

The Print Club of New York Inc

Summer 2011

President's Greeting

Mona Rubin

My first half year as President has sped by in a flash, filled with many wonderful developments for the Club. One of the most exciting accomplishments is finding a home for our archives. The Club has been in existence for 20 years, and our extensive history includes a full set of commissioned prints, several plates used in the process of these prints, our newsletters, important correspondence and various other items. We have been looking for an appropriate home for these materials, a place where the history of the Club is safely preserved and also made available as a resource for anyone who would like to make a study of it. Past President, Leonard Moss, found a perfect partner at the Hebrew Union College. They not only have a superb Museum, along with excellent curatorial skill, but also a body of students who can study our collection and activities. If anyone ever wants access to this, please let us know and we will supply the contact details.

Kay Deaux, who heads our Events Committee, has arranged some outstanding programs in the past few months. Many of you heard Marilyn Symmes speak at the Joan Snyder show at the Zimmerli Museum at Rutgers. Her insights made the show so much more exciting, and it was great to see an entire room devoted to the creation of *Oasis*, our commissioned print from 2006. The Artists' Showcases exhibit at the National Arts Club gave us an overview of what talented artists were selected from the inception of this program in 1994. Several of the artists were able to attend and talk to the guests. A special thank

you goes to Board Member Mary Lee Baranger for manning the exhibit and being available to discuss the show with visitors. A related panel discussion focused on many important issues. In April we learned about paper conservation from Harriet Stratis, Head of Paper Conservation and Conservator of Prints and Drawings, Art Institute of Chicago. In May, Kay hosted an informal wine and cheese party at her beautiful apartment. We were able to enjoy her print collection and get to know some of our newer members and inform them about Club activities. Kay is already planning exciting events for next year. If any of you have some ideas of what would be of interest, please let her know.

Some other items of interest include the free distribution of a copy of the *Journal of the Print World*. I hope all of you enjoyed receiving that. It led me to order a subscription. Also, Board Member Corinne Shane has been scouting new venues for our upcoming events, and we hope to have some interesting new meeting places next year. Finally, plans are well underway for our next two commissioned prints — both of them sure to be huge successes for the Club, but more about that later. Keep Sept 12th open for the next Artist Presentation. You won't want to miss it.

In closing, I just want to share a few thoughts I have had about the Club over the past few months. I see it as an important forum for open discussion on issues facing the print world. For example, during the panel discussion at the National Arts Club, there was a heated debate about giclée prints, and I learned a tremendous amount that evening. Also, the exhibit at the NAC helped me realize that we are an important facility for supporting living artists and helping to provide an outlet for their work. We are looking at hosting special events for those of our members who are also artists. In a rapidly changing print world, The Print Club of NY helps you keep up. Our newsletter, published by Board Member Gillian Greenhill Hannum, covers current exhibits, reviews new books and identifies critical exhibits for our members to see. She is always looking for input and articles from our membership, so do get in touch with her if you have a story idea (Gillian.Hannum@mville.edu). Gillian also brought to my attention a new print publication that looks extremely informative and well done. All of you may want to visit that website: www.artinprint.org (see Press Release in this issue).

As an extra bonus to my membership and new position as President, I have had the wonderful opportunity to forge new friendships and look forward to getting to know more of you. I wish all of you a very happy summer, filled with art and hopefully lots of sunshine.

The Print Club of New York, Inc.

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Recent Print Club Events

Curator's Tour Of "Dancing With The Dark: Joan Snyder Prints, 1963 – 2010," Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, February 19, 2011

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

On Saturday afternoon, February 19, a group of Print Club members converged upon the Zimmerli Museum in New Brunswick, New Jersey to enjoy a curator's tour of the major print exhibition, "Dancing with the Dark: Joan Snyder Prints, 1963 – 2010," led by Marilyn Symmes, Curator of Prints and Drawings. The exhibition is reviewed elsewhere in this newsletter. The event was especially exciting for Club members as Snyder created our 2006 presentation print, *Oasis*, to which an entire room in the exhibit was devoted, complete with watercolor and graphite studies, two color proofs and a video of Snyder at work with master printer Randy Hemminghaus at the Brodsky Center. What terrific "PR" for our Print Club!

Marilyn Symmes led us through the exhibition in more-or-less chronological order, taking us from student work of the early 1960s up to the present. Snyder had been a Sociology major at Douglass College — then the women's college affiliated with Rutgers — who discovered art her senior year when she took a class. She took a year following her graduation to work and develop a portfolio, then began her MFA at Rutgers in 1963. The earliest work was Brücke-inspired woodcuts, followed by lithographs in 1964, including *Woman Undressing*, her first female nude. Her MFA show in 1966 directly explored female sexuality just as the feminist movement was beginning to find a voice.

In the 1970s, Snyder did her first and only screen print, *Whispers and Screams* (1972) commissioned by Connecticut College for the American Dance Festival. Vera List was responsible for the commission, the artist's first for a print. Snyder's earliest etchings date from 1973, when she was teaching painting at the Yale Summer School of Art and Music.

In the late 1970s and early 80s (especially the period from 1975 – 81), Snyder explored the theme of violent crimes against women, based on newspaper articles she collected. In 1977, she created a 26 foot multi-media painting of the subject, now at the Boston Museum of Fine

Arts; it is considered a seminal piece in the history of feminist art. The work lists 102 names of victims. A related print edition was published in 1981. Several other prints from this time period explore the artist's struggles to have a child with then-husband, photographer Larry Fink. A miscarriage in 1978 led to *FMSWNL (For My Son Who Never Lived)* (1979 – 80). She worked with Maurice Sanchez at Derriere l'Etoile Studio on this project. In 1981, again working with Sanchez, she created *Study for Symphony for A.D.*, dedicated to Dr. Alvin Donnenfeld, the obstetrician who delivered Snyder's daughter, Mary. Unlike the previous work, which was dark, this print is filled with bright color and looks like a child's finger painting.

By 1984, when she created the woodcut *Dancing in the Dark*, Snyder and Fink had separated and she was a single mother. The work features stick figures inspired by her



Marilyn Symmes (left) with Club Members at Joan Snyder Exhibit
PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

young daughter's drawings - dark, ominous totemic forms. Towards the end of the 80s, she did a series of woodcuts, again utilizing the stick figure motif, titled *For the Children* (1987 – 88); it was based on a series of articles that ran in *The Christian Science Monitor*. There was also a collection of monotypes from the late 80s reflecting a happy period when Snyder and her daughter were living in Eastport, NY; many of the scenes feature nature, and the pond imagery found in the Club's print begins at this time.

An interesting project from the mid 1990s was *Our*

Foremothers, an edition of 90 combining color lithography, etching and woodcut commissioned by the Jewish Museum in New York. It includes the names of all the women mentioned in the Old Testament as well as the names of those close to Snyder. Printed with Andrew Mockler at Jungle Press, it was used as a fundraiser by the museum.

Works from the last decade are especially personal. *My Maggie* (2000), printed by Jungle Press and published by

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, NY, explores the difficulty the couple faced in trying to give a name to their relationship. A series of monoprints from the same year was inspired by the selling of one house and moving to another that occurred in 1999 (*In Times of Great Disorder V and XII*). In 2008, her series *Seedcatchers with Ghosts* explores the theme of rebirth, growth, loss and mourning – the cycles of life – in shades of pale pink, yellow and green inspired by springtime.

The show ends with a meditation on life in the 2010 color etching and woodcut *See what a life...*, which incorporates a passage from Thoreau's journal of March 27, 1842: "See what a life the gods have given us. Set round with pain and pleasure it is too strange for sorrow and too strange for joy." The piece, done in the artist's 70th year, expresses her own view of life.

The exhibition was accompanied by a beautiful, full-color catalog with essays by Faye Hirsch and Marilyn Symmes.

Upcoming Print Club Events

Monday, September 12, 2011

Annual Presentation Print Unveiling; time and place to be announced.

Tuesday, October 18, 7 pm

Panel discussion on collecting Japanese prints, moderated by Allison Tolman; location to be announced.

Also of interest to Print Club Members:

June 2 – September 4, 2011

8th Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, 299 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT (203) 899-7999 www.contemprints.org

June 17 – July 24, 2011

Richard Bosman – "Art History: Fact and Fiction," BYRDCLIFFE Kleinert/James Arts Center, 34 Tinker Street, Woodstock, NY (845) 679-2079 <http://www.byrddcliffe.org> [Please note: this is an exhibition of paintings by Bosman, one of our presentation print artists, done between 2002 and 2011.]

June 18 – October 16, 2011

Picasso's Vollard Suite: The Sculptor's Studio, the Bruce Museum, 1 Museum Drive, Greenwich, CT (203) 869-0376 <http://brucemuseum.org>

June 21 – July 9, 2011

The Society of American Graphic Artists (SAGA) will be presenting its 78th Member Exhibition at Prince Street Gallery in New York City from June 21st to July 9th. The show will feature the work of 110 SAGA members from 23 states. Prince Street Gallery is located in the heart of the Chelsea art district at 530 West 25th Street on the 4th floor. A reception and awards presentation will be held on July 9th from 4 to 6pm. For more information about SAGA contact Shelley Thorstensen, SAGA president, at sagaprints@verizon.net or write to SAGA, 32 Union Square East, Room 1214, NY, NY 10003.

November 3 – 6, 2011

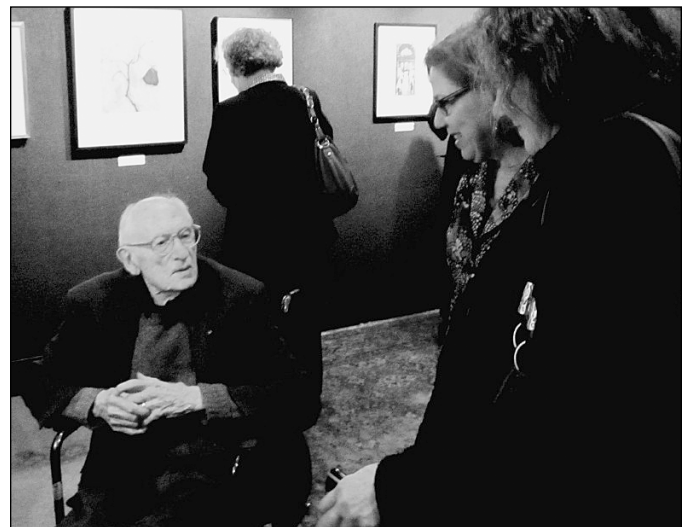
Save the date for the annual IFPDA Print Fair in New York. Preview is November 2. For further information contact Laura Beth Gencarella at laurabeth@ifpda.org or 212-674-6095.

"PCNY Artists' Showcase 1994 – 2010: Prints from Members Collections," National Arts Club, Panel Discussion March 14, 2011

Allison Tolman

On March 14, about 50 people gathered at the National Arts Club to attend a panel discussion "The Artist's Perspective: From Showcase to Now," presented by the Print Club of New York in conjunction with its exhibition of prints purchased from the Club's annual Artists' Showcases. Thomas Lollar, Director of the Brodsky Center for Innovative Editions, moderated the discussion. Four artists had been selected to speak: Bill Behnken, Daniel Hauben, Tomomi Ono and Karen Whitman. Each one began by giving a brief career description:

Behnken was elected to the National Academy, has



Artist Will Barnet (left) at Opening Reception
PHOTO BY HOWARD MANTEL



Artists and Club Members after Panel Presentation
PHOTO BY HOWARD MANTEL

had several exhibitions, is a teacher at the Art Students' League and is determined to help his students show their work professionally. He takes pleasure in seeing young people admire and look at his prints. Daniel Hauben has had many commissions; he teaches drawing in the Architecture Department of City College, has participated in many international workshops, and he is currently working on 20 paintings for the library of the Bronx Community College, which are to be hung in the summer of 2012.

Tomomi Ono made her first image on a press in 2007. She works at the Art Students' League as a master printer. Her series explore the theme of existence. She feels that the technique of monoprint lithography frees her to express her thoughts. Since the Showcase, she has had two-person and group shows at Hofstra University and the Japanese Cultural Center in Washington, DC.



Thomas Lollar at Panel Presentation
PHOTO BY HOWARD MANTEL

Whitman has been showing annually and occasionally winning medals of honour. Her work is in the collections of the British Museum, Hofstra University and the Zimmerli Museum. The next topic was on getting into collections. Bill Behnken had a friend who had bought many of his pieces who approached the Chrysler Museum; the artist contacted the Metropolitan Museum on his own. Hauben noted that his energy for putting the work out there goes and comes in waves. He pursues whatever opportunities feel right. Pfizer has bought his work and subsequently donated it to the Museum of the City of New York. Karen Whitman is part of the *NY Centennial Portfolio*, which has found its way to the National Association of Women Artists, the New York Public Library, and the Museum of the City of New York. Participating in a SAGA show led to an acquisition by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Ono entered an open competition in Japan and won. Tama University in Japan owns some of her work, as well as the New York Public Library.

Whitman's comment about the portfolio led to a question about whether the artists like being part of a portfolio.

Karen Whitman liked being part of the process, and Behnken and Hauben both thought that it is a good idea to be part of a portfolio. Daniel Hauben works in themes and has done a portfolio for the Society of Etchers. Tomomi Ono had never thought about making a portfolio on her own.

Mr. Lollar then asked if any of the artists had explored digital printmaking, which evoked a lively, negative response from the group. It was agreed that the general public needs to be educated about the difference between prints and reproductions. The discussion lingered on the difference between printing from an original matrix vs. giclées. Some felt that the American audience is not willing to embrace the concept of printmaking as a "real" art form, and that education is key. Organizations like the Print Club of New York serve that mission.

There were a few general questions from the audience and then we continued the conversation in a more informal manner: each artist had brought some work, and attendees could look at the work and admire the walls, which were hung with pieces displayed at previous Artists' Showcases. [The exhibition is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.]

Talk By Paper Conservator Harriet Stratis, Society of Illustrators, April 4, 2011

Kay Deaux

April's Print Club event was a talk by Harriet Stratis, Head of Paper Conservation and Conservator of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute of Chicago. She was in the New York area on business, and the Print Club was fortunate to be able to schedule her for this event.

Stratis holds a B. A. from Barnard College, Columbia University, and a M.A. in art history and certificate in conservation from New York University's Institute of Fine Arts. She has been at the Art Institute of Chicago for 20 years, first as an intern and Mellon Fellow. Since 1995, she has served as Conservator of Prints and Drawings and Head of Paper Conservation there. She has worked and consulted with museums throughout the world, from London to China—and here in New York, at MOMA among others. She has written on the work of Whistler, Cassatt, Redon, and Pontormo. The title of her presentation was "The State of the Art: Insight into the Conservation of Prints and Drawings."

Stratis' talk was divided into three main sections: (a) a review of different kinds of damage that can happen with works on paper; (b) a technical study of restoration and



Conservator Harriet Stratis at the Society of Illustrators PHOTO BY HOWARD MANTEL

conservation of John Marin works at the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC); (c) an overview of a large-scale project of restoration of Soviet posters at the AIC. The first section was a very informative description of various forms of damage that can occur to works on paper, such as insect and mold damage, damage from overexposure to light or contact with acidic materials, describing how they are most likely to occur and how she works on these kinds of damages, plus hints on how to avoid having each kind of damage in the first place! Here, she showed slides of the conservation labs at the AIC as well as examples of various art works with "before and after" treatment. The technical discussion of the Marin project was the briefest of the three sections, hampered in part by the failure of the photographs of the full drawings to make the MAC to PC switch. Finally, part (c) was a fascinating story of the discovery of some 600 World War II era posters, hidden behind a wall at the AIC for the past 60 years. Virtually all had some damage from water, mold, etc.; most had been in rolls and not touched for all this time because no one knew they were there. The then director of the AIC had been given them in a trade arrangement (though there is no record that AIC ever gave anything in exchange). The reason for the hiding may have been that the director came under scrutiny from the House Un-American Activities Committee during that time.

The posters are very large and most have a number in the upper right, signifying the number of days that the war had been going on when the poster was made. At least one of these was made every day, and they were typically posted in a store front or other visible place to report the events of the war. All were made by a stencil process, often very complex—sometimes 20 or 30 separate stencils to create a single poster. AIC will have an exhibit of approx 200 of these posters opening in July and running through October.

After Harriet's talk, which lasted approximately 45 minutes, many members of the audience asked questions, and Harriet was very responsive and informative here as well. All in all, it was a fascinating and highly educational evening.

New Members Event, May 16, 2011

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Print Club Board members had an opportunity to meet and mingle with those who have joined the Print Club of New York during the past three years on Monday evening, May 16. Held in the print-filled Greenwich Village apartment of Events Chairperson Kay Deaux, the event was a huge success. Board members present, in addition to our hostess, were President Mona Rubin, Treasurer Joan Blanksteen, Corresponding Secretary Natalia Kolodzei, Howard Mantel, Allison Tolman and me. Recently joined members who attended were Joanne Bernstein, Judy Blum, Vivian Lazerson, Katherine Martin, Robin Pocker, Joe Russell, Eleanor Schwartz, Gabriel and Roslyn Swire and Delton Vandever.

A short program included remarks by President Mona



Katherine Martin and Kay Deaux at New Members Event
PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

Rubin, who spoke about the history of the Club and her involvement with it; Joanne Bernstein, who talked about having organized last spring's Lower East Side Art Walk, an event that drew rave reviews; Kay Deaux, who talked about events past and present; Howard Mantel, who explained the Print Selection Committee's workings; and your author, who talked a little about the *Print Club Newsletter*. We all enjoyed the wine, cheese and crudités as we admired both prints and spectacular New York views. All agreed it was a most worthwhile event.

Print Club of New York Annual Meeting, Society of Illustrators, June 13, 2011

Allison Tolman

Monday, June 13, 2011 was the date of the New York Print Club's annual meeting, held at the Society of Illustrators. In all, 95 ballots were received; every board member received 90%, and so all board members were reelected. After a few remarks about the past year and a report about the state of our treasury (\$39,000 income, \$35,000 expenses) and praise for the hard work of Gillian Hannum, the newsletter editor, and Kay Deaux, the Events Committee chairperson, President Mona Rubin introduced Mary Bartow, vice president at Sotheby's New York. She is responsible for development of internet and in-house print sales. Ms. Bartow was originally a pre-med major in college who switched to art history and after a 6 week internship at Sotheby's was offered a job in the print department. She is fascinated by the techniques involved in printmaking and has never been bored by her job. Studying prints is a wonderful way to educate one's eye as to an artist's style.

Ms. Bartow explained that historically, auction houses dealt with estate properties and with dealers. Around 1985-1990, the Japanese started buying, and more private clients started buying directly from auction houses rather than from dealers. In recent times, the major auction houses (Sotheby's and Christie's) have decided to only handle lots valued at \$ 5000 and above, but there are smaller auction houses where one can find more reasonably priced items, and she mentioned Swann's, Doyle's

and Phillips' while cautioning the audience that it is always best to see the items in person rather than just buying from the catalogue. The market these past 2-3 years has been flooded with fakes. Ms. Bartow has worked on numerous occasions with the FBI and the US Postal Inspection Service, discovering many fake Picassos, Chagalls, Miros and Lichtensteins. Sotheby's does provide a 5 year guarantee to a buyer; in other words, if one buys something at auction that turns out to be fake, one has five years to return it to Sotheby's, which will get the money back from the consignor.

Auction houses earn money by charging fees to both the seller and the buyer; a private seller will pay 10% of the sale price, a dealer will pay 6% and the buyer will pay a 25% commission. It used to be that most of the bidding would take place in the sales room, but now 50% of the bidding is done by phone, and she is seeing more and more online bidding, too.

Buying prints is a wonderful way to start collecting art, and she is often asked by beginning collectors, "What should I buy?" Gordon's Art Index and Artnet are two good resources for checking print prices. Most important is identifying what one likes. Go to dealers; they are a wealth of information and often will let you pay over time; go to museums, visit the print department and see the difference in impressions. Establish a yearly budget to be spent on art acquisitions. In 1980, US\$10 million of prints were sold globally. The print market now is US\$100 million in sales. Warhols, Picassos and Lichtensteins are the hot properties, and more collectors from Russia,

China and the Middle East are bidding.

The market is strong and so condition may be overlooked. Also, with demand for certain artists so strong, she is seeing more and more fakes come on the market. Blind stamps by the publisher are being faked, many unnumbered prints turn out to be fakes, and there is an issue of re-screening: with demand for contemporary pop art, especially silkscreens from the 1960s and 1970s, certain unethical conservators are re-screening so as to remove any scuffing or fading on the surface of the images. Bartow is now able to identify when an artwork has been re-screened and warned that it has become a problem.

She advised members to frame prints properly. It is all right if there is sunlight in a room, but there should never be direct sunlight on an image. Ms. Bartow loves looking at prints, studying the technique, figuring out how an impression was achieved. It is great to have the artist have a hand in making the print.

She was asked what prints she would be excited to gather for a sale, and she listed the following: Van Gogh, Rembrandt, Jasper Johns, Mary Cassatt, Toulouse Lautrec and Whistler. She has financial goals for every sale and is under major time constraints when putting together a sale: finding the items, cataloguing and photographing them.

Her final words of advice were: Collect because you love the piece. Art is not merely an investment. The informative evening ended with Ms. Bartow volunteering to meet with the New York Print Club at a future date to show us some fakes.

Member News

Issue no. 3 of the journal *Carrier Pigeon* features original, hand-embossed stamps on the back cover by artist **Stephen A. Fredericks**. The stamp is based on Fredericks' etching *Seagull Skull*, included in the artist's issue no. 3 fine-art portfolio. *Carrier Pigeon* continues to fulfill its mission to produce the highest quality fiction and fine art journal on the market today with its largest and most lavishly illustrated issue to date. As with previous issues, six works of short fiction and six artist portfolios form the anchor of the content.

Exhibition Reviews

Dancing With the Dark: Joan Snyder Prints, 1963 – 2010, Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, January 29 – May 29, 2011

Maryanne Garbowsky

When first visiting this exhibition, I felt alternately overwhelmed and inspired. The boldness and bright colors of her marks repelled me, but after looking at the prints – all 110 of them – I fell

Member Input Wanted

The Print Club of New York plans to make some changes to its website in order to make it more visually appealing and also more user friendly. If you have ideas about features that you would like to see in a redesigned site, please contact Print Club Corresponding Secretary Natalia Kolodzei at kolodzei@kolodzeiart.org.

in love with her work, even those that first surprised me. Snyder's work is sensitive, evocative, moving. It is never strident, but it is consistently assertive, demanding the viewer's attention. Her colors, her imagery, her symbols — the totems, crosses, cherry trees, ponds, altars — resonate with the viewer as he/she surveys their evolution through the years. This is one distinct advantage of a retrospective, witnessing a whole body of work over much of a lifetime.

One particular highlight from Snyder's early years is a woodcut entitled *The Red Pony* (any relation to John Steinbeck's poignant short story?), a striking red horse against a dark blue background that hangs in the first

room of the exhibition. It clearly reveals her debt to German Expressionists.

Among the highlights of the show, and of special interest to Print Club members, are the preparatory drawings and development of Snyder's 2006 Presentation Print, *Oasis*, "a silkscreen and digital print." In the glass cases we witness the growth of the design and the decisions about color and borders that Snyder makes with her collaborator, master printer Randy Hemminghaus. All of these, plus a video, add immensely to our understanding and appreciation of the genesis of this fine print.

We also see the artist as she moves to monoprints, a technique that allows her more flexibility as well as the opportunity to blend together her love of painting with the print medium.

Snyder's themes deal with love, loss, aging and death, among other subjects, all aspects of a lifetime. There is a celebration of the women in her life, her foremothers, her daughter, her friends. Although there is the loss of family and friends that she has to adjust to, there is also a pervasive optimism, a sense that life — despite its "suffering and tears," words she borrows from Virgil and writes on the surface of her prints — they will pass and life will renew itself.

Snyder quotes not only Virgil, but Henry David Thoreau, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Eliza Wilcox as well, and uses their words in her prints to emphasize these human themes. Despite these "necessary losses" in a life lived, there is the reminder of spring, of regeneration and ongoing life — the pond, the source of new life; the cherry trees with their blossoms. One leaves the exhibit inspired and buoyed up, not let down, respecting the work of this seasoned artist over the years, measuring her growth and evolution, and admiring the results of her talent and creative energy.

A companion show entitled "Joan Snyder/Intimate Works" is at the Mabel Smith Douglass Library Galleries, and displays small paintings from 1965 – 2010. It will run until June 5, 2011, and is the Mary H. Dana Women Artists' Series 40th anniversary exhibition. Ms. Snyder is the Estelle Lebowitz Visiting Artist in residence for 2010-11.

Both exhibitions are worthy of not only one, but repeated visits. I guarantee that the art of Joan Snyder will follow you home and stay with you for many days to follow.

The Print Club of New York Artists' Showcases 1994-2010: Prints from our Members' Collections, The National Arts Club, March 7 - 20, 2011

Mary Lee Baranger

This exhibit is a selection from 17 annual Showcases, where 93 artists were invited to show, discuss and sell their works. Usually there have been five artists per year, but 1994 was ambitious, with 10. Of these, 32 artists are represented in this exhibit with one to three prints from each year.

The exhibit derives from a two step selection process. First, the annual committee picks the artists, and second, members (and guests) select prints to buy. The result is a fascinating variety of prints representing the taste of our most committed members.

A few years ago, all members were asked to respond to a questionnaire as to what kinds of prints they like. This exhibit is part of the answer. We observe a dominance of traditional black and whites (14 etchings, 3 aquatints, 1 linoleum block, 1 lithograph). Color is introduced subtly in 4 prints (1 aquatint and 3 mixed media), and strongly in 9 works (1 litho, 3 linocuts, 2 silkscreens, 1 woodcut, 1 aquatint, 1 intaglio/chine collé).

What are the subjects? Cityscapes: a remarkable 11 out of the 33 prints (there are 32 artists, but one with two prints). Perhaps this is not surprising with a New York based membership. There are panoramas of buildings and skyscrapers: Karen Whitman *Painting the Town*, Richard Sloat *Clear Night*, and untitled works by Bill Behnken and Michael Di Cerbo. There is a skyline of water towers by Emily Trueblood, another view from a window by Richard Pantell, a birds' eye view by Richard Haas, street scenes by Arthur Werger (*Daybreak*) and Daniel Hauben (*Dyckman Station*); Christopher Clarke portrays the Brooklyn Bridge, which is included in Haas' print, also with the Woolworth Building, and Richard Pantell depicts the approaches to the Williamsburg Bridge.

There are 4 landscapes. Bill Murphy depicts *Snake Hill*, the quarry for sand and gravel next to the New Jersey Turnpike; Mary Price's *Arion* shows a blue lakefront with pine trees and a pink sky. Sarah Bryer has a snowy mountain village (*Hagashiyama*). Ward Davenny's *Construction* has an elevated highway in the distance.

In the category of still lives, Mildred Beltre enlarges a humble iron to monumental scale; Carson Fox draws two delicate sea urchins. Pamela Moore combines delicate roses with snatches of Italian text; Francisco Feliciano uses dried twigs and a leaf, Tomomi Ono floats *Seed Fountain*, and Pavel Ouporov lays out a dried fish impaled with 18 large nails.

Other subjects include nudes: Sherman Drexler uses flat pink and black silhouettes of two women. Lynn H. Butler partially undresses a soft-focus seated girl. Portraits are also present: Andy Hoogenboom portrays Fred Katz in a close-up with cello. Interiors: Richard Pantell's *Summer Twilight* is half in and half out the window; Samantha Beste looks through the Great Hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In addition to these traditional genre, there are three others: Fantasy, Ethnic (which would have been called Orientalism in the 19th century), and Abstraction. Fantasy is the mode of Alexander Zakharov's *Alligator and Hydra* — a Bosch-like image of an alligator/human swallowing a reptile, with an adjacent scrum of reptiles, birds and knife-wielding humans. Lynn Allen draws an allegory (?) of a dead hyena trussed on a table, like in a child's story. Ethnic (or exotic) is an uncomfortable category that here includes two or possibly three images. Tenjin Ikeda shows a dancer, with two red feet in a swirl of draperies that could be Japanese kimono designs, with similar undulating lines framing the figure. They also evoke the

patterns used in North West American Indian cloaks and woodwork. The title *Powers Concealed* can refer to the shrouded head, or the significance of dance in either culture. Selva Sangines depicts a woman in a woven striped robe seated in front of rock formations with a prickly pear cactus beside her, suggestive of the American Southwest, but actually Chile. It is hard to classify Brayer's *Higashiyama* here as it does not read strongly as a Japanese village scene. It is about snow.

There are four abstractions, this being the modern age, but this is not the dominant choice of subjects in the Showcases. Bryan Nash Gill's *Euonomous* layers scrimms of red and yellow, splattered like fallen leaves. Catalina Chervin's *About the Apocalypse* has a networked obelisk-like tower in front of a ghostly tall rectangle. A unique cast paper relief by Brian Knoerzer recalls a red masonry wall, corroded. Lastly, an image called *Icon I* by Sergei Tsvetkov combines a grid of four forms that at first seems pure abstraction, but I will describe it below as suggesting religious imagery.

What subject is conspicuous by its paucity? Overt religious imagery. I think, however, that underlying Sergei Tsvetkov's abstraction, there is religious content. The title, *Icon*, is the word used to describe Byzantine objects of worship. The four forms seem to be bent, cloaked and maybe haloed saints or worshipers. The dark grid that frames them recalls the leading of stained glass, or the pierced marble of Middle Eastern architecture. The rich, warm textures and patterns that overlay the figures are suggestive of antiquity.

I found one print highly contemplative—perhaps a secular religious attitude of viewing a complex city as awesome, and beautiful. This is Richard Pantell's portrait of his wife as a young woman seated on a windowsill looking over the Williamsburg, Brooklyn nexus of buildings and subway tracks approaching the bridge. Her star-studded tank top, her bare feet, and the almost ritually *de rigueur* touch of artistic interior decoration—the Turkish bronze coffee pot—give this picture a fascination beyond the other prints. A person is interacting quietly with her world.

With author's privilege, I could describe (and desire for my own collection) at least ten more prints in this exhibit of high quality, much admired by those who visited. Similarly, the installation by Sandra Sewing is outstanding.

Many thanks to Kay Deaux for organizing the show, the opening, and the panel discussion, to Mona Rubin for seeing the brochure to press, to the lenders Gillian Greenhill Hannum, Julian Hyman, Kay Deaux, Allison Tolman, the Kolodzei Collection and Foundation, Leonard and Muriel Moss and Emily Trueblood.

Will Barnet: Recent Work, Montclair Museum of Art, through July 17

Maryanne Garbowsky

Even though there are no prints, Will Barnet's recent show at the Montclair Museum of Art deserves a mention — and a visit. The Art Students League's Master Printmaker, the creator of the Print Club's 1998

Presentation Print – *Between Life and Life*, Will Barnet is undoubtedly one of the Print Club's favorite artists. And in this small but significant show, Mr. Barnet at 99 years old (his 100th birthday is May 25, 2011) shows that longevity has only improved his art.

The exhibition's ten oil paintings, done between 2008 and 2010, testify to the quality and versatility of his art. Done in an abstract style similar to his earlier Indian Space paintings, they provide a look at his philosophy and theory of art. His shapes mingle, converse, and interact playfully one with the other.

Barnet admits that getting older has allowed him greater latitude, the luxury of doing as he pleases. And we agree. Keep making art as you please, we want to say to Mr. Barnet, for the viewer is the fortunate beholder of your work. The Shelby Gallery is small and intimate, the lighting not as bright as it could be, but the art is timeless, Barnet proving that age does not defeat the artist, but only challenges him to continue to grow and perfect his work.

"Will Barnet: A Centennial Celebration" opened February 4th and will continue through July 17, 2011. Join with me in wishing Mr. Barnet many more years of artistic creation.

8th Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT, through September 4

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Print Club members with limited wall space will want to make a point to travel to coastal Connecticut this summer to take in the Center for Contemporary Printmaking's 8th Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition. Juried by Club member Judith Brodsky, Founding Director of Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper (now renamed the Brodsky Center for Innovative Editions), the exhibit includes work from printmakers in 11 countries: Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Switzerland, Ukraine and the U.S.A. As CCP Artistic Director Anthony Kirk notes in the exhibition brochure, this biennial event offers "an opportunity to observe what artists around the world are concerned with at a given time."

The selection process must have been a Herculean task, judging from the quality of the work reproduced in binders in the main entry hall labeled *Salon des Réfusés*. Brodsky gives a feel for the process in her brochure essay, in which she notes: "Jurying the miniature print exhibition for the Center for Contemporary Printmaking was like entering these worlds. In the *Magician's Nephew*, by C.S. Lewis, the children leap into different universes through jumping in pools that exist in a wood between the worlds. That's how I felt in looking at 553 prints by 200 artists from 20 states and 13 different countries. As I moved from print to print, I entered magical worlds, each only four inches square but opening out into entire universes."

The exhibit granted a number of prizes and honors, including several purchase prizes. The Renaissance Graphic Arts Inc. Purchase Award went to Michael Arike of New York, whose 2 x 2" *Lower East Side*, 2011, is a color view of the top floors of several tenement buildings done in etching and aquatint in an edition of 50; the price was \$100. The Print Club's own Marvin Bolotsky offered the fourwindsfineart.com Purchase Award to two artists: France's Jean-Marc Coutfin for *Naja*, 2011, a whimsical etching in black and white with just a tiny touch of red in a 2 x 1.875" format, printed in an edition of 100 and priced at \$30, and New Yorker Nina Jordan's color woodcut of a rambling house, *Untitled 2*, 2011, a 1.75 x 2.25" image in an edition of 3 selling for \$40. The CCP Artistic Director Purchase Award went to New Hampshire artist Anna Marie Ottaviano for her brooding monotype, *South Station*, 2011, a 1.5 x 2.5" image of two people on the street outside the station building, which was selling for \$75. Emily Trueblood of New York, familiar to Club members, took the Legion Paper Purchase Award for her linocut, *Quiet City I*, 2011, a 2 x 2" image of New York City's rooftop water towers, printed in an edition of 50 and selling for \$85, which recalls her 1995 linocut from the Club's recent exhibition at the National Arts Club.

Other prize winners include Warren Criswell of Arizona, who received Honorable Mention for his linocuts *Roadkill* and *Salome's Kiss*; Killian Dunne of

Ireland, who also took Honorable Mention for several figurative etchings, *The Invisible Lady*, *The Guard* and *The Zap* (available for a most reasonable \$25 each); Janet Best Badger of Maine, who took an Honorable Mention for her two untitled intaglios, *Untitled (Cairo)* and *Untitled (Denver)*; Mark Pikul of Connecticut, winner of Third Prize for his etching and aquatint, *Rules of Thumb*, 2011, a humorous image of a "thumb figure," available for \$30; landscape artist Julianne B. Ricksecker of California, who took Second Prize for her color etchings of California scenery; and Australian Cleo Wilkinson, who took First Prize for her series of mezzotints: *Fledgling* (a pair of baby shoes), *Inception II* (two eggs) and *Mushroom* (a single mushroom on its side). Her velvety images, in an edition of 50, sell for \$100 each.

Print Club member Sheila Fane has a charming pair of prints – *Jumping the Waves #3* and *Jumping the Waves #4*. The color linocuts utilize an abstract wave pattern in blue and white with a brilliant orange koi that has been printed separately, cut out and inserted into the waves through slits cut into the background image.

This is a great exhibition for beginning collectors on a budget with lots of terrific work at very affordable prices. So, make a day of it; enjoy some of the other museums in Mathews Park, check out one of South Norwalk's many great restaurants, watch the boats on the Sound and fill that little empty spot on your wall.

New Edition From Ed Colker And Haybarn Press

Haybarn Press announces the publication of *Voices to Share*, intended as a companion piece to the 2010 volume, *Gathering*. The work of eight poets, writing in languages ranging from French to Yiddish and Korean (with English translations), the portfolio features original color lithographs by former presentation print artist, Ed Colker.

It is offered as an expression of esteem for the international poets. Only 100 cloth-bound copies have been produced; the price is \$195. Haybarn Press focuses on not-for-profit projects. Further information is available at Edcol015@aol.com or by calling (914) 666-6760.

Art In Print Launch

Press Release

We are excited to announce the launch of *Art in Print*, a new journal and website devoted to prints.

Art in Print is designed as a venue for discussion of the culture of the print, and as a source of easily accessible, global information about print events, exhibitions, and publications. It aims to serve the needs of the international museum, collector, artist, and print dealer communities, and to offer an educational entry point for people new to the field. Among its component parts are a bi-monthly PDF journal addressing critical issues in print and art, and an open-access website with searchable listings and reviews of exhibitions, prints, and books, as

well as directories of dealers, artists, collections and workshops. Professional subscribers to the journal are entitled to regular listings/advertisements on the site, as well as to printed advertisements in the journal. We are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, and depend on subscriber memberships, grants and donations for our support.

Please visit us at www.artinprint.org. Our first issue is available in its entirety for free. Subsequent issues will be available to subscribers, along with a members' site, updated regularly, of print world news and events. Basic subscriptions begin at \$50. We hope you will consider becoming part of the Art in Print community.

Please let us know if you have any questions about, or suggestions for, *Art in Print*.

America's Last Yiddish Linotype: From Jewish Daily Forward To National Yiddish Book Center

Fran Alexander

When Aaraon Lansky, founder of the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA, started collecting thousands of Yiddish books back in 1980, little did he know he was rescuing a piece of history. As a young graduate student in Yiddish literature at McGill University, he had become aware of a dying generation's unwanted volumes and spread the word that he was collecting them. As word of mouth gained momentum, first in New York, calls came from all over the country for pick-up and then from all over the world. After many years of warehouse storage, over one and a half million Yiddish books are housed in the 37,000 square foot book center, which opened in 1997 on the campus of Hampshire College. Over the years the center has helped over six hundred great libraries establish Yiddish collections. A digital library was added in 1998, making reprints on demand possible, forever saving a once endangered body of literature.

Now another rescue operation has culminated in a permanent display at the center, the Yiddish Print Shop. A *velt mit vetelekh: The Worlds of Yiddish Culture* opened in November 2010, featuring machine no. 23,211, one of the nine linotypes made in Brooklyn for the *Jewish Daily Forward* in 1918, and the very last used to publish the newspaper. The linotype was in operation on opening day of the exhibition, when visitors could have their names printed in Yiddish, but it now remains dormant because of the danger of lead poisoning (the liquid lead comes off in little particles). This exhibition also includes another machine, and Yiddish lead type and wood type, all from *The Forward*.

The life and journey of no. 23,211 is indeed worth reviewing as an example of the Yiddish culture's threatened extinction, as well as the evolution of newspaper printing. Outfitted with Hebrew letters and converted to compose type right to left, this linotype was in operation for over seventy years in *The Forward's* two locations, the East Broadway building through 1974 and then East 33rd Street. The *Jewish Daily Forward* was the last among its peers to modernize its printing process because of its dedication to workers' rights, including its own unionized printers who ran their presses. It was not until the very last worker reached retirement age that the paper finally retired its printing presses as well to bring the paper's technology out of the dark ages.

Enter Mr. Lansky, who had patiently been waiting for the opportunity to acquire a press for the book center. He started his friendship with *The Forward* in his early days of book collecting in a roundabout way. When he began his quest for Yiddish books informally, he first headed to the Lower East Side of New York City in 1975 with some friends. They headed for the obvious destination, the Garden Cafeteria, a well-known gathering place for all the regular shmoozers, from Yiddish writers to workers. It was right next door to the *Jewish Daily Forward's* original

headquarters.

Their trip to the Lower East Side eventually led Lansky and his team to Sam and Leah Ostroff, early ambassadors for the cause and self-appointed "zamlers" (Yiddish for treasure hunters), who opened the door to many other donors in Coney Island and Brighton Beach. Of note, Ostroff himself donated an antique portable Yiddish type-writer that had belonged to Lamed Shapiro, who wrote stories of pogrom violence in Ukraine in 1919. (Lansky would later compare this gift to getting Shakespeare's pen.) Lansky and the Ostroffs became fast friends and their nephew, Harold, was general manager of *The Forward*, where many of the collected books were initially stored. And it was Harold Ostroff who would later facilitate the National Yiddish Book Center's acquisition of machine No. 23,211.

Harold Ostroff called Lansky in 1991 to advise him that the Yiddish linotypes had to make way for the growing English version of the newspaper, thinking he might like some parts for display. All nine linotypes were destined for the scrap heap. But Lansky had something else in mind - his dream was to save an entire machine, no easy feat given its size and weight. Had it not been for Paul Nash, one of NYC's finest hot metal machinists, the dream may not have been realized. Nash was able to break down the linotype into about a thousand pieces, which could then be transported to a warehouse in Holyoke, MA, where Nash rebuilt the machine in three days with the help of only his memory and deep understanding of the machine's workings.

And so the linotype and its skilled operators were on their way to becoming obsolete, but at the time of its invention it was considered a revolutionary breakthrough. When Ottmar Mergenthaler, immigrant clock-maker in Baltimore, invented the machine in 1884, Thomas Edison referred to it as "the eighth wonder of the world." Up until then, newspapers were typeset manually for almost five hundred years, per Gutenberg's invention of moveable type. It was tedious and time consuming, with lines of type set by hand, one letter at a time; newspapers were never longer than eight pages. The mechanical linotype paved the way for longer papers with faster printing, better quality impressions and automatic margin alignment. It allowed an operator sitting at a keyboard to compose lines of type from reusable brass molds; the lines were then cast in metal and slid into galleys for printing, and the brass matrices returned to their original position until they were needed again. After printing, the type was melted down and the metal could be reused (hence the "hot type" term). One day's linotype output was the equivalent to that of a roomful of skilled typesetters.

The first twelve linotypes were installed at *The New York Tribune* in 1886 and within ten years, there were linotypes in use throughout the United States and Europe for almost one hundred years until photo typesetting machines began to replace them in the 1970s. By the mid-

1980s, most major newspapers had switched from “hot lead” to “cold type” (with no heat involved to melt metal). *The Forward* was one of the few that continued to use “hot type,” until 1991, when a single desktop computer finally replaced machine no. 23,211 and its eight sibling machines.

What better ending could No. 23,211 have, than to be surrounded by works of leading Yiddish writers, many of whose works were serialized in *The Forward* once upon a time? When the machine was transported, the *Wall Street*

Journal published an article on March 5th, 1992, complete with a Yiddish headline, which translates to “The Last Yiddish Linotype in America.” After spending years in the National Yiddish Book Center warehouse, it can now be seen on permanent display in a beautiful building dedicated to the newly thriving Yiddish language and culture.

For more information see www.yiddishbookcenter.org.

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