

The Print Club of New York Inc

Winter 2014

President's Greeting

Mona Rubin

It's hard to believe that I am entering my fourth year as President. The beginning of a new year is a good time to reflect on highlights from the past twelve months and to focus on how to make this new season a meaningful one for our members.

One development that stands out for me is how nationally connected the Print Club has become. I receive mailings from printers and publishers all over the country, as far away as Seattle. We are pleased to welcome an important new member this year, Sue Oehme, who has published prints by several of our Presentation Print artists out of her studio in Colorado – Oehme Graphics. Although she is a distance away, I am certain she will make important contributions to the club with her wealth of knowledge and interesting group of artists.

Kay Deaux has continued to provide us with extraordinary events, which cover a broad range of styles and interests. It saddens me that more members do not take advantage of these opportunities, especially since they are an integral benefit of membership. Kay is planning to send a survey in the next few months to try to understand what modifications may increase attendance. I encourage you to provide thoughtful answers for her as this is intended to respond to the needs and interests of our members.

We are so fortunate that Gillian Greenhill Hannum shares her expertise in art history through our meaningful newsletter. She is always looking for more writers. Keep



Our Prints Ready to Ship. PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT BLACKBURN PRINTMAKING WORKSHOP

this in mind if any of you see an interesting print show or have an idea you would like to share. Gillian is always available to discuss writing an article. (Contact her at Gillian.Hannum@mville.edu.)

Our two newest Board Members, Kimberly Henrikson and Gabriel Swire, are exploring ways to develop our social media presence. Natalia Kolodzei continues to post details about our events on our Facebook page. Please be sure to like us at <http://www.facebook.com/PrintClubofNewYork>. They are hard at work looking at ways to expand our website and facilitate information sharing between our members. If any of you have good technical skills or want to be part of this process, please let us know.

The shipping of our prints went incredibly smoothly this year. Nora Rodriguez is new at Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, and she did an amazing job understanding all the intricacies of this task. No problems have been reported to date! If you look at the attached photo, it gives a sense of how massive this undertaking is! We were also lucky this year that we weren't hit by a storm on delivery day.

It was exciting for me to work with Audrey Flack. I have received much positive feedback about the print, and it was so interesting to hear her discussion in September when she spoke about the artistic development of the image and the underlying history and philosophical influences.

I feel so fortunate to have learned so much about print making in general through all the printers I have met through our events. Previously, I never realized how instrumental the printer was in the entire process, teaching the artist about cutting edge techniques, and understanding and facilitating the artistic vision. Luther Davis spoke to us about many new techniques when he showed us some incredible work in June. For those of you who missed his talk, it is possible to visit his studio by appointment. We also learned about developments in digital printing at the Ribuoli studio. Phil Sanders, who keeps

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the inclusive and innovative spirit of Robert Blackburn alive, summed up why all this is so important; in a year-end letter he wrote that it is "our belief that art is what adds quality to our lives, and fills us with joy and hope." It feels good to be part of an organization like the Print

Recent Print Club Events

Ribuoli Digital Studio Visit

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

On October 21, the Club enjoyed a special tour of Ribuoli Digital, an innovative print shop on West 26th Street run by Andre Ribuoli and Jennifer Mahlman-Ribuoli. Billing itself as a "hybrid traditional and digital studio," Ribuoli specializes in a wide range of innovative printing techniques, from digital cutting to CNC embroidery and photopolymer platemaking. Our tour began with the latter, a non-toxic process that creates images resembling photogravures using an industrial Anderson and Vreeland Orbital X machine. Jennifer showed us a series of images of pearl necklaces she was working on, which had wonderfully nuanced tonalities. The largest works they do using this method is 30 by 40 inches; polymer plates usually aren't any bigger. Another piece of equipment they have engraves copper plates from digital files. The machine can work from both 2D and 3D CAD files. Its three axis router can work on a variety of materials, from metal plates to plexi. Andre told us that 3D printing is exploding right now. Commercial printing technology is moving in that direction with textural reproductive prints being made from laser surface scans.

Ribuoli Digital was opened in 2009; prior to that, Andre did digital printing at Pace Editions. In addition to this studio in Chelsea, they also have one in Upper Manhattan. Andre has been working for over twenty years in digital, first with Jean-Yves Noblet, coming on the scene when Iris printing was the new innovation. (Ribuoli Digital still has an Iris 3047 printer, one of the last working models in New York; they are using it to print on silk.) Musician Graham Nash (Nash Editions) was the first to conceive of a fine art application for Iris equipment.

Over the course of his career, Andre got to know many of the other print shops in New York City and often collaborates with both Maurice Sanchez and Brand X on special projects. The use of industrial/commercial equipment is one of the studio's hallmarks. They also have a 64 inch wide Epson pigment inkjet printer that prints 2880 dpi. Instead of doing the commercial giclée printing that most people do on it, Andre and Jennifer experiment with a variety of papers and other printing surfaces. Their niche is bringing what is happening in the commercial realm and applying it to fine art printmaking. Another great example of this is a commercial embroidery machine on which they were working on a project for David Byrne – *Big Love: Hymnal*. New York is having something of a printing renaissance due to the increasing popularity of digital work, which does not require the level of real estate that traditional print shops need.

Probably the most interesting piece of equipment in the studio, however, was "The Painting Machine." Invented by

Club that supports printmakers, educates its members and tries to keep dialogue open to print enthusiasts around the country.

I wish all of you a great 2014, filled with an abundance of provocative and fulfilling print experiences.



Andre Ribuoli and Jennifer Mahlman-Ribuoli with the Painting Machine. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

a man in Utah, the 8 by 8 foot machine works like a giant air brush. Only about 100 of the machines were ever made; 3M then bought the patents and production ceased. Andre and Jennifer use it to "print" from digital files; it can print on all sorts of material. The pair is beginning to publish with some artists. They see their job as being to find all the new innovations in printing and to then introduce artists to them and see what possibilities they discover.

An example of an amazing project they collaborated on was a Tauber Auerbach project for the New Museum that involved intricate origami folding. In addition to printing the edition of 36, Jennifer had to score and fold each sheet, a project that took four to six hours per print.

The evening ended with a chance to examine and purchase work in the studio by a wide range of artists, among them Kiki Smith, David Shapiro, Vik Muniz, Jane Hammond, Robert Mangold, James Dine and James Sienna. Members who missed this event should consider contacting Andre and Jennifer at (646) 418-4030 or going to www.ribuolidigital.com to see the wealth of interesting contemporary prints they have available for purchase.



Print Club Members at Ribuoli Digital Studio. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

Upcoming Print Club Events

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

Save the date for the Print Club of New York's Annual Meeting, which is being combined for the first time with our popular Artists' Showcase event.

Monday, September 15, 2014

Mark your calendars now for next fall's unveiling of the Print Club's commissioned print; this will be your opportunity to hear our 2014 artist talk about our presentation print.

Also of interest to Print Club members:

January 7 – May 11, 2014

Forging Alliances, Palmer Museum of Art, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA (814) 865-7672 or www.palermuseum.psu.edu. *Forging Alliances* draws on the Palmer Museum's collection of postwar *mingei* ceramics, many of which were acquired for the University by the late professor of art Ken Beittel during his historic 1967 sabbatical in Arita to study with Manji Inoue, and mid-twentieth-century woodblock prints from the "Creative Print Movement," a western-influenced trend that emphasized a more individualized approach to Japanese printmaking.

January 17 – March 2, 2014

Bolton Brown: Strength and Solitude, Byrdcliffe Kleinert/James Center for the Arts, 36 Tinker Street, Woodstock, NY (845) 679-2079 or www.byrdcliffe.org.

January 21 – February 27, 2014

Pale Fire, LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies, Columbia University, 2960 Broadway, 310 Dodge Hall, New York, NY (212) 854-7641 or www.neimancenter@columbia.edu.

January 22 – March 12, 2014

New Prints 2014/Winter, International Print Center New York, 508 West 26th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY (212) 989-5090 or www.ipcny.org.

January 22 – February 20, 2014

Both Sides of the Pond: Prints by Anne Desmet, Jackie Newell, and Vijay Kumar, Arthur Berger Gallery, Berman Students' Center, Manhattanville College, 2900 Purchase Street, Purchase, NY (914) 694-2200 or www.mville.edu.

February 9 – April 6, 2014

Annual CCP Members' Exhibition: Branching Out, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, 229 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT (203) 899-7999 or www.contemprints.org. Opening Reception: Sunday, February 9, 2 – 5 p.m.

Celebrating Print: Masters of Czech and Slovak Printmaking

BBLA Gallery, 321 East 73rd Street, Manhattan

Kay Deaux

Czech and Slovak printmaking is rich in history and fascinating in its expression, as members of the Print Club of New York learned in a visit to the BBLA Gallery on January 15, 2014. The exhibit was curated by Katerina Kyselica, herself an artist and a writer, with works drawn primarily from the extensive collection

of long-time PCNY member Marvin Bolotsky, and both Katerina and Marvin were on hand to walk our group through the exhibit.

Two generations of Czech and Slovak artists were represented in 58 prints, with a vast range of techniques and subject matter on display. Many of the artists came of age during World War II and then experienced the tumult of the Soviet Army invasion in 1968 and the eventual fall of the Soviet Union in 1989. These experiences created narratives



Oldrich Kulhanek (Czech, 1940 - 2013) *Torn Face*, lithograph. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARVIN BOLOTSKY

of evil and self-destruction, evidenced in, for example, Jiri Anderle's 1980 intaglio, *Soldier*. But also, perhaps as a means of escaping from some of the harsh political realities, Czech and Slovak artists developed a fascinating world of imagination and fantasy (though sometimes incorporating political messages in those fanciful images, as evidenced in Jiri Solomon's *Public Secret*, 1987). Vladomir Gazovic produced intricate lithographs, incorporating techniques of color wash and stone scratching, depicting fanciful figures that often combine human and animal forms. Adolf Born used *commedia dell'arte* motifs in some of his pieces. Whether realistic or fantastic, figurative work was prominent in the prints of the earlier generation of artists.

In recent years, some Czech and Slovak artists have moved to more abstract images. One particularly lovely monotype by Alena Laufrova, *Something from Toyen*, was created with a combination of techniques that included "blind embossing," using aluminum foil on a plate without ink, as well as etching and pastel work.

Some of those attending were already familiar with this genre, but for many others, the event provided a stunning introduction to a group of highly skilled and talented artists. Our thanks to Marvin and Katerina for a wonderful evening!

Print Week Highlights

IFPDA Print Fair, November 2013

Maryanne Garbowsky

The train was late, the cars overcrowded. When we arrived at Penn Station, there were few cabs to be had. But once we arrived at the Park Avenue Armory and walked up the steps, we felt at home. The array of fine art welcomed us with its variety, sizes, and colors. Like a child on Christmas morning, I looked at the offerings and began to select which package I would open first. It was the Frederick Mulder Gallery which beckoned, catching my eye with the prints of Käthe Kollwitz, one of my favorites. There were also Dürer's *St. Jerome in His Study* and some of Picasso's prints from the Vollard Suite. More impressive was Picasso's famous precursor to *Guernica*—the *Minotauremachie*, which I had only seen in books.

Next I went to Leslie Sacks, which featured modern artists like Richard Diebenkorn, Jasper Johns, and Andy Warhol. I was especially intrigued by a rare tricolor silk-screen print by Warhol entitled *Kick*. It shows the dancer Martha Graham in a graceful movement from her dance *Letter to the World* based on the life of poet Emily Dickinson.

The Print Fair not only offers print enthusiasts opportunities to see the prints that they love and would like to own, but also allows patrons the chance to learn more about the artists and their work. At Israel Goldman, I learned about the different periods of Japanese art on display: the Edo period, which ends in 1868 at the time of a radical political change in Japan, and the pre-modern Meiji period that begins right after. The young gallery assistant graciously helped me to fill the gaps in my background.

At Egenolf Gallery, I added to my knowledge of Japanese art when I saw a wonderful print by Chiura Obada (1885-1973), *Before the Rain*, part of a larger sequence entitled *World Landscape Series* (1930). The highlight of my investigation of Japanese art was a visit to the Verne Gallery, where I met gallery owner Michael Verne, who spoke to me about his gallery's interdisciplinary emphasis. Here were American artists like Paul Binnie, Daniel Kelly, and Micah Schwaberow, among others, who demonstrate the influence of Japanese artists in their own work. His book *Quiet Elegance* develops this idea further with interviews with selected artists and examples of their work.

Another highlight was at the Fine Art Society, where I stood transfixed before *The Bellman* by 19th century artist Samuel Palmer. In the margins of the print were the artist's annotations, phrases like "too glittery," "too bright," and "shadow cast by stick." I felt as if I had entered the mind of the artist as he worked. It was a one-of-a-kind print and had already sold for \$65,000. It was well worth the purchase price for some wealthy collector.

I also learned about artists I had not known about before. For instance, at Two Palms I was introduced to the work of Peter Doig. In addition to his work, there was a book of his prints entitled *No Foreign Land* on display. I put it on my "books to buy" list. Another new artist for

me was Al Taylor, who worked with the Niels Borch Jensen Gallery in Copenhagen. I browsed through the artist's recently published *Catalogue Raisonné* and promised myself that I would learn more about him.

The afternoon moved swiftly, and I had more aisles to travel. I saw wonderful Edward Hoppers at the Old Print Shop, Kiki Smith's *Sampler*, based on 200 poems by Emily Dickinson, at Arion Press, some rare Rembrandt biblical prints at David Tunick, Inc., and a talented young Irish artist named Donald Teskey at Stoney Road Press, Dublin. There was much more to see, and I did my best to see it all.

The show was perfect. To be able to see museum-quality work within one large space was exciting and convenient. The range of art in varying mediums was inspiring. To be able to stand in front of a Whistler, a Rembrandt, a Picasso print was thrilling. And there were prices for every pocket-book. All in all, it was a busy, productive day. The gallery owners and assistants were knowledgeable and willing to talk and answer questions, even basic ones.

On the train ride home, I was tired but elated. I thought about next year and another chance to enjoy this rich treasury of art. Needless to say, I am anxious to see how Print Fair 2014 will top this one.

The New York Satellite Print Fair, November 2013

Kay Deaux

An added stop for print lovers this year was the New York Satellite Print Fair, which took place on November 8, 9, and 10 at the Bohemian National Hall on East 73rd Street (a building that also houses the Czech Consulate in New York). Fourteen dealers, several of whom participated in Print Week satellite shows held at the Lighthouse for the Blind in past years, occupied two natural light-filled rooms on the third floor of the building.

A splendid array of prints was on view at the Satellite Fair, with a wide range of prices, historical periods, and country of origin represented. Large and often colorful prints by contemporary artists could be seen at Oehme Graphics and at Van Deb Editions. A fine collection of Japanese prints was available at Floating World Gallery, while Kleinprint showed Central and Eastern European work, including political work done during the Communist era. Twentieth-century American artists were also abundantly represented, with well-known exemplars such as Will Barnet's *Introspection* at Edward T. Pollack Fine Arts, Elizabeth Catlett's *The Sharecropper* at Srago Gallery, and a fine group of Käthe Kollwitz prints at Davidson Galleries. For the beginning collector, the availability of many very reasonably priced works (hard to find at the larger Armory show) was surely a plus.

Flat tables rather than walled booths created a sense of openness at the Satellite Fair. Collectors and conservators alike were able to engage easily in conversations with the dealers and to examine the selection of prints on hand, and one left with a feeling of camaraderie among the print

lovers of the world. Additional bonuses of this event were its easy walking distance from the Armory show and the absence of an admission charge.

Reportedly, the event was always busy but never congested throughout its run. "It was greatly successful, particularly for a first-time event," said dealer Ellen Srago. The dealers who were here this year are already planning to repeat the event next year. So too is this attendee!

Print Week Breakfast, International Print Center New York

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

One of the highlights of Print Week has come to be IPCNY's annual Print Week Breakfast, featuring their New Prints 2013/ Autumn exhibition complete with artist talks. Last year, Hurricane Sandy and its attendant power failures below 42nd Street prevented this event from taking place, so it was with great enthusiasm that we assembled on the morning of November 8th to see the exhibition and to hear three of the artists speak about their work. Members of the Print Clubs of Cleveland and New York were joined by IPCNY members and friends of the featured artists. Selected from more than 2600 entries, the roughly 50 prints by 29 artists was the 46th in IPCNY's "New Prints" series (there are three "New Prints" shows per year). The work was selected by a panel including Desirée Alvarez (artist, teacher), Andrea Butler (lawyer, collector), Christopher Creyts (master printer, Collaborative Art Editions), Amze Emmons (artist, editor of *Printeresting*), Kimball Higgs (IPCNY board member, art professional) and Tara Misenheimer (artist, educator at Avenues School). Selected artists were: Rosaire Appel, Susan Belau, Allison Bianco, Noah Breuer, Deborah Chaney, Elizabeth Corkery, Josh Dannin, Sage Dawson, Jeffrey Dell, Kevin Frances, Ron Fundingsland, Anne-Karin Furunes, Rodrigo Gonzalez, Jungil Hong, Richard Hutter, Sea Hyun Lee, Julia Jacqueline, Laura Kinneberg, Kaitlyn Knapp, Jonggeon Lee, Janet Marcavage, Sean Morrissey, Yoonmi Nam, Heidi Neilson, John O'Donnell, Endi Poskovic, David Sandlin, Gunilla Widholm and Jenny Wiener. They worked with the following presses and print shops: 2 by 2 Press, Buildface Press, Dieuonné Papermill, Lower East Side Print Shop, Pace Editions, Inc. and Sinland Press.

Interestingly, this year's show included a number of works that seemed to reference landscape, mapping or aerial views. For example, Appel's



Artist Jeffrey Dell. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

INCIDENT 4:30, 2012 (digital print) is a triptych consisting of three panels of eight abstract images that look like aerial views; Susan Belau's *19th Avenue East* and *1424 North*, both 2013, are nice black and white, abstract street grids (etching); Allison Bianco's *Zeppelin*, 2013 (intaglio with chine collé and screenprint) has a Japanese quality but is, again, a view from above.

Elizabeth Corkery's two prints, *Est. Shot; Florals*, *Est. Shot; Hedge* and *Est. Shot; Parterres* (all intaglio and screenprint on paper, 2013) depict elaborate formal gardens.

Three of the artists were present and spoke a little about their work. Noah Breuer was represented by *Over Nevada*, 2013 (cyanotype and screenprint on panel). It is an aerial view of a mountain range. Breuer has been in four or five previous "New Prints" shows. Originally from California, he attended RISD as an undergraduate and has been on the East Coast for 13 or 14 years. He takes photos out of the plane as he flies West; this work is based on one of those images. He has a longstanding interest in mapping and cartography. He currently teaches at Purchase College, SUNY, which is when he began to work in cyanotype again. Breuer is interested in "secret sites" and military installations, and beneath the cyanotype is a geometric grid that references secret military spaces. The work is made of multiple strips of Japanese Kozo paper adhered to a wood panel with Japanese rice paste. Breuer spent a year in Japan studying traditional *ukiyo-e* techniques.

For Jeff Dell, this was a first "New Prints" showing, but he was represented by two works from his "Follies" series – *Thunder Rock* and *Screenrush* (both serigraphs, 2013). This work grew out of a previous series, "Frenemies," about eight-year-olds' birthday parties and the anticipation of cake. He is fascinated with perceptual issues and the notion of desire. He, too, is transfixed by *ukiyo-e*,



Artist Noah Breuer.
PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM



Kaitlyn Knapp folding one of her houses. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM



Artist Kaitlyn Knapp with IPCNY Director Anne Coffin.
PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

which also is often about desire; he likes the spatial quality. He also works on a Japanese “non-paper” material called Yupo, which is translucent and encourages layering; he works on both sides of it, creating interesting color effects. *Thunder Rock* evokes images of a piece of tumbling confetti. He plans the negative space very carefully; for him, composition is how things relate to the edge. He noted that different printing techniques have “bred” different colors. There are lots of fluorescent inks available for screenprinting, for instance, and few earth tones; the reverse is true for litho inks. *Screenrush* is a diptych of slices of cake, inspired by his previous series. The back is printed green, creating nuances in the color.

Kaitlyn Knapp is currently an intern at IPCNY, here from North Carolina where she has just finished undergraduate school at UNC. Her piece, *Pennsylvania Farmland*, 2013 (screenprint installation) was selected by the jury “blind” for this show. The basis of the work, which was so creative and conceptually mature, was a farmland photo from 1938 and her own fascination with suburbia, and especially Levittown. Her three-dimension-



Print week breakfast at IPCNY.
PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

al work, installed in a glass case, takes the traditional Levittown Cape Cod house as its basis. Knapp took its dimensions and then scaled it down to a miniature size. She printed the 1938 photo on one side and the template for the Cape Cod house on the other; she then cut and folded to create the installation. She said she became like a machine doing this – like the mass-produced housing of Levittown itself. She has installed the pieces in various ways and has not yet actually visited a Levittown.

IPCNY is a non-profit organization that supports printmaking in New York. In addition to their exhibition program, they host events, such as an upcoming reception to introduce undergraduate and grad printmaking students to one another and to the print shops in New York. Jeff Dell noted that it is hard to get recognized as a printmaker if you do not work in a large shop; IPCNY is one of the places that supports emerging printmakers. This show was truly international, with artists from Sweden and Mexico as well as both coasts and what lies in between.

Two Tributes To The Print Club’s Inaugural Artist, Fred Mershimer, On The Occasion Of His Exhibiton At The Old Print Shop

Frederick Mershimer: Master of Mezzotint

*Morley Melden, Founding President,
Print Club of New York*

When we began the Print Club in 1992 and selected Frederick as our first commissioned artist, we were hoping he would continue to develop and become more successful in his chosen specialty. Today, I can say, with almost parental pride, that he has achieved a degree of success beyond all expectations. He is truly a modern master of the mezzotint process.

I hope most of our members will see his dual show (with Michael De Cerbo) at the Old Print Shop beginning February 8. Going back, before our Club began, I had

been following Frederick’s progress at a local gallery. Eventually, a gallery in Washington, DC had a Mershimer show, and *The Washington Post* gave it such a rave review that area print collectors began buying. When we first offered Club memberships, even Father Haller, curator of prints at Georgetown University, wanted to join, mentioning his special interest in Mershimer to me.

When we offered Frederick the commission, he was uneasy about doing an edition of 150 prints (the initial membership cap of the Print Club – *ed.*), as he had only been doing much smaller editions. Fortunately, we convinced him to try, and the edition proved to be a triumph for all. Now he is able to do larger editions with ease.

Throughout the years, he has also continued to teach colleagues and new students the various skills needed to create beautiful mezzotints. We wish him many more years of successful growth and good health.



Artist Fred Mershimer and Print Club President Mona Rubin holding an impression and the plate of *Passage* in 2012. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

Fred Mershimer: Exhibit at the Old Print Shop

Julian Hyman, President Emeritus, Print Club of New York

When I heard that our first commissioned artist was having an exhibit at the Old Print Shop in New York, I volunteered to write an article in order to share this good news with our members. During my Presidency, I wrote a letter for his catalogue raisonné that was published in 2007: *Frederick Mershimer Mezzotints, 1984-2006*, published by Stone & Press and compiled by Earl Retif and Ann Salzer. After reading through this letter again, I decided that the historical information included would be interesting for our newer members. I have made some modifications, so the original writing has been italicized:

Exhibition Reviews

Closer: The Graphic Art of Chuck Close, The Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT, September 28, 2013 – January 28, 2014

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

The Bruce Museum's Chuck Close exhibition leaves the viewer in awe of this contemporary master's vision and sense of adventure as an artist. The uninitiated may think that a show of Close's portraits, done in various graphic media, might be repetitive or monotonous, but nothing could be further from the truth. What the show reveals is an artist constantly pushing the envelope, experimenting with one printmaking technique after another, pushing all well beyond their normal applications, constantly framing new artistic problems for him-

The Print Club of New York was founded in 1992 by a small group of serious collectors. As its mission, the newly formed board of the Print Club sought to develop an interest-based organization with the purpose of sponsoring informative events about prints and print collecting. The board was also interested in the commission of a unique work to mark the club's foundation. The inaugural, and subsequent annual, images would be presented as a privilege of membership to the organization's members.

Board members of the Print Club of New York gathered at the Associated American Artists Gallery to view a new plate that had been created by Frederick Mershimer. Positive response was unanimous, and Mershimer was commissioned to create the fledgling club's first edition, a mezzotint entitled "Passage." The entire edition of 150 was quickly exhausted by the influx of members into the organization.

Many members of the Print Club have continued to follow Frederick Mershimer's career and to collect his work. In addition, Mershimer has remained a member of the Print Club and has conducted a wonderful teaching workshop for its members. Two years ago I hosted an event at my home in New Jersey, and Mershimer brought several of his images and talked about his work. There was a large turnout, and members were thrilled to meet him in this social setting.

The Print Club of New York was, indeed, fortunate to have a successful beginning with the Fred Mershimer print, *Passage*.

The Old Print Shop was founded in 1898 and is one of America's oldest galleries. They boast over 100 years of experience, specializing in American art. They are located at 150 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (212) 683-3950. Mershimer's paintings and prints will be featured there in a two-man show from February 8 – March 22, 2014.

self, all of which are overcome with results that outstrip anyone's expectations.

The first part of the exhibition is in the Louis and Virginia Battle Lecture Hall and is introduced on the wall facing the viewer upon entering the museum. This "introductory" exhibit lays the groundwork for the larger exhibition behind the double glass doors as it focuses on only two images, but explores the artist's thinking and technical approach to each in great detail. On the wall outside the lecture hall are five dye-transfer photographs of *John*, 1971. These were made at a time when the artist was rethinking color and restricted his palette to the minimal number of colors needed to produce the full spectrum – magenta, cyan and yellow. The five prints include one in each of the three colors, one combining magenta and cyan, and one combining all three, resulting in a full-color image.

Inside the large, rectangular room, mounted on gray panels and lit with spotlights, was a full presentation of

Self-Portrait/Scribble/Etching, a portfolio of 12 state proofs, 12 progressive proofs and one final signed print created in 2000 in an edition of 15 soft-ground etchings. Following a projected image to maintain scale and consistency, the artist created 12 varied sketches of a three-quarter view self-portrait using 12 different colored pencils; these sketches vary quite a bit, some having more space filled, others having significant open areas. Twelve plates were then made, one for each color, and a print was made from each, with the 12 progressive proofs adding a new color each time, becoming increasingly complex and nuanced until, in the final print, all 12 were combined. These two examples really allow the viewer to understand how carefully Close builds up his images.

In the museum's main galleries one is quickly blown away by the vast range of print techniques with which Close has experimented and over which he has gained mastery. The show opens with *Keith/Mezzotint*, 1972, 5/10, a portrait of the artist's friend, sculptor Keith Hollingsworth, done with Kathan Brown at Crown Point Press in Oakland, CA. At 45 by 36", the image is incredibly large for the mezzotint medium and, in fact, a special press had to be custom built for the project. In this image, the grid that is so central to Close's working method has been left exposed for the first time. Right next to this mezzotint is *Keith/Four Times*, 1975, a two-color lithograph from eight stones based on the same Polaroid photo of Hollingsworth. This was the artist's first foray into the lithographic medium and was done at Landfall Press in Chicago. The four images increase in size exponentially from left to right; the seriality reflects the influences of Pop Art and Minimalism during the artist's formative years.

Next, one comes upon four huge images of composer Philip Glass, based on a 1968 photo that Close has used as the basis for more than 200 works. All in black and white, *Phil/Fingerprint*, 1981 is a litho; *Phil I (White)*, 1982, *Phil II (Grey)*, 1982 and *Phil III (Black)*, 1982 are all pulp paper. This project was done at the Madison Art Center at the University of Wisconsin. *Georgia*, 1984, a collage depicting his daughter, was made with pieces of dropped, dry pulp paper from a project he was doing at the Dieu Donne Papermill in New York City. He collected these scraps in a cigar box and then pieced them together into a collage. He wanted to edition this, so he got his collaborator Joe Wilfer to create a 3-D stencil-like mold for the purpose.

Leslie, 1986, a color woodcut on Kozo paper, 27/150, depicts the artist's wife. Close went to Japan in the fall of 1986 to study traditional *ukiyo-e* techniques. In this case, with the help of master printer Tadashi Toda, various woodblocks were printed by hand a total of 117 times. *Leslie/Fingerprint*, 1986, direct gravure etching, 27/45 and *Marta/Fingerprint*, 1986 AP VII were done with Graphicstudio of Tampa, FL.

Lucas/Book, 1991 is an accordion-fold letterpress book using color reduction block linocuts in an edition of 100. It showcases the subtractive method of working with linocuts. A beautiful wooden box with a laser-engraved copper cover plate of the same portrait of artist Lucas Samaras rounds out the presentation. The same image of Samaras is the basis of *Lucas/Woodcut*, 1993, woodcut with pochoir, AP I/XII, is Close's first European-style woodcut, made in col-

laboration with master printer Karl Hecksher. To create this portrait, numerous blocks were made to fit together like a puzzle, each of which could be inked and printed.

Alex, 1991 is a 95-color *ukiyo-e* woodcut from 47 blocks, 15/75. It depicts artist Alex Katz, who was a major inspiration for Close in the 1960s. *Alex/Reduction Block*, 1993 shows how never giving up can turn a disaster to a success. The final work is a silkscreen made from a reduction linoleum cut, AP VI/XV. Started as a reduction linocut at Tandem Press, there were problems with both the linoleum and the paper. The project was finished as a silkscreen at Brand X in Manhattan and is a subtly nuanced image with a powerful presence. Close had never been interested in silkscreen prior to this piece but found it to offer him a range of painterly possibilities, which he used again in *John*, 1998, a 126-color silkscreen, AP VIII/XV. This portrait is based on a 1992 oil painting of the sculptor, John Chamberlain. *Lyle*, 2003 and *Lyle*, 2000 hang side-by-side. The former is a 149-color silkscreen, 45/80; the latter is an 8-color soft-ground etching, 30/60, of Lyle Ashton Harris. The latter utilizes the same scribble technique employed in the self-portrait portfolio on display in the Lecture Hall gallery.

The last section of the exhibit is all self-portraits. Highlights include *Self-Portrait/Pulp*, 2001, stenciled hand-made paper pulp in 11 grays, 18/35 and *Self-Portrait*, 2006, a jacquard tapestry woven in Bruges, Belgium, 9/10. Grant Romer at the George Eastman House in Rochester taught Close to make daguerreotypes. This tapestry is based on a daguerreotype self-portrait that, with the help of Donald Farnsworth at Magnolia Editions in CA, was scanned and turned into a digital weave file. There is also *Self-Portrait/Felt Hand Stamp*, 2012, 28/60, a piece made by making numerous hand-stamps with felt glued on wooden dowels. These were then used to apply oil paint to a silkscreen ground. A different stamp was used for each color and the stamping is done in three layers. There are slight variations in the edition due to the process employed, but they are minimal and the work was conceived of as an edition.

This really was a print lover's show with so much technical information provided. For those who missed it, a catalog was produced and is available through the museum's store.

Inside the Artists' Studios: Small-scale Views, The Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT, through March 9

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

The Bruce has another gem of a show on until early March which, while not a print exhibit, will be of interest to Club members as it features work by former presentation print artist Richard Haas. The exhibit is part of a holiday tradition at The Bruce, to show some sort of works in miniature. This year's offering features work by four artists, Joe Fig, Richard Haas, Lori Nix and Jimmy Sanders, all focusing on the theme of the artist's studio and work space. Haas, inspired by 17th century Dutch

peep boxes such as those made by Samuel van Hoogstraten, began making small boxes and dioramas in the 1960s. These are rarely seen by the public and most still belong to the artist. *The Art of Painting* a.k.a. *The Allegory of Painting* (1968-69) is based on Vermeer's painting and establishes the Dutch roots of Haas's creativity. *Pablo Picasso in his Studio* (1968) shows the artist in his studio at 7, rue des Grands-Augustins in Paris, where he worked from 1937 to 1955. The composition is based in part of a 1939 photo by Brassai of the space. A 1934 Brassai photo formed the basis of another work, *Ambroise Vollard in His Studio* (1968). Two dioramas from the early 1970s formed the basis for Haas's work as an architectural muralist — *Broome Street Looking East* (1971 – 2005) and *Greene Street Looking South* (1971). The artist moved to New York in 1968 and rented a studio in SoHo, where he was taken with the cast-iron facades in the neighborhood. His first mural, done in 1975, was on a building at the corner of Prince and Greene Streets. Also included in the exhibit are a drawing, two etchings and a drypoint, all from the early '70s, of SoHo buildings.

Frank Lloyd Wright on his Terrace of his Home at Taliesin (2002) includes a Wright stained-glass window and the architect standing on a cantilevered balcony overlooking the rolling hills and fertile fields of Spring Green, WI. Haas has a special link with Wright as he worked as an

assistant to his uncle, George Haas, Wright's Master Stonemason at Taliesin, during summers off from college.

Other Haas pieces in the exhibit are *Mark Rothko in his Studio* (1970), *Hans Hofmann in his Studio* (1969-70), *Franz Kline in his Studio on 14th Street* (1970), *Constantin Brancusi in his Studio in Paris* (1970), *Giacometti in his Studio* (1968) and *Schwitters's Merzbau* (1969). There is also a lovely Haas watercolor of *Ozenfant Studio (designed by Le Corbusier)* (2012).

In addition to all these charming pieces by Richard Haas, one piece by Joe Fig will also interest Print Club members — *April and Eric: August 10, 2004* (2005 – 2006). Fig visited the studio of April Gornik and Eric Fischl while conducting interviews for his book, *Inside the Painter's Studio*. He has created a model of the artists' twin A-frames, connected by a breezeway, designed by architect Lee Skolnick on five secluded acres on Long Island. Almost identical on the outside, Fig reveals Gornik's studio to be open and spare, while Fischl's is much more cluttered and disheveled, giving the viewer a sense of the artistic process of each.

The work by Nix and Sanders, the latter having created a peep box in the Dutch 17th century tradition, is equally fascinating and informative in terms of the insights provided about how artists use their spaces and what they learn from studying the spaces of other artists.

The Peep Show

Rozanne Cohen

John Sloan (1871 – 1951) was a proponent of Realism. Realism in America was partly derived from commercial illustration; this field allowed financial stability for Sloan. The need to depict current events led him to observe the street scenes in New York. In time, Sloan transitioned from illustration to printmaking and painting. Printmaking appealed to the average American because it was affordable to the common person. Sloan's subject matter depicted city streets, sidewalks and everyday people who responded to the chaos of New York City life (Myers).

John French Sloan was born in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania and grew up in Philadelphia. After dropping out of high school, he worked for a book and print dealer, where he studied English cartoons and copied prints by Rembrandt, Dürer and Hogarth. He also taught himself etching. He became a freelance commercial artist as well as a staff artist for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (1892 – 95). In 1892, he met Robert Henri, who became his mentor and friend, and in 1893, he studied for a time under Thomas Anshutz at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Sloan left the *Inquirer* in 1895 to become staff artist for the *Philadelphia Press*, a position he held until 1903. By this time, he had produced almost 60 oil paintings, but he kept doing etchings and drawings for income. In 1904, he and his wife moved to New York, where he worked as a freelance illustrator. Between 1904 and 1916, he divided his time between commercial and private work. Sloan published a set of etchings titled *New York*

City Life in 1906 (Zurier, *Art for the Masses* 181).

Sloan liked to show New Yorkers going about their daily routines from the perspective of the urban observer. Thinking of "the common people" as a social category allowed him to see his subjects as objects. He depicts class distinctions, and yet he and his neighbors shared the same social space. In 1901, he had married Anna (Dolly) Wall. She had worked as a bookkeeper and, possibly, as a prostitute. As an alcoholic, prone to depression, she may have influenced his sympathetic depictions of working-class women (Zurier, *Picturing the City* 251).

Fun, One Cent from his *New York City Life* series allows us to see a changing of social mores. Young women looking fashionable are high spirited and ready for fun. They are viewing penny motion pictures at the mutoscope parlor. Movies were the cheapest form of popular entertainment, affordable even to women. Here, work has not turned them into wage slaves (Zurier, Snyder and Mecklenburg 45).

Sloan's approach to making art differed from those of his colleagues because it was based on images seen and remembered, rather than sketched on the street. Therefore, the effect is conceptual rather than perceptual; they are "memory" pictures (Zurier, *Picturing the City* 65). In the etching *Memory* (1906), friends gather together to discuss readings. Dolly read as a form of therapy. The people in the etching include Robert Henri, his wife, Linda, Sloan and Dolly. Sloan was a constant reader of fiction, poetry and philosophy. He made this memorial as a tribute to the many evenings he spent with old friends after the death of Linda, Henri's first wife (Zurier, Snyder

and Mecklenburg 68). Reading was the cheapest and most popular mass amusement. New Yorkers could choose from one hundred daily and weekly newspapers, which included publications in other languages. The subject is a working-class woman at home in a tenement setting. The viewer peers over the subject's shoulder as she reads a newspaper fashion column. She is heavy and lumpy, and the room is sloppy with drying laundry, scrub board and basin. A small boy plays with a cat. The newspaper displays a tall, thin-waisted lady wearing a fancy hat. In this work, Sloan focuses on body types to make an ironic contrast: the differences between the fantasies that people read about and the reality of their lives – a cruel class distinction (Zurier, Snyder and Mecklenburg 115).

Roofs, Summer Night (etching, 1906) depicts tenement residents sleeping on their roofs on a summer night to escape the heat of the crowded apartments below. The shades of black suggest a suffocating nighttime heat. A family is seen sleeping in the foreground. The strap of the mother's garment has slipped off her shoulder. Her hand had held a fan, now at her side, showing a printed advertisement for a dry-goods store. Across the roof, a man lies awake and gazes upward. Is he fantasizing about the woman?

The *New York City Life* set was first exhibited as a whole in 1906 and consisted of ten etchings made in 1905 and 1906. While working on these prints, he changed his signature from an Art Nouveau-style cartouche to a legible inscription. This shift from decoration to a readable line of words parallels the growing trend towards narration in Sloan's art (Zurier, *Picturing the City* 279).

His etching *Turning Out the Light* (1906) is a scene of great intimacy. The viewer can see directly into the room because the shade has not been pulled down. It shows a private moment between two people in an unabashed expression of mutual sexuality. The discarded clothing over the bed provides a clue to the action as the woman reaches to turn out the light. In the background, a man is stretched out, his arms pulled up, his head resting on his hands. The large bed frame gives an erotic charge. The glimpse provided will disappear as soon as the light goes out (Zurier, *Picturing the City* 284 – 285).

In a lithograph of 1908 titled *Sixth Avenue and Thirteenth Street*, Sloan depicts prostitution in New York. One sees a woman all dressed up, wearing a large feathered hat and putting on a long glove. She holds her head up and stares into the street. Her tone is very light, while in the background a group of women and children are seen in darker tones. There is an absence of any moral disapproval. Prostitution was found not only in red-light districts, but all over the city (Zurier, Snyder and Mecklenburg 48).

Night Windows (etching, 1910) is yet another scene of urban voyeurism. The very act of viewing through the window states that the viewer and the subjects are city dwellers. Sloan (the viewer) watches his neighbors and asks us to join him. The architecture of the buildings frames a series of images. In the center, a lighted window shows a woman half dressed. She raises her arms to her head as if to show off her body. The bars across the window stress her face, breasts and stomach. A darkened building also lighted from within shows a woman dressed in white who is hanging clothes on a line. Behind her, a man is sleeping in a chair. Sitting on a rooftop above

is a silhouetted figure who leans over to direct his gaze toward the half-dressed woman. Sloan noted that this etching was based on his studio window observations while working late at night. Eavesdropping was a popular subject in the city newspapers, and this was the visual counterpart (Zurier, *Picturing the City* 281 – 282).

In a gallery, the artist depends upon his works being viewed as well as sold. William Macbeth was among the first dealers in New York to promote the work of contemporary American artists. In his etching *The Picture Buyer* (1911), Sloan depicted Macbeth in the process of making a sale. Two men are seen in profile; they are in a gallery room; there is a crowd of people in the doorway watching the sale being made. The seated man is deciding on a painting. He is a mature-looking, older man. He holds a cane in one hand and is dressed in a fine coat. Light shines on his bald head and goatee. In back of him stands William Macbeth. He is younger, with dark hair and a goatee. One hand is on his hip as he bends toward the prospective buyer. He is shown "purring into the ear of his victim" (Zurier, Snyder and Mecklenburg 65).

It is noteworthy to mention that Sloan became an active member of the Socialist Party in 1909. In political cartoons published in left-wing journals, he expressed sympathy for IWW and its dedication to the uncompromising pursuit of class warfare. His cover illustration for the June 1914 issue of *The Masses*, entitled *Class War in Colorado*, imagines a scene from the Ludlow Massacre of April 1914. In it, striking miners in Ludlow, Colorado defended themselves against National Guard troops and the strike-breaking agents of the Rockefellers, who owned the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation. Against a bright wall of fiery orange flames, Sloan represented a lone Ludlow mineworker holding the limp body of a child in one hand. With the other, he fires a gun at an unseen National Guardsman or security agent for the capitalist mine owners. Sloan sympathetically portrays the worker as a family man avenging the apparent massacre of his wife and children. Lying beneath the striking miner are the bodies of a mother and child (Bjelajac 293). Sloan resigned from the Socialist Party in 1916. Following the Armory Show in 1913, he turned his attention to formal concerns and away from the subject matter for which he had become known.

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Presentation Print Artists

Former Presentation Print artist Bill Jacklin has an upcoming exhibit at Marlborough Gallery. "Bill Jacklin: New York Paintings" will open on Wednesday, February 12 with a reception from 6 to 8 p.m. and runs through March 15. The gallery is located at 40 West 57th Street. Further information is available on their website at www.marlboroughgallery.com.

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