

# The Print Club of New York<sup>Inc</sup>

Fall 2007

## President's Greeting

Leonard Moss

The Print Club will hold its fourteenth annual Juried Artists' Showcase in the National Arts Club on October 15th. The purpose of that event is to bring artists who are not likely to have gallery representation to the attention of the broad community of print collectors. Five artists will present their work, then move to tables where they have laid out portfolios and prints they wish to sell to the membership.

The Showcase is a popular event, well-attended by members and their guests who enthusiastically crowd around the tables to meet the artists, discuss their work, buy a print on the spot, or make an appointment to visit the artist's studio. One can usually hear conversations in the background, such as "Where will we hang it? We have no more wall space." The true collector will buy the print anyway, because the prices are favorable for such appealing works of art.

Considerable preparation is necessary to make the Showcase a success. Starting in April, members of the Events Committee ask gallerists and print curators to suggest emerging artists who might be interested in submitting their work. Sub-committees visit print workshops in the tri-state area, such as The Art Students' League, The Robert Blackburn Print Workshop and the Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk, Connecticut, among others.

Of the more than one hundred artists whose work was viewed in person by members of the Events Committee this year, fifteen were nominated for possible participa-

tion in the 2007 Showcase. They were invited to submit a résumé, an artist's statement and six slides for consideration by the full Events Committee at a meeting held in late August. Final selection was based solely on the six slides chosen by the artists themselves to represent the body of their work. The Events Committee makes an effort to reflect a diversity of techniques, styles and colors.

On several occasions during that vetting process, the committee member who had seen the actual prints commented that the slides did not accurately portray the artistic quality of the work, whether because the slide was poorly prepared, or because the subtle communication between artist and viewer was not possible under those conditions. I had a similar impression during last year's vetting process. However, when the artist discussed his or her work while showing the slide on the screen, my experience as a viewer was greatly enhanced. And when viewed in person after the discussion, the emotional impact of the work was even more profound.

I wondered whether the outcome of the vetting process might have been different if the jurists had first reviewed the written material submitted by each artist describing his or her technical orientation, creative intentions and career progression. I focused on when each of the fifteen artists first participated in a group or solo exhibition, and found that the dates of their inaugural presentations ranged from 1959 to 2003. Although all candidates currently work in the tri-state area, that initial exhibition took place in Johannesburg, Tokyo, Mexico City, Bogotá, London, Barcelona, Valencia and Brooklyn. The vast majority of candidates have been exhibiting for over fifteen years, and all are exceptionally well trained and educated.

The artists' statements varied considerably in how they perceived their communication with the viewer. Some are fascinated solely by the technical aspects and opportunities of the print medium: "The subjects I have selected for printmaking have often been driven by my exploration of these techniques in my quest to expand my understanding of the process and to push the limitations of each printing method to achieve my artistic effect." Others are fascinated by particular images: "I try to capture the visual landscapes of my home city. I love vintage buildings, and I have experimented with different textures to express the feel of old bricks and stone."

Occasionally, the artist expressed a political motive: "This artist's work presents penetrating and often painful social and political criticism with humor, wit, and flair. Simple etchings tell poignant tales ranging from brutal suppression of peasants, workers and 'the people' by tyrants of all sorts, to the exuberant joys of love. The simple elegance of his sometimes wistful, often ironic presentations manages to induce in the viewer not only agreement but also a commitment to future stances."

Many statements were in themselves poetic works of art: "She seeks the highest expression of those intense, sublime, intimate moments when everything is still." And, "In my practice, I reach outwards, with hope, into

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new territories as I cross passages of extreme beauty and borders of terrifying darkness.”

Last year, participating artists were encouraged to rehearse their presentations so they could remain within the ten minutes allotted them. For several, that was their first opportunity to speak about themselves and their work in front of an audience. They wrote down their presentations, then rehearsed them with fellow artists. As a result, their presentations were much more personal, inti-

mate and revealing than they might have been if spoken spontaneously. This year also, the artists will be encouraged to rehearse their presentations.

Members of the Print Club and their guests are invited to hear and see the five selected artists as they describe and present their work. Come early as we are likely to have a standing-room-only audience once again. And remember, jacket and tie are required dress at the National Arts Club.

## 57th Street Looking East: The Print Club of New York's 2007 Presentation Print by Artist Richard Haas

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Monday, September 10 marked the beginning of the Print Club of New York's 2007 – 08 season. Members gathered at the Society of Illustrators on East 63rd Street to hear artist Richard Haas talk about his work and unveil our commissioned print for this year.

The meeting was called to order by our club president, Dr. Leonard Moss, who welcomed members to the inaugural event of the year. Moss then told members that this year's Presentation Print, *57th Street Looking East* by Richard Haas, is a black and white etching and aquatint depicting modern Manhattan, traffic jams and all. Haas has a long and distinguished history as a printmaker. In 2005 *The Prints of Richard Haas, 1970 – 2004* was published by John Szoke Editions; Marilyn Kushner, now of the New-York Historical Society, compiled the catalogue raisonné. Also renowned as a painter, Haas published *Richard Haas: The City is My Canvas* with Prestel Verlag in 2001. His art work, and especially his large-scale urban murals, has been the subject of numerous articles as well as a 1990 film entitled *Painting the Town: the Illusionist Murals of Richard Haas*.

The artist then took the podium and complimented the Club on its interest in and support of printmaking. Haas said his interest in prints was piqued as a student at University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee around 1954 by a German-born teacher named Robert von Neuman. In the early 1960s, as a graduate student at University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Haas had a teaching assistantship working in the etching studio with Professor Malcolm Meyers. Later, he taught printmaking at Michigan State and then, for about a decade, at Bennington College.

The first images he showed were from an early series of "famous heads" done while a graduate student. He had col-



*57th Street Looking East* by Richard Haas.



Dr. Leonard Moss and artist Richard Haas unveiling the 2007 Presentation Print. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM.

lected badly damaged drawing boards from the studios and used them to make about 30 woodcuts of figures such as Monet, Van Gogh and Einstein. These were simple black and white prints, but very inventive. A "walking man" series of color woodcuts followed, also done on old drawing boards. In the mid 1960s, Haas entered into a "dialogue" between his painting and printmaking, creating a series of abstract woodcuts that related to shaped canvases he was making at the time. (A print from this period is included in the current exhibition at the National Academy Museum—*The Abstract Impulse: Fifty Years of Abstraction at the National Academy*—through January 6). Soon after, he became obsessed with grids, both in painting and printmaking.

Before long, the grids morphed into the cast iron facades he saw out the window of his Broome Street studio. He did these in drypoint, a medium not much in use in the second half of the 20th century. Architecture was a natural subject for Haas. He had grown up in Spring Green, Wisconsin, and his Uncle George worked as a stone-mason for Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin in the early 1940s. Haas assisted him there for two summers in the mid 1950s and briefly considered studying architecture in college before settling on art and art education. Among the studies of cast iron architecture are two of the Haughwout Building (1970), and one of 621 Sixth Avenue (1971). These prints were shown by the Brooke Alexander

## Upcoming Print Club Events

**Monday, October 15, 2007, 6 – 8:30 p.m.**

Annual Artists' Showcase, National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South (20th Street between Park and Irving Place), New York.

**Saturday, November 3, 2007, 9:30 – 11 a.m.**

The International Print Center New York is once again hosting its popular "Print Collectors Breakfast" for members of our club and of other print clubs visiting New York for the annual IFPDA Print Fair. The exhibition *New Prints/Autumn* will be on display, coffee and pastries will be served, and there will be a presentation of artist talks at 10 a.m. The IPCNY is located at 526 West 26th Street, Room 824, in New York City. For further information call (212) 989-5090 or go to [www.ipcny.org](http://www.ipcny.org).

**Also of interest to Print Club Members:**

**September 6 – October 8, 2007**

*Per Square Foot*, Dieu Donné Papermill, 315 West 36th Street, New York, NY, (212) 226-0573 or [www.dieudonne.org](http://www.dieudonne.org). This is the inaugural show of the Papermill's new space. They are also holding a benefit auction on Thursday, October 18 at the Metropolitan Pavilion. The event is sold out, but proxy bids are being accepted for works by renowned artists such as Polly Apfelbaum, Lesley Dill, Jim Hodges, William Kentridge, Kiki Smith, Daniel Zeller and others.

**September 10 – November 11, 2007**

*Fall '07 Exhibition*: Guest Curated by Mary Temple, Lower East Side Print Shop, 306 West 37th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY, (212) 673-5390 or <http://printshop.org>.

**September 20 – November 17, 2007**

*Randi Bull: Print Retrospective*, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Mathews Park, 299 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850, (203) 899-7999 or [www.contemprints.org](http://www.contemprints.org).

**September 28 – October 23, 2007**

*Randy Williams: Scholar Rocks*, VanDeb Editions, 313 West 37th Street, New York, NY, (212) 564-5553 or [www.vandeb.com](http://www.vandeb.com).

**January 17 – March 15, 2008**

*Not Printed on Paper*, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT.

**March 20 – May 24, 2008**

*Footprint International*, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Norwalk, CT.

Gallery and by Sylvan Cole. Haas soon "moved uptown" to focus on what he called "the Edwardian Buildings" of the late 19th and early 20th century, such as Alwyn Court, which he featured in an etching of 1973.

In 1974, Haas attended a six-week residency at Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He created a series of some 14 color lithographs based on paintings and drawings he brought along from New York. Examples shown included *The Dorilton* and *Olana*.

Prints using an etching and aquatint technique followed; *The Starrett Lehigh Building* (1975) is a prime example. It was at this point that Haas completed his first outdoor mural, at the corner of Prince and Greene Streets in SoHo, sponsored by Doris Freedman's "Citywalls" organization.

Haas has also made various "aerial views" of New York and other cities, including a series of photoetching and aquatints of Battery Park in 1980. In the late 1990s, he did two prints of views from the World Trade Center when he was one of several artists given access to studio space there. In 1999, he and a photographer friend flew over lower Manhattan in a helicopter, leading to two prints which were the artist's last documents to include the twin towers. Most recently, he has been working on a *Carceri* series of prisons or structures turned into prisons, inspired by Piranesi. So far, there are ten prints in this ongoing series.

In the late 1980s, Richard Haas began to "document" his large mural projects in a series of large silkscreens. His *West Façade, Boston Architectural Center* (1989) explores cross sections of domes; *Chisholm Trail, Sundance Square, Fort Worth* (1989) shows cows smashing through a "window" on a façade located where the Chisholm Trail once ran. The artist also showed a series of prints of "proposals" for mural projects never executed—*Shadow of Empire State and Chrysler Buildings on the World Trade Towers* (1994) is a representative example.

Haas completed his presentation by showing examples of some of his murals—a SRO hotel in Chicago "transformed" into a "late work by Louis Sullivan," the Edison Brothers Shoe Distribution Warehouse in St. Louis "reshaped" to recall the grandeur of the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair and a Washington, D.C. underground passageway linking several of the Smithsonian's museums that "reveals" the view above. He also discussed the series of 14 murals he did in the early 1980s in the Periodical Room of the New York Public Library depicting the history of publishing in our city.

After several questions and comments from members of the audience, the artist, assisted by Leonard Moss, unveiled our Club's print. The subject—57th Street from 6th Avenue looking east—is one Haas has painted several times. He worked on the print during a residency at McDowell Colony in New Hampshire the winter before last. Sabina Klein did the proofing. The artist said he chose the subject because there is "no street quite like 57th Street." In the vertical composition, the Fuller Building, I.M. Pei's hotel, the Ritz Tower and the IBM Building are seen in late afternoon light. The etching with aquatint has an extraordinarily painterly quality with rich, velvety blacks. Haas said this is his favorite medium. At this point, members rose from their seats and approached the stage in order to examine the print at close range. Clearly, both the print and the evening's presentation were great successes!

## 2007 IFPDA Print Fair to Showcase New Projects and Works from all Periods

November 1 – 4, 2007, 7th Regiment Armory, Park Avenue, New York City

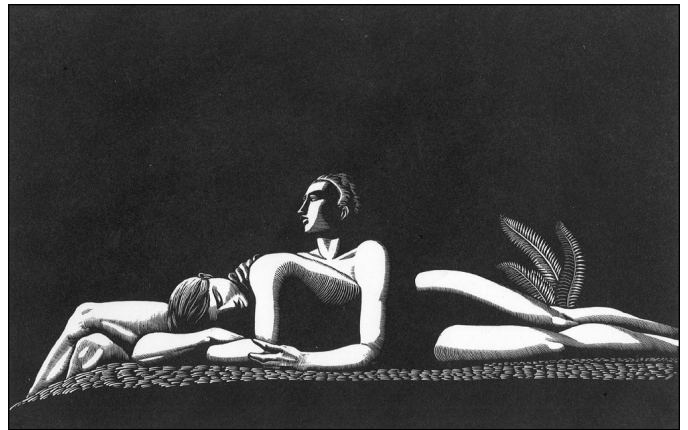
Preview Benefit: Wednesday, October 31st for The Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, The Museum of Modern Art

The International Fine Print Dealers Association (IFPDA) will present the Annual IFPDA Print Fair from Thursday, November 1st through Sunday, November 4th at New York's prestigious Seventh Regiment Armory on Park Avenue. Opening on Wednesday, October 31st, with a dazzling Preview Party to benefit The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, the Fair celebrates its seventeenth year with eighty-nine IFPDA members exhibiting.

The Fair's unique character lies in its comprehensive look at one medium and its ability to draw the leading international dealers in the field from all periods, old master to contemporary, under one roof. Participation in the Fair is limited to IFPDA members and although most are longtime veterans on the international art fair circuit, there is tight competition for the stands available at the Annual Print Fair. Robert Newman, chair of the IFPDA's organizing committee, states: "The Print Fair is the premier event in the print world calendar and draws virtually every museum print curator and all the major collectors." Over 7,000 visitors attend the IFPDA Print Fair each year and include museum curators, seasoned connoisseurs, new collectors, scholars, and devoted art aficionados.

New faces at this year's fair include Cologne based member, Galerie Boisseree. Headed by Johannes Schilling and Thomas Weber, the gallery focuses on graphic works after 1950 as well as contemporary art. Two Palms, the New York based contemporary print publisher, is another newcomer to the Fair and will exhibit new editions by Richard Prince, Carroll Dunham and Mel Bochner. This will also be the first Print Fair for longtime IFPDA member Leslie Sacks Fine Art of Los Angeles. The gallery will feature modern and contemporary masterworks including Jasper Johns' *Target with Four Faces*, 1979, an intaglio printed in colors from the edition of 88, signed, dated, and numbered in pencil. Aaron Galleries (Chicago) will return after a two-year hiatus to exhibit major African-American artists including Eldzier Cortor, Beauford Delaney, Aaron Douglas, and Charles White. A highlight among the gallery's offerings will be Charles White's 1971 color lithograph, *Love Letter*, from the edition of 25. Armstrong Fine Art (Chicago) also returns to the Fair to present a private collection of prints and drawings by Jean-Emile Laboureur (French, 1877-1943). This collection, built by a private European collector over many years, strongly focuses on the subjects created in and devoted to the United States and includes many of the artist's greatest East Coast compositions, his best cubist etchings, as well as his most well-known woodcuts.

On view for the first time will be many newly complet-



Rockwell Kent, *The Lovers*, 1928, wood engraving, 6 1/2 x 10 1/8 inches. IMAGE COURTESY OF ABIGAIL FUREY FINE PRINTS AND DRAWINGS LLC.

ed projects at the stands of the Fair's contemporary print publishers. Marlborough Graphics, the publishing arm of Marlborough Gallery, Inc., will premiere editions by gallery artists Tomás Sánchez, Richard Estes, Manolo Valdés, and Claudio Bravo. The Sánchez etching, entitled *Uno en Dos*, in an edition of 40, is the first print the artist has done in over 10 years. Similarly, the Estes print, *Kentucky Fried Chicken*, is the first screenprint in many years by the artist and incorporates more than seventy-five colors. Gemini G.E.L. at Joni Moisant Weyl will show the latest projects from Bruce Nauman, Ed Ruscha, and Richard Serra, artists long engaged in printmaking. Advanced Graphics London unveils new screenprints by Craigie Aitchison and by Ray Richardson, *Onwards and Upwards*, screenprint with woodblock. Crown Point Press introduces four luscious new soap-ground and spit-bite aquatints with photogravure, soft-ground etching, and roulette by Swiss artist Pia Fries. Mary Ryan Gallery has just completed publications with artists Yvonne Jacquette and Donald Sultan. Jacquette, known for her stunning aerial views of New York City, turns her unique vision to the varied coastlines of New Jersey in a new diptych, a woodcut. The Sultan project, entitled *12 Colors*, is a set of twelve screenprinted poppies in which the enamel-like surface of the flowers actually "pops" out from the textured, tar-like black background which was created using nine layers of color. Mixografia® will premiere two new editions by the Cuban artist known as "Kcho" (Alexis Leyva Machado). Paulson Press debuts color aquatint etchings by Gee's Bend quilters Loretta Pettway and Loretta Bennett. Two Palms will release *Strong Language*, a suite of six etchings by Mel Bochner, the first etchings the artist has published since 1991. Tandem Press will feature a site-specific installation created by artist Nicola Lopez. Lopez's delicate constructions are drawn, printed, and collaged on mylar and paper and reference the visual language of cartography creating, in her words, "images of landscapes that struggle against themselves."

Organizers have continued the Fair's great tradition of





Howard Daum, *Cat and Bird*, 1946, linocut, 5 x 7 inches. Image courtesy of Susan Teller Gallery. This image is a rare example of Indian Space printmaking.

placing publishers and contemporary galleries alongside top dealers in old master, 19th-century European, 20th-century modernist and postwar, Japanese, American Impressionist, and WPA prints. London-based dealer Frederick Mulder will exhibit a signed Picasso *La Minotaure machie*, 1935, published by the artist during a period in which he had stopped painting. Mr. Mulder hails this seminal work as "one of the great objects in our field." An impression from the edition of approximately 55 currently hangs in the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition *Repicturing the Past/Picturing the Present*.

This year's Fair brings an abundance of 19th century treasures, many on view for the first time after years in private hands. Paris-based dealer Paul Prouté will exhibit a fine impression of Odilon Redon's delicate *Yeux clos*, 1890, on china laid paper, between the first and the second edition with inscriptions on the lower margin. On view at Paul McCarron Fine Prints and Drawings, *La Galerie de Notre-Dame*, 1853 by Charles Meryon in black ink on green paper (*papier verdâtre*) and titled in brown ink by Meryon in the lower margin. Impressions of his prints on colored paper are highly prized among Meryon collectors. Meryon did not sign his prints, thus to have his written title on this sheet is special. (The practice of signing and numbering prints would become the norm after his death.)

American prints will have a striking presence this year. Boston-based dealer Abigail Furey will focus her booth on an exhibit of nearly all nineteen lithographs made by Grant Wood over the course of his career, including the very rare *Sultry Night*, 1939. The publisher of this print, Associated American Artists, had planned an edition of 250, however only 100 were completed and even fewer signed after they were forced by the U.S. Post Office to remove the print from sale by mail on a charge of obscenity.

Philadelphia dealers Dolan/Maxwell will show several very rare early engravings and state proofs from the estate of Stanley William Hayter, the English printmaker and painter who founded Atelier 17, the most influential print workshop of the 20th century. A rare example of

Indian Space printmaking will be on view at Susan Teller Gallery, Howard Daum's 1946 linocut entitled *Cat and Bird*, which originally appeared on the cover of the first issue of *Iconograph* magazine.

The IFPDA Print Fair includes numerous specialists in Japanese prints, and their juxtaposition in this Fair with European and American modern and contemporary works illustrates their enduring influence on Western artists. Exhibitors with expertise in Japanese prints include The Art of Japan, Merlin C. Dailey & Associates, Inc., Egenolf Gallery Japanese Prints and Drawings, Israel Goldman, Carolyn Staley Fine Japanese Prints and The Verne Collection, Inc.

For connoisseurs of old master prints, the Fair is unmatched in its reputation as a showcase for works of high quality and rarity. These prints are exceedingly difficult to find in today's market and dealers in this field confront numerous challenges in order to bring top notch works to the Fair. Venerable old master dealers August Laube of Zurich will exhibit a very beautiful and strong impression of the extremely rare print, *The Apostle Simon Zelotes* done by the German engraver known only as "Master E.S." who was active around 1448-1467 and is considered the most interesting and complex engraver of his day, as well as the most prolific. Together with Martin Schongauer, he was the most influential engraver of the fifteenth century. In addition to this impression, only five are known to exist (in the print collections of Berlin, Dresden, London, Paris and Vienna). Several fine Rembrandt etchings will feature prominently at R.S. Johnson. *A Beggar Seated on a Bank*, 1630, shows a character bearing a strong resemblance to Rembrandt himself, and in particular to his etching *Self-portrait, open-mouthed*, also from 1630. Hill-Stone, Inc.'s characteristically sumptuous installation will include works from the 15th through 19th centuries including the elegant engraving, *Ismael, Persian Ambassador of Techmas, King of Persia*, circa 1569 by Melchior Lorch (Flensburg c. 1527 – 1583) and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff's woodcut *A Girl from Kowno*, 1918, signed in pencil lower right 'S.Rottluff' from the edition of 75 impressions.

### Opening Night Preview Party

On Wednesday, October 31st, the Fair will preview with an elegant cocktail party to benefit The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Prints and Illustrated Books. Ryan McGinness has created this year's benefit print, a screenprint entitled *Kaleiding Petals (Peripheral Drift Illusion)* in an edition of 100, signed and numbered by the artist. The benefit print will be offered exclusively to those purchasing tickets at the Benefactor level (subject to availability). Tickets for the Preview can be purchased from The Department of Special Programming and Events at The Museum of Modern Art at 212-708-9680 (email [specialevents@moma.org](mailto:specialevents@moma.org)).

### Fair Dates and Hours

Thursday, November 1 – Saturday, November 3  
12:00PM — 7:00PM  
Sunday, November 4 12:00PM — 6:00PM

### New York Fine Art Print Week

Each year in New York, the IFPDA's member galleries

as well as numerous museums and nonprofits organize special exhibitions and events to celebrate printmaking and its significance as an artistic practice through the ages. Among the many wonderful treats for print aficionados will be Galerie St. Etienne's reception and

gallery talk on Thursday, November 1st from 6 – 8 pm to celebrate their exhibition, *Leonard Baskin: Master Printmaker*. The IFPDA will provide frequent updates on Print Week Events and Exhibitions on its website at [www.ifpda.org](http://www.ifpda.org).

## A Glimpse of Immortality

Maryanne Garbowsky

Imagine my surprise, passing through a small anteroom that led to the *Apocalypse Then* exhibition at the Morgan Library, when I saw *Masterworks from the Morgan Near Eastern Seals*. Transfixed by these miniature masterpieces, I wanted to learn more about them. What were they? What purpose did they serve? How old are they? These questions and more needed answers.

First, what are they and why are they here on exhibit? Cylinder seals, as their name suggests, are cylindrical in shape and very small, approximately 1 to 1 1/2 inches in size. Engraved or cut into them are images that are revealed when the seals are pressed on a wet clay surface. Since they are round, they can be continuously rolled, printing a repeating pattern, or a "rhythmically ordered composition" (Bertman 232).

The Morgan Library, whose current exhibit is ongoing, has one of the largest collections of seals, collected between 1885 and 1908 by William Hayes Ward and then added to more recently in the 1970s and 1980s. According to the Morgan's *Calendar of Events* (Spring and Summer 2007), they are "among the earliest known pictorial carvings used to communicate ideas" (5). They are here in the anteroom to the *Apocalypse Then* exhibition because they "precede the illuminations of the Morgan's great medieval collection" (5). Thus, as prelude to medieval illumination, they whet the appetite. However, in their own right, they were for me "meat" enough to enjoy and digest.

What struck me most about these seals was that they are, in essence, "prints" from the past, "an invaluable . . . pictorial record of a lost world" (Bertman 231). Like a printer's plate, these seals provided a surface that could be cut into like an intaglio plate and then pressed on a surface to leave an impression. Although the seal is neither bitten by acid nor inked before printing, it too leaves an impression that has a lasting aesthetic beauty.

May I suggest then that cylinder seals are among the earliest of prints and that like prints they preserve a look into a particular time and place of long ago and far away. Like prints, they are created by artists who are highly skilled, and the result of their craft is an art form that is not only pleasing to the eye, but highly informative as well.

My research led me to what purpose they served. The seals were a method of communication providing "symbolic content" to preserve certain information (*Morgan Calendar of Events* 5). Used before writing as we know it, the seals' images recorded day-to-day details, such as economic transactions, proof of ownership, and hunts. However, they also recorded significant events like ceremonies, religious rituals, myths and contests. Like a still

photograph of a scene that the photographer or patron deemed important, the artist fixed it on the seal for posterity. Thus the images are extremely helpful to the modern historian and viewer, detailing aspects of an ancient world and its way of life.

For instance, one seal depicts a Mesopotamian king named Etana who – legend has it – was carried up to the heavens on the wings of an eagle (Baumann 55-56). Another depicts a god who "like the Biblical Tammuz . . . personifies the generative force in nature," and is "graphically represented by certain animals and plants" (Lloyd 59). Numerous others show episodes in the life of the hero Gilgamesh. In one, he overcomes a buffalo, while in another he defeats a lion.

The history of seals is a long one, extending from "the end of the 5th millennium B.C. to the fourth century B.C." (Morgan Collections/Ancient 1), a period of thousands of years during which time styles varied. Among the most beautiful are those from Mesopotamia from the Middle Assyrian period (ca. 13th century B.C.).

Over time, not only style, but material varied as well, ranging from bone, shell, or clay to metal. The predominant material, however, was stone – soft stones like steatite, hematite, and the semi-precious lapis lazuli, the latter's blue color making it a popular choice. So, too, some of these stones had symbolic meaning, such as lapis, which signified "power and success" while "green marble insured continual blessings" (Bertman 234). For this reason, many believed the seals had magical power and wore them like amulets. The seals had a hole in the center so that a cord could be threaded through (Lloyd 59), or they could be mounted on a pin and worn as jewelry (Moorey 49). As amulets, the seals were believed to offer protection and good fortune to the wearer.

The seals were cut or engraved by hand or sometimes with the help of tools or bow drills. They were done in reverse so that the image would appear in the right direction when "printed" or pressed (Bertman 232). When one sees the small size of these seals, the talent of the artist is even more esteemed. The intricacy and delicacy of detail attest to the highly skilled craftsmanship of these fine artists.

The cylinder seals, which were popular for thousands of years, were eventually replaced by the stamp seal at the end of the 5th century B.C. Since Aramaic replaced Akkadian and would be "written in ink on papyrus, etc." (Bertman 233), the cylinder seal lost its usefulness. However, as we can see, the seals or "prints from the past" have given us an invaluable record of a sophisticated world which will not be forgotten because of them. "For the people of Mesopotamia . . . the stone cylinder seal was the ultimate symbol of permanence in an impermanent world" (Bertman 235). So, too, for our world, in

which change plays such a dominant role, these seals confirm the power of art to arrest time and to grant us a glimpse of immortality.

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## The Etching Salon 2007

### Presented by the New York Society of Etchers

The New York Society of Etchers is pleased to announce its forthcoming juried exhibition timed to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the first official New York Etching Club exhibition in 1877. The exhibition, featuring the best of contemporary intaglio in traditional techniques, will be hung in a 'salon style' and include a broad sampling of current approaches to this time-honored printmaking medium. Mr. David Kiehl, Curator of Prints at The Whitney Museum of American Art, juried the show on behalf of the society. The exhibition dates, selected to coincide with New York City's Print Week, are from November 4th through November 14th 2007 at The National Arts Club.

The New York Society of Etchers was founded in 1998 and this year is celebrating its seventh anniversary of formal exhibitions. Since the group began its exhibit program in 2000, it has organized and collaborated in thirty exhibitions of artist prints. Principally, these efforts have focused on the graphic arts of local emerging artists and not-for-profit



Stephen Fredericks, *Desolation*, 2006, etching, 9 x 6 inches. IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

workshops, though several of the shows have had international influences with collaborating visual artists from Hungary, China, France, Ireland, Australia, Ukraine and Peru. And still other exhibitions have been organized on behalf of cultural institutions including the Museum of the City of New York, the Transit Museum of New York, the Housatonic Museum in Bridgeport, CT, and the Ukrainian Institute of America. Ten of these exhibitions have been documented in professionally published catalogues. The New York Society of Etchers, Inc. is an artist-run print maker organization serving New York based artists. The current directors of the group are Stephen A. Fredericks, Andy P. Hoogenboom, Denise Kasof, Bruce Waldman, Sara Sears, and Steven Walker.

The National Arts Club is located at 15 Gramercy Park South, aka east 20th Street, NY, NY. The galleries are open daily during normal business hours and on weekends from 12pm until 6pm. For additional information about the New York Society of Etchers visit [www.nysetchers.org](http://www.nysetchers.org), or contact [info@nysetchers.org](mailto:info@nysetchers.org).

## Exhibition Reviews

### Working With Prints: Selections from Eight Corporate Collections International Print Center New York September 8 – October 20, 2007

Mary Lee Baranger

Eight companies out of more than 1000 in the United States; 39 prints, plus eight from a book; 48 artists. Curator Sandra Lang has selected representative corporate collections. The companies are international as well as national, based in the New York area or the Midwest: JPMorgan Chase, Cleary Gottlieb Steen and Hamilton LLP, Deutsche Bank, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Hess Corporation, Johnson and Johnson, The Progressive Corporation and Pryor Cushman LLP. The businesses range from banking, to insurance, law, health, energy, and greeting cards. Prints are the exclusive medium of only one of the collections (Pryor Cushman LLP). The other companies include painting and sculpture. The collections are large. For instance, JPMorgan Chase has 30,000 art works, the Progressive Corporation 6,500, Hallmark 4000 (and 6,500 photographs were recently donated to a museum), Deutsche Bank 3000 (have works destroyed on 9/11 at the World Trade Center been subtracted?), and Cleary 1000.

What is the purpose of corporate art collections? Starting with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Company in the 19th century, it was advertising. No longer an active collection, a print of Thomas Moran's painting *Grand Canyon of Arizona*, lent by The Old Print Shop, introduces this long history. Lang's superb essay for the brochure, which is to be on the Print Center's web site ([www.ipcny.org](http://www.ipcny.org)), summarizes the various ways in which companies have used art. Historically it is in advertising, both institutional and consumer, showing the commitment to American and general cultural values. The prints are also used as decoration in corporate offices, are reproduced in annual reports, are lent or given to museums, and some are the result of national juried competitions which encourage the artists. The Progressive Corporation, an insurance company based in Mayfield, OH, seeks emerging artists "whose creativity and innovation reflected the...same qualities as the company's business vision." Supporting art can be a way for the company to demonstrate commitment to the community as well as to the social and ethical problems of our times. For instance, Johnson and Johnson acquires work from the Brodsky Center of Rutgers University, NJ, and also "supports the Artist Proof Studio (APS) in Newtown, South Africa, which provides training and studio space for artists who lack access to facilities for making art."

The primary audience for many of the collections is the employees in whose offices the works hang. What kind of art is this? Prints by safe, established artists? For the most part, in this show, yes. The names are well known to anyone who is familiar with American art since World War II. The quality is high, and the art is a good corporate invest-

ment. Art improves the work environment and can contribute to the pleasure and education of the workers. There can be another purpose. Your reviewer once visited a floor in the loan department of Chase Bank in lower Manhattan. The art was "difficult" and challenging, and even off-putting. Why, I asked? Because a loan officer should have an open mind to the creativity of the artists as well as the loan applicants whose proposals may seem risky, because they are innovative. Of the companies represented in this exhibit the Progressive Corporation comes closest to this, including works whose subjects refer to race, civil rights history (Kara Walker's *Boo-Hoo*, Glenn Ligon's *Condition Report* with a repeated text "I AM A MAN, I AM A MAN," Damien Hirst's *The Last Supper—Chicken/Morphine Sulphat*. JPMorgan Chase owns Kerry James Marshall's *Memento* with images of assassinated leaders and victims of racial hatred. The most impressive work in the show is a tapestry of etchings printed on black cloth, and embroidered by 150 crafters from women's groups, produced by the Artist Proof Studio in South Africa, led by Kim Berman. It is two huge (66 x 42 inches) hangings, with portrait heads of family members or friends who had died of AIDS. This work is owned by Johnson and Johnson. It would be interesting to know where they exhibit it: in a private office, in a public space? It is a beautiful and powerful work.

How are the works selected? For years the Museum of Modern Art encouraged corporate collecting. Curator Sandra Lang worked with this program, and there is an International Association of Professional Art Advisors (which provided major support for this exhibition and the brochure). The companies vary, in using one advisor, or committees assisted by a professional art curator.

This is the first in a series of IPCNY exhibitions drawn from corporate collections. We can look forward to more of Sandra Lang's excellent writing and her expertise.

### Randi Bull: Print Retrospective The Center for Creative Printmaking, Norwalk, CT September 20 – November 17, 2007

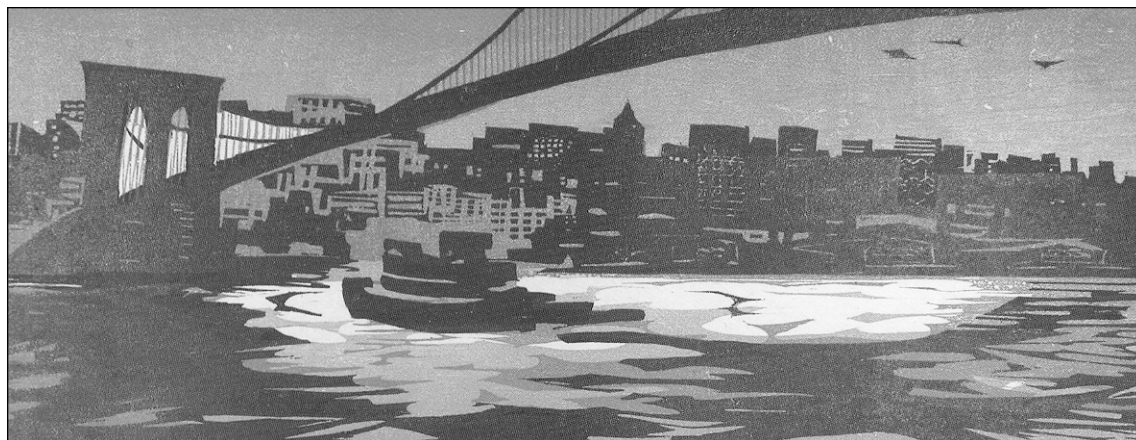
Jilda Manikas

This year's annual one person exhibition at The Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk, CT, focuses on the work of a talented and prolific artist. *Randi Bull: Print Retrospective* features more than 70 woodblock prints that portray the versatility of Ms. Bull, whose subject matter includes city, land and seascapes, as well as animals, flowers and portraits.

In addition are three strong social commentaries, *Parade*, *The Orator* and "Trial Proof" which depicts the resulting landscape after a nuclear explosion. Here, the artist shows a desolate island of charred, bare trees with a vivid, red cloud hanging above – a disturbing, yet moving piece.

Throughout the exhibit, we experience the artist's love affair with New York City as she takes us all over Manhattan and Brooklyn, neighborhood by neighbor-





Randi Bull, *East River – Sundown*, 1969. Image courtesy of Center for Contemporary Printmaking.

hood, from the tugboats working the docks, across the bridges of the East and Hudson Rivers to midtown, the heart of the city with its maze of rooftops and landmark water towers. Yet, she never forgets her roots; we visit the fjords, skiers, hikers and hunters of her native Norway.

Randi Bull, now 92, never used a printing press; her colorful portrayals are all done by hand with a Japanese bamboo baren. Ms. Bull has studied with renowned printmakers including Harold Sternberg and Antonio Frasconi as well as worked with Japanese printmakers Shiko Munakata and Junichiro Sekino.

This artist never promoted her work, and her prints have been carefully stored for decades. *Randi Bull: Print Retrospective* runs from September 20th to November 17th and her work is priced to sell from \$300 to \$1200. Come, experience this artist's prolific printmaking career as her woodcuts now receive the recognition they have long deserved.

## Randy Williams' *Scholar Rocks* at VanDeb Editions September 28 – October 23, 2007

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

VanDeb Editions, at 313 West 37th Street, is owned by Marjorie Van Dyke and Deborah Freedman, who began their association at the Bob Blackburn Printmaking Workshop. They partnered in order to pursue their passion for printmaking, creating a place where artists can come to explore the media of monoprint and etching. VanDeb Editions has published prints by a number of important contemporary artists, including Daniel Berlin, Deborah Freedman, Cris Gianakos, Cheryl Goldsleger, Mimi Gross, Joseph Haske, Eric Holzman, John King, K. K. Kozik, Pamela Lawton, Mel Pekarsky, Mark Saltz, John Schiff, Arden Scott, Elke Solomon, Anita Thacher, George Trakas, Marjorie Van Dyke, Lorraine Williams, and Randy Williams. Van Dyke is a master printer whose name may be familiar to Print Club members from her collaboration with artist Paul Resika on our Club's 2001 Presentation Print—*Still Boats and Moon*—a black and white soft-ground etching. As reported in our Fall 2001 *Print Club Newsletter*, Bob Blackburn introduced

Resika to Van Dyke when the painter known for his luminous color turned to etching in the mid 1990s.

The current show, *Scholar Rocks* by artist Randy Williams, features a series of etchings with monoprint. [By way of disclaimer, this reviewer must confess that Williams, Professor of Studio Art at Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, has been her colleague and friend for two decades.] An internationally-known installation and mixed-media artist, Williams is also Director of the New York State Summer School of the Arts and Consultant and Instructor for Education Programs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He is the recipient of many awards and fellowships, including from



Randy Williams, *Scholar Rocks #21*, 2007, etching and monoprint, 19 x 25 inches. IMAGE COURTESY OF VANDEB EDITIONS.

the National Endowment for the Arts and The American Academy in Rome. His work has been exhibited widely at such prestigious venues as The Studio Museum in Harlem, the Jamaica Arts Center and P.S. 1 in New York, to name just a few.

Williams' mixed media pieces include objects that are meaningful to the artist because they evoke childhood memories or relate to the process of art making in some way. He has said, "Often I explore elements of my past that were harmful to me as an African American."

The current exhibit is a somewhat new direction for the artist. He notes, "They are free of cultural, historical, political or social intent." Featuring the fanciful shapes of Chinese scholar rocks, the prints in this series are incredi-

bly lyrical with luscious colors and wonderful, organic forms. The artist says, "Creating the *Scholar Rock* series is truly a form of meditation—when I am working on these images, I am content and free from wanting." He reveals that working in monoprint over an etched background enhances the meditative quality: "The technique allows me to practice the duality of knowing and not knowing simultaneously."

Just as Chinese scholars would be spiritually transported to a place where they could commune with the natural world by contemplating the wonderful forms of the intricately shaped rocks they kept on their desks, so, too, can the viewer be carried to another place by exploring the spontaneity of these new prints.

## Japanese Prints in a Perfect Setting

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Print Club members contemplating an autumn outing might consider a visit to the Hammond Museum and Japanese Stroll Garden in North Salem, New York. Established in 1957, the museum takes as its mission uniting eastern and western artistic traditions to foster intercultural understanding through art and nature. Located on Deveau Road, not far from I-684, this gem of an institution is open May through October from Wednesday through Saturday between noon and 4 pm. The outdoor Silk Tree Café offers lunch, desserts and beverages from 12 – 3 pm Thursday through Saturday.

Among the current shows in the museum's "Guildhall" is a small but interesting exhibit of Japanese prints from the Hammond's permanent collection. These are examples of *Moku Hanga*, traditional woodblock printing, an art form that came to Japan from China along with Buddhism as early as the 6th century. Initially, it was used to print copies of Buddhist sutras. Later, during the Edo period (1603 – 1868), the black and white printing method evolved into the complex, multi-colored *ukiyo-e* prints illustrating the "floating world." The transition paralleled Japan's transformation from a rural society to an urban, mercantile culture.

These images, printed in sumi ink and water-based color with a hand-held baren rather than a press, had to be carefully registered so that the many blocks needed to print them could be positioned precisely. Special *kento* cuts are made in the blocks for this purpose. The artist created only the drawing; a publisher then took over, coordinating the work of the cutter and printer and marketing the popular images.

This show features figurative work by several artists—Utagawa Toyokuni III, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Toyohara Kunichika, Utagawa Yoshitora and Utagawa Kunisada II. The subjects are typical for the Edo period, focusing on courtesans, Kabuki actors and sumo wrestlers.

As a complement to the exhibit, the museum held a



Hammond Museum and Japanese Stroll Garden.  
PHOTOS BY GILLIAN HANNUM.

Woodblock Print Workshop with artist April Vollmer on Saturday, September 29. The class was an introduction for contemporary artists to the traditions of Japanese woodblock printing. Vollmer, a New York City artist, has an

MFA from Hunter College and works primarily in Japanese woodblock, sometimes combining it with computer-generated imagery. Vollmer traveled to Japan in 2004 to work with the Nagasawa Art Park Program. She has taught workshops at the Japan Society, the Lower East Side Print Shop and Dieu Donne Papermill, among others.

At this time of year, the garden at the Hammond Museum is at its best—tinged with the colors of fall. A small Zen dry garden, a bamboo grove and a waterfall await you. The garden forms a perfect backdrop to the viewing of

Japanese prints. For more information about the Hammond Museum, call (914) 669-5033 or go to [www.hammondmuseum.org](http://www.hammondmuseum.org). To learn more about April Vollmer's work, visit her website at [www.aprilvollmer.com](http://www.aprilvollmer.com).



## Richard Haas' *Windows to the Past*

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

The unveiling of our Presentation Print and Richard Haas' fascinating slide presentation to our Club members spurred your reviewer to visit the mural project the artist did last year, located almost in her own back yard! *Windows to the Past*, unveiled just a year ago, decorates a second floor exterior wall of the Westchester Arts Council's sculpture court in the Arts Exchange building on Mamaroneck Avenue in downtown White Plains, New York.

At 36 x 15 feet, the mural dominates the small interior courtyard of the former bank building and can be viewed both from the mezzanine through a series of large arched windows, which the mural neatly mirrors, or by stepping out into the small courtyard.

Three large windows reveal views of significant buildings from White Plains' past—buildings which, sadly, were torn down during the "urban renewal" of the 1960s and 70s: the Colony Theater, the former county courthouse building and the RKO Keith Theater. The windows are "set" in a "sandstone" wall which creates the illusion of large blocks. "Reflected" in the windows, in addition to the monuments from the city's past, are fragments of the metal balustrade that lines the mezzanine walkway. Indeed, the mural is most effective when viewed through the windows from that walk, creating what the artist has called "endless window-ism." The palette is muted beiges, blues and grays. The texture is rough, like stone; from the court itself, one can scrutinize the mural at close range.

The real windows that the mural "reflects" were only uncovered and restored in 2005 when the Westchester Arts Council lovingly brought the magnificent building back to its former glory. The windows light what was the Grand Banking Room below. The painted scrollwork



Richard Haas, *Windows to the Past* (2006), Arts Exchange building, White Plains, NY. IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

around Haas' windows echoes decorative motifs on the ceiling of the Grand Banking Room, where the door to the massive vault stands open.

The project was commissioned by the Westchester Arts Council and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. The work was executed at Evergreen Studios in Yonkers, New York. It is the artist's second mural in Westchester County; *Gateway to the Waterfront*, depicting the history of Yonkers, was completed in 1997. It is located at the intersection of Warburton Avenue and Main Street. The Arts Exchange building is open Tuesday through Saturday from 12 – 5.

## Membership Renewals

Members are reminded that by now they should have renewed for the 2007-2008 season. The Richard Haas print will only be shipped to paid-up members. In the next few weeks, the Print Club will begin to fill any membership vacancies with those who have applied for and are awaiting the opportunity to join our club.

## Late Breaking News!

We have just learned that last year's Presentation Print artist, Joan Snyder, has been awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship—one of the most prestigious awards given for creativity. The Print Club of New York congratulates her warmly.

**The Print Club of New York, Inc.**

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