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THE TAMARIND PAPERS  
*A Journal of the Fine Print*

Volume Eleven

1988



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## THE TAMARIND PAPERS

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### COVER:

**Willem deKooning.** Born 1904.  
*Landscape at Stanton Street.*  
Lithograph, 1971.  
76 × 56 cm (30 × 22 in).  
Graham 26 (see page 24).

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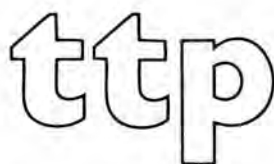
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Except as noted in captions, all works illustrated are printed in black; dimensions are given in centimeters, height preceding width.



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## LETTERS TO *TTP*

### Further Comment: "The Syntax of the Print"

RUTH WEISBERG'S REPLY to my letter [*TTP* 10 (Fall 1987): 52–53] clarifies the differences in the way we view printmaking. I do not see collaboration as a mechanical process. I do not think the only way to view the making of a print is to throw a Newtonian grid over everything and place us all in pigeonholes. This may give a precise and accurate description of a particular collaboration, but it does nothing to describe, for instance, Robert Rauschenberg's non-ego approach to his *Hoarfrost* project. Artists tend to be unpigeonholeable. Some printers pride themselves on their ability to adapt themselves to artists.

I understand that the separation that Ruth makes between artist and non-artist is not an elitist statement. And I regret any misinterpretation of that meaning. The common attitude is that artists are very special. And of course every artist is special—but no more than anyone else. One unfortunate result of the separation between printer and artist might be the lowering of expectation as to what the print experience could be. What is gained from such definitions of roles and functions is merely academic.

As to the balance that Ruth sees between art as process and art as a thing in itself, I think there is a misplaced sense of where the power lies. All you have to do is compare the amount of time involved in the evaluation of a print—an average of about ten seconds in a museum—with the amount, and the quality, of the time spent in the making of a print. There is a dialogue that goes on between the artist and the print throughout the many stages of its development: the long extended periods of time involved in the contemplation of a proof, perhaps even a meditation, and the decisions and thoughts involved in the playing of the game. There is also a dialogue between the printer and the print. Part of this dialogue has to do with

comparison. It is only through comparison, both during the proofing process and during the printing of an edition, that a good understanding can develop of the differences between one print and another. The proofing process shows what works better, aesthetically and conceptually. The printing process shows through comparison how to come closer to the making of a more perfect print. And then there is the dialogue, communication, and collaboration between the artist and the printer that may last for weeks or months on a single print. I am sure that you can understand the intensity of that entire experience and the feeling that the art is that experience. That is where the power lies.

The print, as a thing in itself, through sales, functions as a source of money. In some workshops, prints are referred to as stocks and bonds. Sales permit the making of prints to continue. But the print also functions as a record of a working toward perfection and the playing of games that involve all the members of the printmaking team. This information is used by other artists (going on the assumption that everyone is an artist) in their own art of communication and collaboration.

ED HAMILTON, Los Angeles

### On "Anonymous" Printers and Unconscious Collaborators

A NUMBER OF OTHER ACTIVITIES has prevented me entering as fully as I should have liked into the debate begun by Ruth Weisberg in "The Syntax of the Print" [*TTP* 9 (Fall 1986): 52–60] and continued in subsequent issues by Ed Hamilton [see letter above and *TTP* 10 (Fall 1987): 52–53].

Even at this late stage, however, I remain sufficiently intrigued to offer an observation or two, particularly in relation to Ruth Weisberg's rejection of "interventionist modes of collaboration" in favor of the Romantic myth of "total control" by one individual. Apparently she believes that "total control" offers a greater chance of "authenticity, originality, and the artistic growth of the artist" and less likelihood of the impoverishment attendant upon the collaborative intercession of a printer. This somewhat hierarchical approach (not altogether dispelled by her subsequent disclaimer) prompted Ed Hamilton's response.

In support of her argument Weisberg gave two contentious illustrations. One (pardon the chuckle) was of Whistler's "working alone." Well, despite huffing and puffing about the artist needing to ink and print his own etchings, it was too much like hard work for Whistler to follow his own precept. To deal only with later prints, he enlisted the help of Mortimer Menpes;<sup>1</sup> he called on the (unpaid) services of the printer Champagne, who, although employed as a lithographer by Way, assisted with the Venice etchings;<sup>2</sup> and he even collaborated with Joseph Pennell.<sup>3</sup> Weisberg's other illustration

1 Menpes related that he "... simply fagged for Whistler and gloried in the task." He also observed that wiping an etching plate required as much skill as painting a picture and that Whistler abhorred collaboration. Nevertheless one day, when the artist's own proofs were particularly disappointing, Whistler told Menpes to try and print a Palace and "from that day onward I printed constantly for Whistler." Having told Menpes that although his hands were doing the work, he was but the medium "translating the ideas of the Master," Whistler, "wearing canary-coloured kid gloves and not looking at all like a printer," would call in and order twenty proofs on his way to a garden party. Later, Menpes reported, Whistler was so stimulating and encouraging that "one felt amply repaid for the work." See Mortimer Menpes, *Whistler as I Knew Him* (London 1904): 99–101.

2 See Thomas R. Way in *Memories of James McNeill Whistler, the Artist* (London 1912): 59. "... my father had in his employ an old French printer, named Champagne. ... [Whistler] begged his help at his studio over his plates and for some time the old man went to Tite Street and was very useful. But he could not get on with the long hours and short pay, for if he worked 'overtime' he was in the habit of being paid for it, and this side of affairs did not seem to occur to Whistler."

3 In *The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* (New Haven and London 1984): 161–63, Katherine A. Lochnan relates that Pennell was asked for help by Whistler in June 1893: "... he must have been concerned about his lack of experience, for Whistler reassured him and said that 'I could help him, and he would teach me.'" It seems to have proved a case of the blind leading the blind, however, for only weak proofs eventuated and "every plate was a disappointment. ... Years later, after Whistler had printed a few more "exquisite shadows," Frank Short was roped in to help with the editioning.

drew on her experience of Atelier 17. Yet S. W. Hayter believed profoundly in group interaction, which in my view is another form of collaboration. Moreover, despite denying the influence of "the master," Hayter powerfully communicated his ethical sense, his belief in the supremacy of engraving, his disinterest in lithography, his preference for softground rather than aquatint, and his ideas about the superiority of color printing from one plate. When he disapproved of students, he is reputed to have relegated them to a corner and paid them scant attention, "thereby exerting a form of control over much of the work."<sup>4</sup> Certainly Hayter's "visible effect" on the art made by the denizens of his workshop is at least as obvious as that exerted on prints produced more recently with the help of so-called "interventionist" collaborators.

It is moving to read of Ed's meditative attitude to art-making: of the "dance of repetition which leads toward perfection." Few "artists" would comprehend this, any more than they would understand the beatitude of the lamented John Sommers, who regarded the time spent waiting for proofs not as boredom or tedium, but as "a further opportunity to conceptualize and respond."<sup>5</sup> As to Ed's condemnation of art's commodity status and his distress about the ten-second "take" expended by the average museum-goer on the lithographs he has made with such loving care—I think he should take heart. Occupying the middle ground between the dedicated makers and the uncaring hordes are the owner-viewers who hang prints on their walls that they may be constantly irradiated by them.

Except that it ignores printmaking, a thoughtful catalogue about artistic collaboration was produced by the Smithsonian Institution in 1984.<sup>6</sup> In arguing against the myth of the isolated genius, its writers suggested that style was a manifestation of group dynamics, that even criticism constituted a collaboration (having negative capability), while the growing tendency for artists to work together rather than compete could be seen as "emblematic of a protest against imperial war." The parting shot of the last essayist, with which I fully concur, suggested that:

collaboration is oftentimes so open-ended and pervasive that it is not consciously recognized. Sometimes crit-

ics collaborate with artists, artists with other artists, artists with viewers, and all of us with history. Collaboration can be a conspiracy, and it can be open. It is important because it allows all of us to break down barriers, to cease being locked into a monolithic and largely materialistic definition of the self, and to recognize art as dynamic rather than static, part of a discourse and not an absolute, connected with history and people and not simply a decontextualized masterpiece. Of course, artists conceive and make art, but all of us collaborate in creating its cultural role. We can remove art from its context and aestheticize it as significant form, and that too is a possible way of dealing with it in a difficult, changing world that needs definite anchors even if they are only manifested sensibilities. But we can also recognize that art plays an important function of symbolizing reality at a particular time; to function it requires numbers of people pooling their common interests to think about it and assess it. In this manner art becomes collaborative, and it also becomes culture.

PAT GILMOUR, Canberra, Australia

- 4 Joann Moser, *Atelier 17* (Madison: Elvehjem Art Center, University of Wisconsin, 1977): chap. 4, n.p.
- 5 John Sommers, "Information Exchange," *TTP* 8 (1985): 67.
- 6 David Shapiro, "Art as Collaboration: Towards a Theory of Pluralist Aesthetics, 1950–1980," and Robert C. Hobbs, "Rewriting History: Artistic Collaboration since 1960," in *Artistic Collaboration in the Twentieth Century* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984): 45–62; 63–87.

### On Weights and Measures

I NEED YOUR HELP! [Tamarind has published] the most attractive and certainly most complete book on lithography. I have found plenty of interesting and remarkable things in it, but . . . [as] a metric-cartesian French lithographer . . . [I find it difficult to comprehend that] the British gallon would contain 4.539 litres and the Yankee one 3.490 litres; the British ounce could be the equivalent to 28.413 millilitres, but transposed to the U.S. [is] 29.572 millilitres. . . . As regards drops, [I] have not an exact idea: one cm<sup>3</sup> contains, maybe 17, 18, 19, or 20 drops? Nobody knows. . . . To clear up this problem, you may use a slide rule and many years of your life. . . . When authors give their book to an international publisher in New York, London, Melbourne, or Toronto, what sort of an ounce is the good and real one?

Please help me. Would you be kind enough to explain how I am to manage to transpose a Tamarind ounce, or drop, or gallon, or grain, into an ordinary metric something! With my kind thanks and admiration for your work.

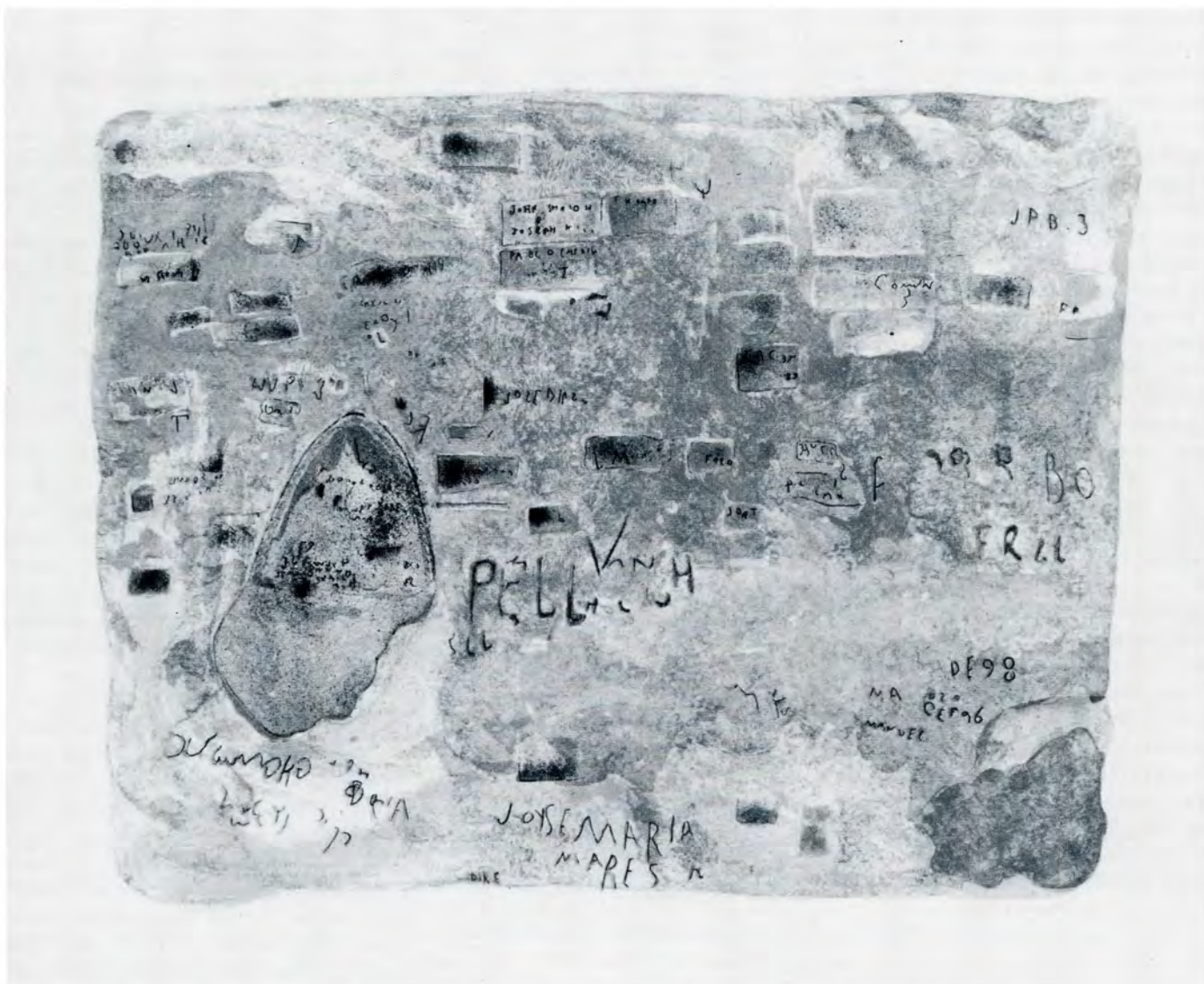
PIERRE JONQUIÈRES, Comps, France

### The editor responds:

Pierre Jonquières's letter (somewhat abridged above) contained additional examples of the illogical weights and measures which the United States, alone among major nations, continues to employ. Readers of *TTP* are aware that it is our practice always to provide metric equivalents to U. S. measures in technical articles. When works of art are illustrated their dimensions are given in metric measure. Unfortunately, when *The Tamarind Book of Lithography* was written—almost twenty years ago—metric measure was not used: a decision we regret but cannot rectify.

Tables for conversion of U. S. and British measure to standard metric measure are contained in many dictionaries and encyclopedias, however, for the convenience of readers who do not have ready access to such information, we provide below a few of the more common equivalents. Among many other units of measure, less well known, is the minim, the smallest unit of liquid measure in the U. S. system, equal to 0.06161 milliliters. Because the use of such very small measures is felt to be impractical in the context of the lithographic workshop, we continue to refer to a number of "drops of acid" which are added to an ounce (29.573 ml) of gum arabic when an etch is mixed. Clearly, this measure is scientifically inexact, as it will vary with the dropper (or adjustment of the stopper in a laboratory bottle) from which it is dispensed. (Using Tamarind's present droppers, about 15 or 16 drops equal one milliliter.) But as etch strengths are also given, measured in pH, it is possible for each person to calculate his or her own "standard drop" by conducting a simple experiment: Using his or her own dropper or bottle, how many drops of acid must be added to an ounce (or 30 ml) of gum to bring an etch to a given pH? An entire series of etch strengths may thus be calculated using Tamarind's tables as reference.

*Continued on page 77.*



**John Sommers.**  
*Totemic Meter (El Moro No. 1)*, 1975.  
 41.9 × 54 cm (image).  
 Printed by David Salgado [T75-111].

## JOHN SOMMERS

*Joseph Traugott*

VISITING JOHN SOMMERS'S STUDIO for the first time permanently colored my vision of his art. Lithograph pencils lay everywhere. Hundreds of them—all over the studio. A few rested near stones on which were open drawings, but most were repacked in their original factory boxes. Sommers stored the small factory boxes in larger corrugated cartons. The significance lay not in how the pencils were stored, but in how they were sharpened. Sommers gave each a two-inch-long stiletto point. A few glancing strokes on a finely grained lithograph stone would take the edge off the needle-like point, so that after a few moments of use it would be relegated to a pile needing sharpening. I reacted immediately to the pencils and overlooked the drawings developing on the stones.

Sommers's early lithographs combined words and drawings into potent images. The largest group of these prints come from a series generated from photographs of Inscription Rock at El Morro National Monument in New Mexico. This rock records the random notes of passing Indians, Spanish explorers, ranchers, scientists, and geographers. The meaning of the monument is less tied to the specific inscriptions than to the visual form of the words. It is the quintessential transformation of words into imagery.

Sommers's lithographs based on El Morro are concrete poems also founded on the transformation of words into imagery. He printed the El Morro lithographs in a series of color variations which, as the carrier of content and mood, radically alter each version. The lithographic process of adding visual fragment upon visual fragment mirrors the accretion of inscriptions at El Morro. Images layer over images until the text becomes code to be deciphered. The baroque Spanish script carved into the soft sandstone is difficult to read, but the message is not in the words themselves; it is in the mystical questions raised by the altered word forms. Similarly, there is no resolution in Sommers's prints, only enigma. The viewer intuits this. Each reinterprets posed questions, not didactic messages.

In the late 1970s Sommers initiated a series of lithographs entitled *Wold*. On the surface, these were views of an upland plain with a stretch of rolling land. The idea of an upland plain is a pun. The works present layered visual planes which frame and reframe, focus and refocus, the viewer's attention. The abstracted forms may be recognizable as decaying sticks, pine needles, and rocks in a forest. The images concentrate on the decay that nourishes and rejuvenates the woods. The contradictory concept that death creates life underlies these images. The centrality of these works to this paradox can be seen in the edges of some of the *Wold* lithographs. Sommers meticulously battered the edges of each impression (using rocks to do this)





**John Sommers.**

*Wold (Ambiance)*, 1978–79.

46 × 64 cm.

Printed by Brynn Jensen [T78–677].



A metaphor of the man, this picture of John Sommers appeared in *TTP* volume 1, number 1.

to further blur the distinction between the lithograph's life and death, its beginning and its end.

By the mid-1980s, Sommers began a new series of works which grew from the *Wold* imagery and synthesized aspects of the earlier text-based images. Words reappeared in the borders, seemingly strung together in a stream of consciousness. The poetic aspects of Sommers's work again became concrete. These new works emphasized drawing, painting, or combinations of processes. Often Sommers abstracted his works to the point that the visual aspects acquired the cryptic characteristics of the verbal passage.

Sommers's lithographs mirror the man. He was intensely private, always thinking, always working on multiple levels. Privacy this intense can obscure subject matter and render content inaccessible to the viewer. In this case the boxes of lithograph pencils offer clues to the meaning of Sommers's imagery. Sharpening those pencils demonstrated more than manual skill and symbolized more than the pride in craft that permeated Sommers's love for lithography. Proper preparation of the tools of the craft constituted a meditation essential to the whole artmaking process. Outsiders could never know what thoughts danced in Sommers's head while he labored. But they could view these ideas as material form in works of art. The piles of lithograph pencils in Sommers's studio presented these ideas as well: they served as a metonym of the artist's life, attitudes, and art. □



### John Sommers

Born, 31 May 1927, Cassopolis, Michigan.

B.A., Albion College, Michigan, 1952.

Certificate, Tamarind Master Printer, 1969.

Studio manager, Tamarind Institute, 1970–75;

technical director, 1975–82; director of

research and printer training, 1982–83.

Contributing editor of *TTP*;

author of sixteen articles, 1974–87.

Lecturer in Art, University of New Mexico, 1970–87.

Public collections: Grunwald Center for the

Graphic Arts, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art,

New York; Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena;

University of New Mexico Art Museum, Albuquerque;

University of Dallas; and others.

Died, 16 December 1987, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Tamarind citation, 1988.

I MET JOHN SOMMERS in the fall of 1968 in Los Angeles. I was there to make some lithographs at Tamarind Lithography Workshop and to discuss with June Wayne our tentative plans for establishment of Tamarind Institute. Among the printer-fellows then at Tamarind, John stood out. I immediately sensed his spirit of dedication. Then forty-one, he had already had one career (as a baker) and was beginning a second. It was evident that he found the work tiring, but that he compensated for sore muscles by sheer intensity of conviction.

When in 1970 Tamarind Institute became a reality, John was an obvious choice among those who might be invited to move from Los Angeles to Albuquerque. He contributed immeasurably to the establishment and organization of the Institute, first as master printer and studio manager, then as technical director. In these roles he was responsible for the training of a new generation of printers and for collaboration with artists.

Those who are aware of collaborative lithography only from the outside, not as participants, may not recognize how essential to successful collaboration are the personal qualities of printers: their empathy with the artist's intentions, their aesthetic perceptiveness, and their sensitivity to the inevitable tensions and uncertainties of the creative act. A fine printer enables an artist to make a better print than he or she might make otherwise. John Sommers was such a printer.

When in 1974 *The Tamarind Papers* began publication, John and I coauthored the first article. Subsequently, he became *TTP*'s contributing editor and over a period of thirteen years wrote on a variety of technical topics, always infusing his writing with the spirit of commitment that pervaded every aspect of his work. Together, John's articles constitute a lasting contribution to the literature of the medium.

John Sommers died on 16 December 1987 at the age of sixty. In recognition of his substantial achievements as a printer, writer, teacher, and artist-lithographer, he was selected as the 1988 recipient of *The Tamarind Citation for Distinguished Contributions to the Art of the Lithograph*, the first such citation to be awarded posthumously.

Clinton Adams



3

Willem de Kooning.  
*Untitled*, 1960.  
 Lithograph, 116.4 × 80.6 cm.  
 Printed in black on architectural paper.  
 Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
 Gift of Mrs. Bliss Parkinson. 11.64.

# THE PRINTS OF WILLEM DE KOONING

## An Illustrated Catalogue of His Editions 1960–1971

*Lanier Graham*

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST artists in America were not, as a rule, interested in making prints during the “heroic” years of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Few artists of the first and second generations of Abstract Expressionists discovered lithography until the 1960s. During and since that decade many of these artists have made important contributions to the print renaissance, primarily by means of lithography. Among the artists of the first generation, the prints of Robert Motherwell are deservedly best known. Excluding a few intaglio prints he made during the early 1940s, Motherwell’s interest in printmaking began during the early 1960s. Since then he has produced more than 300 editions, including many lithographs.

Willem de Kooning’s lithographs, far fewer in number and not so frequently exhibited, are less well known. Like many other artists associated with Abstract Expressionism, de Kooning worked for a while with S. W. Hayter at Atelier 17 in New York during the early 1940s. Although de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko learned important things about automatism from Hayter, they did not develop a continuing interest in printmaking. During the late 1940s, these artists focused exclusively on painting and tended to look down on the very idea of printmaking. It was not until the late 1950s and early 1960s—after the founding of Universal Limited Art Editions Workshop (ULAE) in New York, Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles, and, subsequently, Hollander’s Workshop in New York—that a number of Abstract Expressionists reconsidered printmaking and produced their first editions.<sup>1</sup>

The few prints de Kooning made in 1943 have disappeared, unrecorded and unphotographed.<sup>2</sup> His earliest surviving print is an etching he contributed to *21 Etchings and Poems*, the most famous portfolio of the Abstract Expressionist era.<sup>3</sup> This remarkable collection of pictured poems was developed under the inspiration of William Blake’s illuminated books, in which his handwritten words and figurative images were printed to form a single composition. Using similar combinations of etchings and words, the architects of this portfolio were able to print each poem (usually in the hand of the poet) and each poem’s “illustration” on the same sheet. De Kooning’s contribution was for illumination of the poem “Revenge” by his old friend Harold Rosenberg. This, de Kooning’s last etching, was printed in 1957 by Anderson-Lamb in Brooklyn and published in 1960.<sup>4</sup>

Nineteen sixty was also the year of de Kooning’s somewhat unorthodox introduction to lithography. His now legendary first lithographs were made at the University of California in Berkeley. There he stood over the stones and used a mop to create his spontaneous gestures as if he were mopping a floor. Both large stones were printed

1 Irwin Hollander was the first of a new generation of printers trained at Tamarind Lithography Workshop (TLW) to open a workshop in New York City. Hollander had earlier served as Technical Director of TLW from July 1963 through August 1964; see Gustave von Groschwitz and Clinton Adams, “Life and Work: Thoughts of an Artist-Printer: A Conversation with Irwin Hollander,” *TTP* 8 (1985): 34–43.

2 The source of this date is S. W. Hayter in conversation with Lanier Graham; Paris, 15 July 1985.

3 For a general survey of the prints of this era in America and Europe, see Lanier Graham, *The Spontaneous Gesture: Prints and Books of the Abstract Expressionist Era* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1987).

4 The portfolio *21 Etchings and Poems* was developed on the initiative of Peter Grippe, who directed Atelier 17 after Hayter returned to Europe. After almost a decade of work, it was published in 1960 by the Morris Gallery, New York. Among the artist-poet pairs were Adja Yunkers and Theodore Roethke; Jacques Lipchitz and Hans Sahl; and Peter Grippe and Dylan Thomas.



Willem de Kooning in his East Hampton studio, 1971.

5 Clinton Adams, "The Personality of Lithography: A Conversation with Nathan Oliveira," *TTP* 6 (1982–83): 4–9.

6 "Life and Work": 38.

7 Since then he has authorized and signed a number of photo-offset reproductions of his drawings for charities. He has also authorized and signed "special editions" that were printed lithographically from drawings he sent to be transferred to stones or plates. That process is related to the drawings on Mylar that were printed in *In Memory of My Feelings* by Frank O'Hara (1967). A set of color lithographs were published in Paris in 1987 (but signed '86) on the occasion of the publication of a book. The special printing techniques used in the above-mentioned prints, as well as his uneditioned trial proofs, will be recorded and discussed at a later date.

8 Willem de Kooning and Xavier Fourcade in conversation with Lanier Graham; East Hampton, 26 July 1985.

by Nathan Oliveira and George Miyasaki. Readers of *The Tamarind Papers* will remember Oliveira's recollections of this historic event.<sup>5</sup> The result of de Kooning's first encounter with lithographic stone was two monumental works of considerable strength. More than 116 cm (almost 46 in) high, they mark the beginning of that radical enlargement in the scale of lithographs which took place during the 1960s and 1970s.

Although de Kooning was not entirely satisfied with these two lithographs, the idea of printmaking had begun to intrigue him. He had discovered, much to his surprise, that it was possible for Abstract Expressionism and printmaking to go together after all. Even so, it was not until 1967 that he made his third lithograph, which was printed by Irwin Hollander and published in *Portfolio* 9. Like most members of the first generation, de Kooning had to be encouraged to make prints. As Hollander has related, he tried for several years to encourage de Kooning to make more lithographs:

It was not until he returned from his trip to Japan that he responded to do a body of lithographs. Perhaps the seeing and feeling of calligraphy, sumi brush painting and Zen inspired him sufficiently to do prints. Whatever, the results were beautiful. . . . We worked for a year together in 1970 and 1971, proofing thirty-eight images, of which twenty-four were editioned.<sup>6</sup>

Three groups of prints resulted from that intense year of creativity: from June of 1970 to June of 1971. Irwin Hollander and his partner Fred Genis printed the first twenty editions from aluminum plates of a uniform size. Those twenty editions were published by Xavier Fourcade at M. Knoedler and Co., America's oldest art gallery, in 1971. Somewhat later in 1971 editions of four more lithographs were pulled and published by Hollanders Workshop in association with Fourcade, who has recently resigned from Knoedler. A third group of lithographs consists of trial proofs that were never editioned. The twenty Knoedler editions were made on transfer paper, often as collages; the four Hollander-Genis editions were drawn on stone.

The lithographs of 1970–71 were the last to be drawn entirely by de Kooning's hand and printed under his watchful eye.<sup>7</sup> In a 1985 conversation, de Kooning and Fourcade talked about his work as a printmaker:<sup>8</sup>

**Lanier Graham.** [Hayter] tells me you made some prints with him in the forties.

**Willem de Kooning.** Yes, but not good ones.

**LG.** I remember you were not completely happy with your first two lithographs at Berkeley in 1960. When you decided to explore printmaking again, what led you to Hollander and Genis?

**WdeK.** Oh yes. Nice fellows. There's a point after which it's their work, too. After all, there's only so much you can do on the plate; then you give it to them and let them do their work. They were good printers who got out of the plate just what I wanted.

**Xavier Fourcade.** Bill got to know more about lithography by experimenting at a number of workshops. He visited ULAE and [also] worked with Ken Tyler for a while. But he was not completely at ease with the process until he began working with Hollander and Genis.

**LG.** Out of all your experiments with color lithography, only two proofs survive: *Valentine* in blue and yellow, and *Sun*.

**WdeK.** Yes, I like *Valentine*.

Willem de Kooning and  
Irwin Hollander, 1971.



**XF.** I thought all the proofs of that [lithograph] were destroyed after it was decided that only twenty-four black-and-white prints would be editioned.

**LG.** Most of them were, as per the agreement, except for a handful that Bill had second thoughts about and decided to sign.

**XF.** I see. O.K.

**LG.** I know you put a lot of time into experimenting with color lithographs with Ken Tyler and with Hollander and Genis. Why were you unsatisfied with the process?

**WdeK.** I did them in black and white because you do it and it's there. I couldn't work with different colors at different times. I can only work with what's there. If it's not there, I can't experience it. Besides, sometimes there's more light in black and white.

**LG.** Did you enjoy making those twenty-four prints?

**WdeK.** Yes, I enjoyed doing that.

**LG.** Why didn't you make any more?

**WdeK.** I really didn't want to make any more. I didn't have any more to say that way.

The first generation of the New York School found it difficult to make color prints. De Kooning tried with Genis and Hollander in 1970 and failed. Rothko tried to make color prints with Ken Tyler in 1969 and failed. Even Motherwell's early attempts at color lithography were unsuccessful. As Tyler explains it, "except for a few, like Motherwell, [they] found it too frustrating to try to see a multi-colored reality one layer at a time. They had to see all the color all at once or they could not 'see' it at all."<sup>9</sup>

This strong aesthetic preference for the immediacy of the total visual experience helps to explain why all of de Kooning's editioned lithographs of this period are in black and white, as are most of the best gestural prints made during the 1960s in America. The prints editioned or planned by Pollock, Motherwell, and David Smith between the mid-1940s and the early-1950s are also in black and white. The flowering of the color print in the work of Motherwell, Gottlieb, Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler, Sam Francis, Elaine de Kooning, and the other "old masters" of the movement did not take place until the 1960s and 1970s. Their historic situation is not unlike that of the Impressionists of the 1870s, who did not make color prints until twenty or thirty years later, when prints by the older Impressionist masters were published side by side with prints by younger Post-Impressionists during the first flowering of color lithography as a fine art. Moreover, as de Kooning once said, "sometimes there's more light in black and white."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Ken Tyler, in conversation with Lanier Graham; Bedford Village, 27 July 1985. Subsequently, Tyler added this comment: "I started to visit Bill on a frequent basis in 1969 in an effort to have him make lithographs. However, he was not willing to leave his East Hampton studio to work in L.A. so I introduced him to transfer paper and, later, to zinc plates. In the beginning he made some interesting transfer paper drawings which he was reluctant to have transferred to stone. Then he tried to make a color zinc plate lithograph using a plastic sheet transfer from one of his wet paintings. I took the wash drawing plates and the paint transfer on plastic back to L.A. where I color proofed the plates. He never made up his mind regarding these color proofs. There were complications and the proofs were not resolved and the project never came to fruition. This collaboration suffered not only from the long delays between my visits to East Hampton, the difficulties with the distance between our studios, but also from the lack of spontaneity." (Ken Tyler to Clinton Adams, 18 May 1988.)

<sup>10</sup> de Kooning in conversation (as in note 8).



1

## CATALOGUE

IN THE FOLLOWING CATALOGUE of de Kooning's editions the dimensions are those of the sheet; they are given in centimeters and inches (in parentheses), height preceding width. All known impressions are signed by the artist. Except as noted in the catalogue, both the proofs and editions of de Kooning's lithographs were printed primarily by Fred Genis at Hollanders Workshop. The date given is the year of publication; the date of the proofs is usually a year or more earlier; all of the proofs in the Knoedler series were made in 1970. The photographs used to illustrate that series are made from Irwin Hollander's collection of proofs, signed by the artist, now in the collection of the Australian National Gallery, Canberra; these proofs are virtually identical to the numbered editions. An effort has been to list these prints in the order in which they were made. The sequence of the Knoedler lithographs was established after discussions with both printers and the publisher; there was a high degree of consensus.

1. *Untitled*, 1960.  
Etching, aquatint, 43.0 × 50.5 cm (17 × 19<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in).  
Black ink on Rives paper.  
Printed by Anderson-Lamb, Brooklyn, 1957.  
Published in *21 Etchings and Poems*, New York, 1960.  
Edition: 50.
2. *Untitled (Waves)*, 1960.  
Lithograph, 116.4 × 80.6 (45<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 31<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub>).  
Black ink on architectural paper.  
Printed by Nathan Oliveira and George Miyasaki.  
University of California, Berkeley, 1960.  
Edition: 11.



4



5



2

Private collection, Boston.  
Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

3. *Untitled*, 1960.  
Lithograph, 116.4 × 80.6 (45<sup>15</sup>/<sub>16</sub> × 31<sup>13</sup>/<sub>16</sub>).  
Black ink on architectural paper.  
Printed by Nathan Oliveira and George Miyasaki.  
University of California, Berkeley, 1960.  
Edition: 9. ILLUSTRATED ON PAGE 10.
4. *Clam Digger*, 1967.  
Lithograph, 43.2 × 57.0 (17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>).  
Black ink on Arches paper.  
Printed by Irwin Hollander, New York, 1966.  
Published in *Portfolio 9*, New York, 1967.  
Edition: 100.
5. *Woman at Clearwater Beach*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 71.6 × 102.8 (28<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 40<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>).  
Transparent black ink on J. B. Green paper.  
Edition: 44.



7

6. *Landing Place*, 1971.

Lithograph, 71.0 × 94.0 (28 × 37).

Transparent black ink on Akawara paper.

Edition: 44.

7. *The Marshes*, 1971.

7A. Lithograph, 102.8 × 71.6 (40½ × 28¼).

Transparent black ink on J. B. Green paper.

Edition: numbers 1 through 10 (of 20) marked "A."

7B. Lithograph, 101.6 × 71.0 (40 × 28).

Black ink on Italia paper.

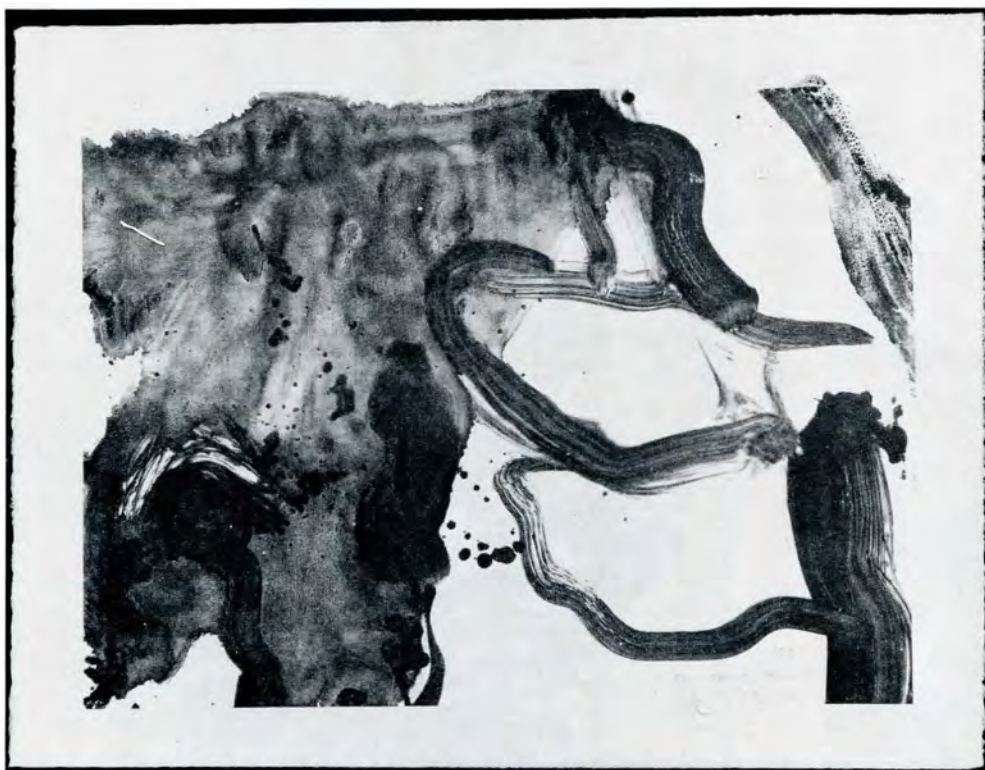
Edition: numbers 11 through 20 (of 20) marked "B."

8. *Big*, 1971.

Lithograph, 101.6 × 72.4 (40 × 28).

Black ink on Italia paper.

Edition: 10.



6



8



9



10



11

9. *Souvenir of Montauk*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 109.3 × 89.0 (43 × 35).  
Transparent black ink on Akawara paper.  
Edition: 43.
10. *Clam Digger*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 103.0 × 72.4 (40½ × 28½).  
Transparent black ink on J. B. Green paper.  
Edition: 34.
11. *Table and Chair*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 76.0 × 95.7 (30 × 38⅛).  
Transparent black ink on Copperplate de Luxe paper.  
Edition: 66.



12

12. *Woman at Amagansett*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 71.6 × 101.6 (28<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 40).  
Transparent black ink on Italia paper.  
Edition: 49.

13. *Weekend at Mr. and Mrs. Krishner*, 1971.

- 13A. Lithograph, 107.8 × 76.0 (42<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 30).  
Black ink on Copperplate de Luxe paper.  
Edition: numbers 1 through 25 (of 75) marked "A".
- 13B. Lithograph, 128.0 × 89.0 (50<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 35).  
Transparent black ink on Akawara paper.  
Edition: numbers 26 through 50 (of 75) marked "B".
- 13C. Lithograph, 128.0 × 89.0 (50<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 35).  
Transparent black ink on Suzuki paper.  
Edition: numbers 51 through 75 (of 75) marked "C".



13



14A



15



14B

14. *Wah Kee Spare Ribs*, 1971.

14A. Lithograph, 144.4 × 94.0 (57 × 37).

Transparent black ink on Suzuki paper.

Edition: numbers 1 through 46 (of 57) not marked with a letter.

14B. Lithograph, 106.7 × 78.7 (42 × 31).

Transparent black ink on Copperplate de Luxe paper.

Edition: numbers 47 through 57 (of 57) marked "A" [sic].

15. *High School Desk*, 1971.

Lithograph, 101.6 × 71.3 (40 × 28).

Transparent black ink on Italia paper.

Edition: 57.



16



17

16. *Valentine*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 93.6 × 71.4 (37 × 29).  
Transparent black ink on Suzuki paper.  
Edition: 47.
17. *Woman with Corset and Long Hair*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 94.0 × 76.0 (37 × 30).  
Transparent black ink on Akawara paper.  
Edition: 61.
18. *Love to Wakako*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 120.0 × 88.9 (50½ × 35).  
Transparent black ink on Akawara paper.  
Edition: 58.



18



22



21



19



20

19. *Japanese Village*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 71.3 × 101.6 (28 × 40).  
Transparent black ink on Italia paper.  
Edition: 58.
20. *Mother and Child*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 71.2 × 101.6 (28<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 40).  
Transparent black ink on Italia paper.  
Edition: 44.
21. *Sting Ray*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 130.6 × 94.0 (51<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 37).  
Transparent black ink on Suzuki paper.  
Edition: 48.
22. *Reflections: To Kermit for Our Trip to Japan*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 127.3 × 88.3 (50<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 34<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>).  
Black ink on Akawara paper.  
Edition: 28.



23



24

23. *Beach Scene*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 94.0 × 71.4 (37 × 27<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>).  
Transparent black ink on Suzuki paper.  
Edition: 39.
24. *Figure at Gerard Beach*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 101.4 × 71.6 (40 × 28<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>).  
Transparent black ink on Italia paper.  
Edition: 32.
25. *Minnie Mouse*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 76.0 × 57.0 (30 × 22<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>).  
Black ink on white Arches paper.  
Edition: 60.



25



26



28



27

26. *Landscape at Stanton Street*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 76.0 × 56.0 (30 × 22).  
Black ink on Van Gelder paper.  
Edition: 60.

27. *The Preacher*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 76.0 × 56.0 (30 × 22).  
Black ink on Arches creme paper.  
Edition: 60.

28. *With Love*, 1971.  
Lithograph, 40.0 × 33.0 (15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 13).  
Black ink on Jeff Goodman paper.  
Edition: 40.

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James McNeill Whistler  
*Street at Saverne*, 1858  
Etching on chine collé, 210 × 159 mm.  
Printed by August Delâtre, Paris.  
Courtesy, Syracuse University Art Collections.

## ARTISTIC PRINTING

### Collaborative Printing during the Etching Revival and Early Twentieth Century

*Larry D. Perkins*

THE ADOPTION OF ETCHING by American artists in the 1870s constituted the advent of printmaking as an independent fine art in the United States. The beginning of the American etching movement may be dated to 1877, when the New York Etching Club was founded.<sup>1</sup> Popularly known as the "Etching Revival," this movement closely followed precedents established in France and England. Like their European counterparts, American etchers undertook etching as a serious part of their work as artists. National boundaries were not actually very rigid, however, as there was considerable international interaction among artists, dealers, publishers, and printers. The etchers were not only breaking from the tight control and hard-edged line of engraving to a more spontaneous and expressive medium; they were also adopting original subject matter, no longer confined to reproductions and commercial illustrations created through engraving and chromolithography.

Intimately linked to the etching movements of all three countries were the printers. These artisans adjusted their printing techniques to suit the desires of individual artists. That some artists experimented with the printing process and encouraged others to do so was understandable, as one of the aims of the etchers was to bring individual expression back into the print media. Even so, the artist-etcher who printed all his or her own work was the exception; it was the norm that the etcher and printer worked together, exchanging information and skills.

Although an expatriate, James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) may be considered the first prominent exponent of modern American printmaking. Through Whistler, concrete ties were established between the French, English, and American print movements, though it must be acknowledged that his impact on the artists of his homeland was primarily inspirational. His connection with

the French and English movements was evidenced by his close association with the foremost artists' printers of those countries. Whistler worked intimately with Auguste Delâtre (1822–1907), a well-known intaglio printer in Paris, and with Frederick Goulding (1842–1909), who held a comparable position in London.

It may be assumed that Whistler knew only the rudiments of preparing and drawing on a copper plate, or of printing it, when his first set of prints—twelve etchings known as the "French Set"—was printed by Delâtre in 1858.<sup>2</sup> As Katherine Lochnan, curator of prints and drawings at the Art Gallery of Ontario, has suggested, "Whistler must already have known of Delâtre's outstanding reputation as a printer of etchings, and may have been advised to go to him by Legros or Bracquemond, whose plates he had already printed."<sup>3</sup> From Delâtre, Whistler learned the printer's art in depth, especially how to ink and wipe the plate so as to achieve the optimum beauty inherent in the etched composition. He found that vast differences in appearance could be achieved by varying the amount of ink, or plate tone, left on the surface of the copper plate.

1 The reader is advised that this label is misleading. Etching is one medium in the family of intaglio media. While it was the dominant medium utilized by the artists discussed in this article, other intaglio methods were also used, including drypoint, engraving, soft-ground, and aquatint, often in combination.

2 It was probably through Francis Seymour Haden, his brother-in-law, that Whistler first became familiar in 1848–49 with the etchings of Rembrandt, other artists of the Dutch School, and contemporary French artists. He made his first etching in 1854 while working for the U. S. Coast Survey Office. In 1857 he made his first etching in Paris, followed by others in 1858 while visiting the Hadens. See Katharine Lochnan, *The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press in association with the Art Gallery of Ontario, 1984): 3–27.

3 Lochnan, *Etchings of Whistler*: 50.

Depending on how and with what the plate was wiped, shadows and highlights could be created independently of, or corresponding to, the lines etched into the plate. Delâtre referred to this technique of printing as "artistic printing." Another technique favored by Delâtre was *retroussage*, which involved coaxing ink from the depths of an etched line to its outer edges by rubbing a soft cloth across the wiped plate in a particular fashion. The result was a richer and softer line. The use of *retroussage* became a favored technique among etchers and printers. Lochnan has stated that Delâtre "developed much of his technical knowledge while printing Rembrandt's reworked plates, and had experimented in the manner of the Dutch Masters with the use of plate tone to create chiaroscuro effects. . . ."<sup>4</sup> Delâtre demonstrated that there were various alternatives to the summarily wiped plate characteristic of commercial intaglio printing; probably more than anyone else, he set the standard for artistic printing in the nineteenth century.

Through a chance encounter with a young printing apprentice, Frederick Goulding, Whistler was instrumental in transplanting Delâtre's artistic printing methods to England. At fourteen years of age, Goulding apprenticed himself to Day and Son, a commercial firm that specialized in printing engravings and lithographs, then located at 6 Gate Street, Lincoln Inn Fields, London. He was following in a family tradition of fine craftsmanship, as his father and grandfather had both been copper-plate printers. In 1859, during the second year of his apprenticeship, Goulding had his first encounter with Whistler. Martin Hardie, Goulding's biographer, has suggested that it was Whistler who first introduced the young artisan to the idea of artistic printing: the idea that a copper plate could be treated in more than a perfunctory manner. Hardie wrote:

One day in 1859 a message came to the apprentice that he was to act as "devil" to a Mr. James MacNeill [sic] Whistler, a strange-looking gentleman, with eye-glass, tall cane, and black slouch hat, who had come to the office and insisted on "proving" his own plates. . . . As he [Goulding] mixed the ink, and turned the press, he watched keenly the handiwork of this artist who insisted on occupying himself with a printer's business. The "devil" was amused, no doubt, by the poses and attitudes of his eccentric visitor, by the fussiness of all his play with palm and muslin, and by his strange ejaculations in

French and English, but there can be no doubt, too, that he learned then for the first time that there was something in the printing of a plate beyond the mere filling of its lines with ink and cleaning it with hand and whitening like a visiting card, and recognized that something of the artist's mind could pass through his finger-tips to the inanimate copper.<sup>5</sup>

Goulding would print for Seymour Haden (1818–1910) and most of the other English etchers, as well as for numerous French artists, including Auguste Rodin (1840–1917) and Alphonse Legros (1837–1911). American etchers who sought Goulding's expertise included Anna Lea Merritt (1844–1930), John Singer Sargent (1856–1925), Stephen Parrish (1846–1938), and Joseph Pennell (1857–1926).<sup>6</sup>

Goulding's success as a collaborative printer must be credited to his ability to anticipate artists' needs and to interpret what they wished to accomplish. The portrait of Goulding that Hardie has drawn is one of a master craftsman, sensitive to artistic temperament, who learned from those with whom he worked. He knew that it was his responsibility to achieve the best possible print of the plate created by the artist. He understood etching as a collaboration between the artist and printer, each of them obligated to understand the intentions, abilities, and limitations of the other. As a means to such understanding, it is significant that Goulding tried his hand at numerous etchings and drypoints. He expressed the following sentiment in an address to the Art Workers Guild on 6 May 1904:

I think no printer, be he as good a craftsman as may be, could print an etcher's etching the same

4 Ibid.: 55. Nowhere is the "use of plate tone to create chiaroscuro effects" better discussed than in Eugenia Parry Janis's stimulating essay, "Setting the Tone—The Revival of Etching, The Importance of Ink," in *The Painterly Print: Monotypes from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980). "Mavericks of the revival," she writes, "lavished ink on their plates and exaggerated inking and printing into a veritable cuisine. Justifiable only in part through Rembrandt's precedent of inventive daubing, ink in the hands of a significant minority became an impertinent sauce 'hollandaise.'" (p. 11.)

5 Martin Hardie, *Frederick Goulding: Master Printer of Copper Plates* (Stirling [England]: Eneas Mackay, 1910): 146.

6 Ibid.: 32–34.

as he can do it himself, providing always he has gone through the experience of knowing what printing is capable of doing. He may not "pull" two proofs alike, but in each and every one he will have his own art feeling trickling down his arm to his fingers' ends, and put on or wipe off his plate those art feelings which are passing through his mind, and in each proof there will be an individuality no craftsman could exactly imitate.<sup>7</sup>

But Goulding knew from experience that few artists would be able to accomplish consistently in printing what the artisan, who had complete devotion to the craft, was capable of achieving. He nevertheless encouraged the printmaker to learn as much of the printing craft as possible:

I think every engraver, as by this I mean worker on plates of every "style," should know sufficient of the printer's craft to be able to take proofs of his own work. That he could learn printing to its bitter end is next to impossible. It's a life's work, and would leave him no time to practise his art. The printer should have his craft at his fingers' ends, and be sufficiently well accomplished in the thousand and one tricks or ways of treating all and every description of work he may have to interpret.<sup>8</sup>

Goulding eloquently defined the pros and cons of collaborative intaglio printmaking, if not the universal dilemma of collaborative printmaking. He questioned whether the printmaker could utilize the skills of the professional printer without subverting the artist's responsibility to create completely the image that bears his or her name. Goulding seems to suggest that the printer could be a resource at the artist's disposal and that, as with other resources, the artist must learn to utilize the printer to the fullest advantage.

DURING THE 1860S AND 1870S, there were apparently no printers in the United States comparable to Delâtre or Goulding—printers who had adapted their printing techniques to suit the needs of the etcher. Neither was there a significant demand for them, as etching was practiced only sporadically by American artists before the late 1870s. A concerted effort to establish etching as an independent art form in the United States was not launched until the New York Etching Club was founded on 2 May 1877. Among its twenty founding members, few could be referred to as experienced etchers, in fact, "Half the original members of the Club knew nothing about

etching. . . . The Club provided an etching press to its members, held classes, and sponsored annual exhibitions. . . ."<sup>9</sup>

The Cincinnati Etching Club was founded in 1879 under similar circumstances. H. J. Farny (1847–1916), a prominent Cincinnati artist, described this fledgling group of etching advocates in a letter written to Sylvester Rosa Koehler (1837–1900), editor of *The American Art Review*, on 25 August 1879:

Our etching club is as yet in its infancy being a very recent affair chiefly—or almost entirely composed of enthusiastic amateurs. . . . But we have a press and meet every two weeks—alternate Saturdays—at my studio, where proofs of the etchings are taken and everybody succeeds in smudging themselves thoroughly with printers ink.<sup>10</sup>

The Philadelphia Society of Etchers and other regional organizations devoted to fostering etching in the United States were founded during the early 1880s. It seems apparent that interest in etching was on the rise in America when Koehler began in 1879 to popularize the accomplishments of American etchers in *The American Art Review* (hereafter referred to as the *Art Review*). Prior to the publication of this journal, there had not been sufficient effort put forth to cultivate commercial printers or other skilled craftsmen to print collaboratively with artists.

Through his efforts as editor of the *Art Review*, Koehler became the leading advocate of American etching. The journal covered all the visual arts but featured the fine art of etching through a series entitled, "The Works of the American Etchers." During the two years that the publication existed (1879–1881), Koehler published biographical information on twenty-six etchers and brief essays about their works.<sup>11</sup> More important, these essays

7 Ibid.: 82–83.

8 Ibid.: 84.

9 Deborah Sue McGowan, "Etching in America: 1866 to 1925" (Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1981; published by University Microfilms International): 14.

10 H. J. Farny to Sylvester Rosa Koehler, 25 August 1879. Sylvester Rosa Koehler papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as Koehler papers), reel D184.

11 These were, by order of appearance, Robert Swain Gifford (1840–1905), Henry Farrar (1843–1903), Stephen J. Ferris (1835–1915), Peter Moran (1842–1915), Thomas Moran (1837–1925), John M. Falconer (1820–1903), J. Foxcroft Cole (1837–1892), Anna Lea Merritt (1844–1930), Albert F. Bellows (1829–1883), Alfred L.

See also a review of *American Women of the Etching Revival*, page 77.

were accompanied by original prints by the printmakers. The significance of this undertaking has been expressed by Maureen C. O'Brien, associate director for curatorial affairs at the Parrish Art Museum, who wrote that the American etching revival "could not have blossomed into a national movement had not Koehler elected to publicize [the artists'] accomplishments, and to develop and serve the market for original art prints with the *American Art Review*."<sup>12</sup>

In his introduction to the series on American etchers, published in the first issue of the journal, Koehler identified the printer as having a role in the making of fine etchings distinct from that of the artist. He explained that:

Much of the beauty of an etching depends upon the printing, which differs in many ways from ordinary plate printing. An artistically endowed printer, capable of understanding and following out the artist's intentions, can complement the latter's work in a manner that is unattainable by either point or burin.<sup>13</sup>

Although by the late 1870s American etchers had begun to acquire presses upon which to proof their own work, none would likely have been capable of printing the large editions of prints required for inclusion in each issue of the *Art Review*. A major obstacle Koehler thus faced was to locate a printer in the United States who could be relied upon to print the thousands of impressions that he needed for inclusion in his journal. Letters written to Koehler in 1879 document his search for such a printer and underscore the fact that artistic printers were not then available in the United States. Dana Estes, of Estes and Lauriat, the Boston publishers of the journal, wrote to Koehler on 28 March 1879 that:

There is nothing that gives me so much anxiety about the whole thing as this one question of getting the etchings properly printed. The question of price, I do not care much about that will settle itself in due time. It is really a question of

the possibility of getting artistic printing at any price.<sup>14</sup>

It became clear that an artistic printer would have to be cultivated from the ranks of commercial plate printers or that one would have to be imported from abroad. Among those who offered Koehler advice in this matter was J. Sabin, who wrote that:

I heard that you had been looking for printers—and I thought it was very likely that you would find difficulty with the etchings. I have had some printed myself and found that it requires some "wrestling" with the disciples of the black art to get them to print etchings anything like the Europeans. . . . I find that a number of trial proofs taken under supervision are necessary. Delâtre of Paris was so much of an artist himself that he could improve the etchers work—but they don't seem to have the instinct here to get the artist effects.<sup>15</sup>

There were only two printing shops that Koehler felt confident to recommend to etchers in 1880. In a note to Maxime Lalanne's influential *A Treatise on Etching*, which Koehler translated into English from the original French, he offered this advice:

Not every printer can print an etching as it ought to be printed. A man may be an excellent printer of line engravings and mezzotints, and yet be totally unfit to print an etching. I would recommend the following printing establishments:—

New York: Kimmel & Voigt, 242 Canal Street.  
Boston: J. H. Daniels, 223 Washington Street.<sup>16</sup>

Koehler arranged for several printmakers to work with Daniels on an experimental basis in 1879, including Henry Farrer (1843–1903), James D. Smillie (1833–1909), and R. Swain Gifford (1840–1905). It was Koehler's hope that

11 continued.

Brennan (1853–1921), Samuel Colman (1832–1920), John Henry Hill (1839– ), Kruseman Van Elten (1829–1904), James D. Smillie (1833–1909), Stephen Parrish (1846–1938), Otto H. Bacher (1856–1909), Charles Henry Miller (1842–1922), William Merritt Chase (1849–1916), Frederick Stuart Church (1842–1924), Mary Nimmo Moran (1842–1899), Charles F. Kimball (1835–1903), Eliza Greator (1820–1897), John James Mitchell (1845– ), Edmund H. Garrett (1853–1929), Charles A. Platt (1861–1933), and George Loring Brown (1814–1889).

12 Maureen C. O'Brien, "To Mr. Henry E. F. Voigt with the Compliments of the Etcher," in *The American Painter-Etcher Movement* (Southampton, N. Y.: The Parrish Art Museum, 1984): 10.

13 Sylvester Rosa Koehler, "The Works of American Etchers," *American Art Review* 1 (1880): 4.

14 Dana Estes to Koehler, 28 March 1879; Koehler papers, reel D184.

15 J. Sabin to Koehler, 4 December 1879; Koehler papers, reel D189. The writer is probably J. F. Sabin, a founding member of the New York Etching Club.

16 Sylvester Rosa Koehler, note to *A Treatise on Etching by Maxime Lalanne* (Boston: The Page Company, 1880). Koehler wrote a chapter of introduction to Lalanne's book, which he also translated from the second French edition.



**James D. Smillie.** *Old Cedars, Coast of Maine*, 1880.  
Etching, 125 × 175 mm. Printed by the firm of Kimmel & Voigt, New York.  
Published in *The American Art Review*, Volume 1.  
Courtesy, George Arents Research Library for Special Collections,  
Syracuse University.

the etchers could teach the printer the methods of artistic printing. On 29 May of that year, Smillie volunteered to Koehler that "I will be glad to meet Mr. Daniels at any time he may appoint and if there's anything that I can tell him about printing of course will be glad to do so."<sup>17</sup>

It was to Kimmel and Voigt, however, that the commission to print the etchings for the *Art Review* was given. This New York firm was experienced in the printing of engravings and lithographs, though unfamiliar with the special techniques of artistic printing. It was necessary for Koehler to explain to Henry E. F. Voigt the printing effects that would be expected of Voigt's printers.<sup>18</sup>

The printing of etchings for the *Art Review* was a complicated venture, often less than ideal from a collaborative point of view. Koehler negotiated the purchase from the artists of

the plates to be published and exercised a great deal of control over their printing, varying as each situation allowed or warranted. While some artists had direct access to the printers, in other instances their distance from New York City made such contact impractical. It was not uncommon for an etcher to send Kimmel and Voigt a proof to use as a guide for the edition, with notations in the print's

17 James D. Smillie to Koehler, 29 May 1879; Koehler papers, reel D190.

18 See O'Brien, "To Mr. Henry E. F. Voigt": 11. O'Brien's essay provides an extensive account of Koehler's importance to the etching revival and of the interrelationships between the etchers, Koehler and Voigt. It also includes information about printing presses, paper, and the steel-facing of etching plates. The Parrish Art Museum has Henry E. F. Voigt's personal collection of prints.



**Henry Farrer.** *Sunset, Gowanus Bay, 1880.*

Etching, 164 × 240 mm. Printed by the firm of Kimmel & Voight, New York.

Published in *The American Art Review*, Volume 2.

Courtesy, George Arents Research Library for Special Collections,  
Syracuse University.

margins giving additional printing instructions. Other etchers were relatively inexperienced and welcomed Koehler's guidance in regard to printing. In the best of circumstances, the artist and the printer worked directly together in proving the plate, until a print was pulled that could be used as a model for the edition.

James D. Smillie and Henry Farrar, both of whom lived in New York City, were competent printers themselves and endeavored to work directly with Kimmel and Voigt's printers in proving their plates. Smillie seems to have been particularly adamant about supervising the process, a stance evident in a letter to Koehler:

I went to Kimmel & Voigt's and had half a dozen pfs. & imps. pulled from "Old Cedars" under my direction. I was pleased to find that the printer took hold of the plate at once very intelligently & I think successfully. I fear only that he will

give me a little too much ink and a little too much "*Retroussage*." I have warned him against that and beg that you will add your warning to mine. There is strength enough in the etching without adding a murky effect in the printing.<sup>19</sup>

A year later, however, Smillie was clearly displeased to find that a plate of his had been printed without his knowledge:

I was disappointed when I learned that they [Kimmel and Voigt] had printed "Up the Hill" without my knowing it—think I might have helped them—I know more of printing than I did when I took pfs. of the plate two years ago.<sup>20</sup>

Among the many factors to be considered in the printing of intaglio plates are the color

19 Smillie to Koehler, 14 June 1880; Koehler papers, reel D190.

20 Smillie to Koehler, 17 June 1881; Koehler papers, reel D190.

and consistency of the ink, the type of paper used, the inking and wiping of the plate, and the pressure used in printing. Smillie seems to have insisted on controlling such decisions himself; he understood that to achieve an optimum printing all factors must be harmonized.

Henry Farrer also preferred to work directly with the printer. He printed with Daniels as well as Kimmel and Voigt and was generally unsatisfied with the quality of printing available from either establishment. Having received his second issue of the *Art Review* in December 1879, Farrar was critical of what he claimed to be the perfunctory manner in which etchings were printed at Kimmel and Voigt. He encouraged Koehler to hire a "good French printer" and advised the editor that, "I don't think you will be able to do much with the old printers in the way of training, they have got too deeply into their ruts. If you could get some intelligent *young* men I think a few weeks ought to be sufficient to train them to do all you want of them."<sup>21</sup>

Stephen J. Ferris (1835–1915), who admitted to being an inexperienced printer, worked directly with several commercial plate printers in Philadelphia with uneven results. For the *Art Review* he faced the peculiar dilemma of having his proofs pulled by one printer in Philadelphia and the edition by another in New York. Under these conditions, it was apparently a struggle to maintain control over the manner of the printing. His frustration was evident in a letter to Koehler:

I am not learned in so much how to print as to advise a printer. When I describe the qualities wanted the printer can suit me readily and I have no doubt you have a good printer. But you will find printers differ in taste and style and some will get qualities in a plate to suit you and I while others cannot. . . . I shall not be hard to suit only whenever you can better a print it is my duty to tell you so and shall be thankful for your criticism *also* as to make your enterprise the more successful. We have mutual interest in making it the best possible. . . .<sup>22</sup>

The willingness of artists, such as Ferris, to place their plates in the hands of printers unknown to them indicates a remarkable flexibility on their part. It also underscores the fact that there was a need for more collaborative printers with an ability to interpret the artists' intentions. As John M. Falconer (1820–1903), a member of the New York Etching Club and a resident of Brooklyn, expressed in the



Mary Nimmo Moran. *Passaic Meadow*, 1881. Etching, 133 × 187 mm. Printed by the firm of Kimmel & Voigt, New York. Published in *Catalogue of The New York Etching Club Exhibition*, 1892. Print Collection, Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints & Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

early years of the etching movement, "It is almost impossible to get artistic printing done here . . . and trained printers are much needed, even if their 'hands are not quite those of a Duchess.'"<sup>23</sup>

*The American Art Review* was short-lived and ceased to be published after only two volumes, a victim of high production costs combined with an inadequate number of subscribers. It did succeed, however, in helping to arouse interest in the work of American etchers. Typical in his estimation of the journal's influence was Henry Farrar, who wrote Koehler that, "I am quite sure the 'Review' has given a *decided lift* to etching in this country."<sup>24</sup> Despite the demise of the *Art Review*, the momentum of the etching movement was sustained throughout the 1880s and well into

21 Henry Farrer to Koehler, 22 December 1879; Koehler papers, reel D184. See also O'Brien, "To Mr. Henry E. F. Voigt": 12.

22 Stephen J. Ferris to Koehler, 11 July 1879; Koehler papers, reel D184.

23 John M. Falconer to Koehler, 2 June 1879; Koehler papers, reel D184. Falconer is obviously referring to a statement by Seymour Haden, who wrote: "If the Etcher cannot print his own works he should choose, then, a finely organized man with the palm of a duchess to do it for him, having first set before him a proof to his liking." See Seymour Haden, *About Etching* (London: The Fine Art Society, 1879): 33.

24 Farrar to Koehler, 22 April 1881; Koehler papers, reel D184.

the 1890s. Many of the printmakers whose work appeared in the journal returned to Kimmel and Voigt to have their plates printed throughout this period.

The prominence of Kimmel and Voigt as the foremost collaborative plate printers of the etching revival was evidenced by the firm's association with the New York Etching Club. The club held an annual exhibition, documented during the years of 1882–89 and 1891–93 through a publication entitled *Catalogue of The New York Etching Club Exhibition*. Bound into these exhibition catalogues were selected original etchings—smaller renditions of prints actually shown in the exhibitions. One thousand copies of the catalogue were printed each year, with the firm of Kimmel and Voigt credited as printer of the editions. Many of the etchings in these catalogues show a distinct manipulation of the plate tone to a satisfying effect.

KIMMEL AND VOIGT was not the only printing establishment to serve the needs of American etchers during the late nineteenth century. In a printing business inherited from their father, Gustave and Richard Peters of Philadelphia had printed intaglio plates for artists since the late 1880s, and continued to do so until the mid-1920s.<sup>25</sup> Margaret Getchell reported in the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* in 1919 that:

Virtually every etcher in Philadelphia and many from other cities and towns have picked their way through the presses and the chests and the stacks of books and papers which have accumulated in the old shop to watch first the father, the old Mr. Peters, and later on the two sons, print his etchings.<sup>26</sup>

The printmakers who sought their advice and skills, or use of their facilities, included Stephen Parrish (1846–1938), Peter Moran (1842–1915), Earl Horter (1881–1940), and Joseph Pennell, who wrote that, "In the firm of the Peters Brothers, I have found . . . genuine craftsmen, who love their craft and do their work intelligently and well. . . ."<sup>27</sup>

In the agreeable atmosphere of the Peters's workshop, printmakers could be more or less involved in the printing of their plates as desired. Getchell wrote:

Many are the artists who have taken off their coats and donned aprons to work with the printer, where there are others who have preferred to stand by, giving suggestions as to light and dark,

while the printer, with deft fingers, rubbed ink off a bit here and a bit more there to produce the varying tones.<sup>28</sup>

Getchell further suggested that numerous printmakers did their own inking and wiping, essentially using the workshop as a convenient facility. The Peters brothers offered the intaglio printmaker the full range of artistic printing techniques and came to know the preference of each artist.

Gustave and Richard Peters provided crucial assistance to John Sloan (1871–1951), who collaborated with them for more than thirty-five years, beginning about 1890 and ending when both brothers died in 1925. Peter Morse, who compiled the catalogue raisonné of Sloan's prints, has suggested that the artist did not own an intaglio press until about 1902, and that prior to that time he probably proofed his plate on the Peters's press.<sup>29</sup> Sloan pulled his own trial proofs before turning plates over to the printers. "He did not . . . wish to take the time to print entire editions," nor did he feel competent enough to maintain consistency and quality throughout an edition.<sup>30</sup>

The Peters brothers may have printed Sloan's contribution to *Twelve Prints by Contemporary Artists*, a portfolio of etchings, drypoints, woodcuts, and lithographs published by the Weyhe Gallery in 1919.<sup>31</sup> Sloan's *The Copyist at the Metropolitan* was included in this remarkable portfolio along with etchings by Earl Horter, William Auerbach (1889–1964), and Walter Pach (1883–1958); and drypoints by Kenneth Hayes Miller (1879–1952), Jerome Myers (1867–1940), and Mahonri Young (1877–1957). Also participating in the printing of the intaglio plates, in addition to the Peters, was

25 Margaret C. Getchell, "A Little Print Shop in Locust Street Familiar to All the Great Etchers," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, 27 July 1919: 4.

26 Ibid.

27 Joseph Pennell, *Etchers and Etching* (New York: Macmillan, 1919): 322.

28 Getchell, "A Little Print Shop": 4.

29 Peter Morse, *John Sloan's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Etchings, Lithographs and Posters* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1969): 4.

30 Ibid.

31 For an account of the publication of *Twelve Prints by Contemporary American Artists*, see Carl Zigrosser, *A World of Art and Museums*, p. 40–41 (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press, 1975). While running a gallery in Erhard Weyhe's New York art book store from 1919 until 1940, Zigrosser was a vital force in stimulation of American printmaking.

Frederick Reynolds (1882– ) of New York City. Reynolds, himself an intaglio printmaker, had also been commissioned by the American Institute of Graphic Arts to print the original intaglio plates for its *Catalogue: An Exhibition of Etchings by Contemporary American Artists*, published in 1917.<sup>32</sup>

WHILE PRINTMAKERS such as Reynolds were occasionally prevailed upon to print for other artists, their contributions to collaborative intaglio printmaking were minor compared to that of Peter J. Platt (1859–1934), who would eventually become the foremost master printer of artists' intaglio plates in the United States. In 1879, when Koehler began the *Art Review*, Platt was a young man of twenty years. Platt's father was a mezzotint artist in New York City during the Civil War era, and had taught the younger Platt the basics of intaglio printing. Peter Platt later apprenticed at a lithography shop and subsequently worked at several printing establishments before opening his own shop in the mid- to late-1880s. Platt's first workshop was located at 109 Liberty Street, with later relocations to Barclay and Murray streets, then finally to 23 East Fourteenth Street. This master printer worked at printing artists' intaglio plates for some fifty years, until his death in 1934 at the age of seventy-five.<sup>33</sup>

Platt printed for artists from all over the United States, not only for those who lived in New York City. These artists represented several generations and stylistic sympathies. Leigh Hunt (1858–1937), an etcher who had exhibited with the New York Etching Club in the 1890s, reminisced about Peter Platt, when as a young printer he was establishing his credentials during the early years: "So painstakingly inked, so sympathetically wiped and so sensitively printed were the etchings which left the shop at 109 Liberty Street, that one by one, new disciples discovered Peter Platt and began to realize that fine art printing was being done in New York as well as in Paris and London."<sup>34</sup> Late nineteenth-century etchers with whom Platt collaborated included Cleveland Cox, Thomas Moran, Hamilton Hamilton, Thomas Manley, James King, Harry Farrar, James Monk, and James Smillie.<sup>35</sup> Hunt wrote of this workshop as a gathering spot for artist-etchers: "In a shadow-filled back-room they sat, smoking and talking of the 'new art,' of the craftiness of art dealers, of the villiany and stupidity of juries . . . while



John Sloan. *Jewelry Store Window*, 1906.

Etching, 144 × 95 mm.

Printed by Richard W. and Gustave A. Peters, Philadelphia.

Courtesy, Syracuse University Art Collections.

the etchers worked on plates from which Platt made prints."<sup>36</sup>

Peggy Bacon (1895–1987), who represented a generation of artists quite removed from that of the etching revival, wrote an article entitled "Etchers Heaven" for the *Yale Review*, published in 1948, in which she described a day spent in Platt's studio. With characteristic

32 This exhibition was held from 28 February to 23 March 1917 at the National Arts Club, New York.

33 See Leigh Hunt, *In Memoriam: Peter J. Platt* (1935): 12, 19.

34 *Ibid.*: 13.

35 *Ibid.*

36 *Ibid.*



**Peggy Bacon.**  
*Peter Platt Printing*, 1929.  
Etching, 151 × 102 mm.  
Courtesy, Kraushaar Galleries, New York.



**Peggy Bacon.**  
*The Promenade Deck*, 1920. Drypoint, 153 × 213 mm.  
Published in *The New Republic*.  
Courtesy, Syracuse University Art Collections.

humor, Bacon christened the printer with the pseudonym of Mr. Biggs, and described her impression of Platt and his Murray Street studio:

Pressures that existed elsewhere in the city ceased to exist here. You felt that what went on within these walls had continuity, was nearly eternal—that you had risen to a sort of dilapidated heaven, and that if St. Peter in the character of Mr. Biggs would accept you as one of the chosen within these unpearly gates, you would be assured of a hallowed retreat into a rather highgrade state of bliss.<sup>37</sup>

Bacon wrote that on any given day, several artists were likely to appear at Platt's studio, to work and have prints pulled. Platt was available to give advice as needed or requested, from initiating the novice into the basic process of etching or drypoint to providing space and equipment for the master etcher to come and work. Childe Hassam (1859–1935) was apparently among this privileged latter group. Hunt wrote that Hassam "often worked his plates up from the first proof on to the finished state at the special table Mr. Platt fixed for him."<sup>38</sup> For the sake of convenience, certain artists were permitted to leave their own tools at the workshop. Among the many artists who collaborated with Platt during the early twentieth century, in addition to Sloan,

Bacon, and Hassam, were Ernest Haskell (1876–1925), Roland Clark (1874–1957), John Taylor Arms (1887–1953), Kerr Eby (1889–1946), and Charles A. Platt (1861–1933). Platt's success as a collaborative printer rested on his skills and his attitude. He was quoted as saying that "Every plate must be printed as if it were the only etching in world. . . . It is an individual that must be studied, understood and then treated in the way best designed to bring out its best qualities. Learning a new plate is like learning a new piece of music—always an adventure."<sup>39</sup>

Although other artistic plate printers were available in New York City, apparently none was as accomplished as Peter J. Platt. Spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Platt and the Peters brothers provided pioneering, service-oriented workshops in which American intaglio printmakers were able to create prints collaboratively. There can be little doubt as to the significance of their contributions to the development of intaglio printmaking in America. □

37 Peggy Bacon, "Etcher's Heaven," *Yale Review* 38 (December 1948): 272.

38 Leigh Hunt, *Peter J. Platt*: 19.

39 *Ibid.*: 11.

## DOMINIQUE VIVANT DENON and the Beginnings of Lithography in France

*Petra ten-Doesschate Chu*

IN 1806, SEVEN YEARS AFTER Aloys Senefelder had produced his first lithographic print, the Senefelder printshop in Munich was visited by Louis-François Lejeune, an officer in Napoleon's army and an artist of some merit. In the course of his visit Lejeune made a drawing on a lithographic stone of a *Mounted Cossack*, which the Senefelder brothers printed in one hundred impressions for the artist to take back to Paris. In a letter written several years after the fact, Lejeune recalled how he had shown his lithograph to Napoleon as well as to several influential figures on the contemporary art scene, such as Jacques Louis David, Dominique Vivant Denon, and Carle Vernet. All (including Napoleon) were enthusiastic about the new medium, except for "M. Denon, director of the Imperial Museums, [who] was the only one, at that time, who appeared to be almost hostile to lithography." Not long afterwards Lejeune was called to war in Spain. When he returned to France in 1811, he found to his surprise that the same "Denon, who formerly had shown so little interest in lithography, was now boasting the results of that admirable art and that . . . in his atelier the most charming ladies of the day, among them the Countess Mollien, were practicing their artistic skills by drawing quite gracious sketches on stone."<sup>1</sup>

Assuming that Lejeune's report is true, the question arises why there was such initial reluctance about the merits of lithography on the part of a man who is generally considered one of the crucial figures in the early history of artistic lithography in France. In 1806, when Vivant Denon reportedly was shown Lejeune's lithograph, he was nearly sixty years old. At the time he was one of the most influential figures on the French art scene, as he was both the Director General of the Imperial Museum and the unofficial advisor to Napoleon and Josephine in all matters of fine and decorative arts.<sup>2</sup> An eminent connoisseur with infallible taste, Denon was himself an amateur printmaker of note.<sup>3</sup> From the 1780s onwards, he had produced some five hundred etchings, and he had also closely supervised the production of a superb album of engravings, the *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Egypte* (1802). The plates of this unique travelogue were based on sketches that Denon had personally drawn when, in 1798–99, he accompanied Napoleon on his campaign to Egypt,<sup>4</sup> and their engraving had been entrusted to some of the best-known engravers of the period, including, among others, Louis-Pierre Baltard, Jacques Joseph Coiny, Claude-François Fortier, Victor Pillement, and Jean-Baptiste Réville. As a consequence, Denon was intimately familiar with contemporary printmaking techniques, and it is easy to imagine how early lithographs, such as Lejeune's *Cossack* or others that he may have seen around that time, would have seemed to him quite poor

1 The letter is quoted in Henri Bouchot, *La Lithographie* (Paris, 1895): 32–33. It is noteworthy that in his memoirs, which also recall the visit to Senefelder's studio, Lejeune is silent about Denon's early antipathy to lithography. Cf. Germain Bapst, ed., *Mémoires du général Lejeune* (Paris, 1896), vol. 1: 42–43.

2 On Denon's various functions, see Jean Chatelain, *Dominique Vivant Denon et le Louvre de Napoléon* (Paris, 1973) and Pierre Lelièvre, *Vivant Denon, Directeur des Beaux-Arts de Napoléon* (Paris, 1942). For a biography of Denon in English (with emphasis on his activities as a writer), see Judith Nowinsky, *Baron Dominique Vivant Denon (1747–1825): Hedonist and Scholar in a Period of Transition* (Rutherford/Madison/Teaneck, N.J., 1970).

3 For Denon as printmaker, see Albert de la Fizelière, *L'oeuvre originale de Vivant Denon: Collection de 317 eaux-fortes . . .* (Paris, 1873); Roger Portalis and Henri Bérardi, *Les graveurs du dix-huitième siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1880): 728–37; Marcel Roux, *Inventaire du fonds français, Département des estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. 6 (Paris, 1949): 513–612; Jean Adhémar and Jacques Lethève, *Inventaire du fonds français après 1800, Département des estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. 6 (Paris, 1953): 253–57; and Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, ed., *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 121, part 1 and 2 (New York, 1985–88).

4 On Denon's trip to Egypt, see the excellent introduction to the modern annotated German edition of the *Voyages* by Helmut Arndt, *Mit Napoleon in Aegypten* (Freiburg i. Br., 1978): 7–44. The whereabouts of Denon's original drawings is so far unknown.



FIG. 1. *Essai au crayon, à la plume, et à l'estompe* (Exercise in crayon, pen, and stump). 1809. 98 × 143 L.

All illustrations reproduce lithographs by Dominique Vivant Denon. Measurements are in millimeters, height before width, taken either at the outline (marked "L") or at the extreme contours of the image (marked "I"). Unless otherwise indicated, the prints here reproduced are in the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

5 For example, some portrait and landscape lithographs by the Duc de Montpensier, the younger brother of the future Louis Philippe, dating from 1805–06; a few prints by Pierre-Nolasque Bergeret of about the same time; and a print by Colonel Lomet who, like Lejeune, visited Senefelder's printshop and produced a lithograph on the spot (1807). For the beginnings of lithography in France, see especially Walter Gräff, *Die Einführung der Lithographie in Frankreich* (Heidelberg, 1906) and Bouchot, *La Lithographie*, chap. 1.

6 Cf. Wilhelm Weber, *Aloys Senefelder: Erfinder der Lithographie: Daten zum Leben und Werken* (Frankfurt a. M., 1981): 52, and Idem, *A History of Lithography* (London, 1966): 48.

7 Cf. Gräff, *Die Einführung der Lithographie*: 80.

8 On the *Oeuvres lithographiques* and their origins, see Wolfgang Wegner, "Les Oeuvres lithographiques und ihre Entstehungsgeschichte." *Oberrheinisches Archiv* 86 (1963): 139–92.

9 Cf. Aloys Senefelder, *The Invention of Lithography* (New York, 1911): 88. See also Weber, *Aloys Senefelder*: 54.

10 Ibid.: 61–62.

and lacking in effect when compared to the superior results eighteenth-century etchers and engravers had been able to achieve in their respective media.

Denon's subsequent change of mind about the artistic importance of lithography may be attributed to a prolonged visit to Munich in the fall of 1809. Though by no means Denon's first trip (he had been in Munich several times and even had made a brief appearance in Senefelder's studio in 1806), it allowed him to become more thoroughly acquainted with lithographic techniques and processes.<sup>6</sup> During a visit to the Senefelder establishment, Denon, like Lejeune, was given the opportunity to draw an image on a lithographic stone, and in so doing he produced a print that, together with Lejeune's *Cossack*, ranks as one of the *incunabulae* of lithography in France, the *Essai au crayon, à la plume et à l'estompe* [FIG. 1]. Though generally referred to as the *Holy Family in Egypt*, this print actually represents a pastoral scene that is closer to standard representations of the Virgin with the Christ Child and St. John than to traditional renderings of the Holy Family in Egypt. As the title of the sheet indicates, the purpose of the print was not so much to illustrate a particular iconographic theme as to try out various lithographic instruments and techniques. While the image itself was drawn with lithographic crayon and stump, the inscription was written with the lithographic pen and the signature below, "faite à la lithographie de Munich, le 15 9bre 1809, Denon" was probably obtained with the help of a transfer.<sup>7</sup> The print must be seen as a demonstration piece of early lithography illustrating some of its technical possibilities and artistic effects.

DURING HIS 1809 visit to Munich, Denon was in close contact with his German colleague Christian Mannlich, the director of the Royal Galleries in Munich. Mannlich took an active interest in Senefelder's business, particularly in the *Lithographische Kunstanstalt*, a joint venture of Senefelder and Freiherr Johann Christoph von Aretino, intended to produce lithographic reproductions of works of art. In 1810 Mannlich even brought Senefelder's share in this business and formed, together with Aretino, J. Stuntz, and the artists Johann Nepomuk Strixner and Ferdinand Piloti, the so-called *Gesellschaftsbund*, which began the publication of the *Oeuvres lithographiques*, a series of lithographic albums reproducing the masterpieces in the Royal Museum of Munich.<sup>8</sup>

It was Mannlich who must have aroused Denon's interest in the use of lithography as a reproductive print medium, one that could successfully replace earlier reproductive techniques such as engraving, mezzotint, and aquatint. So much enthusiasm was mutually generated between the two men that talks got underway about bringing Senefelder to Paris and giving him a government allowance to start up a lithographic printshop.<sup>9</sup> Nothing came of this plan, however, and when Senefelder eventually did found a printshop in Paris in 1818, it was entirely on his own account.<sup>10</sup>

Though Lejeune claims that already by 1811, Denon was busily promoting lithography as an attractive new medium for amateurs, it would seem more likely that that activity began some years later. None of Denon's own lithographs, with the exception of the *Essai*, is dated before 1816. This suggests that Denon's active interest in lithography did not start until the fall of Napoleon had forcibly put an end to his multiple government functions: functions which had allowed him little time for his own artistic pursuits. When Denon re-

signed his official post on 5 October 1815, he resumed the lifestyle of enlightened *amateur* that had been his before his involvement in imperial administration. He had time, once again, to devote himself to his extensive private collections, assembled over some forty years; time, also, to show his treasures to selected visitors, distinguished either by their social status or by their accomplishments in the arts or sciences; and time to engage once more in printmaking, though at this time he substituted the lithographic stone and crayon for the copper plate and etching needle that he had used earlier.<sup>11</sup>

Between 1816 and 1820 Denon produced numerous small lithographic portraits of the cultivated high society that frequented his studio to view his collections and have spirited conversation about art, travel, and literature.<sup>12</sup> It was precisely to this sophisticated public that lithography initially appealed as a new amateur medium, easier to use than etching, which had been the favorite amateur printing technique of the eighteenth century. Indeed, several of the men and women portrayed by Denon practiced lithography themselves. Besides the Countess Mollien [FIG. 2], cited by Lejeune as one of the ladies who studied lithography in Denon's atelier, the sitters for these portraits include Comte Charles-Philibert de Lasteyrie [FIG. 3], who founded one of the first successful lithographic establishments in Paris; the early lithographer Jean-Baptiste Mauzaisse, who appears in a fascinating double portrait with Denon that is signed by both artists simultaneously [FIG. 4]; and Inès d'Esmenard, portrait painter and lithographer. The latter is portrayed in one lithograph while reading in her atelier, and, in another, entitled *The Delights of the Countryside* [FIG. 5], flanking the well-known Irish novelist Lady Sidney Owenson Morgan. Lady Morgan, during a prolonged visit to France, visited Denon's combination home, atelier, and private museum (which was one of the highbrow tourist attractions of Paris), and left the following enthusiastic account:

His house is one of the classic repositories, where the taste and talent of foreign nations pause, in their enlightened pilgrimage to the shrines of genius, to offer their tribute of admiration and respect. It is the little Loretto of the arts! and the high priest frequently supersedes the divinities, at whose altar he presides.<sup>13</sup>

Like countless other women, Lady Morgan had fallen under the spell of Denon who, throughout his life, had charmed women in spite of the fact that at least one of them (the painter Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun) described him as "rather ugly."<sup>14</sup> Denon's own confidence in his ability to charm the ladies, even at an advanced age, is expressed in a lithograph in which he shows himself sketching a young woman while another one looks on in admiration [FIG. 6].

IN ADDITION to some fifty portrait lithographs, Denon produced a small number of prints on allegorical, genre, and landscape themes. Among them the *Allegory on the Blessings of Motherhood* [FIG. 7], dated 1817, is significant for its inscription, "de la lithography de C. de Lasteyrie." It is a further confirmation of the close connection between Denon and the Comte de Lasteyrie, which was so important for the evolution of lithography as an art form. While Lasteyrie was able to provide Denon with choice stones, Denon promoted lithography both as an amateur technique and as a professional artistic print medium, geared *par excellence* to reproductive purposes.<sup>15</sup>



FIG. 2. *The Countess Mollien, née Dutilleul*. 180 × 150 L.



FIG. 3. *Jacques-Charles Brunet and Charles-Philibert du Saillant, Comte de Lasteyrie*. Left portrait: 85 × 65 l; right portrait: 120 × 90 l.

11 On this chapter of Denon's life, see especially Chatelain, *Vivant Denon*: 257–82.

12 Reproduced in Chu, *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 121, part 2, plates 469–522.

13 Lady Sidney Owenson Morgan, *France* (Philadelphia, 1817): 157–58.

14 Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Souvenirs*, edited by Claudine Hermann (Paris, 1983), vol. 1, 246: "... M. Denon, même très jeune, a toujours été assez laid, ce qui, dit on, ne l'a pas empêché de plaire à un grand nombre de jolies femmes."

15 Bouchot, *La Lithographie*: 39.



FIG. 4. Dominique Vivant Denon and Jean-Baptiste Mauzaisse Drawing an Old Woman. 1823. Lithograph jointly produced by Denon and Mauzaisse. 134 × 209 L. London, British Museum.



FIG. 5. *Les Délices de la campagne* (The Delights of the Countryside): Inès d'Esmenard, Lady Sidney Owenson Morgan, and an Unknown Lady. 1816. 202 × 305 L.



FIG. 6. Dominique Vivant Denon and Two Young Women. 164 × 185 L.

FIG. 7. *Allegory on the Blessings of Motherhood*. 1817. 275 × 350 L.



Denon's interest in lithography as a reproductive print medium is exemplified in the *Monuments des arts du dessin*, a four-volume, folio-size history of art illustrated with lithographs reproducing paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, and archaeological and anthropological objects in Denon's own collection. Though published in 1829, four years after his death, the plates for the book were produced during Denon's lifetime and under his close supervision.<sup>16</sup> Following his practice in the production of the *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Egypte*, Denon has attracted a team of the best contemporary printmakers to whom he confided the reproduction of specific art works according to their talents. Among the dozens of early lithographers that he employed were both men and women, including Jean-François Bosio, Louise Bouteiller, Lucienne Collière (who had studied lithography with Denon himself), Willem Hendrik Franquinet (who from 1823 onwards was co-author of the sumptuous *Galerie des peintres*, another

16 As stated specifically by Amaury Duval in his introduction to the *Monuments des arts du dessin*.

early album of reproductive lithographs). François Gounod (father of the composer Charles Gounod), François Heim, Louis Lafitte, Jean-Antoine Laurent, Jean-Baptiste Mauzaisse, and Pierre Vigneron. Several of the technically most challenging plates in the album were done by Denon himself, such as the reproduction of a drawing in black, red, and white chalk attributed to Federico Barocci [FIG. 8].

In addition to its significance as an early example of a large-scale project of reproductive lithography, the *Monuments des arts du dessin* is a fascinating visual document of Vivant Denon's activities as a collector. It speaks of his catholic taste in art, which ranged geographically from the Americas to the Far East and chronologically from prehistory to the eighteenth century. Though it comprised objects of various kinds, the real strength of the collection was in the field of prints and drawings. Denon owned important groups of Guercino and Parmigianino drawings, which came from the celebrated Zanetti and Arundel collections, respectively. Though the Italian masters generally dominated among his drawings, Denon had not neglected the Northern schools and owned groups of drawings by Dürer and Rembrandt.<sup>17</sup> Many specimens of his drawing collection were reproduced in the *Monuments des arts du dessin* and Denon himself made the lithographs after drawings attributed to Barocci, Jacques Courtois, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Bernardo Luini, Andrea Mantegna, Nicolas Poussin, Rembrandt, Sebastiano Ricci, Veronese, Cornelis Visscher [FIG. 9], and Antoine Watteau. The *Monuments* moreover includes Denon's etchings after his collection of drawings by Guercino, which he had made some three decades earlier.

The *Monuments des arts du dessin* was in many ways Denon's legacy to the world, as it was intended to summarize both his activities as collector and connoisseur and the knowledge of art he had acquired over a lifetime. Unfortunately, Denon was not able to write the text for the book, a task that fell to the artist Amaury Duval. One is left to guess what a man with Denon's knowledge and lively writing style (witness the *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Egypte*) might have accomplished in the field of art-historical writing.

While the *Monuments* constitutes Denon's intellectual legacy, a more immediate and personal testament is comprised in the *Allegorical Self-Portrait at Different Ages* [FIG. 10], a sizeable lithograph, measuring 43.8 by 52.5 cm, which describes in visual terms Denon's physical and psychological development in the course of his long life. In it Father Time hovers over a winter landscape, carrying over his scythe a banner containing self-portraits ranging from Denon's infancy to old age. Handing an hourglass to a small putto at the top of the scythe, Father Time is pulled back by a little Cupid at the other side. This metaphor of time, old age, and death arrested by love is repeated in the winter landscape down below, where a naked putto embraces an old man, possibly Denon himself. Thus the *Allegorical Self-Portrait* gives us a glimpse of a lifetime spent in the spirit of love—of women, of art, of travel, of the new and unexpected, of life itself. □

This article is dedicated to the memory of Walter L. Strauss, who first aroused my interest in Vivant Denon as a printmaker. It is based on research in Paris and the United States, made possible by a grant from the Seton Hall University Faculty Research Council in the summer of 1984.



FIG. 8. *Head of a Monk*. After a drawing attributed to Federico Barocci. From *Monuments des arts du dessin*. 308 × 229 L.



FIG. 9. *Young Girl with Cap*. After a drawing attributed to Cornelis Visscher. From *Monuments des arts du dessin*. 185 × 180 L.



FIG. 10. *Allegorical Self-Portrait at Different Ages*. 1818. 438 × 525 L.

17 On Denon's art collections, see the three-volume catalogue of the auction held after his death by Duchesne Aîné, J.-J. Dubois, and A.-N. Pérignon, *Description des objets d'arts [sic] qui composent le cabinet de feu M. Le Baron V. Denon* (Paris, 1826). See also Charles Blanc, *Le Trésor de la curiosité*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1858): 361–66; and Ulric Richard-Desaix, *La Relique de Molière du cabinet du Baron Vivant-Denon* (Paris, 1880).



FIG. 1. **Johnny Bulun Bulun** (born 1946).  
*Sacred Waterholes Surrounded by Totemic Animals of the Artist's Clan*, 1981.  
Ochres on eucalyptus bark, 135.5 × 73 cm.

# The Potential of AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL PRINTMAKING

Pat Gilmour

ALTHOUGH THE ART OF THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINE is probably the oldest in the world and is thought to have been in existence for at least 30,000 years, Aboriginal printmaking is very young. If one discounts the stencils made by blowing mouthfuls of liquid pigment around hands or objects held against a cave wall,<sup>1</sup> and the crayoned drawings made by Aborigines specifically for publication in books by anthropologists,<sup>2</sup> the earliest examples of Aboriginal printmaking date from around 1970. The emergence of this branch of Aboriginal art can be related to the steady growth of white interest in Aboriginal painting, coupled with the political campaign for Land Rights. The production of prints has been stimulated by a number of artists, writers, and craft advisers, often attached to missions or government settlements, who across the years have mounted educational and marketing programs for Aborigines. More recently it has also been helped along by the spread of information: in 1987, for example, Roger Butler, curator of Australian prints at the National Gallery in Canberra, published the first historical account of Aboriginal printmaking.<sup>3</sup> As president of the Print Council of Australia, he also initiated an Australia-wide exhibition of Aboriginal graphic art<sup>4</sup> which followed a show of art by urban Aborigines in 1986.<sup>5</sup>

In 1984, Theo Tremblay, an American artist from Boston who lectures in printmaking at the Canberra School of Art, asked at a conference on Aboriginal art whether anyone had tried to promote printmaking.<sup>6</sup> He later reported that the replies he received ranged through "varying degrees of indifference to outright hostility."<sup>7</sup> Although he learned that textile printing had been encouraged in two locations,<sup>8</sup> and that Chips MacKinolty, a screenprinter from a Sydney Poster Collective had, like others from the same group, advocated postermaking as a social and political vehicle for Aboriginal communication, Tremblay nevertheless felt that there was "little encouragement from the establishment élite to promote Aboriginal prints in the market place." He put this down to an unwillingness to experiment other than with art forms felt to be "genuinely traditional." Nevertheless, Tremblay's interest and belief in the potential of Aboriginal prints was such that by 1986 he had helped with the production of twenty-two editions.

In fact, even bark painting, to which the prints of traditional Aborigines are often related, is thought by some scholars to be a relatively new development in Aboriginal art, although nobody is really sure of its origins. While many museums possess artifacts made by the first Australians—among them subtly shaped wooden dishes, carved weapons, and bags of fiber and feathers crafted with a fine sensitivity to the relation between decoration and form—ritually significant Aboriginal art has been for the most part uncollectible. Ab-

1 Such stencils abound throughout Australia. Over six hundred, probably several thousand years old, are to be found in one cave in Queensland's Carnarvon Ranges. See Frederick D. McCarthy, *Australian Aboriginal Rock Art* (Sydney: Australian Museum, 1958): 80.

2 The anthropologists C. P. Mountford and R. M. Berndt both gave Aborigines paper and crayons to make drawings for subsequent reproduction.

3 Butler's article, "From Dreamtime to Machine Time," appeared in a special issue of the journal of the Print Council of Australia devoted to Aborigines: *Imprint*, vol. 21, 3–4 (October 1986): 6–14. His title was borrowed from a painting and an exhibition of work by the urban Aboriginal artist Trevor Nickolls, shown at the Canberra Theatre Gallery in 1974. Butler also mounted the first historical exhibition of Aboriginal printmaking at the Australian National Gallery's Drill Hall Gallery in late 1986.

4 Curated by Chris Watson and Jeffrey Samuels, *Aboriginal Australian Views in Print and Poster* began touring Australia in July 1987. The show will have been seen in over a dozen locations by the end of its run, which included the Commonwealth Institute, London, in May and June of 1988. The exhibition, mounted by the Print Council of Australia with the help of the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council, was reviewed by Jennifer Isaacs, "Views in Print and Poster," in *Australian and International Art Monthly*, no. 9 (April 1988): 22–23.

5 *Urban Koories: Two Exhibitions of Urban Aboriginal Art*, Workshop Arts Centre, Willoughby, 23 May–12 July 1986.

6 The three-day biennial conference, "Aboriginal Arts in Contemporary Australia," was mounted by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in May 1984 at the Australian National Gallery, Canberra.

7 Theo Tremblay, "Aboriginal Artists at the Canberra School of Art," *Imprint* (as in note 3): 15–16.

8 Bede Tungutalum and Giovanni Tipungwuti established Tiwi Designs on Bathurst Island in 1970; they were helped initially with block-prints by the teacher Madeline Clair and later with screenprints by Ray Young. The Ernabella Workshop in South Australia was established in 1949 and is now celebrated for its batiks on silk.



FIG. 2. Anthony Tipungwuti, Bathurst Island (photograph reproduced from brochure published by Aboriginal Arts Australia, Ltd.).

origines have always been more interested in spirit than matter, believing it is in the act of making an image that power is harnessed, rather than in the end product. Even the elaborate painted sculptural burial poles of the Tiwi are left out in the elements to decay, while the majority of other aesthetic manifestations are short-lived, having considerable affinity with the process art and earthworks of the 1970s. Examples of ephemeral Aboriginal art include the intricate designs of the north, laboriously painted onto the chest of initiates, the extraordinarily inventive headdresses and body designs contrived for ceremonial participants [FIG. 2], elaborate oral song-cycles, and the huge but expendable ground drawings of the Central Desert, composed for a single event from carefully arranged clusters of bird-down, seeds, or blossoms.

Although modern substitutes have been gradually adopted since the war, bark can be seen as the Aborigine's paper. It is stripped from the stringybark eucalyptus tree, uncurled over heat, flattened with stones, smoothed by sharkskin, and then painted with colors obtained from greatly prized red and yellow ochres. The palette can also include rarer hues such as the deep plum shade derived from hematite; while white is provided by pipeclay or gypsum; and black by charcoal, soot, or manganese ore. These colors are ground, mixed with water, and fixed by juices traditionally taken from wild orchids, gulls' eggs, or plant resins. Even since Windsor and Newton's alternative solutions became known, bark painters have continued to apply broad areas of paint with brushes of frayed or chewed bark, fine lines by 10 cm lengths of fiber or human hair fixed to a twig, and dots by thin sticks softened at one end; they have used these implements in printmaking as well.

The earliest record of a decorated bark was made by a member of a French expedition in the first decade of the nineteenth century, following the accidental discovery of "rude charcoal drawings" on a shelter over a Tasmanian burial place.<sup>9</sup> The oldest work to have survived is a rather rudimentary example which was once part of a temporary dwelling. First smoked to make it sooty and then scratched with a design recording everyday incident, it was collected "before 1876" and is now in the National Museum of Victoria. During the twentieth century successive anthropological expeditions lodged collections of bark paintings in various museums. In 1912, Sir Baldwin Spencer even commissioned a number carried out in the famous X-ray style of Arnhem Land; he paid for those measuring one by two feet (30.5 × 61 cm) with a 1½-penny stick of tobacco and those measuring up to three by six feet (91.5 × 183 cm) with three sticks. Beautiful though early twentieth century bark paintings often are, they do not match more recent examples in sophistication and finish—a condition tempered by white expectation and fashioned with museums and markets in mind [FIG. 1 and 3]. The opposite can also be true, in that perfunctory designs are mass-produced especially for tourists, in a size aimed at the average suitcase.

THE ISLAND CONTINENT OF AUSTRALIA is so vast that its indigenous art embraces a huge range of imagery.<sup>10</sup> There are paintings based on rock art, such as the mischievous stick-like Mimi figures of the north, or the mouthless Wandjina cloud spirits found in Western Australia. In prolific Arnhem Land several distinct styles flourish: the X-ray paintings in which ritually significant internal organs are accurately depicted within a schematized outline of a fish or animal; the

9 For a short history of bark painting, see Helen M. Groger-Wurm, "Historical Records of Paintings on Bark," chapter 1 in *Australian Aboriginal Bark Paintings and Their Mythological Interpretation*, vol. 1: Eastern Arnhem Land (Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies no. 30, 1973): 1–5.

10 The various styles of Aboriginal art are identified and attractively illustrated in the souvenir book by Wally Caruana, *Australian Aboriginal Art* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1987).

fascinating blend of figuration and abstraction which locks totemic animals, birds, and other creatures into the dense and intricate fields of cross-hatched patterning related to body painting and known as *rrark*; and the more openly drawn figures with dotted and dashed infilling effected by islanders off the northern Australian coastline. The commercial success of bark painting in these diverse styles paved the way for acrylic paintings related to the ground art of the Central Desert peoples. These paintings were first made by Papunya artists and, like prints, they date from around 1970.<sup>11</sup> At first glance they appear to be allover abstractions, but in fact they comprise about fourteen basic graphic elements, each stereotype capable of representing a range of natural phenomena. Composed mainly of dots, the almost Pointillist graphic system can be used in an infinite number of ways, for each symbol is interpreted according to its context and a set, say, of concentric circles is variously capable of indicating a camp site, a breast, a rock hole, or a hill.<sup>12</sup> Based on a hunter's-eye view of ancestral dreaming sites, the paintings often have human or animal tracks threaded through them. In 1983, the practice of acrylic painting spread, with stunningly beautiful effect, to the Warlpiri Aborigines at Yuendumu. They were encouraged by the local headmaster to paint "the true stories of the Dreamtime" on the school doors, one of their aims being to save Warlpiri children from becoming like white people.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the total secrecy customarily surrounding sacred designs, in the years since white settlement bark paintings have gradually become the most potent means by which traditional Aborigines can convey their ideas to non-Aboriginal people. In some communities the paintings have become an important source of income, enabling traditional life to continue by the purchase of four-wheel-drive Land Cruisers which are coveted, not as status symbols, but as a way for fewer Aborigines to carry out the daunting responsibility of caring for the land.<sup>14</sup> Traditional Aborigines believe that different images were given to the first people by creation ancestors and that these images are owned by clans with title to a particular "dreaming" or mythological origin, and so can only properly be reproduced by those inheriting them. Before white settlement disrupted Aboriginal society, there were no specialized groups of people classed as artists. All adults were expected to reproduce designs in a manner which matched the extent of their initiation to ritual knowledge, but some designs were so secret that if by mistake the uninitiated saw them, they could be put to death. As Aboriginal society has been eroded by the impact of white invasion, however, Aborigines have realized that all knowledge of their beliefs may be lost if they do not allow them to be recorded. Persuaded that a complete picture of their culture will only emerge if its profounder aspects are also made known, Aborigines have permitted sacred images to be published and have in certain circumstances provided an interpretation of their innermost meaning rather than the usual "just-so story."<sup>15</sup>

Aborigines believe that the inanimate features of the landscape, as well as the flora and fauna, were created by Dreamtime Ancestors. After they had completed their task, they sank back into the earth, leaving the environment eternally imbued with their life-giving powers—an occurrence which rendered the land rich in symbolic potential. Each Aborigine is related at conception to one of these creation ancestors, whose powers are invoked and whose laws are obeyed by the ritual personification and reenactment of their deeds. In a fascinating

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12 This fascinating use of symbols has been analyzed by the American, Nancy Munn, one of the most subtle anthropologists to have written about Australian Aboriginal thought. Her study in the "Symbol, Myth and Ritual" series—*Walbiri Iconography: Graphic Representation and Cultural Symbolism in a Central Australian Society* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1973)—links the ritualistic use of graphic symbols by men with drawings made in sand by women telling stories.

13 In 1983, the headmaster of a school in Yuendumu in the Western Desert, suggested that senior men from the Warlpiri clan should paint the local school doors with traditional designs. The elders grasped the opportunity to preserve for their children "our Law and our Dreamings," and a school of painting has since grown out of the enterprise. The thirty superb designs were published in *Warlukurlangu Artists—Kuruwarri—Yuendumu Doors* (Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1987). The book illustrates the doors with their accompanying stories in Warlpiri and English, as told by the painters themselves. The book's postscript is a memorable essay by Eric Michaels, "Western Desert Sandpainting and Post-Modernism": 135–43.

14 Michaels (as in note 13: 139) relates that when the Warlpiri repainted the Yuendumu door images on canvas so as to receive adequate financial return for them, the price they asked was two four-wheel drive Toyotas, thus to facilitate access to their land. Of the traditional artists mentioned in this article, Enland Bangala owns a four-wheel drive vehicle, Jimmy Pike has a second-hand Land Cruiser, and Johnny Bulun Bulun is saving up for one.

15 Foreword by N. W. G. Macintosh in Groger-Wurm (as in note 9): vi. This book, not released to commercial booksellers, is sold only to "named individuals of repute or of academic standing," who sign an undertaking that they will handle the material "with great discretion," making sure discussion about it does not cause distress to an Aborigine without the correct standing in his society.



FIG. 3. England Bangala (born c. 1925). *Bones*, 1983. Ochres on eucalyptus bark, 104.5 × 49 cm.

essay about subject/object transformations in Aboriginal mythology, Nancy Munn has interpreted the tendency to equate people with things not as a confusion of thought, but as a subtle form of socialization through which the individual is related to the collective socio-moral order.<sup>16</sup> Groups which care for a particular territory believe they inherit the responsibility to do so; alienation from the land and cessation of its associated ritual, therefore, amounts to desecration and a violation of the law. As Stanner made clear in *After the Dreaming*: "When we took what we call 'land,' we took what to them meant hearth, home, the source and locus of life."<sup>17</sup>

Before this pattern of life was systematically destroyed by white expropriation, it seems to have offered Aborigines a remarkable degree of freedom, with an emphasis on self-reliance and mutual aid. The clans had no conception of the state, in the sense of an institution with a monopoly on force. Individuals did not narrowly specialize in one of life's tasks, but enjoyed an all-round activity. Despite each group's title to a particular parcel of the landscape for ritual purposes, there seems to have been unimpeded access to natural resources, for complex kinship laws placed each clan in an exchange network in which "egalitarian mutuality" was the governing principle. Even religion did not produce an authoritarian priesthood, since ritual involved the entire body of initiated males.<sup>18</sup>

Although many black city-dwellers have necessarily adopted white conventions, the prints of traditional Aborigines tend to be based either on traditions in woodcarving or on bark-painting methods adapted to graphic processes. Screenprinting is often found where the decorative arts have been fostered, and even etching has been used once or twice. The first time may have been in 1976, when Jorg Schmeisser—then on a visit to Australia from Hamburg, but who later became head of printmaking at the Canberra School of Art—visited the Northern Territory and met Albert Worotjima, an Aborigine who was assistant to the curator George Chaloupka. Schmeisser recalls that Worotjima was more interested in the distance from Nazareth to Jerusalem than he was in printmaking. Nevertheless, the two men exchanged information and Worotjima shared the techniques of bark painting while Schmeisser provided a drypoint tool with which the Aborigine incised a tiny image of animals and fish caught in an almost Rayonist system of linear hatching. Schmeisser had to print the plate later when he had access to a press. A similar event took place in Canberra in 1978, when Schmeisser worked with three Aborigines visiting the Australian National University; they drew in crayon on zinc which Schmeisser subsequently etched and printed for them.

AMONG THE EARLIEST PRINTS to have been made by Aborigines were those initiated by John Rudder, then a missionary on Elcho Island in the Arafura Sea. In 1970 he introduced an Adult Literacy Program, and conceived the idea of making a book of Aboriginal stories as an aid to learning, which his students would illustrate. Several myths were dictated to him in Gubabingu, which he recorded on tape and then transcribed. The illustrations were cut by three Aborigines—Mattjuwi, Manydarri, and Botu. In Elcho Island there is a tradition of carved smoking pipes, made by "V" cuts into soft hibiscus wood. Rudder gave blocks of linoleum to his artist/students and showed them that cutting into the lino with safety razor blades was similar to the carving of their pipes. Isolation and lack of suitable materials prevented him from obtaining satisfactory impressions from the blocks

16 Nancy D. Munn, "The Transformation of Subjects into Objects in Walbiri and Pitjantjatjara Myth," in Ronald M. Berndt, ed., *Australian Aboriginal Anthropology: Modern Studies in the Social Anthropology of the Australian Aborigines* (Perth: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and the University of Western Australia Press, 1970): 141–63.

17 W. E. H. Stanner, *After the Dreaming*, Boyer Lecture (Sydney: ABC, 1968).

18 This necessarily brief vignette about Aboriginal society is taken largely from Kenneth Maddock, *The Australian Aborigines: A Portrait of Their Society* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972).

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12 This fascinating use of symbols has been analyzed by the American, Nancy Munn, one of the most subtle anthropologists to have written about Australian Aboriginal thought. Her study in the "Symbol, Myth and Ritual" series—*Walbiri Iconography: Graphic Representation and Cultural Symbolism in a Central Australian Society* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1973)—links the ritualistic use of graphic symbols by men with drawings made in sand by women telling stories.

13 In 1983, the headmaster of a school in Yuendumu in the Western Desert, suggested that senior men from the Warlpiri clan should paint the local school doors with traditional designs. The elders grasped the opportunity to preserve for their children "our Law and our Dreamings," and a school of painting has since grown out of the enterprise. The thirty superb designs were published in *Warlukurlangu Artists—Kurruwarri—Yuendumu Doors* (Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1987). The book illustrates the doors with their accompanying stories in Warlpiri and English, as told by the painters themselves. The book's postscript is a memorable essay by Eric Michaels, "Western Desert Sandpainting and Post-Modernism": 135–43.

14 Michaels (as in note 13: 139) relates that when the Warlpiri repainted the Yuendumu door images on canvas so as to receive adequate financial return for them, the price they asked was two four-wheel drive Toyotas, thus to facilitate access to their land. Of the traditional artists mentioned in this article, Enland Bangala owns a four-wheel drive vehicle, Jimmy Pike has a second-hand Land Cruiser, and Johnny Bulun Bulun is saving up for one.

15 Foreword by N. W. G. Macintosh in Groger-Wurm (as in note 9): vi. This book, not released to commercial booksellers, is sold only to "named individuals of repute or of academic standing," who sign an undertaking that they will handle the material "with great discretion," making sure discussion about it does not cause distress to an Aborigine without the correct standing in his society.

at the time. In 1985, however, he returned to Canberra, heard of Theo Tremblay's work with Aborigines, and handed the as yet unprinted blocks over to him. Tremblay made one set on good mouldmade rag paper. A second set, now in the National Gallery, was printed on a handmade paper, pearly and light as a water biscuit, which Tremblay ran up himself from cotton rag and pampas grass. Although a Gubabingu grammar had already been written when Rudder was stationed on Elcho Island, the texts he transcribed were not then translated into English. If time permits, this may yet be done so that the illustrated stories can be published. *Ngalindi* by Manydjarri [FIG. 4] tells of the Moon-man and the origin of death.<sup>19</sup> Alinda's sons had found food, but had brought back none for their father, so, very angry, he asked them to test a large fish trap he had been making. When they got into it, he tied the neck of the trap and drowned them. Later his wives returned from gathering yams and deduced from tracks what had happened. They set fire to the house in which Alinda was sleeping, but even as he burnt Alinda returned to life, becoming first a thin crescent and then a large silvery sphere. According to Rudder, the moral of the story is "Feed your father!" According to the anthropologist C. P. Mountford, the Moon-man announced that while all other creatures, once dead, would never come to life again, he, although waxing and waning in power, would live forever. As far as is known, the Elcho Islanders have made no more prints, but strong block printing traditions, which can be locally controlled, have sprung up in other parts of Australia. Since it was introduced to them in 1982 by Adrian Marrie, a student at Flinders University, Adelaide, Indulkana women printmakers have used linoleum blocks to make complex, abstract, multicolor designs.<sup>20</sup>

The few Aborigines who have begun to explore graphic processes in depth—ultimately the only way to make prints of consequence—are either those who live in cities and have access to printing equipment, or traditional Aborigines whose growing fame in bark painting allows them to bridge the gap between their ancestral lands and the modern world. While many of the less complicated processes have resulted in striking images—like Sally Morgan's monochrome print *Before the Dancing*, used on the cover of the 1987 exhibition catalogue—others have benefitted from more specialized techniques, papers, or printing expertise. This can present problems, in the sense that Aborigines have an increasing need to control their own destinies without white help or interference. At the same time, there can be no greater cultural division than that between the tribal Aborigine and Japanese or Western artists with access to sophisticated facilities. Moreover, if their graphic art eventually achieves extensive circulation beyond Australasia, Aboriginal prints will have to make their way in a world where the collaborative workshop has become the norm. In fact, thanks to Tremblay, some of the best Aboriginal prints in Australia have already been made in conditions that closely resemble the European or American workshop where the image maker and a master printer sensitive to the artist's aesthetic collaborate with one another. Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to look ahead to the day when Aboriginal master printers will train at Tamarind!

The woman artist Banduk Marika, who comes from Yirrkala in Arnhem Land, is a fascinating example of someone who has retained firm links with the traditions of her people, yet has also spent long periods in one or another of the state capitals [FIG. 5]. Daughter of a famous Riradjingu painter, she was encouraged to begin printmaking



FIG. 4. Manydjarri. *Ngalindi* [Moon], 1970, printed 1985-86. Linocut, 12.5 × 21 cm (overall).



FIG. 5. Banduk Marika working on a lino block at Canberra School of Art.

19 C. P. Mountford, "The Moon-man Alinda, and the Origin of Death," *Before Time Began* (Melbourne: Nelson, 1976).

20 See Janet Maughan, "Indulkana Prints," *Imprint* (as in note 3): 16-17.



FIG. 6. **Banduk Marika** (born 1954). *Djanda and the Sacred Waterhole*. Color linocut, 53 × 30 cm.

by Jennifer Isaacs, a white writer of popular books on Aboriginal culture.<sup>21</sup> Banduk Marika's imagery is often related to the totems of her family and the myth of the Djanggawu creators, and she claims entitlement through her mother to use heron, crocodile, octopuses, and squid "as long as I do it in my own way." Although as a female she is without access to sacred designs, the imagery she employs, often within a framing rectangle typical of the district from which she comes, has a tangential connection with bark paintings done by the men of her clan. Without specialized assistance, she can produce monochrome images of great liveliness, such as the scene of men catching turtle in a sea abounding in great moonfish. Perhaps her most beautiful print, however, is the color linocut of the goanna Djanda at the sacred waterhole—yet another image made with Theo Tremblay's help [FIG. 6]. What is particularly fascinating is the way the color—printed in black, ochre, red, and grey from two blocks, each cut and imposed more than once—lends itself to the build-up of the cross-hatched patterning, or *rrark*. In traditional bark painting, the colors of the *rrark* must be ordered in a particular way and nobody can use another person's design. The technique Tremblay devised, however, is exquisitely appropriate for the task, and one would like to see the men from the same areas as Banduk Marika making prints as successful as the beautiful example she has pioneered.

In 1984, Johnny Bulun Bulun and England Bangala—two tribal Aborigines who live on outstations in Central Arnhem Land—traveled to Canberra on a trip organized by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs which included making prints with Theo Tremblay. Bulun Bulun had worked on white territory before, and even had prior experience as a graphic artist, having been commissioned in 1979 by the Port Jackson Press to make screenprints with Larry Rawlings at Mal Studio in Melbourne.<sup>22</sup> A couple of years before that, he painted a fascinating mural incorporating some of his most important totems on a wall of the Communications Centre of the Foreign Office in the Federal capital. Nothing could better symbolize the exquisite incongruity of Australia's cultural diversity than this encyclopaedic rendering of the iconography of Bulun Bulun's clan, painted in earth colors with homemade brushes on an undulating surface of reinforced concrete trying to imitate bark in a vast room full of whirring computers.<sup>23</sup> Unlike Bulun Bulun, the older artist England Bangala had never been to a city before and therefore had to cope not only with the sobering experiences like traveling in a lift, but with making a print for the first time.

LITHOGRAPHY is the technique about which Tremblay is most passionate, so it is appropriate that in his collaboration with these two artists, he became a midwife at the birth of the most successful Aboriginal lithography to have taken place in Australia.<sup>24</sup> In preparation, he had investigated the techniques of bark painting so as to devise the most sympathetic ways for the Arnhem Landers to work on stone. He later wrote of his strategy:

In the normal routine of developing a bark painting the artist generally silhouettes the main characters and later builds up both positive and negative space with crosshatching and dots. Oleified bitumen was used to paint in the solid black forms. Gum arabic was used to paint in spots and crosshatched lines, and a drypoint tool was also used in some of the smaller prints to suggest crosshatching. The red and yellow ochres normally present in the paintings were translated as greys using air brush and rubbing

21 In particular, *Australian Dreaming: 40,000 Years of Aboriginal History and Australia's Living Heritage* (Sydney: Lansdowne, 1980 and 1984, respectively).

22 According to Butler, in *Imprint* (as in note 3): 9, the screenprints made by Bulun Bulun and David Milaybuma were produced in editions of 90 and marketed by American Express. Although information was sent to 22,000 card holders, only 54 prints sold; the most popular image was Bulun Bulun's *Flying Foxes*. The Aborigines applied blockout directly to the screens using twig brushes.

23 Bulun Bulun's Canberra mural *Djakaldjirrparr*, named after a place in the Arafura swamp, is exhaustively described by Joseph Reser in the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies Newsletter*, new series no. 8 (June 1977): 79–83.

24 In 1978 Dinny Nolan Jampijinpa of the Central Desert produced a five-color lithograph at the Victorian College of the Arts for the *Commonwealth Print Portfolio* produced by the Canadian government. Jampijinpa afterwards commented that the print was "white man's art." When editioned in Canada, two of the plates had to be screenprinted because of printing difficulties. See Butler, *Imprint* (as in note 3): 9.

techniques with lithographic tusche, and gum arabic as stenciling liquid. The initial resistance of the artists was soon overcome as they proceeded to work. England Bangala and Johnny Bulun Bulun chose to work on the floor, rotating the stone. . . .<sup>25</sup>

Although both artists come from central Arnhem Land and share Maningrida as their nearest Craft Centre, the district it serves covers some 10,000 square kilometers.<sup>26</sup> Thus Bulun Bulun lives at Gamardi, speaks Ganalbingu, and is a member of the Bangardi subsection and Jiridja patrimoiety of the Gurumba Gurumba clan, while Bangala lives at Gochan Jiny-Jirra, speaks Gun-nartpa, and belongs to the Warridj subsection of the An-ngulinj clan.<sup>27</sup> Johnny Bulun Bulun also speaks English and has signed some of his prints, while Bangala communicated with Tremblay through his interpreter, the craft adviser, Charlie Godjuwa, and used a cross as his mark. Each artist made two prints—a small monochrome lithograph published by the Australian National University in twenty impressions, and a second, larger, and more complex image. Of the smaller prints, Johnny Bulun Bulun's "Dreamtime hunting expedition" takes place after the long-necked turtle Barnda created the world. Jiridja man is dreaming of the ibis spirit sitting in the tree, while Jiridja woman is gathering tucker among the wild yams and water lilies, accompanied by a child and the dingo dog. In Bulun Bulun's larger print [FIG. 8], a considerable tour de force, the snake spirit Gunungu (akin to the black-headed python) emerges from a sacred water pool to pursue a kangaroo whose tracks, droppings, and bones are depicted, together with plants and other creatures on which the snake preys, including a goanna.<sup>28</sup> The tonal grey used for the chief protagonists—figures that would have been yellow ochre in a bark painting—were created by gum stenciling, followed by airbrushing. While the edition of fifty, made for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, was printed on Fabriano paper, eight artist's proofs were imposed on a paper made from bleached native bullrushes, specially commissioned by Tremblay from his colleague Gaynor Cardew. The effect of the powdery grey animals framed by a tracery of black bones, lizards, and plant forms silhouetted against the soft neutral of the paper is positively magical. Bulun Bulun permitted the printers at the School of Art workshop to emboss each impression with a stamp made from his fingerprint, which released him from remaining in Canberra until the completion of editioning.<sup>29</sup>

England Bangala's small print deals with subject matter similar to that in the small print by Bulun Bulun. Two creator women with their dog are seen in conjunction with yams, a frog, and a form which could be a nest of eggs, or perhaps a waterhole impregnated with spirit essence imparted by the digging stick one of the women is carrying [FIG. 9]. Bangala's second print began sumptuously in rich shades of reddish-tan and black, and was intended to receive additional printings of yellow ochre and cream. Its story features snakes, turtles, and a water bird wreathed in a framework of plant forms embellished with *rrark* or dotted with plant seeds. Tremblay tells an amusing story of the print's genesis: Bangala built it up in stages, adding successive colors to a working proof. Having drawn the first two colors directly on stone, the artist was painting the progressive proof to indicate the shapes for the third stone, and painting dots in cream-colored gum arabic to be transferred to the fourth. Having completed the task while Tremblay's back was turned and doubtless thinking the work was finished, Bangala sold it for twenty-five dollars to a visitor from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs who happened



FIG. 7. Johnny Bulun Bulun working on a bark painting at Canberra School of Art.



FIG. 8. Johnny Bulun Bulun (born 1946). *Gunungu*, 1983. Color lithograph, 56 × 40 cm.

25 Tremblay, "Aboriginal Artists": 16.

26 Charlie Godjuwa, interviewed in the *Canberra Times*, 8 May 1984.

27 The spelling of Aboriginal proper names is a nightmare; no two anthropologists agree and after heroic effort all attempt at consistency has been abandoned here.

28 Johnny Bulun Bulun gave these details to Theo Tremblay in an interview, 11 May 1984.

29 Although student assistants, such as Suzanne McCorquodale and Elizabeth Kruger, were paid for printing for Aborigines at Canberra Art School out of money supplied by those giving commissions, Tremblay has made it a point of honor not to profit from the assistance he gives. He retains occasional printer's proofs for himself or for the school and occasionally sells one to refund the cost of materials, or to pay for special papers, and so on.

to be passing through. Tremblay had to pursue the purchaser and buy it back for the same amount so that he could try and complete it! Unfortunately, the time wasted in these tricky negotiations prevented the last two stones from being realized before the artist had to leave; the stillborn print, destined to remain a monotype, is now in the collection of the Australian National Gallery. Despite this hiccup, the remarkable facility shown by both these artists on their first essay into lithography augurs well for future Aboriginal involvement.

GIVEN THE EXTRAORDINARY BEAUTY and popularity of their paintings, the prints of the Central Desert area have so far been somewhat disappointing. One can only conjecture what glorious results might ensue if an entrepreneur like Ken Tyler existed in Australia, ready to invest limitless capital and imaginative technical expertise in graphic art as large in scale and broad in conception as the paintings that have made famous the names of Michael Tjakamarra Nelson or Paddy Japaljarri Stewart. Recent works by Tjakamarra grace both Canberra's new Parliament building and one of the foyers of the Sydney Opera House,<sup>30</sup> while Japaljarri Stewart helped paint the Yuendumu doors.<sup>31</sup>

The best known printmaker in Western Australia is Jimmy Pike of the Great Sandy Desert, a traditional artist whose life story proves the old adage that truth is stranger than fiction. Pike, who never went to school and who reached adolescence before seeing white people, spent his childhood hunting and gathering with the Walmajarri clan to which he belongs. Today, however, he has become the progenitor of "Desert Designs," which, having already taken Japan by storm, is expected to make three million Australian dollars in the coming year.<sup>32</sup> In 1981, Pike was sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering a fellow Aborigine during a drunken brawl. While incarcerated in Fremantle Prison, he discovered a talent for painting which so impressed his two art teachers and a female psychologist at the jail that they helped him promote his work. Since granting a license to a Sydney clothing manufacturer to use his designs—which thus ironically make the transition from body art to body decoration—Pike's work can now be found on T-shirts, sportswear, swimwear, and fashion fabrics. In 1986, the burgeoning artist was released on parole to a camp at the edge of the Great Sandy Desert. Here, the English-born psychologist, named Patricia Lowe, decided to spend her life with him. They camp on a sand dune in complete isolation, 180 km from the tiny town of Fitzroy Crossing, cooking on an open fire and enduring temperatures of 46° C (115° F) while plagued by clouds of flies. Untroubled by success and slightly contemptuous of "white fella business," Pike has never bothered to attend the opening of any of his exhibitions. Wearing second-hand clothes or traveling in his second-hand Land Cruiser, when he is not making art he goes hunting for wallabies, feral cats, goannas, and bush turkeys, or visits the waterholes of his youth. According to Patricia Lowe, he is able to "find his way unerringly to seemingly obscure spots in the middle of what most white people would consider Nowhere, places he may only have visited once or twice in the course of his travels more than thirty years ago."<sup>33</sup> Meantime, Pike's companion, who plans to write a book about him, spends her time helping him write the titles and stories accompanying his work, as well as providing information to Walmajarri linguists compiling a dictionary of the tongue.

Like his "Desert Designs," Pike's fine art linocuts are translated into

30 Tjakamarra's floor mosaic in front of the new Parliament building in Canberra was the only work of art to be mentioned by the Queen when she opened the building in May 1988. His 6-by-33-foot mural in Sydney Opera House is pictured and discussed by him in an interview with Ulli Beier in *Australian and International Art Monthly*, no. 11 (June 1988): n.p. (inside covers).

31 See note 13: 9, 11. "A group of old men worked at the school: two Japaljarri, two Jupurrurlas and a Jungarrayi . . . Whoever owns the Dreaming will be *kirda*, the other group will work for them as *kurdungurlu*. . . ." These words, roughly translated as "owners" and "managers," indicate that the Aborigines clearly have a sophisticated collaborative system.

32 Jennifer Isaacs, "Success and Jimmy Pike," in *Australian and International Art Monthly*, no. 8 (March 1988): 21. This article includes a personal account by Patricia Lowe.

33 Patricia Lowe has published several accounts of life with Jimmy Pike, among them, "Jimmy Pike the Person" (see note 32: 21, 23), and "Love in the Desert," *Melbourne Sunday Observer* (25 October 1987): 13.

screenprints back in the city [FIG. 10]. His images are so strong that the force with which he gouges his blocks survives the transposition into the somewhat blander process, although one is left with a residual regret about the unavoidable reduction of their immediacy. An occurrence in 1985 throws an interesting sidelight on the problems of image ownership, for the Australian National Gallery bought a complete exhibition of Pike's prints, including one of a spirit dog which was not his to use. This print is now wrapped and stored at the bottom of a solander box with a stern injunction that it must on no account be unwrapped or exhibited.

Pike's subject matter is often threatening: for example, one print shows invisible snake-spirit men who can make you sick and bring you out in lumps, another tells the story of a dog with two names:

Dog lives at this waterhole, his name Walyparti or Nagalyngaly i.e. he has two names. When he is in the cave/waterhole, these two men make a fire far away. The smoke come to him, he smell it. He got up, stretched his back. He see it in the moon where the fire comes from. He set off. When he got close he go slow, crawl along real slow. Two men after killing kangaroo were lying down sleeping at night. He sneak up. He go up and grab them in his jaws. He drag them all the way back to his waterhole. Dragged them long way (maybe 200 miles) through the sandhills all the way to Milkarra.

You can hear him today, crunching bones down there in his hole.<sup>34</sup>

THE EXCLUSIVE TITLE to particular images has distressing implications for urban Aborigines who, unlike their tribal brothers and sisters, face the results of dispossession in a kind of cultural no-man's-land. The most traditional Aborigine, of course, cannot remain petrified in a pre-settlement state, but the city Aborigine, ripped out of context, is compelled far more ruthlessly to abandon an unknown heritage and come to terms with a white aesthetic. One can therefore sympathize with the dismayed reaction to a remark in Butler's history of Aboriginal printmaking, which three Aborigines discussed in a recent interview.<sup>35</sup> Butler, reporting the remarks of others rather than reflecting his own opinion, commented that the urban Koories were often criticized for not being the rightful owners of the images they used, and were sometimes regarded as "little more than fashionable image scavengers." Raymond Meeks, an Aborigine with an art training as exhaustive as that of any white student—and who holds a B.A. from the Art Institute in Sydney to boot—often blends several different Aboriginal images in one picture and describes what he is doing as "hunting for lost pieces of myself."<sup>36</sup> Meeks's powerful adaptation of a traditional Mimi figure demonstrates his consummate artistry [FIG. 12], and, as he justifiably comments with Post-Modern appropriations in mind, "... if you want to call any artist a scavenger, you've got to call the whole art world scavengers of information and images. So why bring this up in relation to people whose culture has been taken away from them anyway?"<sup>37</sup>

The idea that your force is weakened if others use your images is, nevertheless, a very real Aboriginal concern. Banduk's famous artist brother Wandjuk Marika, a founder-member of the Aboriginal Artists' Agency which now safeguards black copyright, could not paint for several years after discovering his work printed on tea towels without his permission. Similarly, Tjakamarra, while expressing sorrow "for the people in Sydney [who] don't know their story anymore," reiterated the belief that Aboriginal designs could only properly be used



FIG. 9. England Bangala (born c. 1925). *Untitled [Women, frog, plants]*, 1984. Lithograph, 46 × 30.6 cm.



FIG. 10. Jimmy Pike (born 1940). *Milkarra Waakula*, 1985. Linocut transferred to screenprint, 32.8 × 43 cm.

34 Story recorded in the exhibition catalogue, *Jimmy Pike, His Art and Stories* (Perth: Desert Prints, n.d. [1985]).

35 "Three Urban Views: Fiona Foley, Ray Meeks, and Avril Quail, interviewed by Jeffrey Samuels and Chris Watson" (see note 4): 37–40.

36 Biographical statement for Ray Meeks (see note 5, n.p.).

37 See note 35: 39.



FIG. 11. Raymond Meeks working on stone at Canberra School of Art.



FIG. 12. Raymond Meeks (born 1957). *Mimi*, 1984. Linocut, 15.2 × 15 cm.

by those initiated into the appropriate clan, although he did make it clear in the same interview that he approved the compromise which allowed paintings previously kept secret to be exposed in order "to show the world our dreamtime culture, so they can understand our way of life."<sup>38</sup>

A different sense of loss affects the half-caste Aborigine Pooaraar, who is currently a student at the Canberra School of Art. Wistful and gentle, Pooaraar believes that the dilution of his blood has deprived him of the essential power that allows full-blooded Aborigines to see their spirit ancestors—his "molecular structure," he says sadly, does not allow him "to grip the world." Pooaraar has led a peripatetic life, leaving his birthplace at Gnowangerup in the southwest corner of the continent to work in various jobs all over Western Australia.<sup>39</sup> In 1986, at the age of forty-seven, he was accepted into an art course for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Cairns. His imagery, which comes from all over Australia, convincingly suggests that it is possible to be eclectic and at the same time evolve an intensely personal style. His Kangaroo Spirit Man quivers against a background created from his own interpretation of *rrark*, while in other remarkably intricate and memorable designs, his main figures are ingeniously locked together by concentric contour lines, trembling undulations, or delicate filaments like spiders' webs. An image depicting yams as the essence of life might equally well illustrate the Biblical text, "all flesh is grass" [FIG. 13]; Pooaraar's fascinating allover drawing links a variety of animals with the plants on which they feed, suggesting intuitively the scientific perception that everything is the same thing. The artist cuts his lino blocks and prints them himself. Perhaps he can count himself fortunate that he has discovered his gift relatively late in life, for to be able to speak with truth about one's condition is to possess a skill, which can itself be seen as a kind of power few people have.

WHILE FEW WHITE AUSTRALIANS know much about Aboriginal culture, attitudes discouraging racism and a growing resistance to what has been called "the brutal reduction of cultural diversity" are altering the climate in which indigenous Australians strive to improve their lot. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine a greater gulf than that which separates the philosophy of the white urbanite, with notions of "progress" based on the monopolistic accretion of power and property, from that of the traditional Aborigine, with a spiritual affiliation to the land and a code that encourages the sharing of possessions. This spiritual richness has been admired by many writers besides anthropologists. Some scholars assert that even in the most trying conditions, a few hours of hunting and gathering produced sufficient food daily to allow the rest of the time to be spent in cultural activity. Bruce Chatwin, influenced by Ted Strehlow's accounts of the Aranda people,<sup>40</sup> has recently enthused about the song-cycles said to have been created by the Ancestors as they sang the world into existence. In the intersecting songlines that weave waterhole to waterhole across Australia, there is scarcely a rock or a creek that has not been celebrated. The music acts as a kind of map or memory-bank for finding one's way about the world, with the possibility that each song formed a melodic contour of the land it surveyed. This oral tradition demonstrates a high order of conceptual intelligence—an intelligence which allowed the Aborigines to survive for millennia in territory where white explorers quickly perished. But as Chatwin comments in discussing Aboriginal land claims, it is one thing to tell

38 See note 30.

39 Statement by Pooaraar (see note 4): 3.

40 T. G. E. Strehlow, *Aranda Traditions* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1947).



FIG. 13. Pooraar [Bevan Hayward] (born 1939). *Dreamtime: Yam, Essence of Life*, 1988. Linocut, 56 × 37 cm.

the surveyor of a mining company that a lump of red sandstone is a kangaroo ancestor's liver, but quite another to convince him "that a featureless stretch of gravel is the musical equivalent of Beethoven's Opus 111."<sup>41</sup> It was Strehlow who convinced Chatwin that the so-called "primitive" intellect was in no way inferior to that of contemporary man, and that Aranda thought embodied "a mental construction more marvellous and intricate than anything on earth, a construction to make Man's material achievements seem like so much dross. . . ."<sup>42</sup>

THE WHOLESALe DESTRUCTION of Aboriginal society following the white invasion has not only resulted in a tragically limited understanding of Aboriginal philosophy, but has caused the organization of Aboriginal protest to take shape rather slowly. Nevertheless, with admirable tenacity in the face of impossible odds, the Aborigines rallied sufficiently by 1938 to declare the 150th anniversary of western settlement a "day of mourning." During 1988, the year of the Bicentenary when white Australia again celebrates its achievements, the unfolding story of the white oppression of black people has gathered momentum. The dignity of black activists has been sufficient to dispel forever the conception of the Aborigine as helpless and inarticulate.<sup>43</sup> As more evidence emerges to confirm the attempted extermination

41 Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1987): 14.

42 Chatwin (see note 41): 70.

43 One of the most articulate of the black activists is Kevin Gilbert, of Irish, English, and Aboriginal stock. He wrote the first Aboriginal play in English and edited *Inside Black Australia: An Anthology of Aboriginal Poetry* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin, 1988). This year, as chairman of the Sovereign Aboriginal Treaty '88 Committee, he has published a political statement, including a draft treaty, *Aboriginal Sovereignty: Justice, the Law and Land* (Canberra: 1988). At the time of writing, the prime minister of Australia is negotiating a treaty with the Aborigines.



FIG. 14. Alice Hinton-Bateup (born 1950). *Lost Heritage*, 1985. Color screenprint poster, 51 × 76 cm.

of the race and the forcible abduction of half-caste children which, until very recently, took place under the repressive policy of assimilation,<sup>44</sup> it becomes clear that Australia has had little to write home about. Even now, the unique nature of Aboriginal society makes it peculiarly difficult for a Pan-Australian Aboriginal identity to be forged, and in the highly fragmented situation, borne out by the cultural diversity of the Aboriginal artists discussed here, the campaign for "Land Rights" has no one meaning or solution. To the declining number of traditional Aborigines who wish to remain on their ancestral lands, bark paintings may help confirm title to the territory on which they carry out their religious duties. To the dispossessed, abducted to government reserves which may be far from their original homes, "Land Rights" promise possible economic independence and self-determination in Aboriginal affairs. To urban Koories, who no longer know quite where they came from, "Land Rights" means reparation for irrecoverable loss.

It is hardly surprising that Aboriginal artists now living in cities should have adopted the strong white Australian political poster-making tradition as a suitable form of expression. Even if posters did not communicate a sense of grievance and raise white consciousness of past and present inhumanity, they would play a useful role in encouraging solidarity among Aborigines themselves. In the light of the Aboriginal love of land, the histories revealed by posters are often very moving. Alice Hinton-Bateup's *Lost Heritage* [FIG. 14] tells of the disorientation, lack of identity, and consequent spiritual death suffered by her people:

When my great great great grandmother was taken to work on a station near Coonabarabran, she wasn't allowed to use her tribal name, no Aborigines were, she was given the name "Jane," since then my people haven't known what tribe they came from or what land was taken from them.

But art does not have to be overtly political to convey the Aboriginal message—in fact, Marcuse has argued that the case may be made more powerfully through "the aesthetic dimension," or the potential of art in art itself.<sup>45</sup> Original prints by Aborigines, insofar as they are authentic statements, can convey an idea of Aboriginality both by presenting the remembrance of things past as an argument in the struggle for change, and by focusing the quest of the urban Koori seeking an identity on essentially alien ground.

In 1972, N. W. G. Macintosh, President of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, wrote of the need for Aborigines to assert their cultural values. Macintosh contrasted the "biological rapport" the Aborigines have maintained with their environment for untold centuries, with our "materialistic patterns of ambition and behaviour that deny environment and threaten to destroy us in the process."<sup>46</sup> For him the Aboriginal vision of harmony in the universe and the interdependence of man, society, and nature, has much to teach. Indeed, the paternalism which led whites, in the unjustifiable assumption of their own superiority, to save the first Australians from their "primitive" life, proved almost as vitiating as the more obvious acts of violence committed against them. When Tremblay first became interested in Aboriginal graphic art, he saw it as a way for Aborigines to multiply and circulate their ideas without sacrificing their integrity. For in communicating with an even wider audience than can be reached by painting, they can take hold of yet another opportunity to attest to the subtlety, complexity, and intensity of the Aboriginal mind. □

44 Sally Morgan, *My Place* (Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1987), is the true story of a half-caste Aboriginal who passed as Indian during her schooldays. Her mother and grandmother were so frightened that their offspring would be forcibly taken away that they concealed from them (and from everybody else) the fact that they had Aboriginal blood. The book tells how the author encouraged her relatives to "come out," and by allowing her to record their life stories, eventually to take pride in their Aboriginal heritage.

45 H. Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* (London: Macmillan, 1979).

46 Mackintosh in Groger-Wurm (as in note 15): v-vii.

## THE TAMARIND EXCHANGE

### Two American Artists in the Soviet Union

#### An Interview with George McNeil and Lynne Allen

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*Byron Lindsey*

GEORGE MCNEIL, the New York artist, and Lynne Allen, master printer, spent three weeks in the Soviet Union in 1987. Their visit, arranged by Marjorie Devon during her earlier trip to the USSR,<sup>1</sup> was the first stage in an unusual program of direct exchange of lectures and workshops between the USSR's Union of Artists and Tamarind Institute. While the presentation of exchange exhibitions of Soviet and American art has accelerated during the period of *glasnost*, the Tamarind exchange is unique in its emphasis on "working" visits by artists from the two countries. While in the USSR, McNeil and Allen conducted workshops and lectures which not only demonstrated American lithographic techniques to their Soviet hosts but, in the process, also presented American art values. Simultaneously, they gained literal "hands-on" experience of work in Soviet conditions, as well as insights into the world of Soviet art—its currents and its problems—as provided by Soviet artists' responses to their work. These impressions were enlarged by almost daily social encounters with artists, official and unofficial, in their studios and apartments. McNeil brought to the experience a long-standing interest in Russian culture and a thorough knowledge of its art history; Allen, who has since been nominated for a Fulbright fellowship to teach at Moscow's Surikov Art Institute in 1989, had a lively interest in contemporary Soviet art—particularly Soviet lithography. Their interview-dialogue, which opens with my first question (in italics), is a probing and perceptive view of Soviet art as seen from within its studios and workshops, and at its present open juncture between radical reform and resistance to change.

*How did you feel, as American artists steeped in Modernism, about making an official visit to the Soviet Union, the land of Socialist Realism?*

**McNeil:** I've had a love-hate relationship with the Soviet Union since the early 1930s when it alone among the great nations fought Fascism, but after reading, for example, Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and an account of the bulldozing of an independent artists' exhibition in a Moscow vacant lot in 1974, my early admiration turned into antagonism, owing to the country's social and cultural intolerance. With *glasnost*, once again my hopes rose, so when asked to go there last year, I was enthusiastic at the prospect of helping to open up a new creative spirit in Soviet art. I really welcomed the opportunity to exchange our views of art, to see Soviet works, to show American art, and to try to explain the basic aesthetics of Modernism.

**Allen:** Since George and I were going alone and not as part of an organized tour, I knew we would see much more than on a tour bus—and I was right! My generation has had no real contact with the Soviet Union. I didn't witness the Second World War, nor did I have contact with McCarthyism. George was much more aware of Soviet history than I was, but I went with an open mind about what I would experience. I felt positive about it and wanted to make judgments for myself—not ones handed to me by the newspapers.

*You were guests of the Union of Artists. What were your initial impressions of your hosts? How did they receive you?*

**McNeil:** Political differences which have separated our two countries were nowhere evident. Instead there was the sympathetic friendliness one expects between working

<sup>1</sup> See Marjorie Devon, "A Visit to the Soviet Union," *TTP* 9 (Fall 1986): 61–64.

artists. In the Union centers, schools, studios, and homes we visited I never felt that I was working and consorting with Russians. They were simply fellow lithographers, painters, and sculptors. Many were the toasts washed down with understanding, lubricated with vodka. As we know from writers like Dostoevsky, the Russians are a deep-feeling, passionate people, and this is the very stuff of art, so it was easy and natural to be friendly. Once when driving through Moscow, I saw a long queue and thought it reflected a food shortage, but to my astonishment on passing the shop I saw a woman leave with a bouquet of flowers. A people for whom flowers on the table are as important as food has to be one that loves art. Back in the States, when I described our warm reception to friends, they smiled and implied that I had been led down the garden path by guileful party-liners. Not so! It would have been impossible to program the spontaneous warmth and affection shown us by the three hundred or so artists and officials whom we met.

**Allen:** Nearly every artist, printer, student, director, and driver was warm and friendly. I never felt any distance because we were from a country with different politics and a different economic situation. Russians have definite ideas about what is important in life. They enjoy conversation and have lively discussions. The family unit is extremely important. Children and grandmothers are perhaps more important than anything else. I was also most impressed by the fierce national pride. I don't mean that they are proud of their powerful country—the country that invaded Afghanistan—but that they are proud of Russia, the Motherland. I felt that since there is little organized religion Russia itself has taken the place of a deity. On the other hand, never once did anyone mention our Iran-Contra scandal. Usual questions were: "How much money do you make?" and "How big is your house?" People were interested in how Americans live, how they feel, and how they view Russians. Most Russians seem to think we hate them. I think they were pleased that both George and I were open and friendly, inquisitive about them as people, not as Russians. We made some good friends. We understood each other. Who knows? This could have been because we were all artists, but the warmth was real.

*This is a time of "new thinking" in the Soviet Union. Was there a palpable new freedom in the air? How about glasnost in the art world? Could you see it in the form of art?*

**McNeil:** *Glasnost* was everywhere. At no time did we encounter antagonism to the modern art which we were showing in slide lectures, or to the expressionistic drawings which I made in demonstration of my lithographic drawing methods. We visited at the Moscow Writers' Union an exhibition of works by Malevich, El Lissitzky, Goncharova, and other Suprematist artists from the 1911–34 period. Independent, self-sustaining painters, sculptors, and graphic artists who were ostracized before *glasnost* are now increasingly recognized as legitimate artists. I saw two public exhibitions of "unofficial" art: one tending toward the conceptual avant-gardism which dominates contemporary Western art, and another marked by a highly personal Modernism. At the GORKOM (City Committee) gallery we saw a way-out avant-garde exhibition called "Object 1" which was somewhat blunted because its extremes derived from surrealist novelties of some fifty years ago. For example, in a large open box there was a random collection of used bus tickets, old paper match boxes, cancelled stamps, labels, and other paper junk—for all the world like Schwitters's Merz art of 1930. Representing the broader, more subjective tendencies of modern art was an impressively presented exhibition of about forty non-official artists at the Palace of Youth in Leningrad. Although there was also some doctrinaire avant-gardism here—like three frames covered with black cloth which, when lifted, showed a mirror—most of the paintings, sculptures, and prints were based on feeling, and so were more authentic.

Alekandr Kalugin, a well-known independent painter and graphic artist who recently appeared on a CBS-TV Russian survey, exemplifies this inner seriousness. His etchings are somewhat like Beckmann's and Grosz's mordant, controlled Expressionism. Such public exhibitions would have been impossible before 1985 and *glasnost*. Also, I have recently learned that two dissident artists who applied for emigration visas long ago finally got permission to leave. I don't expect that *glasnost* will radically change Soviet art and aesthetics. Rather, I believe Gorbachev's intention is to promote greater openness and flexibility of thought and creativity in order to minimize Soviet bureau-

cratic conservatism. The middle-level administrators whom I met did not seem to be mean-minded or intolerant. They simply were implementing realistic styles which they had been taught and which they believe represent legitimate socialist values. Most of the Union members know about Picasso, Matisse, Mondrian, and other important modern artists, but mostly they think that such art is strange and irrelevant to their representational interests. Perhaps twenty percent of the Union artists—and these are the ones enthusiastic about modern art—will, if *glasnost* continues, strike out in personal directions. And, almost surely, these intrinsic-art individualists will create the most vital work. It is true that in the past art has managed to exist in thought-controlled societies: witness Velasquez in the Inquisition-dominated reign of Phillip IV. But surely culture flourishes when artists possess unmitigated freedom to go their own way, to make mistakes, and then try to correct them. This is why art flourished in nineteenth-century Paris and why it now radiates vitality in New York, London, and other free-thinking centers.

**Allen:** *Glasnost?* Well, never having been to the Soviet Union before, I had no basis for comparison except what I had heard and read. The Russians themselves were more than eager to explain how different life is now, especially over the past two years. Everyone commented on how an exchange such as the one between Tamarind and the Union of Artists would never have happened two years ago, or even one year ago. Non-union and union artists were showing their artwork in the same shows—which had never been done before. *Glasnost* is important in the art world because it makes it easier for artists to see Western ideas, which before were derived solely from smuggled art magazines and the “grapevine.” Only the young artists, who are against the system and eager for anything new, will embrace what they see in the West. For the most part, Russian artists feel that the depth of Russian art is in the feeling. Their fierce passion comes across in their art as emotion. They don’t understand color-field painting or Minimalism because for them there is no message. They want to be constantly reminded of their strength of character, I think.

While visiting Tamarind, Dmitri Bisti and Nikolai Voronkov were constantly explaining that in Russia the technical expertise and



Before going to the USSR, George McNeil and Lynne Allen collaborated at Tamarind.

modern equipment and ideas weren't necessary because the strength lies in the image. To us the images seemed very dated. If one tries to understand what life is like, and how pleasure is derived, it is easier to understand how heroics make the populace feel better. It is like a John Wayne movie: "Remember the Alamo!"

*What program had the Artists' Union arranged for you?*

**McNeil:** It was both a working and a tourist schedule. For example, one afternoon we visited the Catherine Palace at Pushkino, and in the early evening we met Union artists at the studio of Oleg Jaknin and his wife Irina Riatkin. By the way, artists' marriages seem to be frequent. When our evenings were free, the Artists' Union provided tickets for ballet and musical performances. But we were scrupulously supervised—sometimes together, and sometimes alone. Lynne and I enjoyed jostling Moscovites in their seven-cent-per-ride subway, eating in the cafeterias, or making purchases as we explored streets and neighborhoods. Lynne had boned up on Basic Berlitz, so that she deciphered the Cyrillic names of the Metro stations as well as "borscht" on wall-menus.

To fulfill the instructional purpose of our cultural exchange, we visited Artists' Union centers, Houses of Creativity (work-and-rest country retreats), institutes, or art schools, and one "Experimental Workshop." There were working sessions where I usually made a drawing on plastic, which Lynne transferred to stone. Sometimes Lynne proofed these transfers, but more often, since the press was home-turf for the shop printer, he would pull the proofs, which I then corrected until we managed a printable image. At these formal presentations—attended by about thirty-five Union artists averaging forty-five years of age—Lynne (through our interpreter, Galya Saviskaya) described technical and artistic lithographic practices with slides taken at Tamarind, along with other slides showing a range of American lithographs. I projected my paintings and lithographs as well as examples of contemporary American art taken from New York's Museum of Modern Art and Metropolitan Museum.

When modern American art was shown, usually there was a polite reticence—not at all the Socialist Realism versus Modernism

ruckus which I expected. The only serious aesthetic difference arose when I explained that my titles bore no specific relation to the actual painting or print. Deep as they are into subject-matter representation, how could these realists consider titles to be anything other than the denotation of a particular print or painting? I did not convince them that titles in modern art simply name, rather than characterize. However, no issue was made of this nominal problem. After all, there are no firm principles in traditional or modern art, so it would have been pointless to insist on this marginal modern art theory. Without being doctrinaire, I would have liked to discuss some of the more important concepts of Modernism, but an exchange of our different aesthetics never got off the ground.

Lynne had brought some American art magazines and laid them out for inspection, but rather than crowding about to see them, there was only casual interest. Almost surely, past thought-control inclined the Union artists to be circumspect about showing an interest in non-socialist art; it will take some time for Soviet citizens really to believe that freedom of thought and expression is permitted. There was a considerable amount of ideological thawing after Khrushchev denounced Stalinism, but by 1967—and Prague—intolerance and even persecution once again drove non-conformist ideas and art underground. Young American artists driving taxis or waiting on tables worry about survival, but this is nothing compared to the threat of official anathema which non-realist Soviet artists faced between 1934 and *glasnost*—beginning in 1985.

We visited nine Union artists' studios, where lithographers and etchers were present, and where print after print would be placed before us. In no sense did we essay a critique; rather, we remarked about techniques, paper, and other printing matters. At each studio rendezvous, we looked at approximately three hundred prints. Since their graphic art was mostly black and white, with little or no pictorial or psychological excitement, I found this sustained review very tiring.

However, in these informal get-togethers I felt quite at home with the Soviet artists. In contrast to official meetings, where a certain restraint is to be expected, dinner-table camaraderie with food and drink enables friends to speak freely about their ideas, and swap magazines, catalogues, and other publications. Oh, if only all differences between the

USSR and the United States could be considered in such a cordial atmosphere.

**Allen:** Our hosts were more than willing to change the schedule if we wanted. I felt that they were eager to show us their lifestyles and what was important to them. . . . We visited four workshops which operate on a collaborative basis with master printers on the staff, several art institutes, and many artists' studios. It would be possible to suspect that we were shown the best of everything, but that was not the case. Our hosts wanted us to see what we came to see: graphic art in the Soviet Union. Perhaps one of the best artists we visited was a young official artist whose studio was not much bigger than a closet, on the top floor, with very little light. His lithographs were the most powerful I had seen, expressive not only in imagery, but also technically. The showing of artwork was considered a treat for us and we would sit around a table, eating and drinking as artists, one at a time, put their work on an easel before us. It was very tiring, but you could sense the importance they felt in showing us what they were about. Not all the work was realistic in style. Many young artists are doing abstract work and in color. I don't think it is the norm, but it is definitely tolerated.

*And so, as you moved through your itinerary, how did you begin to see the Soviets' view of your visit?*

**McNeil:** It seemed to me that the Soviet artists saw our visit as a low-keyed, mutual-respect exchange of art and of Soviet-American friendship. Underlying the professional small talk, our visit reinforced the general *glasnost* tendency toward social and artistic liberalization, perhaps more importantly in a basic, human sense. Flanking the entrance to the "Tamarind Impressions" exhibition of recent American lithographs with its many styles were two huge Soviet and American flags, surely a symbol of hope for openness in cultural exchanges. The Soviet people were massacred and havocked in World War II and they fear antagonisms, and the possibility of mutual nuclear annihilation. When it is possible for the artists of the USSR and the United States to come together in a cordial exchange of art and good will, it reinforces hope that somehow Russians and Americans can learn to be friendly and mutually tolerant. Nationality is irrelevant in art; we met the Soviet painters

and sculptors as fellow artists, not as citizens of the USSR.

At the June 2nd [1987] opening of the Tamarind exhibition in Moscow, perhaps three hundred people heard the opening address of Charles Wick, director of the U.S. Information Agency, and the welcoming reply of Tair Salakhov, head of the Union of Artists. There can be no question about the fervent interest shown by these cultured Moscovites as they viewed the American lithographs and greeted Lynne and myself. Never have I experienced such enthusiasm for art in this country. Perhaps twenty minutes passed before Lynne and I finished autographing catalogues of the exhibition.

**Allen:** Many people didn't really know what we were about, but, more importantly, they knew we were Americans and they wanted to extend an open hand of friendship. I don't think they really attempted to learn as much information as I was prepared to give (I brought 150 pounds of supplies, including paper, ink, and other items), but they were laying the groundwork for acceptance in the future. It was like a first date: each eager, yet shy. Given the opportunity to go back, I feel sure I would be inundated with practical questions, at least more so than this time. For the most part, the artists asked me more questions of a technical nature than the printers. I was very cautious not to talk too much about lithography in the United States, but to ask questions about Russian methods, to gain confidence until I was asked specifically.

When Dmitri Bisti and Nikolai Voronkov came to Albuquerque they were not openly impressed by the state of technology at Tamarind: the electric presses, the light working spaces, clean tables, and extensive ink palettes. They continually stressed the importance of the image—more important than the technique. However, Nikolai was much more eager, as time went on, to experiment with our materials and even went home with some.

The importance of the exchange was the humanitarian aspect: two peoples are more alike than we care to admit. George and I did not rock the art movement in the Soviet Union. Perhaps we gave food for thought to some individuals, but it will take numerous exchanges with various artists from different places, and the continuation of *glasnost*, for things to change.



Enn Põldross, director of the Union of Artists in Tallinn, Estonia, watches as George McNeil draws a stone.



LEFT TO RIGHT: McNeil, Allen, Põldross, and Voldemar Kann, printer, in the Tallinn Union of Artists workshop.

*As you know, Russian artists have been quite isolated from the West for fifty years or more. Did you find this cultural fact especially apparent in your conversations and in what you saw?*

**McNeil:** This is a paradoxical problem because there are two distinct groups of USSR artists: perhaps ninety-five percent belong to the official, government-supported Artists' Union, while the remainder are independent painters, sculptors, and graphic artists who somehow manage to survive without government support.

There is a standard, institutional procedure for becoming an Artists' Union member. For example, at about age fourteen beginners can study at schools similar to New York's High School of Music and Art. Applicants must pass an examination stressing realistic drawing and composition, so academic art training starts very early. After graduation, and another examination, students proceed to secondary art schools for four years—what we would call college-level education. Then, the best students at about twenty-two go on to the Surikov Institute in Moscow or the Repin Institute in Leningrad for about two years of the most advanced training. These institute graduates may apply for membership in the Union at about age twenty-six to qualify for professional artist status and possible commissions for murals and monumental sculptures, exhibitions, teaching, and a stipend to live on.

I would guess that at least one-half of the Soviet artists would like to be more creative. This latent interest in independent creativity may be seen in the Union artists' use of symbolism and compositional light-and-dark patterns which underlie and support subject matter and, more rarely, in Expressionist styles.

Even at the highest public levels, art seems to exert itself. On one of the principal boulevards in Moscow there is a completely abstract monument to Soviet space exploration which is about one hundred feet high and which resembles the pure form of Brancusi's *Bird in Space*. And in Leningrad, the monument marking the point where the defenders stopped the Fascists also is completely abstract. Signifying barriers, these are rectangular forms like railroad ties, but much larger, say twenty-four feet long by two feet high and wide. I have never seen any abstract sculpture in Western art which by its very might, as well as its psychological signifi-

cance, is as impressive as this form.

Still, I was never questioned about modern artists and their art. The Union artists whom I met were proud of Malevich, El Lissitzky, Goncharova, and other Russian Modernist painters who made a striking contribution to world art, but overwhelmingly they seemed content to let their future art evolve by itself.

**Allen:** Definitely, they have been isolated. The older artists don't think anything is unusual; they talk like good socialists. They believe their classical manner of teaching—where students draw casts for a year, draw models for another year, do fresco painting another year, and then have thesis shows like little clones—is perfectly normal, and the only way to teach. True, they are masters of technique and draftsmanship, but the creativity suffers. The younger artists definitely feel the isolation. We did not hear this from every young artist, only from those who were brave enough to speak out. Everyone wants the new openness to continue, but everyone is aware it might not last. They don't say anything that might hurt them later—at least not where someone else can hear them. I would say only a handful of artists were really excited about their work. There is a right way and a wrong way of doing something. There is no room for experimentation. They were amazed that not every print in the Tamarind exhibition had a white margin around the image, but that instead the image was printed off the edges of the paper. Why did we do this? It never occurred to them to change any tradition, which obviously curtails inventiveness.

*How did you find the working conditions for official artists?*

**McNeil:** The most important and decisive determinant in the working conditions of USSR artists is their lack of creative freedom. With *glasnost* there is now the possibility to exhibit and publicize non-official art; nevertheless, there still remains a climate of restraint, a pressure to conform to past Soviet art ideologies. Only conservative realism is taught in the art schools and no public commissions, book illustrations, or teaching assignments would be given to artists working in suspect styles. It is possible that having achieved Union membership on the basis of academic excellence, an artist would develop modern tendencies which would be respected by his Union

peers. Indeed, this happened with Ernst Neizvestny, the strongly subjective, modern sculptor who dared defend self-expression in the face of Khrushchev's brutal scorn, but who nevertheless created modern art commissioned for the Soviet-built Aswan Dam and, ironically, for the tomb of Khrushchev. I have no doubt that *glasnost* will encourage more and more Union artists to exhibit expressive art. Even so, as anyone associated with creativity knows, that working imperative—the right to create the unexpected, the unknown, and the unwanted—which has prevailed in Paris, London, New York, and other Western art centers, has to be waged against official and covert Soviet sanctions. Official refusal to publicize an exhibition constitutes a very powerful sanction against idiosyncratic art expression.

Within the Soviet art structure, as in Western societies, there is a pyramidal hierarchy where a small elite achieves fame and fortune. While Matisse, Picasso, and practically all Western artists earned prestige through gallery and museum exhibitions and sales of highly subjective art, the most famous Soviet artists achieve glory through more or less conventional public art. Perhaps five percent of the Union artists receive patriotic, monumental commissions such as ten-foot high statues of Lenin or public-building murals showing radiant men and women marching toward a glorious, socialist future. These favored sculptors and painters receive fine studios and living quarters, a car, and perhaps a *dacha*. And, envied by other Soviet intelligentsia, they are granted visas for foreign travel with its opportunities to see international art and buy books. I noticed that the libraries of these public-works artists were very large and contained many modern art publications.

Lynne and I attended an Artists' Union and Information Agency "good-will dinner" the night before the opening of the Tamarind exhibition of American lithographs. This was held at the studio-residence of a sculptor of monumental patriotic subjects. The atmosphere at the dinner was very live-it-up with well-dressed, highly sophisticated guests. Thus, Lynne and I could see how well a famous artist lived. As a kind of late evening intellectual coup, the poet Andrei Vosnesensky proffered his appreciation of American-Soviet friendship. This dinner was marked by affluence from start to finish: a Chinese take-out

meeting of artists and intellectuals, it was not.

On a less grand scale, many artists work as book illustrators, which because of its relation to drawing, was of special interest to Lynne and myself. Time after time in our visits, painters and graphic artists brought out fine editions they had illustrated. In contrast to the West, where well-known artists like Matisse and Picasso occasionally illustrated *de luxe*, highly expensive editions of Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and other poets, the illustration and actual production of books has preoccupied Czarist and Soviet painters and designers. Just before and after 1917, the Circle of Lovers of Russian Fine Editions sponsored illustrated printings of serious literature by Benois, Bilbin, and Dubuzhinsky, and this interest in book art was paralleled by Malevich, Goncharova, El Lissitsky, and other Russian avant-gardists. Since about 1960, many dissident painters who have been influenced by conceptual art have used book-making as their principal art medium. Working alone and with poets, they do not illustrate texts, but rather create very innovative limited *sanizdat* (typed, hand-written, photographed) books in editions ranging from five to ten copies.

I have never known any artist who didn't want critical appreciation as well as some material benefits. Soviet artists also would like more affluence. Interesting enough, in the light of their education in socialist, egalitarian values, American artists' incomes provoked one of the liveliest discussions of our visit. "How much money," they asked, "do American artists earn?" Anatoly Ryzhnikov, an official of the Artists' Union who had lived in the United States, helped me explain the complexity of conditions here: that perhaps only one or two percent of American artists support themselves from sales. Since the Russians know only our superstars, this was difficult for them to comprehend. In the Soviet Union art is a state-supported profession and many of the emigrés who now live in New York have been disillusioned by the difficulty of joining a gallery, let alone selling one's art.

**Allen:** How did I find the working conditions? For the most part we visited large spacious facilities. Artists did not share studios. Many new buildings have studios on the top floors, with lots of large windows and studios for monumental work. These were not only for older, more established artists but also for young artists. How they were given out is

something I don't know. Dmitri Bisti had a very large studio, but it was very old, and on the top floor, and rather cold. The head of the Graphic Department at the Surikov Art Institute in Moscow had a very small studio which was difficult to get to, winding around several buildings' attics, and with no heat at all.

Most accepted artists, those who travel, seem to have better supplies than do artists who perhaps don't conform. Dmitri Bisti had an endless supply of brushes, paints, and pastels. Yet everyone complains about the quality and the scarcity of good paper. Russians don't import anything that isn't a necessity, if that, and art supplies are not a priority. They don't even have gum arabic, which is considered to be an absolutely essential ingredient in lithography. They used potato starch instead!

When shown slides of Tamarind, the artists and printers in the audience noticed every detail in the photographs, every ink can and product that might be lying on the table. Never have I seen people take paper so lovingly and put it away before someone else saw it and might want some. If only I could have carried more! They especially wanted better inks. When I questioned why they didn't have their ink manufacturer make them a transparent base, they answered that one had to have permission to make a new color. Any ink maker who made something without permission would be in serious trouble. Once one begins to understand the conditions these artists work under, it is easier to give information that will really be useful, like recipes for making supplies with ordinary ingredients.

*On a more specific level, how would you describe the state of lithography in the Soviet Union?*

**McNeil:** In contrast to painting and sculpture, the graphic arts are considered a craft as well as art. This is because the printing process is just as important in creating value as in the generating of ideas—the drawing, color, and composition of the art itself. Incidentally, it can be assumed that practically all of the Soviet lithographs are printed in official shops, for we saw many etching presses in the studios we visited, but none for lithography. The Soviet presses, rollers, paper, and ink leave much to be desired: the state of their printing probably has not changed much since the Revolution. Printing pressure is still applied by direct physical force, as by our old Fuchs and Lang machines, rather than by gear reduction. Since

expenditure for new equipment requires foreign exchange, I was told that it was hard to convince budget officers that outdated, but functioning, equipment should be replaced. However, regardless of primitive equipment and inferior supplies, Soviet printers are excellent and can pull fine images from just about any drawing. Almost all their lithographs are printed from stone, which is the opposite of our situation, where mostly plates are used since hard stones are in short supply. Lynne and I were lucky to work on large stones, which are difficult to get anywhere. I believe that photo-printing is known in the Soviet shops, but we did not see any examples of this relatively new lithographic practice.

From a critical viewpoint, as is the case with art everywhere, about five percent of the lithographs were outstanding, while the rest tended to be of middling quality. A very sharp difference between Soviet and American lithography is that, because of the revolutionary changes and growth of this art since 1960—an improvement for which Tamarind is largely responsible—our prints are mostly in color. In the “Tamarind Impressions” exhibition thirty-four of the thirty-six lithographs were in color. Since Soviet prints are overwhelmingly in black and white, they lack the power that luminous hues convey, and thus were not so artistically exciting. Without being denigrative, most Soviet lithographs seemed like ours at about 1940, somewhat staid, somewhat conventional. Igor Orlov, the master printer in the Surikov shop, did work in color with what I perceived to be science-fiction themes, and in every way his prints were excellent.

On balance, some of the most authentic Soviet art that I saw was in their etchings and lithographs. They are well trained in drawing and this stands them in good stead in the graphic arts, which should be relatively simple and straightforward.

**Allen:** Etching—*ofort* in Russian—is definitely the preferred medium in the Soviet Union, and they are absolute masters at it. It was more common to see a color etching than a color lithograph. The same is true of woodcuts and wood engravings, which are the finest I have ever seen. Lithography has not changed in the past sixty years. In one print workshop in Leningrad, the master printer was proud that they have been doing lithography in the same tradition as when it was

founded. In their eyes there is no need for better equipment. Since the artists don’t push the medium—because the art movement is not “moving”—there is no need for technical equipment to change. In the United States, artists are always demanding bigger and better, so the printers and manufacturers try to accommodate. This idea is completely foreign to a Soviet artist.

Since *glasnost*, there is a desire to match the rest of the world, and there is an interest in updating lithography. They realize it is the weakest of the graphic arts. The best part of Soviet lithography is the collaborative aspect. There has always been a strong collaborative tradition between artist and printer. The master printer in Russia has a very high position and is respected by all artists for his skill. There are no women printers in Russia, and even in the art institutes, a master printer is part of the staff to print student work. Since supplies are hard to obtain, that, too, puts a strain on the technical capabilities of the printer. In Tallin there was no way to obtain any material for a counteretch which would enable an artist to work back into the drawing.

*How did your working demonstrations go? What were the reactions to your work?*

**McNeil:** This perhaps relates to my perception that most Union artists are satisfied with the present representational art: only about five artists at the arts schools, Artists’ Union shops, and Houses of Creativity watched me draw and that, I believe, was more from curiosity than an interest in learning new concepts and techniques. Before beginning to draw, I explained that I was only demonstrating a procedure and that I couldn’t expect to get serious results. Then, I drew improvisationally with oil crayons or lithographic rubbing-blocks on grained plastic sheets moistened with turpentine. After striking in some marks and lines, and turning my sheets upside down and sideways, I let a chance figural image emerge. This random beginning was consolidated by linear and dark-and-light relationships until the total form was more or less visible. Lynne transferred the image to stone and either she or the shop printer pulled proofs, which I corrected. They were up for grabs, but I do not believe that more than five were requested in Russia proper. In Estonia, at the Tallin Artists’ Union, the response was

just the opposite: the relatively small printing room was usually crowded with artists who avidly watched every step of Lynne's and my printing and drawing procedures. On a sheet pinned to the shop wall, about thirty-five artists wrote their names requesting one of our prints.

In both Russia and Estonia, the basic reaction to my expressionistic style, as shown in the slides, was politely negative: no one criticized my work in terms of social realism—that is, that it was ego-centered or socially degenerate. There was just artistic indifference.

**Allen:** Basically, George made prints and I assisted, getting whatever he needed, and helping to explain what he was doing. George is a very aggressive artist when he works, even by American standards, so I know his manner was very different for those who watched. I was able to assist only two Soviet artists, at the Senezh House of Creativity and at the Experimental Workshop in Tallin. These master printers were very eager for information, and we communicated very well and exchanged techniques. Leningrad was the most conservative of the art communities, and George worked with little interest from the audience. This was not typical, however. In Tallin, everyone wanted one of George's prints.

During our slide presentations, everyone was very polite and especially asked George many questions about artists in New York City. Although his work was new and unusual for them, they commented on the childlike qualities and energy. They responded well to this. The slides of Tamarind, the workshop, and the prints were received very well. Usually, I got more questions about being a woman printer. Most people felt our equipment was made lighter and easier because a woman couldn't handle their heavy-duty stuff. I informed them that art departments in the United States have old, heavy-duty presses, much like theirs, and that women were usually the majority of the students.

*Let's move momentarily to that other world of Soviet art—the unofficial one. You have mentioned that you visited several artists who are not members of the Artists' Union. How would you compare the two spheres of Soviet art?*

**McNeil:** I must pay respect to the unofficial, independent artists who as courageous indi-

viduals have endured poverty, abuse, and persecution because of their creative integrity. To my knowledge, there has never been a group of artists who so persevered with their personal art: the bulldozing of the independents' open-air exhibition in September 1974 was no light matter. Perhaps it is true that among these dissident artists there were, and are, some lunatic-fringe art-actors, who are into modern art because of its Bohemian attractions, but the charges of the Soviet officials that self-expressive artists are socially irresponsible at best, and mentally ill at worse, are entirely without foundation. World interest is overwhelmingly centered on the contributions of those independent artists, who surely one day will receive their honored place in Soviet museums and in art history.

We saw the work of two independent art groups and met two artists. However, far more important for understanding the unofficial art of the Soviet Union are the many illustrated books on both internal dissidents and those who have emigrated to the West. About 150 now reside in New York.

The group-exhibition at the Palace of Youth in Leningrad was freer and more imaginative than the works of the more modern members of the Artists' Union; still, there is a common bond between them, in that both create in terms of feeling. It was refreshing to proceed from painting to painting and see distinctly unique styles. Some of this art was a little amateurish, and, indeed, many of the exhibitors were not trained in Soviet art institutes, but this was all to the good because a sense of authenticity rather than technical excellence was conveyed. As with much Western abstract art since 1960, I found a tendency toward decorativeness. In the main, this widely diversified group reflected basic Modernist values which prevailed prior to 1960 and Pop Art avant-gardism.

We visited the apartment-studios of Aleksandr Kalugin and another unofficial artist whose name had best remain anonymous. To my memory, theirs was the most striking art we saw in the Soviet Union. In both cases there was a distinctly unique expressiveness in their trenchant interpretation of anguished human beings. Their art has great force and would attract interest wherever exhibited.

At the GORKOM gallery novelty appeared to be the prime creative motive. This is very difficult to characterize and evaluate. These highly innovative artists are eclectic, with

influences ranging from the geometric art of Malevich, Rodchenko, and other pioneering Russian abstractions to that of recent styles like Pop and Conceptual Art. These self-conscious avant-gardists reflect international art fashions which can be found in New York, London, Paris, and other international art centers. I admit a bias here. I do not readily respond to these entertainment-publicity styles in New York, so it is not strange that I found this art, which is so burdened with originality, less convincing than that of both the Union artists and the independent, feeling-directed artists.

**Allen:** We were lucky to meet unofficial artists, since no one ever mentioned they existed. We did not meet any such artists with our hosts, but only under the auspices of the embassy. Although we were often left alone to tour, and not hampered from doing anything, I do not think our visits to these studios would have been condoned. Sasha Kalugin was the most impressive of the dissident artists. His work was very political and very powerful. It was unlike anything else we viewed because it was political. Other dissident artists make a good living selling through embassy channels and are unofficial for various reasons, not only because their work might be sensitive. In fact, many of the unofficial artists probably could be accepted into the Union, but choose not to. At least for those who sell to visiting foreigners, I really think they make more money and live better than they would if members. The only thing they cannot get is permission to travel. This is the reward for very special artists.

*What does the future hold for Soviet art? What are your expectations?*

**McNeil:** Understandably, I perceived a "wait-and-see" attitude on the part of both official and unofficial Soviet artists. The official policymakers surely are concerned about their future, while the independents want to make sure that *glasnost* is not another "thaw" which may again turn into a deep freeze. As for their relations to the old avant-garde, I have mentioned there was a polite reticence when American modern art was discussed, but this was also true of modern art generally. I believe that the independent-minded Soviet artists know their abstract art pioneers, just as they know Mandelshtam, Akhmatova, Tsetaeva,



George McNeil.  
*Dartmouth Disco*,  
1987. 71.5 × 56 cm.  
Printed by Lynne Allen  
and Beth Lovendusky.  
[T87-331]

and other modern Russian poets. But it must be remembered that their art was made over sixty years ago and mostly does not have a vital relation to the present. The position of the Russian avant-garde is like that of Arthur Dove, Charles Demuth, Georgia O'Keeffe and other American abstractionists: they are admired and respected but they are not really germane to the present. Our time calls for contemporary relevance.

It doesn't matter what material benefits accrue to Soviet artists. If they do not possess self-expression, they have nothing. This right to one's art extends to the general culture. Until Soviet artists have access to international painting, sculpture, and graphic art, and to ancillary art sources like books and magazines, they will not be able to consummate their talents. Especially important is the right to visit foreign countries for study and social and cultural development. In a real sense, Soviet artists have been imprisoned by socialist ideologies which by artistic and intellectual censorship throttled their creativity as well.

More particularly, the Soviet educational system will have to be liberalized. It is now functioning at about the level of 1910, when academic conservatism prevailed in Europe and America. I remember reading a complaint made about that time by Kenyon Cox, president of the National Academy of Design in New York, in which he bitterly criticized the crudity of modern art, meaning Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Gauguin. How the programs of the arts schools can be brought up to 1988, I



**Nicolai L'Vovich Voronkov.** *Chaut Throwing a Lasso-Chukotz*, 1987. 49.5 × 53.3 cm (image). Printed by Lynne Allen and Craig Cornwall [T87-352].



**Dmitri Spiridonovich Bisti.** *Untitled*, 1987. 23.5 × 21 cm (image). Printed by Rodney Hamon [T87-351].

don't know. In all bureaucracies, including those of the United States, schools have built in vested interests which are almost impossible to dislodge. In the Soviet Union, which is government-controlled from top to bottom, it will be a Herculean task to introduce unmitigated creativity.

On a more positive side, Lynne and I were pleasantly surprised to see how much freedom of thought and expression exist in Estonia as opposed to Russia itself—yet both are republics of the Soviet Union. In Estonia, there was not the all-out avant-gardism that exists in New York, but nevertheless, there was what might be called creative decency. This may be a future resource for Soviet art. Then, too, other Western artists might contribute to Soviet culture, just as Lynne and I gave our little mite about American lithography and modern art.

**Allen:** I see the main problems for Russian artists as being a lack of adequate supplies and, more fundamentally, the philosophy of instruction, which leaves no room for real experimentation. I believe the classical education produces technically superior craftsmen. I only wish this was coupled with some individual creativity and experimentation.

If the present climate continues, and if more and different artists visit the Soviet Union, they will become more accustomed to different ideas. From this they will take what fits their own philosophies and reject what doesn't. You will always have conformists and non-conformists. I believe that Russian artists want to grow—that in fact they are growing and will adapt to whatever they are exposed to.

*From all you say, American art and Soviet art are worlds apart. Can you compare the two? Can they somehow touch each other?*

**McNeil:** Our two art worlds exist as contrasts: there is very little artistic correspondence. They can come together in cultural exchanges like our recent one. There is talk of sending a blockbuster exhibition of contemporary American art to the Soviet Union, and this would be all to the good. As I have emphasized, there is every reason for believing that the Russians and the Americans, who differ sharply in their politics, can come together through art. This certainly happened with the rapprochement between Russian artists and Lynne and myself.

**Allen:** I think the Russian and American art worlds do not compare in the respect that American art is so highly commercial. The art market and the percentage of artists who have national reputations dictate how trends go. It is completely foreign for a Soviet artist to imagine gallery showings and the competitive atmosphere of the American art market. There is only one permanent selling gallery in all of Moscow, and it is run by the state. There are two galleries in Tallin, and they show only official artists. An artist in the Soviet Union is very secure from the minute he becomes a member of the Union of Artists. They are housed, paid, given commissions to work on, and basically left free—to create for the state. They wouldn't last a minute in New York City. If *glasnost* continues, I think it would be possible to see some work that rivals that done in the West. There will definitely be artists whose vision goes beyond the conservatism of the Soviet Union, but these artists will be in the minority. It will take several decades for these mavericks to become the majority, much as the Impressionists were scorned by their peers in the art world.

### Postscript

The McNeil-Allen visit to the USSR was reciprocated in October 1987 when Dmitri Bisti and Nikolai Voronkov visited Tamarind Institute. Bisti, an officially honored "People's Artist" in graphics and illustration, is a frequent international representative for the Union of Artists; Voronkov is a prominent book illustrator and former director of the lithography studio at the Surikov Art Institute. In their two weeks of work at Tamarind, Bisti and Voronkov produced five lithographs which, with their emphatic narrative and ethnographic concerns, were a predictable contrast to the highly spontaneous Expressionistic lithographs George McNeil made in the Soviet Union. In interviews and informal talks the Soviet artists spoke with cordial respect for contemporary American art and with enthusiasm for the "high professionalism" at Tamarind. Bisti, the spokesman for the two, was unwavering in his view of the realistic tradition as the mainstream of Russian art. He did, however, suggest that the parameters of this realism are broad and flexible, and may admit elements of Expressionism into its artistic lexicon. His remarks carried scant reminders of the doctrine of socialist realism. In fact, the



Dmitri Bisti and Nikolai Voronkov in the Tamarind Gallery.

canon of Soviet artists in official histories has been revised recently, to de-emphasize socialist content, stress academic skills, and rehabilitate artists with links to Modernism, such as Aleksandr Tyshler. Despite some limited exhibits (and promises of others), the avant-garde generation of abstract and Constructivist artists—Malevich, Popova, Tatlin, and others—remains outside the fold.

Certainly the Tamarind exchange is one of several developments that give hope for a freeing up of Soviet art after more than five decades of repressive Stalinist controls; it tangibly reflects Gorbachev's new cultural policy of active involvement in the international art community.<sup>2</sup> But promising as they are, such developments do not constitute fundamental change. As George McNeil and Lynne Allen so convincingly conclude, such change will surely come neither swiftly nor easily to Soviet art.<sup>3</sup> □

2 For a full statement of the policy, see Minister of Culture V. Zakharov's speech to the Seventh Congress of Artists of the USSR in *Iskusstvo*, no. 4 (1988): 1–4.

3 For further insight, see Vladimir Leniashin, comp., *The Soviet Character: Paintings by Soviet Artists, 1960s-1980s* (Leningrad: Aurora, 1986); *Russian Avant-Garde and Soviet Contemporary Art* [Catalogue of a Sotheby auction in Moscow, 7 July 1988.] (Geneva: Sotheby, 1988); M. V. Davidova, et al, eds., *Iskusstvo Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Leningrad: Aurora, 1985); and V. A. Ryzhova, comp., *Molodye khudozhniki o rodine* (Moscow: Sovetskii Khudozhnik, 1985).

## CHANGING TIMES, CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES

Clinton Adams

SINCE ITS PUBLICATION in 1971 *The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art & Techniques* has gained wide acceptance as the standard work in the field of artists' lithography.\* Now in print for seventeen years, *TBL* necessarily reflects the technology and research of the 1960s. While many of the basic techniques and procedures of artists' lithography—particularly stone lithography—have been little modified in the years since its publication, others have greatly changed. As has been the case throughout the history of lithography, changing times have brought changing technologies. During the 1970s and 1980s the horizons of the art have been remarkably expanded, and printers have developed capabilities that did not exist when *TBL* was written.

Inevitably, as printers respond to the aesthetic requirements of a new generation of artists, lithography will change still further in the 1990s and in the century to come, perhaps even more rapidly than in the past. Because artists' lithography is heavily dependent upon materials manufactured for use in the offset industry, it is vulnerable to sudden and often unwelcome technical modifications. Though useful new materials may from time to time become available, it has more frequently been the case that materials upon which printers have long relied suddenly disappear, either because they have become obsolete in the industry or because they present dangers to health and are removed from the marketplace. As commercial printing moves increasingly to computerization, it is likely that laser printing—or other processes as yet unknown—will in some degree replace offset printing, with unpredictable effects upon availability of materials essential to hand lithography.

Few topics covered in *TBL* have changed more substantially than has metal plate lithography, specifically, aluminum plate lithography. Zinc plates, though frequently used at Tamarind Lithography Workshop during the 1960s, are now rarely found in print workshops, in part because they are difficult to obtain, and in part because artists and printers are unaware of their unique characteristics. For those who have access to zinc plates and the materials necessary for their processing, the material included in *TBL*'s sixth chapter remains valid much as written. Although individual printers may have developed additional refinements in the techniques of zinc lithography, the basic processes described in *TBL* are unaltered.

By contrast with zinc, aluminum plate lithography has gained greatly in importance. The high cost and limited availability of fine lithographic stones has led to an increasing reliance upon aluminum, not only in professional workshops but also in art schools and universities. Workshops now exist where, in the absence of stones, all printing is from aluminum plates.

The article that follows—"Aluminum Plate Lithography"—is the first in a series which will serve to update and revise material contained in *TBL*. Although intended to stand alone, it would best be read in conjunction with *TBL*, which contains additional information not repeated here. Reference will also be made to articles that have appeared in past issues of *The Tamarind Papers* (see page 78 for information about the cumulative index to *TTP*, volumes 1 through 10, and the availability of back copies).

Because the printing of lithographs by hand is as much an art as a science, it is not surprising that professional work-

shops reflect in varying degree the style and temperament of their master printers. Just as different printers have different styles, they have preferences for different technical methods. Through intuition—or, if you will, intuition based in experience—one printer may decide to use a certain process at a certain time, while another may decide to omit it. Either route may lead to success, though perhaps of a different flavor. We stress this point in the hope that readers of technical articles in *TTP* (and in *TBL*) will interpret them in the light of their own experience. Less experienced printers are advised to adhere closely to what is written.

The following discussion of aluminum plate lithography reflects the experience, judgments, and opinions of its author Lynne Allen, who was studio manager at Tamarind Institute from 1983 to 1987 and is now technical director at the Rutgers Center for Innovative Printmaking. It is our plan to publish in coming issues of *TTP* other articles designed to update and supplement *The Tamarind Book of Lithography*. We welcome suggestions from readers of *TTP* as to topics that should be given early attention. □

\*Garo Antreasian and Clinton Adams, *The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art & Techniques* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1971).

# ALUMINUM PLATE LITHOGRAPHY

Lynne Allen

## Metal Plate and Stone Lithography [TBL 6.1 and 6.2]\*

SO LONG AS LITHOGRAPHIC STONE was widely available at low cost, there was little impetus in the United States to make use of zinc or aluminum plates. In the early years of the twentieth century, when most American lithographs were small in scale and were printed in black and white, few artists chose to work on metal, and then only as a matter of convenience. During the 1950s, when an increasing number of artists began to work in color and to use techniques other than crayon, zinc plates gained in popularity, their use stimulated not only by new methods but by a growing scarcity of fine-quality stone. By the time Tamarind Lithography Workshop was founded in 1960, it was evident that the future of hand lithography would depend in large part upon use of metal plates. Fortunately, as a consequence of research begun in the 1960s and continued—at Tamarind and elsewhere—during the 1970s and 1980s, we have gained a substantial understanding of and control over aluminum plate lithography. While in many circumstances stone remains the printing matrix of choice, the range and scope of aluminum plate lithography has

\*This discussion of aluminum plate lithography is intended to supplement and bring up to date the information contained in Garo Antreasian and Clinton Adams, *The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art & Techniques* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1971), Chapter 6, "Metal-plate Lithography." Some sections of that chapter remain essentially unchanged by time: section 6.3, for example, which compares the relative merits of zinc and aluminum; others are relevant only to zinc plates: sections 6.11 and 6.16, for example, which discuss *peau de crapaud* and etches for zinc plates.

Where opinions are expressed as to techniques and processes, they are those of the writer and are based upon her experience as a printer; they do not necessarily reflect the views of the authors of *TBL* or of the professional staff of Tamarind Institute.

been greatly extended—sufficiently so that it has come to be the primary medium in many lithographic workshops.

## Plate sizes and gauges [TBL 6.4]

**Ball-grained plates.** At the time *TBL* was written, regrainable, ball-grained, aluminum plates were manufactured in many places throughout the United States and Canada. Today there are few manufacturers of such plates, among them Takach-Garfield Press Company, Albuquerque, New Mexico (see *Directory of Suppliers*); and Precision Litho Grain-ing, Florence, Massachusetts. Both Takach and Precision offer a coarse-grained plate.

Plates are most commonly supplied in two sizes,  $25\frac{1}{2} \times 36$  in ( $64.8 \times 91.4$  cm) and  $36 \times 47\frac{1}{4}$  in ( $91.4 \times 120$  cm). They can (and should) be cut to sizes that conform to the plate supports which will be used on the press bed. They are available in gauges varying from thick (caliper of .02 in, or .5 mm) to thin (caliper of .01 in, or .25 mm). Plates of caliper .015 in (.375 mm) are most practical for hand printing; they are easier to obtain, less costly than thicker plates, not so sensitive to dents as are thinner plates, thick enough to accommodate regrain-ing, and capable of withstanding heavy printing during long editions. Because of their lower cost, plates of a caliper .012 in (.3 mm) are used in many college and university workshops, where smaller editions are usually printed.

**Photo-sensitive plates.** Two types of photo-sensitive plates are available for use in artists' lithography: **presensitized plates**, which are used in the commercial lithographic industry because of their convenience and predictable, standardized behavior; and **wipe-on plates**, which are sensitized by hand with chemicals that are "wiped on" the plate.

The wipe-on plates are primarily negative-working, i.e., the image on the plate will reverse the values of the image on the film or Mylar that is used as the

"negative." A plate is coated with a light-sensitive emulsion made from diazo rosin and is exposed to an ultraviolet light source which renders insoluble the areas struck by light. Because the coating alone is not ink-receptive, the developer contains lacquer, thereby ensuring the ink-receptivity of the developed plate.

When presensitized positive-working plates are used, the values of the image are not reversed; a positive image on frosted Mylar, acetate, or ground glass is used to make a positive printing plate. The ultraviolet light changes the molecular linking system of the emulsion on the presensitized positive plate, softening it and allowing the exposed areas to dissolve in an alkaline developer. Portions of the plate that are not exposed to light remain chemically unchanged and become the printing areas. Once the plate has been processed and the photo-emulsion removed, the exposed, non-image areas must be treated with an acidified gum solution. This allows water to be held on the plate and prevents non-image areas from rolling up. The gum molecules adhere best to aluminum when the plate has been acidified to a pH of 2.7 to 3.0.<sup>1</sup>

Major manufacturers of presensitized positive-working plates are Hoechst Celanese Corporation; Fuji Photo Film, USA; Polychrome; Howson-Algraphy; Horsell; and Kodak. All except Kodak make use of aqueous developers; Kodak uses a solvent base. The plates are made by applying several coats of sensitizing material onto finely grained, degreased aluminum plates. The methods used in manufacture include: **extruder coater** (a coating is squeezed onto the surface and smoothed with a "doctor blade" or squeegee); **air knife** (a coating is sprayed on the plate by an air-powered machine); **reverse roll gravure** (a gravure cylinder prints the coating onto the metal); **miniscus** (aluminum is wrapped and dipped into the coating to provide a thin and even coverage); and **whirling** (the coating is poured onto the surface of a rapidly spinning plate).

Presensitized positive-working plates are available in standard sizes as small as  $14 \times 20$  in (approximately  $35 \times 50$  cm) and larger sizes may be specially

1 For further information, see Deli Sacilotto, *Photographic Printmaking Techniques* (New York: Watson-Guptill, 1982).

ordered. The width of the aluminum roll, usually 60 in (152 cm) determines the maximum width available. Plates are available in gauges varying from thick (caliper of .02 in, or .5 mm) to thin (caliper of .008 in, or .2 mm). Hundreds of thousands of aluminum plates are manufactured annually for use in the offset industry. Characteristically, these plates have very little grain—an almost mirror-like finish—which causes them to be extremely sensitive when used in hand-printing. Because ball-graining by hand is too costly, most manufacturers anodize aluminum plates so as to control oxidation. This is done electro-chemically in conjunction with sulfuric acid and produces a fine and extremely hard surface. Although such a plate surface would be excellent for use in hand lithography, the process is at present too costly for use in the making of coarsely grained plates.

The use of positive-working plates is widespread in Europe, where sixty percent of the work is done on them. Although the offset industry in the United States is becoming increasingly more interested in these plates, ninety percent of its work is still done on negative-working plates.

### Graining Metal Plates [TBL 6.5]

Manufacturers of ball-grained aluminum plates produce a uniform, regularly shaped grain by use of steel balls in an oscillating machine (glass or ceramic balls are used in many European countries). Trisodium phosphate, a degreasing agent, is used in conjunction with aluminum oxide or sodium silica grit to produce evenly grained plates (sodium silica is used both by Takach and Precision because it produces less residue to be disposed of). The plates are then washed or scrubbed, run through a flattening process, and quickly dried to prevent oxidation. Acid-free tissues are then placed between the plates, which are shipped immediately after graining.

As a result of the wide use of disposable plates in the offset industry (and the increasing use of paper plates), commercial plate regraining is now unavailable in the United States except from the remaining makers of ball-grained plates (see above). Although in the 1960s Tamarind assisted in design of two plate-graining machines that successfully re-grain metal plates (machines which are

still in operation), such machines are not now commercially available in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

While it is possible to employ sand-blasting as a means to regain aluminum plates, it is difficult to achieve an even grain. Although not an acceptable method in professional work, aluminum plates can for some uses be washed out, counteretched, and used again without regraining.

### Counteretching Aluminum Plates [TBL 6.6]

Many lithographers believe it is necessary to counteretch aluminum plates before drawing on them. Others believe that since aluminum plate manufacturers grain and ship plates immediately, counteretching may safely be omitted unless the plates have been on hand for some time. While counteretching removes surface oxides and sensitizes the plates so that they become especially receptive to fatty image deposits and gum etches, it also alters the original grain of the plates. The extent of the surface damage depends upon the counteretch that is used, as some acids are more corrosive to the metal than are others. Repeated counteretching can render the surface of a plate almost completely smooth; it then retains water poorly and is susceptible to dry roll and scumming. An alternative method which may serve to clean a plate that has been long in storage while still preserving its grain is to use warm water with a cotton wipe, or, if warm water is not sufficient, lacquer thinner or Hancolite.

Although the commercially prepared counteretches that were once generally available are now seldom found, equally satisfactory shop formulas can be made with relatively safe chemicals. Work that is done on plates that have been inadequately counteretched will inevitably roll up poorly or not at all, and may deteriorate in printing.

Counteretches are also used after initial proofing of a plate to remove the adsorbed gum film which, in the process of etching, has been developed on the non-image areas. Removal of this film allows the surface again to become grease receptive. Here, as in initial counteretching, the grain may easily be damaged and subsequent printing made more difficult.

Many combinations of acids render a

plate sensitive to surface grease. It should be remembered, however, that not all acids are equally corrosive. The primary goal in counteretching is to sensitize the plate while at the same time retaining a surface grain which will accept drawing materials well. Hence the imperative: *Counteretching should be kept to a minimum and should be accomplished with the least corrosive acid.*

### Counteretch solutions for sensitizing aluminum plates:

(1) Acetic acid in a ratio of 6 ounces acid to 1 gallon water (or 18 cl acid to 4 liters water) works well on aluminum plates but is extremely corrosive and harsh. Delicate areas of crayon or tusche wash can literally be counteretched away by this strong formula.

(2) Hydrofluoric acid in a ratio of 1 ounce acid to 1 gallon water (or 3 cl acid to 4 liters water) is a very corrosive material and, quite aside from the dangers it presents to those who use it, readily causes damage to the grain of the plate. Even in dilute solution, hydrofluoric acid is extremely irritating to the skin. Burns with such solutions may give no warning of injury, but if the skin is not quickly and thoroughly washed, slow-healing burns, ulcers, and even gangrene may develop. The vapor, hydrogen fluoride, is very irritating to the eyes, nose, and upper respiratory tract.

(3) The counteretch made with 1/2 ounce phosphoric acid, 1/2 ounce hydrochloric acid, and 1 gallon water (or 1.7 cl of each acid and 4 liters water) is completely dependable and results in little damage to grain. It is important to follow the procedures outlined below.

(4) A citric acid counteretch, as normally used on stone, made by dissolving 1/4 teaspoon of citric acid crystals (1.23 ml) in 10 ounces distilled water (29.6 cl) can also be used successfully on aluminum plates with little damage to grain. It is important to wash the plate thoroughly during and after counteretching so as to remove accumulated salts.

**Procedure:** Before counteretching an image, apply talc and rinse the plate with water. If the image has been gummed, wash off all gum thoroughly, as residual gum can interfere with the effectiveness of the counteretch. Wear protective gloves while flowing the counteretch solution

2 The machine used at Tamarind, illustrated in TBL, p. 125, is no longer manufactured.

over the surface of the plate. If only a small area of the drawing is to be modified, apply the counteretch locally, so as to reduce the possibility of damage to grain. Using a cotton pad or wipe, scrub the plate lightly but with some pressure; continue to counteretch for approximately thirty seconds before flushing the plate with water. Repeat the procedure a total of three times. When using a counteretch stronger than the phosphoric/hydrochloric formula given above, use fewer applications. After counteretching, dry the plates as quickly as possible so as to minimize formation of surface oxides. Unless drawing is to proceed immediately, wrap the plates with clean newsprint to protect their surfaces.

### Drawing on Aluminum Plates [TBL 6.7 through 6.12]

Because aluminum plates are more sensitive to grease than is stone, they must be handled with care at all times, not only during work with lithographic materials but in preliminary stages. Artists unfamiliar with work on metal will detect a distinctly different "feel" from work on stone. The character of the grain is different—and, for crayon drawing, less attractive; there is a resiliency totally absent on stone. Though not as dark as zinc, aluminum is darker than most stones, a difference that requires artists to adjust their drawings to the color of the metal. Because number 5 crayons are capable of scratching aluminum, they must be used with care; because they contain so little grease, they tend to slip on the surface, filling the top grain of the plate without reaching into its valleys. When used on top of number 5, subsequent strokes of softer crayon may impart a rich visual appearance, but this is very deceptive; because they rest on the hard crayon rather than directly on the plate, they may be lost in etching and printing.

All standard forms of tusche may be used to create solid blacks. Korn's Autographic Tusche continues to be an excellent choice for solids and full-strength lines; paste and stick-type tusches are useful in scumbled (dry-brush) techniques. Solid blacks may also be made by use of a mixture called "shop black," a material that has come into widespread use since the writing of *TBL*. It is made by mixing the following ingre-

dients in a container that has a lid: 1 part asphaltum (preferably thick black asphaltum, not an already diluted mixture), 1 part greasy black ink (*noir à monter* or its equivalent), and 1 part lithotine. The resultant mixture should be thick and brushable; although it can be further thinned with lithotine, care should be taken to avoid too thin a tusche, which will "bleed" when used in drawing. Shop black can be stored indefinitely and can be used on stone as well as plates.<sup>3</sup>

Although tusche and water washes may be used on aluminum much in the same way as on stone, they behave somewhat differently and require more precise control. Because of aluminum's receptivity to grease, washes must be somewhat lighter on metal than for a similar tone on stone.

When using tusche and lithotine washes, dilutions must be weaker than on stone. Such washes reticulate very little or not at all. Alternative washes, less greasy than lithotine washes, may be made with alcohol, lacquer thinner, or Hancolite. The mottled effects that result from flowing water tusche into a film of lithotine (or vice versa) may be used on aluminum as on stone [see *TBL* 1.15].

### Printing Bases on Aluminum Plates [TBL 6.18, 15.18]

Aluminum plates rely upon an artificial base from which to print. Unlike stone, where fatty drawing materials are converted by chemical action into fatty acids which combine with the calcium of the stone, aluminum holds the drawing materials only on its surface. Because no soaps are formed—soaps which on stone are highly receptive to greasy printing ink—it is necessary to create a false printing surface.

The base now generally used in printing from aluminum is some form of lacquer. Upon drying, lacquer films provide a tough printing surface which is impervious to the solvents and materials normally used in hand printing. If non-image areas become ink-receptive during printing, they can be cleaned easily with solvents that would dissolve other printing bases and thus endanger the image. Despite its advantages, however, the future of lacquer in hand printing is uncertain.<sup>4</sup> Many of the lacquers formerly used in print workshops have been removed from the market, primarily be-

cause of government regulation of hazardous substances, but also because of technical advances in the offset industry. Handschy Chemical Company's *Lacquer "V"* and Daniel Smith's *Lacquer "D"* are the only vinyl lacquers on the market today.

### Processing Drawings on Aluminum Plates [TBL 6.15]

Although the principles governing formation of image and non-image areas on aluminum plates are the same as on stone, the chemistry is quite different. On plates, both image and non-image areas depend on the establishment of adsorbed gum films that adhere tightly to the surface of the metal but do not become a part of it. The difference between stone and plates has enormous consequences. It means that image and non-image areas are more tenuously attached, that the demarcation between them is dependent upon extremely thin films which, resting on the surface of the plate, can be easily disoriented or destroyed through the cumulative effects of chemical action and/or physical abrasion. While on aluminum the non-image areas are easy to stabilize, image areas can be difficult to maintain.

The etches most often used on aluminum plates are compounded with hydrogum and gum arabic. These etches have been found to be most effective when acidified with tannic acid.<sup>5</sup> The addition of this acid converts the salt form of the gum into the free-acid form. This conversion is critical to the effectiveness of the desensitizing solution. When the pH of the etch is on the alkaline side (pH 7.0 or above) or even as low as 6.0,

3 See also John Sommers, "A New Black Ink," *TTP* 4:28.

4 The increasing regulation of hazardous substances by federal and state law has caused some professionals in the field of hand lithography to express a concern that vinyl lacquers and lacquer solvents may at some point no longer be available. Handschy Chemical Company has assured the writer of its intention to continue to provide these materials, upon which the present technology of aluminum plate lithography—as described in this article—so directly depends.

5 For a discussion of the role of tannic acid in etches, see John Sommers, "Tannic Acid Plate Etch," *TTP* 2:15.

most of the gum is in the salt form; such an etch will produce poor adsorption. The addition of acid, lowering the pH to 3.0, for example, will improve adsorption, because more of the salt form of the gum will be converted to free-acid form. If too much acid is added—sufficient to take the etch beyond the point at which most of the gum has been converted to free-acid form—serious problems will result. Having nothing else with which to react, the excess acid attacks the surface grain of the plate, undermining the drawing, and reducing the effective adsorption of the gum film.

Among the chemicals sometimes called for in etch formulas for use on metal plates are phosphoric acid, ammonium bichromate, magnesium nitrate, ammonium nitrate, tannic acid, or chrome alum.

### Etches for Aluminum [TBL 6.17]

At the time *TBL* was written, the standard etch for aluminum plates was composed of 1 part phosphoric acid to 32 parts gum arabic. Since that time it has been demonstrated that tannic acid is superior to phosphoric acid as an agent in gum adsorption. In present Tamarind practice, etches for aluminum plates are formulated through use of a stock solution called *TAPEM* (tannic acid plate etch mix), which is compounded as shown in TABLE I. These materials are combined in a one gallon (or 4 liter) container and thoroughly mixed together. *TAPEM* then serves as a stock solution from which stronger or weaker etches can be formulated. Although *TAPEM* can be stored indefinitely, its pH should be checked periodically and adjusted as necessary. The pH should fall between 2.3 and 2.5; if it is higher than 2.5, additional phosphoric acid should be added.

Etches of varying strength are then compounded as mixtures of *TAPEM* and gum arabic. In so doing, it is necessary to make adjustments according to the pH of gum arabic that is used. When gum is prepared for commercial use it is preserved with benzoate of soda, formaldehyde, or phenol, any of which will alter its natural pH. Each batch may be different, even if received from the same manufacturer. For this reason, newly received shipments should always be tested before use.

The figures provided in TABLE II indicate the degree to which pH will fluctuate

TABLE I

<i>TAPEM</i>	<i>U.S. Measure</i>	<i>Metric Measure</i>
Hanco Plate Etch, Tannic Acid	42 oz	124 cl
Type MS 214		
Gum arabic (14 baume)	54 oz	160 cl
Hydrogum	22 oz	65 cl
Phosphoric acid	1 oz	3 cl

TABLE II

<i>TAPEM at pH 2.3</i>	<i>Gum arabic at 4.6 to 4.8</i>	<i>Gum arabic at 4.0</i>
1:3 <i>TAPEM</i> and GA	pH 3.6 to 3.8	pH 3.1 to 3.3
1:2 <i>TAPEM</i> and GA	pH 3.5 to 3.6	pH 3.0 to 3.1
1:1 <i>TAPEM</i> and GA	pH 3.2 to 3.4	pH 2.7 to 2.9
2:1 <i>TAPEM</i> and GA	pH 3.0 to 3.2	pH 2.8 to 2.6

in etches compounded from gum of higher and lower pH (in the first column, "1:3 *TAPEM* and GA" means 1 part *TAPEM* and 3 parts gum arabic). Although the *TAPEM* formula includes hydrogum (for its tight molecular structure) and gum arabic (for its water-adsorption properties), it is possible to use tannic acid in combination with either of these gums alone and still achieve an effective etch solution.

When processing aluminum plates, the first etch is the most important. The second etch serves mainly to control the adsorbed gum film, or the areas which are to retain water. For optimum water retention, the etch should have a pH of 2.7 to 3.0.

If an image-area which was *very* dark before the first etch rolls up beautifully, a hotter etch may be applied locally to ensure stability. There is, however, no guarantee that the area will not fill in if the grease in the drawing is too great for aluminum. The metal does not have the flexibility of limestone; both the artist and the printer must come to understand this and recognize its threshold.

### Procedure for Etching Aluminum [TBL 6.19]

The plate that is to be etched should be supported by a flat, even surface. Whatever that surface may be, it must offer a true and unyielding support so as to permit an even roll-up. Some printers prefer to secure the plate to the support with spring clamps; others prefer

to adhere the plate by wetting its underside, thus creating sufficient suction to hold it firmly in place.

The drawing is carefully dusted with a brush charged with talc. It is important that the talc achieve intimate contact with all areas of the drawing. After wiping off excess talc with a cotton swab, a gentle polishing action is exerted on the remainder. As drawings made with heavily applied tusche are usually somewhat tacky, they should be dusted but not polished (so as to avoid smearing the work). Because the etches used on aluminum are mild, rosin is not required; because it is mildly abrasive its use is best avoided.

Etches are best applied into a puddle or wet film of gum arabic. A brush or small sponge is then used to move the etch gently across the plate and distribute it evenly. When different etch strengths are to be used on one plate, each should be applied with a separate brush or sponge. Extreme care must be taken when removing the hotter etches; sponges should be used to *lift* the excess etch; it should never be dragged across other areas of the image. Since there is no effervescence on aluminum, as there would be on stone, the printer must rely on the predetermined pH of the etch and the duration of its application.

Four variables should be kept in mind: (1) the grease content of the drawing, (2) the strength of the etch, (3) the volume (quantity) of the etch, and (4) the time the etch is left in contact with the drawing. The character of the drawing—whether it was drawn with soft or hard

crayons, for example—is a fundamental consideration. The strength of the etch determines how actively the acid will react with both the grease and the metal of the plate. Its quantity is important in that acid remains active longer in a larger volume of gum, thereby continuing to develop the free-acid form. The time the etch is on the plate determines the effectiveness of the etch: if left on too long it can burn the image; if removed too quickly, the image can fill in.

TABLES III through VI provide a structure which may assist in selecting appropriate etches and determining the duration of their application to several types of drawings. In view of the countless variables in drawing and processing, they are no more than generalizations; every situation is unique and must be evaluated in the light of the printer's experience and intentions. In these tables a ratio of 1:2, as example, refers to a mixture of 1 part TAPEM and 2 parts gum arabic. These charts assume that the pH of the gum arabic is between 4.0 and 5.0; if a gum of lower pH is used, the amount of TAPEM should be reduced accordingly. Drawings characterized by a great range from dark to light—from very heavy to very light grease content—should be etched locally with several solutions of different pH, applied for different lengths of time. As with drawings on stone, the palest areas should be protected with pools of pure gum arabic before acidified solutions are applied. The etches that are to remain longest on the plate should be the first applied; they should be followed by etches of successively shorter duration. Localized etching should be planned so that everything comes out even: so that when the several etches are simultaneously removed, each will have been on the plate for the proper length of time.

### Corrections on Aluminum Plates [TBL 6.21 through 6.24]

It is often necessary to correct images (1) during the process of drawing, (2) between the first and second etch, and (3) after the second etch, and usually after proofing. Corrections on aluminum are far more critical than on stone and the means to accomplish them are far more limited. The more the grain of the plate is deformed by corrective processes such as scraping, scratching, and polishing, the less secure will be the es-

TABLE III			
Etches for crayon (duration, one to three minutes):			
<i>Application:</i>	<i>Soft</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Hard</i>
Light	1:2	1:3	gum
Medium	1:2 or 1:1	1:2	1:3
Heavy	1:1 or 2:1	1:2 or 1:1	1:1

TABLE IV			
Etches for rubbing crayon (duration, one to three minutes):			
<i>Application:</i>	<i>Soft</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Hard</i>
Light	1:2	1:3	gum
Medium	1:1	1:2 or 1:1	1:3
Heavy	TAPEM	2:1 or TAPEM	1:2 or 1:3

TABLE V				
Etches for tusche washes mixed with water (duration, three to five minutes):				
Application:	Charbonnel High grade	Charbonnel Coverflex	Charbonnel Stick	La Favorite
Light	1:2 or 1:1*	1:2*	1:2*	1:3 or gum
Medium	1:1	1:2 or 1:1	1:2 or 1:1	1:2
Heavy	TAPEM	TAPEM	1:1	1:1
Very heavy	TAPEM+ (pH 1.5)	TAPEM+ (pH 1.7)		TAPEM
*applied through pure gum				

TABLE VI		
Etches for tusche washes mixed with solvents (duration, three to five minutes):		
<i>Application:</i>	<i>Lacq. thnr., alcohol, Hancolite</i>	<i>Lithotine</i>
Light	1:1	1:1
Medium	TAPEM	TAPEM+ (pH 2.0)
Heavy	TAPEM+ (pH 1.7)	TAPEM+ (pH 1.5)

*Note:* In the above tables, TAPEM+ etches require addition of phosphoric acid drop by drop until the indicated pH is reached.

tablishment of new work; simultaneously, the ability of the non-image areas to retain water will be weakened. For these reasons, the processes of deletion should be chosen so as to minimize physical abrasion of the plate, particularly if new work is to be added in the same areas.

**Corrections before the first etch.** Greaseless solvents are used for such

corrections. Benzine, mentioned in TBL 6.22 as the solvent of choice, is now never used, having been identified as a substance very hazardous to health; gasoline is similarly avoided, by reason of the dangers it presents. Lacquer thinner and Hancolite should always be used with care and in well-ventilated spaces; respirators should be worn while using them. The solvent should be applied

carefully to the parts of the drawing that are to be deleted, but should not be permitted to creep into surrounding areas. Removal of crayon lines and tones is relatively easy by comparison with tusche, particularly lithotine tusche. Numerous applications of solvent may be necessary to lift all traces of grease from the crevices of the grain. If new work is to replace the old, it is less important that the deleted area be completely free of residual grease, for if the additions are appreciably greasy they will mask the remainder. It may be necessary in some cases to counteretch an area from which heavy grease has been removed so as to ensure its receptivity to a new and more delicate drawing.

**Corrections between the first and second etches.** The method of choice for use between etches is the gum deletion. This method is an improvement over all those listed in *TBL* 6.23. For plates not yet put in lacquer, the procedure is simple and secure. After washing out the image with a strong solvent, and before buffing in lacquer, gum arabic is painted over the area to be deleted. The gum acts as a stop-out. If the area to be deleted has a heavy grease content, some TAPEM may be added to the gum (even straight TAPEM may be used). When the gum is dry, lacquer is buffed in normally and fanned dry. If the gum deletion has been made with acidified gum, care should be taken during wash off to avoid burning image areas. Repeated gum deletions may be made with little or no damage to the plate, provided the gum is not excessively acidified.

Deletions made after the plate is in lacquer are more difficult. As the gum deletion method can no longer be used, one must rely on techniques similar to those that might be used after proofing (as discussed below). Commercial image removers are effective but dangerous. They are usually made with hydrofluoric acid, a very hazardous chemical. **Read the warning label carefully before using any such substance.**

Additions should be made in deleted areas only after counteretching them. Such additions to the image should be put in lacquer before the plate is editioned.

**Corrections after the second etch and proofing.** Major changes in lithographic images are most often made after a series of trial proofs has been printed. The extent to which corrections may be nec-

essary can be determined more readily from a printed impression than from a plate, and the establishment of image and non-image areas is more secure after the plate has received the second etch.

Materials used for deletions include abrasives, hones, erasers, and liquid solvents:

**Abrasives:** Fine pumice powder, aluminum oxide grit, or silicon carbide grit (Carborundum) can be used (wet or dry) to remove portions of an inked drawing by abrasive action. The material is applied with a small glass or metal pestle. While grinding away the drawing, to remove or lighten it, the abrasive imparts fresh tooth to plate grain. Alternatively, deletions may be made through use of pumice powder in a pen-type airbrush.<sup>6</sup>

**Hones:** Although hones reduce or remove the grain of the plate, it is possible with care to use them in image-removal while still retaining sufficient grain to hold water. Areas should not be honed repeatedly, nor should additions be made in areas that have been honed.

**Erasers:** Soft erasers may be used for partial removal of work. When used skillfully, they can remove grease from the tops of the plate grain without disturbing deposits in the valleys. By reducing the size of each ink dot and etching the areas thus exposed, the overall tone is lightened. Electric erasers, which are abrasive, can be used for deletions similar to those made with pumice and an airbrush.

**Solvents:** Solvents such as kerosene, lithotine, and turpentine are sufficiently strong to remove grease but, because they are themselves greasy, leave a residue. Evaporative solvents such as lacquer thinner and Hancolite are strong but not greasy.

**Etching after deletions.** Procedures for etching deleted areas vary according to the nature and extent of the deletion. Small areas should be locally spot-etched, preferably with a 1:1 TAPEM/gum arabic mixture. When the areas are either numerous or large, the entire plate may require re-etching.

**Additions.** Work may be added to an aluminum plate at any point after etching, provided that it has been counter-etched. Work that is added without adequate counteretching will roll up poorly or not at all. It is necessary to reapply lacquer once additions have been completed.

## Plate Supports [*TBL* 6.26]

Metal plates must be elevated on a firm base to engage the scraper bar of the press. Lithograph stones of various sizes have been used by many printers for this purpose. In the absence of a sufficient number of stones to permit their use as backers, it is possible to use slabs of slate in thicknesses of 1 or 1½ in (2.5 to 3.8 cm), planed to be perfectly flat and level. It is best to cover the surface of the slate with a used aluminum plate so as to protect its surface from erosion. If in time a slate backer gets out of level it may be easily regained. Granite, marble, and onyx can also be used as plate supports.

## Problems in Printing

Even the best of printers will from time to time encounter problems which cannot be avoided. Plates develop scum, images fill in, or weaken and disappear. These problems, together with means for their avoidance and solution, were discussed at length by John Sommers in "Rescuing the Lost Image," *TTP* 3:60–62. The methods suggested in *TBL* 6.27 and 6.28 for removal of scum from aluminum plates have been made obsolete by subsequent experience and are no longer recommended.

## Storage of Metal Plates [*TBL* 6.29]

Aluminum plates which are to be retained for later printing of the images can be stored easily and safely. A plate to be stored is first inked nearly full, dusted with talc, and gummed with a 1:1 TAPEM/gum arabic mixture. The ink should always be black; plates should never be stored in color. Because color inks dry quickly, it would be necessary after time to use a strong solvent to remove them. When such a solvent is used, it usually also removes the lacquer, and when an image is relacquered, it usually rolls up heavier than before.

The back of the plate should be thoroughly dried after removal from the press. The dried plate is then wrapped in clean newsprint or covered with vellum, labeled, dated, and put in a storage rack. □

6 For a discussion of airbrush deletions, see Julio Juristo, "Precision Deletions on Lithography Plates," *TTP* 1:44–45.

## BOOKS & CATALOGUES IN REVIEW

**The Prints of Don Freeman: A Catalogue Raisonné.** By Edith McCulloch. Published for the University of Virginia Art Museum by the University Press of Virginia, 1988. 192 pp. \$45.00 (hardcover).

THIS BOOK is eminently worth doing. Don Freeman (1908–1978) is important in the history of twentieth-century American art. His best known contribution is in his illustrations, many of them done for his own marvelous children's stories. Although his prints are known, their quantity and scope have not been widely appreciated. Edith McCulloch's book includes the remarkable total of 146 direct lithographs and etchings, many of them utterly unfamiliar until now. For each of them, there is an illustration; information as to title, year, medium, dimensions (in inches and centimeters), signature, and edition size (to the extent known); a list of museums owning the print; and, in some cases (mostly theatrical subjects), a commentary on the subject matter. These are the basic data necessary to a catalogue raisonné. Only one print (no. 84) is known in more than one state, and both states are illustrated. There are also a chronology of Freeman's life; a list of his exhibitions; bibliographies of books written by him, illustrated by him, or about him (information not elsewhere available, to my knowledge); and an index of titles.

The catalogue contains three interesting essays. Drama critic and editor John Beaufort, a long-time friend of Freeman's, contributes biographical information, particularly as it applies to the prints. Of special interest are his comments on Freeman's drawings of people in crowds—an unusual and characteristic aspect of his subject matter and one that could be studied further. Marjorie P. Balge of the University of Virginia provides a critical appreciation of the prints. She is particularly interesting when talk-

ing about John Sloan's influence as a teacher on Freeman's work. Sloan is unusual among teachers for having inspired his students to follow their own styles rather than his; a roster of his pupils includes artists of every possible style. The close stylistic relationship between Sloan and Freeman thus tells more about Freeman's choices than it does about Sloan's. A brief essay by the great cartoonist Al Hirschfeld adds a note about Freeman's publication, *Newsstand*.

The layout and typography of the book, as well as the printing by Thomson-Shore, are excellent. The catalogue entries are placed next to the appropriate illustrations in each case. The illustrations are uniformly clear; in only a few cases have the edges of Freeman's images been cropped. All but one (no. 68) of the reproductions were made from the prints themselves, either in the collection of the University of Virginia Art Museum or that of the artist's widow. Significantly, they retain, in general, the proportionate size of the prints; that is to say, the large prints are larger than the small prints. This is far from being standard practice in art reference books. Since only one of the catalogued prints was in color (no. 117), there is little loss in having all reproductions in black and white. In the essay pages, there are small reproductions of the prints referred to in the text. This very thoughtful aid to the reader is one that could be more widely imitated.

I HAVE BEEN lucky enough to know Don and Lydia Freeman personally, mainly in the 1950s and 1960s, when we were neighbors in Santa Barbara, California. Even in those distant days, I was interested in prints. Occasionally, I would talk with Don about them, and he was kind enough to give me several examples of his *Newsstand*. I have also had the pleasure recently of talking with Lydia Freeman. In the 1970s, I became good friends with the printer Lynton Kistler, and I have seen and discussed some of Freeman's prints with him. This is given as background to some of the following comments.

From my notes, I can perhaps make a few additions to the data in the catalogue. Lynton Kistler printed more lithographs than the ones noted. The following were also printed by Kistler: nos. 128–36, 138–40, and probably 137. On the other hand, nos. 124 and 126,

listed as printed by Lynton Kistler, were actually printed by his brother Rodney in Lynton's shop. The actual edition of no. 104 was twenty. Lynton Kistler printed several other prints for Freeman that were not found by McCulloch: four 1940 subjects for *Knickerbocker Holiday* (in addition to no. 125); a subject entitled *Lipstick*; and a portrait of Kay Thompson (done on variously colored papers in a total edition of 200). The last two were done about 1948. All are stone lithographs that I have seen personally. Examples of these additional prints, along with nos. 104–05, 124–26, 128–36, and 138–40 are now in the collection of the Division of Graphic Arts of the Smithsonian Institution.

After the main body of the catalogue, there is a separate section devoted to *Don Freeman's Newsstand*, which he published at irregular intervals between 1936 and 1955. It consisted mainly of illustrations by Freeman, with some text and an occasional picture by a friend. Reproduced and described in the book is a "representative group" of twenty-five prints from *Newsstand*.

This section is the source of my one major criticism of McCulloch's catalogue. Freeman made many of the illustrations for *Newsstand* as offset lithographs. Specifically—and this is from the artist himself—he drew directly on offset lithographic plates, which were then etched, placed on the press, and printed. No photomechanical process of any sort was involved. These prints are every bit as original as Freeman's lithographs on stone. That is to say, each print stems in a direct line from Freeman's drawing on a plate. It is not taken from a work in a different medium. There is no "original" but the print itself. What Freeman described personally to me is borne out by a close examination of the *Newsstand* prints themselves.

The cataloguer, unhappily, seems to have fallen victim to a common misunderstanding. Since the process of offset lithography is widely used for commercial photomechanical reproductions, ranging from a daily newspaper to this catalogue itself, it is often believed that all offset printing is photomechanical. This is wrong. It is perfectly feasible for an artist to draw directly on an offset plate, which may then be printed without photographic intervention between the plate and the paper. The only difference between Freeman's stone litho-

graphs and his offset lithographs is that the images were passed briefly onto rubber blankets between the plate and the paper. Numerous fine and completely original prints have been produced with offset lithography. Lynton Kistler and George C. Miller are among the master printers who have made prints in this way. Notable artists, from Jean Charlot to S. Macdonald-Wright, have used this process. Unless there are technical clues, it is not always possible to tell from the study of a lithograph, based on quality alone, whether it is printed by offset.

Ideally, Freeman's original offset lithographs should be catalogued right along with the rest of his prints. McCulloch has not done this. The first job, of course, is to compile a bibliography of all the issues of *Newsstand*. This is not in the catalogue. Next, one needs to go carefully through all the issues and distinguish the lithographs. By no means are all the pictures in *Newsstand* original lithographs; many are photomechanical reproductions. When the original prints have been separated from those reproductions, they should then be illustrated, described, and included in chronological order with the rest of Freeman's prints. Over time, many prints have been separated from *Newsstand* and lead an independent existence. Occasionally, they were even signed by Freeman. The twenty-five pictures in the catalogue, numbered from "A" to "Y," all appear to be original lithographs. But they are only a sample of Freeman's important work in this medium. It is a falsification of his life's work to ignore them in a catalogue raisonné of his prints.

In fairness, one must consider that there are extenuating circumstances. The inclusion of the *Newsstand* prints would have made a book twice as large—and twice as expensive—as the present catalogue. Now there is a good reason to make a separate book entirely devoted to *Don Freeman's Newsstand*. I understand that the only complete set of *Newsstand*, printed over twenty years, is now in the University of Virginia Art Museum. It would be exciting to see a complete facsimile edition published, making *Newsstand* available to everyone. Such a reprint edition should include catalogue information about the prints, separating the original lithographs from the reproductions. It would also serve to reprint important texts by such authors as William Saroyan, Carl Sandburg, and e. e.

cummings, and original lithographs by other artists. I have found, for instance, a lithograph by Adolf Dehn in the April 1941 issue. There may well be others. Even if a complete facsimile is impractical, it is important to catalogue Freeman's own prints in *Newsstand*. There are many more subjects at least the equal of the twenty-five shown in McCulloch's catalogue. The delight and the strength of Freeman's original work are too great to be missed for the sake of a technicality.

Having said this, however, I want to repeat my praise for this book and its author. It makes available for the first time an important body of work by an important American artist. For Freeman's direct lithographs and etchings, it presents solid catalogue data on which both scholars and the print market may rely. And it at least serves as an introduction to the *Newsstand* prints, though much work remains to be done in this area. For me, it was a pleasure and a privilege to know Don Freeman, and equally now to see his prints made available to a wide audience.

Peter Morse

### **The Lithographs of Robert Riggs, with a Catalogue Raisonné.**

By Ben Bassham.

Published by the Art Alliance Press, Philadelphia, for Associated University Presses, London and Toronto, 1986. 104 pp. \$30.00 (hardcover).

BEN BASSHAM'S *The Lithographs of Robert Riggs* is a welcome addition to the growing number of catalogues documenting important American printmakers. Riggs (1896–1970) was not a minor talent, to be relegated to a passing footnote, but a fine artist who has remained well known among those interested in American lithography.

As an artist, Riggs was by no means prolific. His meticulous working method, which required numerous preliminary drawings and extensive technical refinements, severely restricted his production. Between 1932 and 1950, he created fewer than eighty-five works; however, with few exceptions, the results were consistently outstanding. The group of approximately fifty-five lithographs created between 1932 and 1934 in many ways

epitomizes the best qualities of his work. This is not surprising, since the 1930s was a period of exceptional print activity in the United States—a situation not unlike the etching revival of the 1880s. Riggs was an active participant in this rediscovery of American subject matter. Unfortunately, after representational work reached a pinnacle of popularity and practice in the 1940s, Riggs, like countless others, ceased making lithographs.

Ben Bassham's book is well done, providing reproductions of all of Riggs's known prints, together with customary catalogue information, including exhibition and publication references. Bassham's introductory essay (forty pages) is informative and well written. He also provides a succinct chronology and a selected bibliography. There is a great deal of useful information in this book. In addition to his work as a lithographer, Riggs, as others, pursued a successful career as a commercial illustrator. In a previous review, Norman Kraeft has pointed to what is perhaps this writer's only criticism of the Bassham book: its concern with the decades-long argument about the relative merit of Riggs's prizefight prints versus those of Bellows. Bassham concludes: "And Bellows, with his tendency to turn athletes into cartoon characters in the spirit of Daumier, never achieved in his fight pictures the depth of pathos found in Riggs's powerful depictions of boxers . . ." (p. 40). To be sure, Riggs created twenty-six stunning prizefight prints; however, the comparison with Bellows's work in a variety of media should not be pressed too far. As a *New York Times* reviewer succinctly stated in 1933: "To the artist's [Riggs's] praise be it said that he is not a little George Bellows. Mr. Riggs's work is individual. . . ." It is precisely within this perspective that Riggs's accomplishments should be viewed. Finally, it must be said that Riggs's and Ben Bassham's efforts should have been recorded with better black-and-white reproductions, and with a catalogue design more sympathetic to the readers' needs. Specifically, the catalogue section would have been far more helpful if both the reproduction of the print and the technical information had been on the same page. Otherwise, this is a fine book and a definite must for those interested in American lithography and commercial illustration.

Joseph S. Czeszchowski

**American Women of the Etching Revival.** By Phyllis Peet.

*Published by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 1988. 72 pp. \$10.00 (paper).*

WHEN IN 1887, Sylvester Rosa Koehler, then curator of prints at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, organized the exhibition *Women Etchers of America*, "it drew attention to two remarkable developments: a large number of American women had become professional artists, and they had produced a sufficient quantity of notable work to earn institutional acknowledgement."

Through the exhibition *American Women of the Etching Revival* and publication of Phyllis Peet's scholarly catalogue, the High Museum of Art celebrates the centenary of Koehler's landmark presentation. Then as now, the exhibition of women's art separately from men's was a controversial practice, and some of the women etchers, including Mary Cassatt, were opposed to it.

In her excellent (and thoroughly documented) essay, Peet does much to illuminate the historical and sociological circumstances which led women to make prints. "In 1848," she writes, "schools of design [began] to train the many single 'superfluous' women who had been displaced by industrialization from traditional jobs. To exploit the burgeoning publishing industry's early demand for wood engravers and lithographers . . . these schools, by the early 1850s, had instituted training in printmaking, along with drawing and designing, for middle-class women who needed to be self-supporting." Subsequently, in the late nineteenth century, women gradually emerged as artists, though not without constraints:

Most women who became professional artists chose to observe the social proprieties. They usually practiced as modestly and privately as they could and were far less visible to the public than their male colleagues. For instance, Emily Kelley Moran, one of the first women to experiment with etching in the 1870s, exhibited her etchings relatively few times. She received little notice from art reviewers or the public, preferring, as was explained by Frances Benson in 1893, to observe "women's proper sphere."  
(p. 10).

Inevitably, these "social proprieties" have caused many of the women artists of the 1880s and 1890s to linger in a twilight zone of unjustified (and unjustifi-

able) obscurity. In the time since then, few other than Mary Cassatt have achieved any measure of visibility. Phyllis Peet's fine catalogue is for this reason most welcome. It illuminates a sector of art history long in need of more light, listing and illustrating a number of outstanding etchings by such artists as Margaret Lesley Bush-Brown (1857-1944), Gabrielle DeVaux Clements (1858-1948), Blanche Dillaye (1851-1931), Florence May Esté (1860-1926), Margaret M. Taylor Fox (1857-active to 1941), Edith Loring Peirce Getchell (1855-1940), Eliza Pratt Greatorex, (1819-1897), Ellen Day Hale (1855-1940), Mary Louise McLaughlin (1847-1939), Anne Massey Lea Merritt (1844-1930), Mary Nimmo Moran (1842-1899), Edith Penman (1860-1929), and, of course, Mary Stevenson Cassatt (1844-1926).

If I were to express any reservation in my praise of Peet's catalogue, it might be that she gives such limited attention to the technical characteristics of the etchings she describes. Although she lists the art schools and etching societies in which the women artists received their training, she says little about the aesthetic attitudes and technical practices which were so important an influence upon the etchers of the day. (See Larry D. Perkins's article, pages 26-36.)

The closing sections of Peet's catalogue contain a mine of information. She lists and catalogues the 117 etchings in-

cluded in the Atlanta exhibition; she provides well-researched biographies of thirty-six artists (including all of those mentioned by name above) and an extensive bibliography. It is a superb achievement and an indispensable reference for scholars of late-nineteenth-century printmaking in America. The catalogue is very well printed (by Williams Printing, Atlanta) and the illustrations are of good quality.

The exhibition, which was shown in Atlanta in February 1988, will be at the Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia, through 21 August 1988; at the Hudson River Museum of Westchester, 30 October 1988 to 12 February 1989; and at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 15 March to 11 May 1989.

Clinton Adams

LETTERS *Continued from page 5.*

TTP will continue to use the metric system to the greatest extent possible. It is the world standard, intelligible everywhere. We will provide dimensions and volumes in U. S. measures only when referring to materials that are marketed in those measures when sold in America. To Pierre Jonquières and our other readers worldwide, we extend our apologies for occasional confusion and our plea for patience with Yankee stubbornness. □

**A Partial Table of Measures**

**Length**

	1 inch	= 2.54 centimeters
12 inches	= 1 foot	= 30.48 centimeters
3 feet	= 1 yard	= 0.914 meters
1 millimeter	= 0.04 inches	
1 centimeter	= 0.39 inches	
1 meter	= 39.37 inches	

**Weight (avoirdupois)**

	1 dram	= 1.771 grams
16 drams	= 1 ounce	= 28.349 grams
16 ounces	= 1 pound	= 0.453 kilograms
1 gram	= 0.035 ounces	
1 kilogram	= 2.2046 pounds	

**Liquid measure**

	1 fluidram	= 3.696 milliliters
1 fluidounce	= 8 fluidrams	= 29.573 milliliters
16 fluidounces	= 1 quart	
1 milliliter	= 0.27 fluidrams	
1 centiliter	= 0.338 fluidounces	
1 liter	= 1.057 quarts	

# CONTRIBUTORS:

**Clinton Adams** has been editor of *TTP* since its founding in 1974.

**Lynne Allen**, who served as Contributing Editor of *TTP* during 1986 and 1987, is technical director of the Rutgers Center for Innovative Printmaking, Rutgers University.

**Petra ten-Doesschate Chu**, Professor of Art History at Seton Hall University (New Jersey), is editor of *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 121, part 1 and 2 (New York: 1985-88).

**Joseph S. Czestochowski**, Executive Director of the Cedar Rapids Art Museum (Iowa), is author of many exhibition catalogues and articles on American printmaking during the first half of the twentieth century.

**Pat Gilmour**, Contributing Editor of *TTP*, is Senior Curator of International Prints & Illustrated Books at the Australian National Gallery. Author of many books and catalogues, she most recently served as editor of *Lasting Impressions: Lithography as Art* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1988).

**Lanier Graham**, author of *Spontaneous Gesture* (Canberra: Australian National Gallery, 1987), is Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, California.

**Byron Lindsay**, Assistant Professor of Modern & Classical Languages at the University of New Mexico, will go to Alma-Ata, capital of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), on a Fulbright fellowship during 1989.

**George McNeil** is a painter and printmaker who lives in Brooklyn, New York. An interview-article about his work, *The Artist as Lithographer*, was published in *TTP* 7 (Fall 1984).

**Peter Morse**, author of many books and articles, including *John Sloan's Prints* (1969) and *Jean Charlot's Prints* (1976), now lives in Honolulu, Hawaii.

**Larry D. Perkins** is Curator and Registrar at the Joe and Emily Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse University.

**Joseph Traugott**, an artist who makes three-dimensional prints, is Curator of Exhibitions at the University of New Mexico Art Museum.

## NOTES FROM TAMARIND:

**Bill Lagattuta** joined the Tamarind staff in January 1988 as master printer and workshop manager, filling the position formerly held by Lynne Allen. In addition to collaborating with artists, printing editions, and managing the professional shop, Lagattuta supervises printers during their year-long internships. He received a M.F.A. degree at the University of Utah and completed the Tamarind printer-training program in 1979. Subsequently, he worked as a staff printer at Vermillion Editions in Minneapolis, Minnesota; as master printer and shop manager at Sette Publishing Company in Tempe, Arizona; and as master printer at Peregrine Press in Dallas, Texas.

**Jeffrey Sippel**, who was appointed Tamarind's educational director in July 1988, will supervise the Institute's educational program, including printer-training, research, and workshop instruction. After completing his professional training at Tamarind in 1979, Sippel received a M.F.A. degree at Arizona State University and gained collaborative and printing experience in Hanover, West Germany, and in California. He then taught at Ohio State University and served as assistant coordinator of the university's printmaking area.

**Kate Downer**, *TTP*'s assistant editor since 1985, is leaving upon publication of this issue to accept an administrative position elsewhere within the University of New Mexico. While at Tamarind she also edited *México Nueva* (Albuquerque: Tamarind Institute, 1987).

## BACK ISSUES:

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## PHOTO CREDITS:

**Aboriginal Arts Australia, Ltd.**  
Page 44.

**Albuquerque Journal (Eugene Burton)**. Page 67.

**Lynne Allen**. Page 60.

**Damian Andrus**. Pages 7, 8, and 65.

**Australian National Gallery**. Pages 14 through 24 (except 15, right) and 42 through 54 (except 44).

**Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris**. Pages 38 through 41 (except 40, upper left).

**Trustees of the British Museum, London**. Page 40 (upper left).

**Irwin Hollander**. Page 13.

**Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**.  
Page 15 (right).

**Museum of Modern Art, New York**.  
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**Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints & Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations**.  
Page 33.

**Robert Reck, Albuquerque**. Page 57.  
**Syracuse University Art Collections**.  
Pages 26, 31, 35, 36 (right).

**George Arents Research Library for Special Collections, Syracuse University**. Page 32.

**Linda Tyler**. Page 57.

**Kenneth Tyler**. Page 12.

# PHOTO / PRINT



From *INVENTORIES AND TRANSFORMATIONS*  
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From the series *Product News*—Fan, 1971

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