick up all the nuances, the turns, the color mixing—all of the little aesthetic things—and it takes me a while to work away from that. So I didn't go—I still don't go—to a lot of shows, mainly because it's too easy for me to assimilate someone else's style. I don't want to find myself stepping away from my own natural instincts in my work. So I have to be careful how I look at other shows; I really have to maintain a distance. Even so, I do keep myself informed through the art magazines and papers.

*I gather that as a student you looked for information which would help you do better work technically, thus your desire to go to Tamarind. What else do you feel you gained during your years of study?*

I learned to embrace my early work for its uniqueness—its raw quality and naive posturing. The early pieces are quite beautiful. It is only because I am a perfectionist and so very critical of my work that I don't appreciate it in the same context as others do.

I learned some fine points from Nathan Oliveira, like how to adapt myself continuously to a situation without losing any ground. This is critical to an artist when resources are at a minimum. Nathan showed me that art can be a very sophisticated issue, very much in contrast to attitudes in the sixties. Nathan always dealt with me as an artist; we conversed about art on a high level and still do.

And I realized that I made art because I





Margo Humphrey. *The Lady and the Tiger*, 1985. Color lithograph, 560 × 762. Printed at Tamarind Institute by Brian Haberman [T85-307].

liked it and was good at it. Upon completion of my graduate work, Nathan and Lorenz Eitner [chairman of the Stanford art department] asked me to present one of my prints to Duke Ellington during his visit to Stanford in the spring of 1974. This special honor made me realize the significance of the cultural contribution I was making as an artist and of the potential contribution I could make through my work. I realized that art is a testament to one's culture, one's intelligence, one's instincts for survival, and one's personal concepts of beauty and aesthetics.

Beyond this, I try to have fun with art, to play with it a bit, to ease into an idea, not to force it to happen. I have learned that the best competition is to let the next image be my challenge; I look to myself for the challenge, not to someone else's work as a starting point. I have also learned to trust my own judgment about things and to believe in my own ideas and images.

*Can you say what it is, specifically, that intrigues you about lithography?*

In the beginning, it was just doing it—seeing exactly what I could do—the experimentation. Then it was the total concept. Now it is the sheer pleasure and challenge. Without putting ink to paper, I can conceptualize a print in at least six runs and I can know exactly the effect I will get—the surface quality and all of that. I like lithography because I know what I am doing. I like the fact that it

is different every time, that there are different circumstances with each print.

*Then even in the preliminary drawings—the first sketches in your notebooks—you are thinking in terms of lithography.*

Yes, I think as a printmaker, although my ideas are also for small paintings and sculptures. When I have ideas, I see most of them as prints, because I've been making prints for twenty-five years now, since 1961. I often think in writing: I can write a print out—sometimes I think that if I wrote a print out, with all the colors and blends, a printer could go ahead and make the print with all of the intended subtlety. I know what I want to do so well.

*Once you begin a print, do your ideas evolve and change in the process of working?*

If I haven't thought the idea through, they do. Like the changes I made in *Pyramids for Lunch*. My original drawing is not like the final print. It's when I don't have an idea really down pat that it changes and evolves . . .

*In other words, even in the first drawing, many of the elements would have been there—the black shape of the pyramid, the border, the figures at the table, the little pyramid, and so forth. All of them would have been there?*

Oh yes, those things have to be stable. The image must always be stable. It is in the choice of colors, surface textures, and tonalities that complexity enters . . .

*. . . the blue might become a green or a purple, or whatever you choose . . .*

Yes, but the image is always there. The first version of *Pyramids for Lunch* [COVER] was made at Tamarind in black and white. The second version was made at another shop in color.

Color is a key issue, critical to my work. *Pyramids II* is rich and colorful. I like color and lots of it. Color is part of the process of communication, as are the imagery and the title. It is when all three elements are in sync that my work functions on its highest level. [Humphrey turns to another print on the table.] This is a try at *The Cake* print. It's an earlier version of the print I made at Tamarind. I made it in Robert Blackburn's studio in New York, but the stone broke before it could be editioned . . .





**Margo Humphrey.** *Postcard from Tunisia*, 1981. Color lithograph, 560 × 762. Printed at Tamarind Institute by Catherine Kirsh Kuhn [T81-633].

*Blackburn is a very experienced printer.*

Yes, I know. But the experience wasn't the one I had hoped for. We couldn't do much after the stone broke, so I just left it.

*Do you often do a full-scale drawing in preparation for a lithograph?*

No, not in the beginning. I usually start with a small sketch, as I did for *The Getaway*, and enlarge it as I go along.

*And each of the symbols in the image has its specific meaning? What is the meaning of the red peppers that float through the sky in *The Getaway*?*

In *The Getaway* they signify the heat or passion between the lovers. In another of my prints they are my reference to soul food. I often make use of hidden symbolism.

*Do you do watercolor paintings as finished works?*

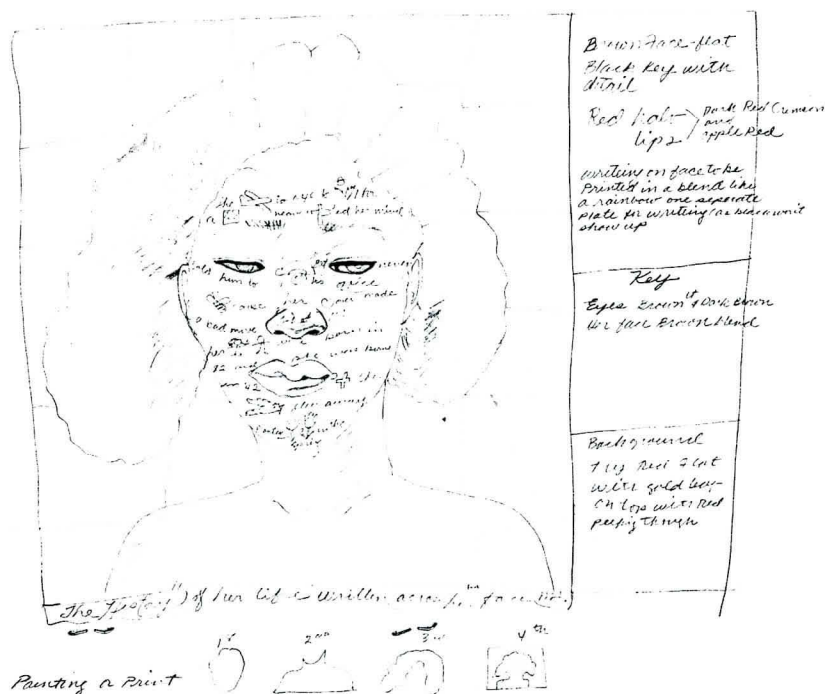
Yes. I'm doing more watercolors now. I used both mixed-media paintings and prints in my most recent show. All of the paintings were sold.

*On the table I see a book with a reproduction of Lorenzetti's Last Supper. Beside it I see a notebook, on which you've written a title, *The Last Bar-B-Que*. Tell me about that.*

I've had the idea for about three years. It has taken that long for it to mature so that I can be sure about what I am doing. At first I was undecided as to which direction to go—satirical or serious. Years of thought sorted it out. The humor, or pun, will be only in the title. The juxtaposition with the Last Supper will be in the change of time and place and in the change of race—incorporating ideas all the way from Lorenzetti to Emil Nolde—his *Last Supper* of 1909. *The Last Bar-B-Que* is a serious piece: a rewriting of history through the eyes of my ancestry, a portrayal of a saviour who looks like my people. I think it is a challenge to do a print from this point of view. I hope to do it soon.

*Is this your usual way of developing an idea? Pen drawings, linear drawings—information about the object which will be the subject of the print? In this case, also the Lorenzetti reproduction?*





Margo Humphrey. Sketch: *The History of Her Life Written across Her Face*. Pencil drawing, 179 × 213.



3 The photograph of the woman with the tattooed face was published in the *National Geographic*, October 1971.

Yes. I make a lot of these little notebooks. Here is a notebook that is nearly finished and complete. [Humphrey picks up a notebook titled "Her Face."] This is one I really like; this book came out well. I started with the idea of a pyramid, then I had an idea for a circus print—a group of black circus performers. Both were false starts. Then this photograph intrigued me. [She points to a small newspaper photograph of a woman in a flowered veil.] I remembered that my mother used to have hats with veils. They create a mystery about one's face. Next, I saw this photograph. The woman has a Sanskrit prayer tattooed on her face.<sup>3</sup>

Then I got this idea. [She points to a pencil drawing in the notebook.] I did a self-portrait at Tamarind from this idea. That's me when I was four years old. When I was a little girl, we used to use books that had the word "cat," then a picture of the cat. I decided I wanted to do a print called *The History of Her Life Written Across Her Face*, with the woman's face and the airplane and all the words. Beside my drawing I made notes about the colors and techniques and the order of the runs.

So each notebook serves as a plan—both for the image and for its technical execution.

Yes, this is how I work, how I start my ideas. Each of these little books is an idea for a print or a painting; each of them adds to completion of an idea. I have been keeping little books like these for quite a while. Once I even taught a special class—at Cal State, Humboldt—on how to put ideas together.

Let me ask a hypothetical question. Given the choice, if there were no problem with money—if you had money to spare—would you prefer to do your own printing, or would you prefer to work with a printer?

I would want to make prints both ways. Both are exciting, although the end results are different. I love printing too much to let someone else always do it for me.

If money were no object, I'd have a creative fit, combining techniques, making triptychs, diptychs, and 3-D prints—which is what I'd like to do next. I'd do some prints that would be undeniable masterpieces. I'd try to make history with every print. I can only hope that I run into a money-is-no-object situation soon, because I have yet to reach my prime.

I'd like to work with Tadanori Yokoo in Japan. I could do the *Adeline Street Tour*—a series of prints about the street I live on in Oakland. I'd like to visit my favorite places in the world: New Orleans, Brazil, Egypt, Trinidad, as well as Europe and Japan, and pull elements from those places to put into my work. Some of the spirit, the color, and the essence of the people. I'd like to make an artist's book, *Fairy Tale for a Nation*, a contemporary rock opera I have been writing in my notebooks.

For the immediate future, I am working on my NEA grant. *The Last Bar-B-Que* will be a major piece. I am also working with clay to test my print images as 3-D pieces. I'm excited about *Her Face* and *The Last Bar-B-Que*. There are more prints to come. At the completion of the grant, I'd like to have a traveling show of my work.

What's next?

I think eventually I will get into sculpture. I have a strong inclination in that direction presently, although I will always make prints and paintings. I look forward to seeing the work I will have made during the coming year. □

## TECHNICAL MATTERS

*edited by Lynne Allen*

*Among the requirements for certification as a Tamarind Master Printer is the conduct of research into some aspect of the lithographic process. This column, **Technical Matters** (which first appeared in TTP 6 (Summer 1983): 52-55), is based upon reports of such research. It will henceforth be edited by Lynne Allen, master printer and studio manager at Tamarind Institute, who with this issue joins the staff of TTP as contributing editor.*

### Subtractive Drawing and Deletion Techniques

*Based on research by Russell Craig  
Tamarind Master Printer, October, 1985*

RUSSELL CRAIG set out to find a way to make deletions on stones and plates without leaving a hard edge. Such deletions are often required during the proofing of a lithograph. On stone, deletions may be made either chemically (as in a gum stop-out)<sup>1</sup> or physically, through use of erasers, razor blades, or picking instruments that alter the surface of the stone. Although on aluminum plates either the gum stop-out or the eraser can be successfully employed, razor blades and scratching implements must be avoided. None of the standard deletion methods results in a soft-edge deletion that has the character of pencil or crayon. Through his tests of alternative materials, Craig discovered a way to make deletions that resemble marks made by crayons and pencils; he also discovered that these materials could be used to make drawings similar to crayon drawings but with the values reversed.

Traditionally, after processing, the marks made by the lithographic crayon or pencil accept the greasy ink; the negative "non-image" areas accept water and repel ink. Craig's method develops a drawing in reverse: when printed, the marks the artist makes will be seen as white marks against a dark background. The principle upon which this drawing technique is based is a subtractive one:

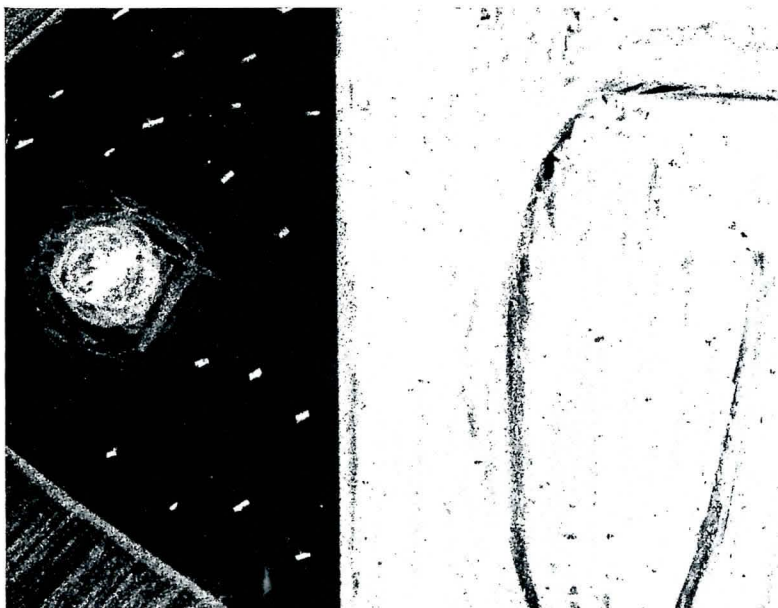
rather than make marks with a greasy lithographic material, the artist uses a material that is capable of serving as a stop-out. Through use of this technique, the artist may obtain the subtle nuances and soft tonal gradations that are characteristic of the traditional crayon drawing, but with reversed values.

Craig's experiments commenced with the testing of various materials, among them chinese and zinc white gouaches and watercolor pencils (Othello, Staedtler, and Aquallelo). The white gouaches, which contain gum arabic as a binder, produced soft, blurred edges or uneven tonal areas that were rather hard, flat, and somewhat similar in character to gum stop-outs. The effect of the gouache resists (briefly discussed in *TBL*, p. 52) seemed difficult to control: Craig could not predict whether or not the edge would be blurred or how much of a tonal value would be deleted. Among the watercolor pencils, however, was one, the Aquallelo (manufactured by the same French company that produces conte crayons) which in tests appeared to be capable of creating a mask with a quality much like crayon drawing.

Experiments revealed that many of the things normally done while processing stones and aluminum plates could not be done when processing drawings made with the Aquallelo pencil. All of the following methods resulted in a loss of clarity: using asphaltum diluted with solvent, deep cleaning with Hancolite, putting the image into lacquer, or inking it heavily in the preliminary stage of processing.

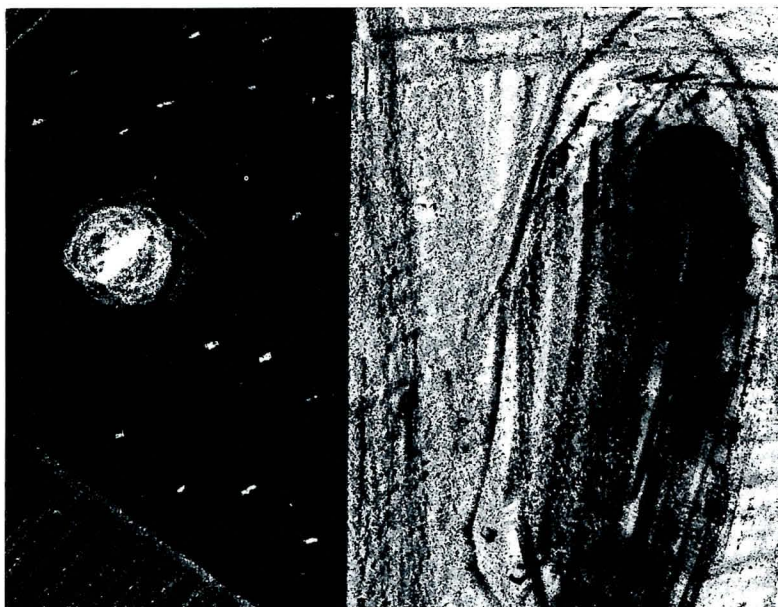
1 The most common method of deletion, other than through physical abrasion or removal of grease with a strong solvent, is the gum stop-out. The stone or plate is washed out thoroughly, so that no residue of grease or lacquer remains. After gum arabic (with added acid, if necessary) is applied to certain areas by the artist, the stone or plate is rolled up in black ink. Areas that have received the gum do not attract grease. Although the gum arabic may be applied in different ways, the appearance is always fluid in nature and the deletions have hard edges.





DETAILS: Test stone drawn by **Russell Craig**, (reproduced at actual size).

The drawing was made with the Aquallelo pencil, after which a coat of asphaltum was then buffed into the stone. Although the image is similar to a lithographic crayon drawing which has been reversed, it was achieved directly, without the complex processing required for image-transposition.



The stone has been counteretched and additions made with crayon. A wide range of visual possibilities can be achieved through such a combination of negative and positive drawing.



Deletions have been made with the Aquallelo pencil, further enriching the combined positive/negative drawing. Following these deletions an edition of 100 impressions was printed. The stone was stable during printing and the edition was consistent in quality.



## Procedures for processing drawings made with Aquallelo pencils

After making a drawing with Aquallelo pencils, a coat of thick asphaltum is buffed in. The asphaltum should not be diluted with solvent; use of a solvent disturbs the delicate marks made by the watercolor pencil and permits the grease in the asphaltum to attach itself to areas where it is not wanted. The drawing is washed off and rolled up. As this is a crucial step in processing, utmost care is advised. During the wash off, the printer must use a wet rag, followed by a dry rag and then by a damp sponge, to lift the watercolor material from the surface before rolling up the image. To assist in a clean roll up, the sponge should be used with sufficient pressure to ensure that much of the drawing material is washed out before the image is inked. Although only a portion is washed free in this initial stage, the rest is dislodged as the leather roller is passed briskly over the surface of the element. This "snap-rolling" method is employed for two or three passes. It should result in a crisp impression, although with insufficient ink in the flats; if a clean, crisp appearance is to be maintained in the areas that have been subtractively drawn, this is to be expected.

It is extremely important that the roll up not be labored and that the image not be inked excessively, as either will result in quick filling in of the drawing. Because a large amount of watercolor medium is being dislodged, it is advisable frequently to change sponges and recharge the roller, which may have a tendency to clog and slip when rolled over the surface of the element. If some areas of pencil drawing prove difficult to dislodge, it is best to remove them at a later stage.

The inking completed, fan the stone dry, apply rosin and talc, and gently massage pure gum arabic (14 baume) over its surface for approximately two minutes. Addition of magnesium carbonate to the gum may assist in washing off stubborn remnants of the drawing material. Wash off the gum with water, sponge the surface, and roll it up a second time. Achieve full inking of the flats but do not ink excessively.

### Etching drawings on stone

1. Fan dry, apply rosin and talc again.
2. Etch through a gum film.
3. Mix gum arabic and nitric acid to a strong etch strength of pH 0.8. Etch small sections of the image one at a time rather than the entire drawing at once. The subtractively

drawn areas should be etched carefully and the strong etch blotted up with a sponge, then replaced with pure gum arabic after each application of etch. The main concern is to establish the subtractively drawn areas so that during printing they will not accept ink.

4. Place an adsorbed gum film over the image (pH 3.0). Allow the stone to rest for an hour.
5. Wash out with lithotine, roll up, and etch a second time. Use the same etch strength and processing procedure as for the first etch. Take care not to leave the etch on the image too long.
6. Proof the stone. If there is "growth" in the image, etch a third time.

### Etching drawings on aluminum plates

1. Fan dry and apply talc.
2. Etch through a gum film.
3. Use full strength TAPEM for the first etch, so as to reinforce subtractively drawn areas. Let rest for one hour under 50 percent TAPEM and 50 percent gum arabic.
4. Apply a fresh coat of gum. Deep clean with Hancolite or another strong solvent; apply a coat of lacquer and fan dry.
5. Apply a coat of asphaltum and roll up.
6. Use full strength TAPEM for the second etch. Apply an adsorbed gum film, again 50 percent TAPEM and 50 percent gum arabic. Let rest one hour before proofing.

### Making deletions on existing images

After a lithographic image has been drawn, processed and printed, it is possible to make deletions with the Aquallelo watercolor pencil. The character of the image that results from such deletions is unique. It is especially interesting when used in conjunction with the reverse drawing method described above. Deletions made with Aquallelo pencils have a soft, blurred edge; they resemble, in reverse, the marks made by lithographic crayons or pencils. Craig conducted tests on both plates and stones to determine which lithographic drawing materials might respond favorably to such deletions. Among the materials tested were shop black (a mixture in equal parts of asphaltum, lithotine, and Noir Monter black ink), rubbing crayon, pencils and crayons of varying hardness, and Charbonnel Hi-grade tusche. With one exception, all responded well to deletions made with Aquallelo pencils; deletions made on Charbonnel Hi-grade tusche on aluminum plates did not hold well during editioning. All other deletions were successful and remained stable through large editions.

### Processing deletions

1. Wash out the drawing; deep clean it with Hancolite or another strong solvent. Clean it exceptionally well.



2. Draw on the stone or plate with Aquarelle watercolor pencils. All marks made by the pencil will be deletions; they will have a specific tonal appearance.
3. Buff in a thick coat of asphaltum. Do not dilute the asphaltum with solvent.
4. Wash off and roll up in the manner described above. After a brisk roll up, some areas of the original drawing may appear to have filled in slightly.<sup>2</sup> The objective at this stage is to achieve a clean, crisp impression in the newly deleted areas. The flats will appear under-inked.
5. Fan dry, apply rosin and talc (talc only, on aluminum plates).
6. Using firm pressure, massage pure gum arabic over the entire image, concentrating on the newly deleted areas of the drawing. Do this for approximately two minutes.
7. Wash off the gum, sponge with water, and roll up until the flats are full. Do not ink excessively.
8. Fan dry, apply rosin and talc (talc only, on aluminum plates).

### Etching deletions on stone

1. Etch deleted areas through a gum film using a mix of gum arabic and nitric acid with a pH of 0.8. Apply the etch as described above.
2. Wet wash the image and roll it up fully.<sup>3</sup> All areas of the drawing should be clean after this procedure.
3. Apply rosin and talc. Etch for a second time with the same strong etch; follow it with a final etch (pH 3.0) to establish the adsorbed gum film.
4. Allow the stone to rest for one hour; wash out, roll up, and proof.

### Etching deletions on aluminum plates

1. Etch deleted areas through a gum film using full-strength TAPEM.
2. Fan dry and apply talc.
3. Regum with gum arabic, wash out, and deep clean with Hancolite or another strong solvent.
4. Replace lacquer and roll up fully.
5. Fan dry and apply talc. Etch for a second time with full-strength TAPEM followed by 50 percent TAPEM and 50 percent gum arabic. Allow the plate to rest for one hour before proofing.

### Conclusion

Although Russell Craig's research adds substantially to the technical repertoire, it is important to understand its preliminary nature. Many of the processing procedures require further research so as to ascertain their reliability in varying situations. *TTP* will welcome response from those who may conduct such investigations.

### Notes:

- 2 Craig found no way to clean these areas of unwanted ink deposits other than to use a wet washout after application of the first etch. Although this step in the processing procedure may seem unorthodox and unpredictable, it is the most satisfactory answer thus far found.
- 3 **Procedure for a wet washout:** A wet washout is used to dislodge existing grease from the stone or plate. It is a very safe practice if done correctly. When going to black ink, it is easiest to do an **asphaltum wet washout**. Roll the image up with one or two passes. It is not necessary to ink the image fully. Put a *large* quantity of water on the stone, put a *generous* puddle of asphaltum in the middle, and add lithotone into this puddle. Wear a vinyl glove and with a rag, using pressure, begin to dislodge the ink from the image. If at any time you think you need more of any of the three ingredients, add it. This can make quite a mess. When you feel confident that all ink has been dislodged, pick up the excessive sludge with a dry rag. The procedure from that point on is the same as for any washout: Using a wet rag and applying pressure, go over the entire stone (picking up all the asphaltum in the negative areas). Follow this with a dry rag (usually going in the opposite direction to make sure you get all the residue), then with a *damp* sponge (used specially for this purpose). Immediately thereafter, roll over the image with the leather roller. It is a good idea to complete the entire process as quickly as possible, since the water and the lithotone *can* burn the image if there is not enough asphaltum on the stone to protect the greasy areas. Speed, however, is not as crucial as some make it out to be; a wet washout can be done slowly but continuously and with precision. If the asphaltum wet washout is not done right (if some asphaltum adheres to negative areas due to insufficient lithotone), the entire process should be repeated immediately.



## BOOKS & CATALOGUES IN REVIEW

**American Impressions: Prints Since Pollock.** By Riva Castleman.  
*Published by Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1985. \$40.00 (hardcover).*

RIVA CASTLEMAN'S OWN WORDS, including her title, suggest that she concluded her chronicle of American prints since Pollock with considerable misgivings. Her acknowledgements end with the warning that "should these impressions occasionally mistake reality, remembered or even documented, the art itself can be depended upon to reveal the exact truth." The introduction ends: "This, then, is the story of how American artists came to make prints that covered the globe. It is a tale not quite as real as the art itself."

I know the feeling. Even if a book is confined largely to the production of prints by American painters and sculptors and that selection is boiled down (as here) to 151 prints by 116 artists, the output of the postwar period has been so varied and so prolific that the task of trying to convey any real sense of it is daunting. On the other hand, if a continuous text claiming to relate the story of graphic art in one country within a given period cannot represent its reality with some confidence, then what has been the point of writing it at all?

Although a few of the better-known "printmakers" are mentioned, as one might expect from the print curator of a blue-chip museum, the emphasis in *American Impressions* is on the "star" system and particularly those who have "made it" in New York. It's a value system which, at a point where a dearth of famous New York artists at Tamarind is mentioned, causes Ed Ruscha to be described as "a local Pop practitioner."

It's interesting to compare the first chapter, dealing with the 1940s, with the equivalent chapter in James Watrous's recent and much more contextually elaborated American print history. For while Riva Castleman's selection features what one might describe as the graphic art of avant-garde Modernism, Watrous weaves those same artists, with the exception of Pollock, into a larger and more con-

vincing tapestry. He treats not only the conservative golden oldies who were still active during the decade but a far more extensive roll call of the specialist printmakers influenced by S. W. Hayter. And this causes one to question again, in the light of the revisionism of recent years, whether a history should try and reflect what happened in its complexity or erect a subsystem mirroring rather narrower personal tastes and proclivities.

Of course, whatever the scenario, the choice of artists will ultimately depend on a writer's notion of significance. Thus Riva Castleman treats Jackson Pollock's prints of the 1940s in some detail because the artist is a celebrated painter. Watrous deals with him cursorily in a later chapter since his prints were posthumously editioned and consequently lacked obvious influence. Neither writer, in my view, gets to the crux of their real importance, which Bernice Rose identified as providing a central experience in Pollock's "discovery of the all-over configuration [and] the philosophy of risk underlying it." In other words, even if the etchings themselves were of minor aesthetic interest, they were of cardinal value in the development of Pollock's mature style and therefore worthy of considerable note.

Perhaps all writers should analyze at the outset of a history the rationale governing inclusion or exclusion. But even if a very exclusive notion of significance were to be initially sketched out, it would still be depressing to find the activity of painter "stars" inevitably eclipsing comparable achievements by "printmakers," or feeble prints by major artists ousting superior work by those considered not quite so "mainstream." For example, Robert Rauschenberg's victory with *Accident* at the Ljubljana Biennale in 1963 is judged "more significant" than Armin Landeck's in 1955, although the prize they won was identical and Landeck was the American who won it first; similarly, a 1960 print of perfunctory boredom by Franz Kline, which the writer herself describes as "a souvenir rather than a commitment to etching," is nevertheless illustrated, while Nathan Oliveira finds his way into the book not for his own sumptuous graphic talent, but only as the conscripted printer of a Willem de Kooning lithograph (the account of the making of which does not entirely coincide with the account Oliveira gave in *The Tamarind Papers*, vol. 6, Winter 1982-83, p. 6).

Although the material in chapter 1

seems rather better digested than that of subsequent chapters, where, like a chamois, one leaps lightly backward and forward, often in doubt as to which decades or styles are under scrutiny, the lack of enthusiasm the writer feels for the task of substantiating fact or opinion is revealed by the dwindling notes. Numbering eight by the end of the first chapter, they peter out altogether on page 21, early in chapter 2. Yet one longs for some of the material presented to be supported by evidence, because it is often at variance with what has been established elsewhere. To deal with the first chapter systematically, Hayter has said that most accounts so far have been inaccurate: Jackson Pollock started work at Atelier 17 in 1943, not 1944, and was introduced there not by Robert Motherwell, but by Reuben Kadish. Moreover, the founder of Atelier 17 was not "forced to flee the Nazis" as is stated on page 5; as a Briton he left France for England immediately after war was declared (ten months before the Germans entered Paris) and set up a camouflage unit. The following year his colleagues in the unit went off on active service for which he was deemed medically unfit. At about that time he received an invitation to the United States which, since he was at a very loose end, he accepted. Motherwell did not produce his first intaglio prints at Hayter's atelier; he worked earlier with Kurt Seligmann. And according to Motherwell, the reason he mass-produced a drawing as his contribution to the VVV portfolio was not so much that he was discouraged by etching (indeed, Hayter told him many times that he was "a born printmaker") but that he owned no press and was loath to spend limited funds on having a plate editioned.

Some of the opinions the author enunciates are equally surprising. In view of the intaglio prints made in the 1930s or 1940s by artists such as Reginald Marsh, Isabel Bishop, Martin Lewis, and John Taylor Arms, one is amazed to read that no "serious" American artist had made them since the 1920s. We are told that Richard Hamilton "more or less founded the Pop movement" and that Josef Albers "was convinced that handmade was better than machine made." The former is simplistic; the latter directly contradicts everything I have understood about Albers. In his own statement of 1961 he declared that he did not believe handmade was necessarily better than machine made, but that both



had their uses. As to the suggestion that Albers "worked directly" with lithographic materials at Tamarind in 1963-64, Ken Tyler says that at that time the artist did not touch lithographic materials at all. As Albers himself later confessed to Theo Gusten (of the Print Council of America): "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!"

Subsequent chapters do not seem to be any better grounded. If the Haslem Gallery catalogue is correct, Mark Tobey made his first print in America in 1955, not in Europe in 1961. Roy Lichtenstein celebrated Rouen cathedral in his prints, not Rheims. June Wayne didn't go to France in the late 1950s because Lynton Kistler had died; Kistler was still giving interviews and making offset prints for artists into the 1980s. And if de Kooning was the first American artist to capture an Abstract Expressionist gesture in print, why did Riva Castleman give that distinction to Sam Francis in an earlier book? And so on. . . .

Perhaps the fact that the word "impression" can be defined as "a vague notion or indistinct survival from more distinct knowledge" limits one's right to cavil at such matters, and of course, listing inaccuracies can seem mere nit-picking: insisting on the letter of the law rather than its spirit. Yet it is continual doubt as to the smaller details, coupled with reservations about the general thrust of a narrative, that eventually undermines a reader's belief in its "truth." A history must necessarily abstract from multifaceted reality as a draughtsman abstracts a line to hint at the expression in a face. In the final analysis, the historian's success depends on the extent to which many different readers are convinced by the legitimacy of the abstraction.

Pat Gilmour

**Ken Tyler, Master Printer, and the American Print Renaissance.** By Pat Gilmour

*Published by Hudson Hills Press, New York, in association with the Australian National Gallery, 1986. 160 pp. 115 illustrations, 64 in color. \$25.00 (hardcover).*

NOWHERE IN THE EXTRAORDINARY HYPERBOLE now drowning the arts has there been more puff and fluff than that engulfing contemporary printmaking. Whereas a decade ago I decried the tiny trickle of new literature on printmaking, today there is a torrent. Until recently,

the verbiage seen in both the professional and the popular press appeared strangely alike: most often it was a litany of gossipy adulation and lock-step opinion which reported upon the latest prints of the latest celebrated artists (already well known as painters). Along the way one usually found passing mention of strangely shadowy figures, identified as "master printers," who assisted the artists in their creative labors. It was customary to add a few summary lines of praise (seldom amounting to a paragraph) in which an artist expressed appreciation or a writer acknowledged the printing specialist's skills in the collaborative effort. Even though genuinely intended, such brief notices served little more than perfunctory obligation, woefully inadequate to an understanding of the measure or magnitude of service contributed by these extraordinarily committed craftsmen. Who are these craftsmen? What does the title "master printer" really mean?

In fact, the printer's involvement with the work process may be as creative—or more so—than that of the artist. Yet monographs are written about artists, not printers, and because of the passing notice that is given them, printers' names and accomplishments slowly drift into obscurity. If we are not careful, they may eventually be lost to posterity. Who can tell us today about the lives and accomplishments of Knecht, Motte, Duchatel, Ancourt, or Lemerrier, to name but a few? They remain unrecognized (like the exotic and little-known chops of today's printers) in minuscule imprint at the lower edge of some of the greatest prints of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Of course exceptions exist. Most of us who are interested in prints do know a little something about Mourlot, Lacourrière, Crommelynck, Desjobert, Chris Prater, and even Ken Tyler—but not much.<sup>1</sup>

The problem is that the art of collaborative printmaking is a very complicated subject to write about. It is very complex and difficult to comprehend unless one is either actively engaged in it or a long time observer of its intricacies. In its scope and dynamics, it is an activity requiring sensitivity and insight to describe—objectively and subjectively—the two levels at which it functions. Above all, it is an activity in which the creative genius, technical know-how, innovative inspiration, individual egos, high-pressure energy, and powerful individual motivations of the participants

are inextricably intertwined. The driving force of such unions among artists, printers, publishers, and their assistants can be ever changing. Ideally, of course, tremendous creativity is released by partners on each side of the collaborative act. Although there is little doubt that during the collaborative evolution of their work the most successful artists ultimately make the crucial aesthetic decisions, they cannot do so without something tangible to look at: without a processed matrix or trial proof. It is the printer's vision, knowledge, and technical skill that brings the work to the state where the artist can make such crucial decisions. In so doing, the printer has tremendous creative leeway: the matrix may be processed precisely or coarsely, impressions may be printed fat or lean and onto papers that have an almost infinite range of appearance and printability. The course of the artist's judgement is thus often governed in subtle ways by a series of circumstances (such as those just described) and by the sequence in which these events are allowed to unfold before his eyes by the printer's skill. Once the work is completed, however, the printer, following prevailing custom, steps back into the shadow of virtual anonymity and the artist steps forward to bask in the light of achievement. Lip service to the contrary, equal status for this curious pavane of shared achievement simply does not exist; seldom did it ever exist; and it may well be that for various reasons (not the least of which are pecuniary) it can never exist.

Exceptions, of course, do occur. In that regard a very important factor in the recognition of printers and workshops is often overlooked. If we assume that in their professional skills and in their years of experience many printers are reasonably comparable, what then are the factors that assign greater recognition to some printers than others? Foremost among such factors are the status of the artists with whom a printer works and the scope and significance of the prints that result. Printers who also function as publishers have better opportunities to select and to orchestrate major projects by major artists. Then, too, if there

<sup>1</sup> A general though inadequate survey of present-day lithographers and lithography workshops may be found in Michael Knigen and Murray Zimiles, *The Contemporary Lithography Shop Around the World* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1974).



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

are helpful intermediaries to encourage prominent artists to make prints, the printers' "access" to such talent is considerably improved. Though less so today, this was of critical importance to emerging printers and workshops of the 1960s. It follows that the more the reputation of a printer, publisher, and/or workshop is established, the more important artists and projects will appear, and the more the printer's skill will be recognized.

Happily, matters are beginning to improve in this country with regard to a more substantive recognition of printing talent. In 1983 we were enlightened by the publication of Clinton Adams's excellent book, *American Lithographers 1900–1960: The Artists and Their Printers*. And now, recently published is Pat Gilmour's informative study, *Ken Tyler, Master Printer, and the American Print Renaissance*. These and other recent or soon-to-be-published works are evidence of a new and greatly freshened cycle of scholarship in printmaking literature which is bound to focus greater attention on the role of individual printers in the making of the great prints of our time.<sup>2</sup> This has come about because of an interesting phenomenon apparent within the last five years. Although generally overlooked, the last two decades of print production have resulted in an extraordinary accumulation of priceless archival materials in the form of documents, artists' studies, printers' experiments, trial proofs, and definitive impressions. Because the responsibility to house and care for these materials and to make them accessible for study entails excessive costs, it has become a severe burden—beyond the capabilities of even our largest workshops. Thus is seen a developing trend of giving or selling such collections to important public institutions so that their preservation and future availability may be assured. This, in turn, has encouraged the publication of a new generation of studies—an outgrowth of the archives—which will undoubtedly illuminate more thoroughly our understanding of printing artisan-ship.<sup>3</sup>

There is no doubt but that this is the genesis of Pat Gilmour's study of Kenneth Tyler. In 1973, Tyler (certainly not among the shadowy printers mentioned earlier) sold approximately seventy rare prints and a complete set of archival



proofs printed at Gemini G.E.L. to the Australian National Gallery. This sale of his personal collection helped to finance his new publishing venture on the East Coast, known today as Tyler Graphics Ltd. In 1985 these prints became the nucleus of a major exhibition in Canberra, "Ken Tyler: Printer Extraordinary!"

Pat Gilmour, founding curator of prints at the Tate Gallery, London, and currently coordinating curator of international prints and illustrated books at the Australian National Gallery, has long been an observer of the world print scene as well as an ardent admirer of Tyler's accomplishment. She establishes the tone of her book in its introduction:

Tyler's name crops up in almost any discussion about American printmaking; it excites every reaction from praise to blame and every emotion from admiration to envy. Few can disregard his impact on recent graphic art. Although many can claim to have assisted in the remarkable reevaluation of printmaking that has taken place over the past two decades, Tyler's contribution has been of particular brilliance and the artists with whom he has worked recognize that they have participated in a new intensity of collaboration.

Gilmour's treatment is blocked out in three principal sections: 1. The Background to Tyler's Career and the "Print Renaissance"; 2. Tyler on the West Coast 1963–1973; and 3. Tyler on the East Coast 1974–1985. Each section contains short chapters devoted to relevant sub-topics.

2 Gilmour provides a valuable and extensive bibliography in four parts: A. Books, catalogues, and articles by or about Tyler, or about firms he has founded; B. Books and catalogues of general interest; C. Articles of general interest; and D. Unpublished sources, including interviews, letters, and manuscripts.

3 Among the archives thus far established:

The contemporary print collection of the Tate Gallery, London, formed in 1974–75, was drawn mainly from the archival prints retained by printers working closely with artists.

The Tamarind Archives were established at the University of New Mexico in 1970; much of the written and photographic material in these archives has been micro-filmed by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The 1981 gift of the Gemini G.E.L. archives to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, initiated the excellent study by Ruth E. Fine; *Gemini G.E.L.: Art and Collaboration* (see review below).

The Rutgers Archives for Printmaking Studios was established at the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Museum on the Rutgers Campus (see "The Archives of Printmaking Workshops," *TTP* 7 (Spring 1984): 4).

The gift of the ULAE Archives to the Art Institute of Chicago has led to the preparation of a book by Esther Sparks, provisionally titled *Universal Limited Art Editions: A History and Catalogue Raisonné* (forthcoming).

The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, which in 1984 received the gift of the Tyler Graphics Study Archive, plans to publish a two-volume study of that collection by Judith Goldman (forthcoming).



Interwoven profusely throughout are anecdotes, quotations, and historical facts gathered from an astonishingly large number of sources. It is quickly obvious that Gilmour, with conscientious research, attempts (perhaps for the first time) to provide an accurate, balanced, and objective portrayal of Tyler's controversial personality, to which she adds her own well-reasoned and sharp insights.

Gilmour begins her description of Tyler's career with an account of the forces in the arts which preceded and influenced it. In short, meaty chapters she outlines the state of the graphic arts in general—and of lithography in particular—in America prior to mid-century. She discusses the consequences of changing artistic, social, and economic conditions and describes the impact on the graphic arts of the Tamarind Lithography Workshop and Universal Limited Art Editions (ULAE). Both institutions were important influences on the eventual formation of Ken Tyler's philosophy. Both evolved mystiques shaped by the strong but very different personalities of their organizers, June Wayne and Tatyana Grosman. Today, the historic success of ULAE is attributed without question to the major artists it was able to attract: those whose imagery and reputations were already well established. Grosman was helped immensely by the assistance of William Lieberman, then curator of prints and drawings at the Museum of Modern Art. Later, this did not go unnoticed by Tyler, who acknowledged that Lieberman's dictum ("great artists make great prints") was crucial to his future. Gilmour hastens to emphasize, however, that Tyler's formative experience and future as a master printer could simply not have been possible without the existence and influence of Tamarind. Certainly Tyler's growth could not have occurred within the cloistered, closely controlled, old-world atmosphere of ULAE. Despite Tyler's negative recollections about his experiences at Tamarind and his reluctance to elaborate on the critical importance of his early training, it was precisely through the workshop's multi-faceted activities that he found the breadth of educational opportunity so necessary for his fertile mind. At Tamarind he received intense specialized training, learned business practices, and encountered a rich variety of technical research that would not have been possible elsewhere. It was also at Tamarind that Tyler was exposed for

the first time to well-known artists: their ideas, personalities, and daily work habits.

In between Gilmour's deft descriptions of the encounters and individuals instrumental to Tyler's progress, there emerges a subtle character study of a complex personality. In 1962–63 we are shown a lean, impressionable, and highly-motivated older student intent on beginning a new career, perhaps as a teacher or practicing artist. He studied lithography in my classes at the Herron School of Art in Indianapolis. (There, in a modest way, Tyler encountered organized attention to the technology of lithography and began to develop the very special awareness of the potential of modern technology for artistic creativity which has accompanied him throughout his career, generating both praise and criticism.) Subsequently, I recommended him for a fellowship in the printer-training program at Tamarind. There he had a notable one-month encounter with the French printer Marcel Durassier which left a lasting impression on the rapidly developing and receptive student. In addition to learning important technical finesse from Durassier, Tyler was overwhelmed by the master printer's old-world reverence and love/hate relationship with his craft. He was awed by Durassier's total commitment to the mastery of a medium in which every day introduced a new learning experience. It appears that Tyler has never forgotten that brief encounter; in retrospect it seems to have had far greater influence in the shaping of his own uncompromising endeavors than the similar ideologies that were espoused by others at Tamarind.

Gilmour provides us with an excellent sketch of Tyler's first collaborative encounter with Josef Albers and of his participation in the production of the important *Day and Night* portfolio in 1964. Tyler ingratiated himself with Albers, who in turn provided both stimulation and personal encouragement while whetting the printer's appetite for the problem-solving technical demands of his precisely orchestrated project. The highly successful outcome of this association helps us to understand the special affection bordering on reverence that Tyler ever after felt for the aging Albers. From the viewpoint of compatibility, mutual respect, technical stimulation, and financial success, it is not surprising that it was to Albers that Tyler turned for his first publishing venture at Gemini

G.E.L. on the West Coast; then again after the formation of Tyler Graphics Ltd. on the East Coast. Gilmour hastens to add, however, that despite his reverence for Albers, "he [Tyler] knows that it was his success in attracting the superstars of the 1960s art world—Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg—that really cemented the reputation of Gemini just as they were also responsible for Tatyana Grosman's success at ULAE."

Tyler's fast moving and colorful years at Gemini between 1965 and 1973 are highlighted by descriptions of his widely publicized projects, especially those with Rauschenberg, Johns, Hockney, Oldenburg, Lichtenstein, and Stella. Gilmour notes that until Rauschenberg arrived at Gemini the workshop's choice of artists tended to be conservative, but that after his arrival, other less conservative artists were quick to follow. The particular reasons that Rauschenberg might have chosen to work at Gemini are intriguing to consider, yet remain unexplained. Jasper Johns's interest in Gemini, after long association with ULAE, was apparently to see what another printing situation might be like and what affect it might have on his work. In an earlier interview he had said that his impulse to make prints in the first place sprang not from a belief that it was a good way to express himself but from his interest in technical innovation. Gilmour's focus on these artists' projects emphasizes the extraordinary escalation of technical innovation and "West Coast finish" embodied in them, all of which projected into the national spotlight Tyler's dramatic technical skill and at the same time established (perhaps unwittingly) the Gemini "house style." What began as awe, praise, and adulation for this new look of large scale, complex, and sleek prints eventually provoked a backlash of criticism among East Coast critics aligned to the more romantic, hand-crafted ideology of the ULAE print aesthetic. Such criticism peaked during the large exhibition of Gemini prints (*Technics and Creativity: Gemini G.E.L.*) held at the Museum of Modern Art in 1971. Significantly, this coincided with a general waning of interest in the concepts of an industrial aesthetic and of art as technology.

In examining Tyler's interaction with numerous individuals during his years in Los Angeles, one is struck by the curious absence of all but passing reference to his business partners at Gemini and to his first wife, Kay. Each played



substantial roles in the story of his success. Early in 1966 Tyler changed the role of his workshop from contract printer to print publisher by entering into a partnership with Sidney M. Felsen, an accountant, and Stanley Grinstein, owner of a forklift company. In addition to bankrolling Gemini, both partners became active participants in the discussion of all major projects and pitched in with the shop printers and fabricators however and whenever their services were required. Even so, Tyler served as the principal collaborator on all artists' projects; his forceful personality dominated Gemini's image, overshadowing his partners, without whose business experience and capital he would probably not have survived in the rapidly accelerating fast lane of blue-chip print publishing.

It is particularly regrettable that in Gilmour's book there is almost no mention of Kay Tyler. It was with Kay that Ken formed his original husband-and-wife enterprise, then called simply Gemini Ltd. As bookkeeper, business manager, companion, confidante, mother, and rock-solid bulwark, Kay provided a balancing force against Ken's restless and sometimes reckless impetuosity. Her courage and loyalty, which have gone unnoticed and unsung for too long, were tested many times over in the early and very tenuous periods of each of Tyler's enterprises, first in Los Angeles, later in the early period at Bedford Village. In this regard it would have been especially illuminating for the reader to understand some of the economic trials of Tyler's print shop and publishing operations. Although understandably difficult to obtain, reliable data on what amounts to confidential business practice—the subjects of profit and loss, details as to the selection of artists, and business agreements related to publishing projects—are fascinating areas for speculation. Obviously, time schedules, bank loans, cash flow, inventory control, and productivity cannot function within the same framework as do sound business practices in other fields. Even so, the way they operate has enormous consequence upon the dynamics of print publishing entrepreneurship in general and upon Tyler's success in particular. Yet here we are left in the dark, as is too often the case with writing about the economics of graphic arts production.

Tyler's seemingly abrupt departure from Gemini after almost a decade of high-pressure activity has never been

fully detailed, presumably because of the reluctance of the partners to talk about it. As Gilmour surmises, there were no doubt numerous reasons for a separation. Some began as early as the *Technics and Creativity* exhibition, which in many ways serves as a benchmark for Tyler's self-consciously directed projects on the West Coast. Certainly the ever-growing size and scope of Gemini activities, along with its high-visibility glamour, had lost their interest for Tyler, by now a highly seasoned professional. Surely there must have been a longing to return to a more sheltered operation in which he could better control his own destiny. Though not spoken of by either party, there were ever-growing differences of policy and objectives between the partners; the parting, when it came, was far from amicable, involving some quite serious litigation.

In sum, the West Coast years, as described by Gilmour and others before her, reveal Tyler as an individual with an insatiable curiosity about printmaking—first about lithography and later about prints and multiples in every form. Between the lines we are shown a person with boundless enthusiasm, willing to collaborate only with the best-known artists; a quick study; an indefatigable worker; one who chafed under the supervision of others; and above all, one who was anxious to govern his own destiny, reluctant to share his achievement with any but the artists with whom he worked.

Whatever the reasons for Tyler's departure from the West Coast in 1974, they coincided with other changes in the world of printmaking which were already underway. These included shifts in attitudes about print aesthetics: shifts away from the mechanical perfection epitomized by the Gemini prints of the sixties and toward a more personalized individuality in both style and execution. New emphasis was given to etching, aquatint, and papermaking; at the same time a very few printers began to equip their shops with offset presses to enhance production capability. Tyler's ever-sensitive antennae were quick to recognize these winds of change, indeed in California he had already undertaken relief-printing projects with Lichtenstein and small-scale prints with Oldenburg. Shortly after establishing his Bedford Village workshop, he set up both an etching press and an offset press for anticipated projects. Tyler characterized his new quarters as a "country shop in

a quiet place" with fewer people and a slower pace. Even so, by 1985 the shop employed fourteen employees, including six printers. In this new environment a more mature Tyler, less brash, less driven to proselytize his skills and at the height of his inventive capacity, acknowledged a greater concern for the care and well-being of his employees.

Following one another, Albers, Stella, Motherwell, Hockney, Oldenburg, Lichtenstein, and other artists from the Gemini days came to make prints at Bedford Village. Rauschenberg and Johns did not—one wonders why? Tyler also began to produce work by another stylistic generation of artists that stimulated new challenges to his printing style and provided a new appearance for his East Coast image. Among others, he undertook projects with Helen Frankenthaler, Joan Mitchell, Nancy Graves, Richard Hamilton, Michael Heizer, and Steve Sorman.

From the beginning of his career, Tyler has been enamored by the beauty and romance of fine papers. From the Tamarind days onward, one or another aspect of his activity was consciously engaged with the technology of paper. Gilmour traces the course of this involvement which by the end of the 1960s had led him to order customized mould-made papers in large rolls from France—now a standard commodity in the printmaking community. In 1973 he collaborated with Robert Rauschenberg in the making of an extraordinary series of colored pulps, *Pages and Fuses*, at the Richard de Bas paper mill in the Auvergne in France. The knowledge that Tyler gained from this intense collaboration, undertaken while he was still at Gemini, served as the foundation for the surprisingly dramatic paper projects which he undertook within his second year of operation in the Bedford Village workshop. With the assistance of papermaker John Koller, Tyler, collaborating with Stella, formed a series of 183 rigidly structured, uniquely colored, paper reliefs. In the next year another series of paper reliefs were executed for Ellsworth Kelly; these were followed in 1978 by yet another group of cast-paper works for Kenneth Noland. The unorthodox technical manipulations necessary to satisfy the demands of these projects were but another example of Tyler's fertile inventiveness.

Gilmour states that not long after the Noland works were completed, David Hockney, while visiting Tyler, was lured





Ken Tyler and David Hockney discuss proof of *Pembroke Studio Interior*, 1984.



Ken Tyler and Robert Motherwell during printing of *Lament for Lorca*, 1982.

into the provocative mysteries of paper forming with colored pulps. What began as a brief visit was extended to forty-five days. The outcome was an astonishing series of dyed-paper pulps in multiple panels that were so large they had to be formed in Tyler's driveway. Known as the *Paper Pools* (their motif was Tyler's swimming pool), many of these works incorporated sheets of paper abutted to span as much as 72 by 171 inches—creating a heroic and luminous tour de force.

In Gilmour's concluding chapters she singles out for discussion particular projects with Robert Motherwell, Helen Frankenthaler, and Frank Stella. Unquestionably, these have added additional stature to each artist's achievement while becoming benchmarks of modern printmaking mastery.

In 1974–75 Motherwell created a magnificent series of lithographs. Awesome in scale, some combined printed collages of enlarged cigarette wrappers overlaid with powerfully gestural splashes of tusche. *Bastos* was one such lithograph; others combined screen printing with lithography to give additional substance to the imagery. Of special beauty is a quite different lithograph of smaller size, *Stoneness of Stone*. It contains but two boldly stroked, vertical marks made with tusche and a heavily loaded brush. These marks have the grace, command, and noble austerity of a Zen brush master—qualities well recognized in Motherwell's paintings. Tyler's sheer mastery of processing and printing the magnificent washes in *Stoneness of Stone* is unsurpassed; it rises to compliment perfectly the touch of Motherwell's hand. Of similar magnificence is Motherwell's *El Negro* suite, an artist's book of nineteen lithographs ac-

companied by a poem of that title by the Spanish poet Rafael Alberti.

As was the case with Motherwell, the prints that Helen Frankenthaler made at Tyler Graphics elevated her work to a new level of graphic achievement. The epitome of these projects is the color woodcut *Essence Mulberry*, whose extraordinarily seductive beauty is an intriguing equivalent to the majesty of oriental scroll art and a wonderful counterpart to her own paintings.

In focusing special attention on the distinct individuality of projects that are the output of the Tyler Graphics workshop, one can single out a handful of unique works such as Hockney's *Pools*, Lichtenstein's metallic-surfaced *Entablatures*, or various Motherwells and Frankenthalers. However, none of these approach the drama or sheer productive energy manifested by the series of prints titled *Circuits* or the by-now legendary *Swan Engravings* which Frank Stella and Tyler executed between 1980 and 1983. The *Circuits* are huge, richly colored images which utilize both the relief and intaglio levels of their metal and wood matrices to carry the ink. They are printed on special papers formulated and pre-dyed at Tyler's workshop. The *Swan Engravings* are black-and-white etchings of equally large size made from "hand drawn" magnesium plates collaged together with "found" fragments of the same material. The fearless freedom that exudes from the prints of both series is dramatic evidence of Stella's changing attitudes about the intrinsic act of printing and the real meaning for him of the printed impression. He has said that he formerly made prints about painting; now he makes prints about printing. Gilmour quotes critic Robert Hughes on the *Swan Engravings*: "One of the most

brilliant and audacious suites of black and white prints produced recently, or indeed ever."

Gilmour sees Ken Tyler's achievements at Bedford Village as a coming of age for an already multi-talented and strongly driven individual whose glossy and highly visible feats on the West Coast have been replaced by a calmer, more mature assurance: an individual who no longer feels the need to assert himself unnecessarily, to oversell his expertise to collaborating artists, or to print cognoscente.

Throughout her book, Gilmour provides ample and convincing evidence that Ken Tyler unquestionably has stretched and extended the horizons of printmaking and the creative capabilities of the artists with whom he has worked. In so doing, he has enriched all who make prints by showing new possibilities for exploration. Regarding his own self-perception, Tyler told Gilmour:

I think the quiet satisfaction within me these days is my knowledge that you cannot separate my role in the prints made at my workshop. Whatever contributions I've made, with whatever innovation, is for me clearly a part of the graphic work. The prints have my hand in them and I think that's a good thing. If the work is not successful as art, then my hand in it is of no value.

In that respect he should have no fear, for the record is clear that Kenneth Tyler has fully invested his creative instincts, his energy, and great skill—and, above all, his heart—into the art of printing art. In so doing, he has demonstrated for us the ultimate measurement of the title *Master Printer*.

Garo Z. Antreasian



## BRIEFLY NOTED

### **Gemini G.E.L.: Art and Collaboration.**

By Ruth E. Fine.

*Published by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and Abbeville Press, New York, 1984. 280 pp. \$45.00 (hardcover).*

BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED (by Gerald Pryor), extensively illustrated (including 124 in color), and very well printed (in Japan), this handsome book was published in celebration of the founding of the Gemini G.E.L. Archive at the National Gallery of Art. In a brief foreword, the gallery's director, J. Carter Brown, describes the archive, which is to be "a continually expanding resource at the Gallery, keeping pace with the imaginative developments through new works completed at the Gemini workshop. The Archive will preserve an example of each of Gemini's published editions (more than eleven hundred works of art to date), as well as selected rare proof impressions and unique working material, including preliminary drawings and collages."

This then, is the occasion. Leafing through the book one is again impressed by the richness, diversity, and quality of the works (many now familiar) that have entered the National Gallery's collection. Somewhat more than 100 of the lithographs, etchings, and multiples produced at Gemini between 1966 and 1983 are illustrated; each is accompanied by full catalogue information and an informative note by Ruth E. Fine.

But as one reads the book, a sense of disappointment sets in; the promise of the subtitle, *Art and Collaboration*, is not fulfilled, for the text ultimately does little to illuminate the collaborative relationship between artists and printers at Gemini. The facts are there—we are told who collaborated with whom—but little is revealed about the spirit or character of these collaborations. Although the book's jacket promises "a history of the unique relationship between artists and the Gemini workshop," the history provided is sketchy, with many omissions and evasions. If the relationship between artists and the workshop is indeed unique, that uniqueness is never made clear. Although it is understandable that Fine may have felt inhibited by the donor-donor relationship between Gemini and the National Gallery, the re-

sult is a constraint in writing which causes key figures in the narrative to remain curiously one-dimensional—particularly Kenneth Tyler, who, though labeled by Fine "a dynamic personality" (as indeed he is), resembles in the text rather more the de Kooning drawing erased by Rauschenberg.

For significant information about Gemini, one is thus better advised to put aside this handsome book and turn to other sources, less handsome but more informative, among them Riva Castleman's *Technics and Creativity* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1971) and Pat Gilmour's *Ken Tyler, Master Printer* (reviewed above).

### **Public and Private: American Prints Today.** By Barry Walker.

*Published by the Brooklyn Museum [exhibition catalogue, 24th National Print Exhibition], 1986. 140 pp. \$10.00 (paper).*

IN AN EXCELLENT CATALOGUE ESSAY, Barry Walker contrasts the large, public print designed to be displayed on a wall, with the small, private print designed to be viewed more closely, perhaps held in the viewer's hand. He relates the emergence of the public print to the "great revolution in American printmaking" which came about "in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s with the establishment of the printmaking workshops and the development of a pool of master printers." He sees the typical print of the 1970s as a "'cool' print that seemed almost untouched by human hands" and the typical print of the 1980s as a "more personal" kind of print, influenced by the rise of expressionism to the place of a dominant style.

Consistent with Walker's thesis, the 24th National Print Exhibition consists of prints both public and private. At the extremes of size are immense prints of Charles Arnoldi and Vito Acconci (both measure more than two meters) and a suite of seventeen tiny intaglio prints (most smaller than seven centimeters). Whether large or small, the prints Walker selected for the exhibition reflect his perception of "a reaction in sensibilities . . . against the machinelike perfection" of the 1970s; this reaction, he feels, led directly to the popularity of the monotype as a print medium (more than one-third of the prints in the exhibition are either monotypes or monoprints). Walker then concludes:

That two divergent modes [public and private prints] can coexist equably indicates the current vitality of the medium. Certain works were selected primarily because they support the thesis of the exhibition, but only if they were thought to have their own intrinsic merit. The works that fit neither category were chosen as representative of the broad range of the finest in American printmaking. Interesting prints are being produced throughout the country as new publishers and workshops open in areas distant from traditional centers of art.

While fully crediting Walker's intention to assemble a "national" exhibition and to include as full a range of American printmaking as was possible within limitations of space, one cannot but note that among the 116 artists represented in the exhibition, 104 live in only six states, 80 of these in New York, and 9 in California.

After leaving the Brooklyn Museum, the exhibition will be seen in Flint, Michigan; Providence, Rhode Island; Pittsburgh; and Minneapolis.

### **Reginald Neal: A Retrospective of His Prints.** Exhibition organized by Patricia Eckert Boyer; catalogue essay by Nicholas J. Capasso.

*Published by the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1986. 58 pp. \$3.50 (paper).*

REGINALD NEAL'S LONG CAREER in lithography began in the 1930s. After serving as Lawrence Barrett's technical assistant at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, he became an influential teacher at Milliken University, the University of Mississippi, and Rutgers University. In 1955, while at Mississippi, he produced the award-winning film *Color Lithography—An Art Medium*; in 1956 he worked briefly as workshop director for Margaret Lowengrund.

Neal's work as an artist underwent many changes, from regionalist landscapes in the thirties and forties to calligraphic abstractions in the fifties and to Op Art in the sixties. Neal's progression through these disparate styles is illuminated by Capasso in his essay and in an interview with the artist. For historians of American lithography, the catalogue is a useful document and a well-deserved tribute to an artist-teacher who did much to assure survival of the medium during difficult times, before the renaissance of the sixties. □



## DIRECTORY OF SUPPLIERS

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*Listings in TTP's Directory of Suppliers are available to all manufacturers and distributors of materials and services appropriate to use in professional lithography workshops. Information regarding listings will be sent upon request.*

**Andrews/Nelson/Whitehead.** 31-10 48th Ave. LIC, NY 11101. (212) 937-7100. Largest selection of papers for printmaking. Sheets & rolls, colors, special makings, oversized board 48×84", custom watermarks, 100% rag Museum Board in 4 shades of white, 2, 4 & 6 ply. Acidfree colored matboard.

**Charles Brand Machinery, Inc.** 84 East 10th St., NYC 10003. (212) 473-3661. Manufacturers of custom built litho presses, etching presses, polyurethane rollers for inking, electric hot plates, levigators and scraper bars. Sold worldwide. Presses of unbreakable construction and highest precision.

**Crestwood Paper Co.** 315 Hudson St., NYC 10013. (212) 989-2700. Handmade and mouldmade printmaking papers. Somerset printmaking paper: mouldmade, 100% rag, neutral pH. Available in white, cream, softwhite & sand, textured and satin finishes, in 250 gr. and 300 gr. Available in 60" width rolls.

**Dolphin Papers.** 624 E. Walnut St., Indianapolis, IN 46204. (317) 634-0506. Dolphin Litho Transfer Paper. Acid-free papers for printmaking, drawing, and painting. Arches, Rives, Fabriano, Richard de Bas, Barcham Green, Lenox, others. Free catalogue and price list available on request.

**Fine Artist's Color and Ink.** 738 E. Third St., Los Angeles, CA 90013-1818. (213) 680-9998. Small manufacturer of hand lithographic, hand etching, and mono-type printing inks. Providers of unique colors, e.g. Pearlessence, metallic, archival pigments. Send \$5.00 for price list and descriptive catalogue; cost deducted from first order.

**Glenn Roller Co., Dept. H,** 2617 River Ave., Rosemead, CA 91770. (213) 283-2838. Lightweight hand rollers for printmaking, durometers from 20 to 75, all sizes available, chrome handles. Very high quality. A must for the professional.

**Graphic Chemical & Ink Co.** 728 N. Yale Ave., Box 27T, Villa Park, IL 60181. (312) 832-6004. Complete list of supplies for the lithographer. Rollers, all kinds and made to order. Levigators, grits, stones, tools and papers. We manufacture our own specially formulated black and colored inks.

**Handschy Industries, Inc.** 528 N. Fulton, Indianapolis, IN 46202. (317) 636-5565; 1801 Factory St., Kalamazoo, MI 49001. (616) 349-2508; 2223 Snelling Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404. (612) 721-3386; 2525 Elston Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. (312) 276-6400; 1670 Fennpark, Fenton, MO 63026. (314) 343-5800. Manufacturer Hanco Printing Inks, lithographic supplies, gum arabic, cellulose gum, etc.

**William Korn, Inc.** 132½ Pine St., Manchester, CT 06040. (203) 647-0284. Manufacturers of lithographic crayons, crayon tablets, crayon pencils, rubbing ink, autographic ink, asphaltum-etch-ground, transfer ink, music plate transfer ink; tusche in liquid, stick, and solid form (1 lb. can).

**Printmakers Machine Co.** 724 N. Yale Ave., Box 71T, Villa Park, IL 60181. (312) 832-4888. Sale of printmaking presses only. Sole manufacturer of Printmakers Combination Press, Sturges Etching Press, and Printmakers Litho Presses. Quality presses, manufactured by skilled workmen, sold worldwide.

**Rembrandt Graphic Arts.** P.O. Box 130, Rosemont, NJ 08556. (609) 397-0068. Hand printmaking presses, litho stones, levigators, grits, ball-grained aluminum plates, large and small ink rollers, printmaking papers, chemicals, tools. Complete line of supplies for all types of printmaking.

**Jack E. Schwartz Co.** 226 N. Clinton St., Chicago, IL 60606. (312) 930-0100; toll free (800) 621-6155. Lithographic supplies, ball-grained plates, positive plates, positive wipe-on coating, processing chemicals, Deep Etch Lacquer, Mylar by sheet or roll, miscellaneous supplies.

**The Structural Slate Co.** 222 E. Main St., Pen Argyl, Box 187, PA 18072. (215) 863-4141. "Pyramid" brand Pennsylvania slate stone: backing slate, slate plate supports.

**Takach-Garfield Press Co., Inc.** 3207 Morningside Dr. N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87110. (505) 881-8670 or 884-4072. Manufacturers of the highest quality hand- or electric-powered floor model litho and etching presses. Tabletop etching presses. Lightweight custom-made rubber inking rollers. Punch registration systems. Polyethylene scraper bars with replaceable straps. Ball-grained aluminum plates. Wool-felt etching blankets. Tables for tabletop presses. Levigators.



## PUBLICATIONS FROM TAMARIND

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*American Lithographers  
1900-1960*  
*The Artists and Their Printers*

Clinton Adams

*American Lithographers, 1900-1960: The Artists and Their Printers.*

By Clinton Adams.

A history of lithography in the United States during six decades. 344 pages, 123 illustrations, 9 in color.

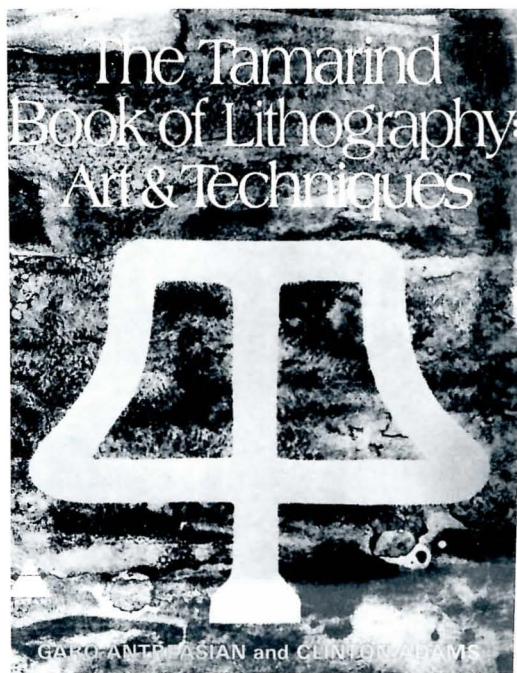
\$65.00 (cloth).\*

*Tamarind: 25 Years, 1960-1985.*

Essay by Carter Ratcliff.

Catalogue of a traveling retrospective exhibition of Tamarind lithographs. 97 pages, 80 illustrations, 16 in color.

\$15.00 (paper).\*



*The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art and Techniques.*

By Garo Antreasian and Clinton Adams.

The standard work on the art and techniques of artists' lithography. 464 pages, 497 illustrations, many in color.

\$27.50 (paper).\*

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**Volume 1** (titled *Tamarind Technical Papers*):

Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 are available in Xerox copies *only*. \$2.00 each

Number 6 (original printing) 3.00

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Each volume consists of two issues, numbers 1 and 2. All issues are available in original printing. 4.00 each

**Volume 7:**

Issue number 1 4.00

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Anniversary issue, numbers 1 and 2 10.00

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