

The Print Club of New York Inc

Spring 2017

President's Greeting

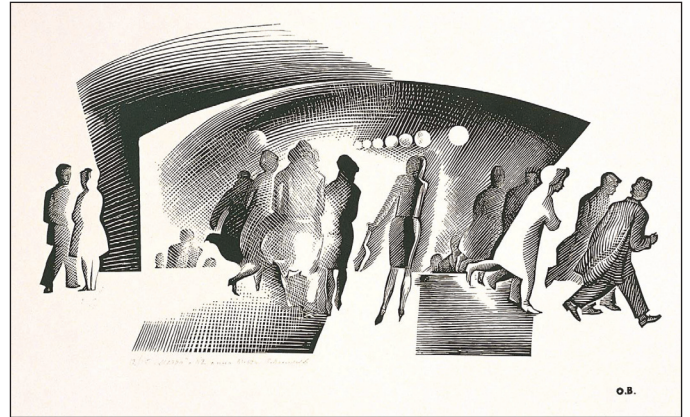
Kimberly Brandt Henrikson

May is here, the sun is warm, and summer is just around the bend. The start of summer marks the end of another PCNY membership year with preparations already underway for the next. It's been a whirlwind of a year, and I do hope that everyone has found a way to enjoy the benefits of membership during the Club's 25th year. Whether you were able to attend the event held at UN Plaza or if you have been reading the book we produced to catch up on the Club's history of prints, or if you have found yourself lost in a moment of peaceful contemplation while enjoying your annual print by Judy Pfaff, this year offered a variety of ways to recognize the Club's successful establishment and growth over the past quarter century.

In addition, this year the Club was fortunate to find itself with both a full roster of 200 members AND a waiting list even before 2016 ended. In planning ahead for the next year, I encourage anyone intending to renew their membership for 2017-2018 to return the membership form and payment as soon as possible. In September, as usual, if there are any openings in the membership roster, we will begin filling them with new members from the waiting list. Don't lose out on a year with the Print Club because the return date slipped by.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for the ongoing interest the members of the Club put toward our shared learning and support for printmakers and printmaking. It is a collaborative medium, and a group like ours is very much a collaborative effort. We would not have the fascinating events and conversations with

artists and visits to exhibitions without the generous work of Club members who volunteer on the board and committees, and we wouldn't be doing any of this if there weren't members and friends who wish to learn more and care about prints. It's a real pleasure to see you and talk with you through the year, and I look forward to doing it again next year.



Oleg Vassiliev, *Metro #2* from *Metro Series*, 1961-62. Linocut, edition 15, Kolodzei Collection of Russian and Eastern European Art, Kolodzei Art Foundation

Recent Print Club Events

Oleg Vassiliev: *Metro Series and Selected Works on Paper* from the Kolodzei Art Foundation, February 15, 2017

Natalia Kolodzei

On February 15, 2017, the Print Club of New York visited the exhibition *Oleg Vassiliev: Metro Series and Selected Works on Paper* from the Kolodzei Art Foundation, at the Harriman Institute of Columbia University, one of the oldest and largest academic institutes in the United States devoted to the interdisciplinary study of Russia. The exhibition featured linocuts from the late 1950s and early 1960s and selected drawings and collages by prominent Russian-American artist Oleg Vassiliev (1931-2013). The exhibition talk was given by PCNY board member and curator Natalia Kolodzei, who discussed works in the exhibition as well as the history of Russian printmaking.

Oleg Vassiliev was born in Moscow in 1931, lived in New York after 1990, and in 2006 moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he passed away in 2013. Vassiliev studied at Moscow Art School and graduated from V.I. Surikov State Art Institute in Moscow, specializing in graphics and printmaking. From the 1950s to the mid-

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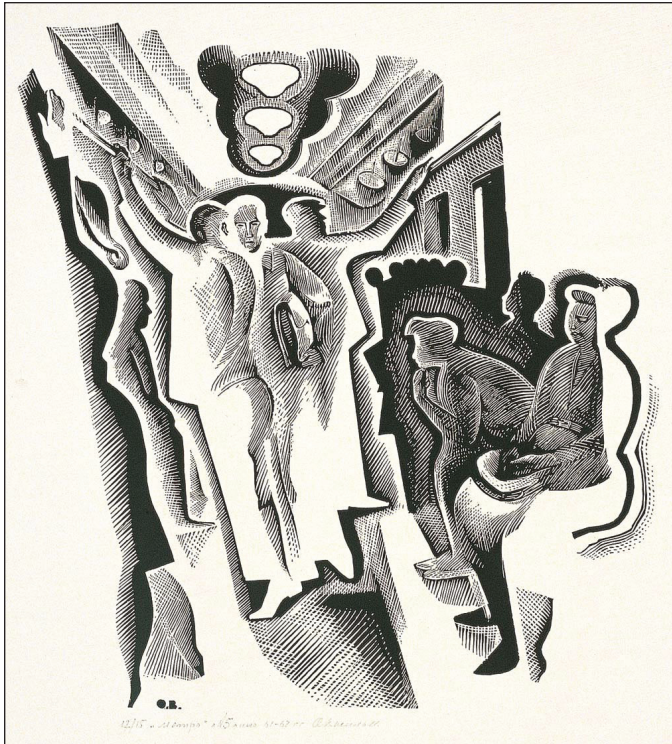
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Oleg Vassiliev, *Metro #5* from *Metro Series*, 1961-62. Linocut, edition 15, Kolodzei Collection of Russian and Eastern European Art, Kolodzei Art Foundation

1980s, he earned a living as a book illustrator as was common for a number of Muscovite nonconformist artists, including Ilya Kabakov, Eric Bulatov, and Victor Pivovarov, which allowed them to experiment with formal issues and work on their own art. In the late 1950s Vassiliev and some of his friends discovered and were inspired by works of the generation of avant-garde artists such as Vladimir A. Favorsky (1886 – 1964), Robert R. Falk (1886 – 1958), and Arthur V. Fonvizin (1882 – 1973) (known as the “three F’s—Formalists”).

Favorsky, an engraver, draughtsman and theorist, who re-introduced woodcut into book printing, was a key figure in the history of Soviet xylography after the 1920s. He was a teacher to a whole constellation of fine masters and promoted innovations in graphic art. Vladimir Favorsky taught drawing (1921–1929) in the Graphics Faculty of Vkhutemas (Higher Artistic and Technical Workshops) in Moscow and was popular as the Director of Vkhutemas (1923–1925) because of his commitment to technical skill, his lack of dogmatism and his tolerance of experimentation of all kinds. Although he was sympathetic to Avant-Garde ideas, Favorsky’s own work was firmly representational. The Soviet school was distinguished by its attention both to the old Realist style and folk art and to the avant-garde trends, as well as by close ties with the printing industry. Favorsky’s engravings, along with his theoretical analyses of the artistic and technical bases of wood-engraving, had a great influence on the development of modern Russian graphics. Until his death Favorsky welcomed younger artists in his studio. Oleg Vassiliev fondly remembered his visits to Favorsky’s studio. In his linocut series *Metro* (1961 - 1962) one can trace

the ideas of Favorsky as the series is in dialogue with Favorsky’s *Metro* series from 1940. Vassiliev wanted to investigate and explore the space, its relationship to surface and border, the energy flow in the image, and the transformation of subject and space, using Favorsky’s system as the basis.

An important and fascinating feature in Vassiliev’s art is the profound intimacy in his work, where personal memories have universal appeal. The division between personal and political, between the private and public had been ideologized in Soviet Russia. Vassiliev escapes the ideology to capture very personal memories on art and life. Most of the prints made in the 1950s through the 1970s were produced by the artists themselves in small editions due both to the absence of an art market and limited access to materials. For example, the Experimental Lithography Studio was accessible during Soviet times only to members of the official Union of Artists. Lithographic stones were numbered and inspected from time to time by state officials, making it very difficult for non-members of the Union to gain access to materials. However, despite these difficulties, artists persisted, creating prints and experimenting with varieties of styles and techniques.

Today Vassiliev is a widely recognized artist; he was the recipient of numerous artistic awards and grants, including from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation (1994 and 2002). His work has been displayed in museum exhibitions across the globe. In 2004-2005, the Kolodzei Art Foundation organized two large solo exhibitions of Vassiliev’s works in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, and published the monograph *Oleg Vassiliev: Memory Speaks (Themes and Variations)* which features some of the works presented at the Harriman exhibition. His prominent museum exhibitions in the USA include *The Art of Oleg Vassiliev*, at The Museum of Russian Art, Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2011; *Oleg Vassiliev: Space and Light* at the Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick in 2014-2015.

World War I Exhibition at The Old Print Shop, Thursday, April 6, 2017

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Print Club members had an opportunity to reflect upon the “Great War” exactly a century after the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, when Robert Newman and his staff hosted us for a tour of his April exhibition, *World War I: 100th Anniversary of the United States Involvement*. A timeline of the war hung at the entrance, vividly laying out the events and key battles. Just to the left hung a selection of American and French war posters, mostly color offset lithographs. Newman discussed a French example, *Emprunt National 1918: Société Generale: Pour Nous Rendre Entière: la Douce Terre de France* by B. Chavannaz, which has been linen-backed to support the very fragile paper.

The prints on view included many by well-known artists. Kerr Eby (1889 – 1946) was the most represented,

Upcoming Print Club Events

October 24, 2017

Presentation by Sarah Brayer, the Print Club of New York's commissioned artist for 2017, the National Arts Club, Gramercy Square, New York, NY.

October 25, 2017

VIP Preview – 2017 IFPDA Print Fair; please note **NEW DATES AND NEW LOCATION**, the River Pavilion at the Jacob K. Javits Center in the Hudson Yards; for more information see http://www.ifpda.org/print_fair

Also of interest to Print Club members:

May 20 – July 29, 2017

Philip Taaffe: "Asterias," Cheymore Gallery, 233 NY-17, Tuxedo Park, NY (845) 351-4831 or www.cheymoregallery.com.

June 4 – August 27, 2017

Picasso: *Encounters*, an exhibit focusing on Picasso's engagement with collaborative printmaking, at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 225 South Street, Williamstown, MA (413) 458-2303 or www.clarkart.edu.

June 4 – August 27, 2017

11th Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Mathews Park, 299 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT (203) 899-7999 or www.contem-prints.org.

June 8 – July 28, 2017

ICONS and AVATARS, a five-person show featuring Aida Muluneh (Ethiopia), Carrie Moyer (USA), Marlene Dumas (South Africa), Diane Victor (South Africa), and Eria "SANE" Nsubuga (Uganda), lending a global view to the ongoing history of portraiture in an ever-developing technological landscape; at David Krute Projects, 526 W. 26th Street, Suite 816, New York, NY (212) 255-3094 or www.davidkrut.com.

October 26 – 29, 2017

IFPDA Print Fair, the River Pavilion, Jacob K. Javits Center, http://www.ifpda.org/print_fair

October 26 – 29, 2017

Editions and Artists Books Fair (E/AB Fair), the Tunnel in Chelsea, see <http://www.printshop.org/eab-fair/>

Please note the new dates for the IFPDA Print Fair and the E/AB Fair!



Robert Newman (at right) of the Old Print Shop discusses World War I prints with Print Club members. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

with powerful images such as *September 13, 1918, St. Mihiel [The Great Black Cloud]*, an etching with aquatint and sandpaper ground published in an edition of 100 in 1934. Newman declares this "without question the most important image by Kerr Eby and one of the greatest World War I images produced." A huge, oppressive black cloud hangs over a crossroads along which trudge weary troops. This particular impression bears an inscription from Eby to "Miss Elizabeth Houghton," and includes the notation "I am prouder of this plate than of any other." Similarly dark is Eby's lithograph from c. 1919 – 20 *Where Do We Go?* depicting soldiers wading through water and mud in the pre-dawn hours.

An etching by Edward Hopper (1882 – 1967), *Les Poilus* of c. 1915 – 18, is one of a very few images of World War I by the artist. It shows a small group of soldiers speaking to a woman with a thatched farm house in the background. The term *poilu* refers to a French infantryman from the First World War; it literally means "the hairy one." The image is especially unique as it is printed in blue-green ink.

Fritz Eichenberg's (1901 – 90) *Brothers! [Comrades in Arms]* expresses the sad irony of war as two seemingly identical twins come face to face with guns and bayonets drawn. As Newman pointed out to us, the message was clear – we are actually battling ourselves.

Edward Hagedorn (1902 – 82) served in World War I but created his very powerful drypoint, *Mercy* of a skeleton bayoneting a soldier c. 1935. His *Useless Precaution* of the same period is an unusual metal relief showing a gas masked figure run through with a bayonet. Joseph Pennell (1857 – 1926), Lester G. Hornby (1882 – 1956), Charles Huard (1874 – 1965) and Auguste Brouet (1872 – 1941) were among the other artists represented.

Club members enjoyed wine and cheese while viewing this powerful collection of images and chatting with Robert Newman, his son and his daughter. We were then invited to go up to the second-floor exhibition space to see a selection of work focusing on World War II and beyond curated by artist Michael Di Cerbo. Featured works included a selection of images of Naval ships by Gordon Grant (1875 – 1962) and Richard Florsheim (1916 – 75),



Michael Di Cerbo in front of prints by Stanley Kaplan (1925 – 2015). PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

powerful woodcut images by Di Cerbo's personal friend, Stanley Kaplan (1925 – 2015), a Jew from Brooklyn who served in the U.S. Army and witnessed the liberating of the concentration camps. Also included were works from World War II by John Taylor Arms (1887 – 1953), Thomas Hart Benton (1889 – 1975) and Ben Shahn (1898 – 1965), including a Shan poster, *Register to Vote, We Want Peace* (1946). The Vietnam War was represented by Sigmund Abeles' (b. 1934) *Deadly Dancers*. Abeles was also the artist of the most recent piece in this exhibit, focusing on the conflict in Syria, done about four years ago. UPI photos of the more recent conflicts were also displayed. The most valuable print in the room was a cubist depiction of bombers by Benton Spruance (1904 – 67), *Riders of the Apocalypse*.

The Print Club would like to thank Robert Newman, his son and daughter, and Michael Di Cerbo for an informative and enjoyable evening.

Annual Meeting and Artists' Showcase, Monday, May 22, 2017

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Members of the Print Club and their guests assembled at The Society of Illustrators on Monday evening, May 22, for the Club's annual meeting and the always-popular Artists' Showcase. President Kim Henrikson called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. She noted that it had been a full year, with our 25th Anniversary Gala and the production of our anniversary publication, but we will nevertheless be ending our fiscal year on June 30th on a firm financial footing with a full membership of 200 as compared with 192 members the previous year. Our commissioned artist for 2017 is Sarah Brayer, who lives and works in Japan. Kim urged members to get their renewals in as soon as possible. After September 1, any open slots will be filled from our waiting list.

Election of members of the Print Club Board was the next order of business. The President invited additional nominations from the floor. There being none, she reported that all those listed on the ballot for proxy voting were elected with over 80% of the votes: Paul Affuso, Paula Cangialosi, Deborah Chaney, Stephanie Feingold, Gillian



Artists Marinai, West, Waitzman, Cron and Owczarek. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

Greenhill Hannum, Leonard Moss, Mona Rubin and Bonnie Yousuf. Kim noted that Rick Miners and Michael Rubin were stepping down after many years on the Board, and she thanked them for their contributions to the success of the Print Club.

Kay Deaux introduced the Showcase and shared how members of the committee were very eager and enthusiastic; she welcomed those interested in joining the group next year to contact her. This year, committee members visited the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, the Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk, CT, the LeRoy Neiman Center at Columbia University and Manhattan Graphics Center in search of talent. From the various visits, committee members came up with a short list of 14 people who were invited to submit electronic portfolios and résumés. From these were selected the five artists whose work was being featured at our 2017 Showcase.



Artist William Waitzman. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM



Artist Joe Owczarek. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

First up was William Waitzman, a printmaker, painter and illustrator. He mainly makes silkscreens. We found him at Manhattan Graphics. Waitzman holds a BFA from Parsons and made his first silkscreen just nine years ago at Manhattan Graphics. He mainly does landscapes; the first he showed us was a series done in 2008 of a lake in Vermont. Also a New England scene, *Cypress Rocks* (2017) became an opportunity for deeper learning as Waitzman demonstrated how he makes a drawing for each color/layer of his image. He draws on translucent vellum, which allows him to then transfer the images to the screen. To create a lot of texture, the artist usually has 10 – 20 layers. He uses a light box to compose his final image. Waitzman likes the way silkscreen combines drawing and painting; prints evolve as he works. He generally does editions of 10 to 20 prints, printing one color at a time moving from the background to the foreground. He frequently works from photographs he takes around where he lives or while traveling. A print of a close-up of lily pads was a view from a kayak. Waitzman said that he finds printmaking to be good exercise. He noted that what he tries to do is capture the essence and peace of nature.

Joe Owczarek was born in Cleveland and studied art and architecture at Miami University of Ohio. He came to New York after a stint in the military and has been here ever since. He studied with Kathy Caraccio and George Nama, the latter helping to solidify his love of etching. He now prints at Blackburn and makes soft-ground etchings. A registered architect, Owczarek's subject matter, not sur-



Artists' Tables at the Showcase Event.
PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

prisingly, focuses on buildings and parts of buildings; for example, he showed us a view of a corner of the Guggenheim Museum looking south. He also had a lovely view of Venice with gondola posts silhouetted in the foreground. He likes to work small, with most of his pieces being 4" x 4" or 6" x 6". He is especially drawn to dusk and likes asymmetry. One technique he has used involves utilizing a sponge to create texture on the plate. The industrial architecture of Cleveland has been a subject, as in *The Flats — Mills Cleveland II* from 1998 with its wonderful black patterns of steel bridges and industrial structures. He also makes still life etchings, as in *Compote Lemons II* of 2011.

As she introduced the next artist, Kay Deaux noted that the committee saw many different and experimental printmaking techniques this year; Steve West specializes



Artist Steve West. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM



Artist Claudia Cron. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

in pronto plate (or polyester plate) lithography. West recently had a show at the Tesla Manhattan showroom. He came to New York in 1981 and worked at Leo Castelli Gallery, where he met the “giants” of 20th century art. He shared an experience he had spending two hours with Jasper Johns waiting for a painting to be delivered during which time he learned some valuable lessons, the main one being “just make the work.”

Rainy Night in Asheville 3 (dated 01/02/2017) is an excellent example of pronto plate lithography. It involves using a plastic plate and oil-based inks. He noted that the process is exciting because you don’t quite know what your image is going to look like until it is done. As he describes the process, “it begins by capturing images on my phone, downloading them to light room, developing and exporting them to Photoshop. Starting the project with a digital image and ending with a classic lithograph print allows continuity in my artistic endeavor.” West’s *American Elm in Bushwick* series explores a tree that grew around a metal fence – a symbol of resilience.

Claudia Cron was born in England and raised in Connecticut. She studied at Maryland Institute of Art for a year, then at Parsons and worked for a time as an actor before returning to art. A class at Anderson Ranch led her to try printmaking. She began with etching but found it too slow, so she went on to collograph. She now works from photos she takes on her iPhone. She turns them into Xeroxes, wets the Xerox and rubs gum Arabic into it then runs it through the press. She uses special cotton paper from India. Living along the Connecticut River, she is especially captivated by the landscape around her. She prints at CCP in Norwalk, which is where committee members discovered her work.

Franco Marinai was born and raised in Florence, Italy. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Italy and came to the U.S. in the late 1970s as an academic. He became an experimental film maker and won several grants from New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), now headed by our own Judy Brodsky. Marinai said he has worked in many print forms but would focus his comments for the Showcase on mezzotint — the “art of darkness.” He started by showing a clip from one of his films, which involve a lot of experimental handwork (scratching, punching, etc.) on the film surface. Thinking of film as an object led him to become interested in photogravure. He used his second NYFA fellowship to buy an etching press and then took a mezzotint class with Carol Wax. He likes the tactility of mezzotint, which is more forgiving than photogravure, so mezzotint has become his medium of choice. He indicated he has no particular subject matter but is a “wanderer.” One piece, *Suspension of Disbelief*, was inspired by a lava lamp. Marinai usually does editions of six. A recent mezzotint he showed the Print Club includes mountains influenced by Renaissance paintings combined with boulders seen on a trip to Iceland.

With the completion of the presentation, Club members and artists repaired to the lower level of the Society of Illustrators, where each artist had a table with work laid out to view and purchase. Business was brisk, and it is clear why the annual Artists’ Showcase is one of the Print Club season’s most popular events!



Print Club member Gabriel Swire talks with artist Franco Marinai. PHOTO BY GILLIAN HANNUM

Elizabeth Catlett: A Socially-Engaged, African-American Woman Artist

Rozanne Cohen

Elizabeth Catlett was born in Washington, D.C. on April 15, 1915. She entered Howard University in 1932, where she majored in painting and was introduced to the work of the Mexican muralists; teachers at Howard included artist Lois Mailou Jones and philosopher Alain Locke. Early on, she began to focus on cutting her vision in wood and stone. While a graduate student at the University of Iowa, she studied under Grant Wood. He emphasized that her work should depict what she knew most intimately. She chose to carve a black mother and child as the subject of her master's degree thesis. Her work won first prize in sculpture at the American Negro Exposition in Chicago in 1940. There, she met fellow artist Charles White, whom she would marry. They eventually moved to New York. In 1946, Catlett won a Rosenwald Fund fellowship, which was renewed in 1947, allowing her to study in Mexico (Bearden and Henderson 422). She and White divorced in 1946, she married Mexican printmaker and muralist Francisco Mora in 1947 and became a Mexican citizen in 1962.

In late 1937, Leopoldo Méndez (1902 - 69), a major printmaker in Mexico, was instrumental in forming a collaborative graphic workshop which became the Taller de Gráfica Popular (see Rozanne Cohen, *Print Club Newsletter* Winter 2017). Catlett worked with this workshop (TGP) where she absorbed stylistic innovations that Méndez

introduced to the linoleum-block technique. This encompassed the articulation of form, tone and texture through variations in the allover stitch-like marks cut from the block in different thicknesses with an assortment of gouges. Because it was inexpensive and abundant, linoleum was the medium used most often at the TGP. It was also understood to be part of the lineage of the popular tradition of woodblock prints (Herzog 88).

Emphasis on ordinary people as heroic subjects is a key element of Catlett's print series, "The Negro Woman" of 1946 - 47, conceived but not fully realized until she arrived in Mexico. This series of 15 linoleum cuts was her first major work at TGP (Herzog 59). Like Jacob Lawrence's (1917 - 2000) "Migration Series," one's attention shifts back and forth from images to texts. The subject matter in Lawrence's series is Negroes in the agricultural South being transplanted to the industrial North. Catlett wrote about the "Migration Series" on October 21, 1944, stating in an essay titled "Artist with a Message" in *The People's Voice*, "One cannot look at these seemingly simple portrayals of the startling lack of the bare necessities of life, the frustrations and complexities of daily struggle, and the determined mass movement towards democratic equality, of these Negroes without a decided self examination" (cited in Hills 132). To Catlett, the artistic achievement rested on his successful alloy of subject and style. She noted that Lawrence's style of painting with almost elemental color and design is a perfect means for the

Four Tips for Donating Artwork to Charity, from March 2017 Update, Creative Tax Planning Associates, Inc., Thomas F. Kelley, CPA, PC [shared with permission]

Individuals may want to donate artwork so it can be enjoyed by a wider audience or available for scholarly study or simply to make room for new artwork in their home. Here are four tips for donating artwork with an eye toward tax savings:

1. Get an appraisal. Donations of artwork valued at over \$5,000 require a "qualified appraisal" by a "qualified appraiser". IRS rules detail the requirements. In addition, auditors are required to refer all gifts of art valued at \$20,000 or more to the agency's Art Advisory Panel. The panel's findings are the IRS's official position on the art's value, so it's critical to provide a solid appraisal to support your valuation.

2. Donate to a public charity. Donations to a qualified public charity (such as a museum or university) potentially entitle you to deduct the artwork's full fair market value. If you donate to a private foundation, your deduction will be limited to your cost. The total amount of charitable donations you may deduct in a given year is limited to a percentage of your adjusted gross income (50% for public charities, 30% for private foundations) with the excess carried forward for up to five years.

3. Beware the related-use rule. To qualify for a full fair-market-value deduction, the charity's use of the artwork must be related to its tax-exempt purpose. Even if the related-use rule is satisfied initially, you may lose some or all of your deductions if the artwork is worth more than \$5,000 and the charity sells or otherwise disposes of it within three years of receipt. If that happens, you may be able to preserve your tax benefits via a certification process. (For further details, please contact us.)

4. Consider a fractional donation. Donating a fractional interest allows you to save tax dollars without completely giving up the artwork. Say you donate a 25% interest in your art collection to a museum for it to display for three months annually. You could then deduct 25% of the collection's fair market value and continue displaying the art in your home or business for most of the year.

The rules for fractional donations, and charitable contributions of artwork in general, can be tricky. Plus, tax law changes affecting deductions may occur in the coming year. Contact our firm for help.

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expression of the fundamental needs of the Negro.... He strips his material to the bone (Hills 132).

With her series, "The Negro Woman" (1947, linoleum), Catlett states the importance of black women's lives. She recalled the TGP's participation in the project she proposed:

So I thought it would be nice if we would do a series of African American heroes... Everyone wanted to do Frederic Douglass, and then everybody wanted to do Harriet Tubman, and I said no, I'm doing Harriet Tubman. (Caplow 223)

The TGP encouraged a graphic approach that employed bold black and white imagery to make the visual message as direct as possible (Butler and Schwartz 239). With the "I" punctuating their reading, the titles of the individual prints read as a narrative that proscribes the order in which the parts are to be viewed. "*I have always worked hard in America*" (1946–47, linoleum) features a repeated figure suggesting the repetitive, harsh, physical drudgery of domestic work. The awkwardness and discomfort of domestic labor is implied by the angular rendering of the poses.

In *Sojourner Truth* "*I fought for the rights of women as well as Negroes*" (1946–47, linoleum), the heroine stands with her left hand on the block holding an open book. There is an image on a book mark that holds the other page open; as she looks out at her audience, she holds up her right hand with fingers pointed upwards as if to stress a point. Though she could not read or write, Truth put forth an eloquent analysis of black women's race and gender identities in her celebrated speech, "Ain't I a Woman," before an 1851 women's rights gathering in Akron, Ohio (Herzog, 61). Her figure fills the entire page. Lines are heavily blackened, and an aura of white enhances the background around her uplifted hand and head.

The most important heroine for Catlett was Harriet Tubman. *Harriet Tubman* "*I helped hundreds to freedom*" displays strongly incised lines of the heroine's dress, arms and face as they become a swirl of movement. The mass of background figures surges forward, visually forcing the figure of Harriet Tubman to the surface of the image. In her struggle to organize the unorganized, Catlett, in part, relies on the gestures of large, powerful hands to serve as a compositional focus (Herzog 62).

In order to maintain the spotlight on heroes and heroines, this writer will skip ahead to the politically-charged atmosphere of the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s. At this time a revolutionary Black Nationalist philosophy was paramount. The Black Power movement was an outgrowth of the Civil Rights movement. Still, her work was given form by her vantage point in Mexico. She organized the Comité Mexicano Provisional de Solidaridad con Angela Davis. Catlett's multilingual serigraph poster (1969–70) conveys the internationalism of this protest. Here, the head of Angela Davis is immediately recognizable, heroic and monumental (Herzog 136).

Malcolm X Speaks for Us (1969, color linocut, serigraph and monoprint) makes a forceful political statement. Catlett displays her continued interest in technical and aesthetic experimentation. The image of Malcolm X is immediately recognizable. Included are faces of women and girls, for whom Catlett demands inclusion in a movement to acknowledge them (Herzog 136).

Finally, *Watts/Detroit/Washington/Harlem/Newark* (1970, hand colored and color linocut) revives the Mexican print tradition of topical protest to address the violence that wracked U.S. urban black communities in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The image graphically portrays police brutality. To one side, a man looks out from the frame of a burnt building; the red background denotes heat, anger and flames. The use of red in conjunction with the white of the man's shirt and the blue of the police officers' shirts reads as an ironic reference to the perversion of U.S. democratic ideals (Herzog 138–139).

To end this short article at this particular point in Catlett's career, it is noteworthy to state that in 1970, the artist was invited to attend the Conference on the Functional Aspects of Black Art held at Northwestern University, as an Advisor and Elder of Distinction. She was, however, refused a visa on the grounds that, as a foreigner, there was a possibility that she would interfere in social or political problems, and constituted a threat to the well-being of the United States (Herzog 147).

Seven decades into her career, Catlett continued to address issues of race and work. She made, among many other creations, six lithographs for Margaret Walker's illustrated book *For My People* (1992) and later produced a lithograph for the NAACP to commemorate their centennial in 2009 (Butler and Schwartz 240–241). Elizabeth Catlett died April 2, 2012 in Cuernavaca, Mexico. [Elizabeth Catlett was the Print Club's commissioned artist in 2005.]

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A Taste Of Printmaking In Havana, Cuba — January 2017

Kimberly Brandt Henrikson

This January I traveled to Havana, Cuba as part of a tour organized by the Tamarind Institute at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Tamarind's workshop has an outstanding reputation for its training of lithography master printers and its production of fine art lithographs with major international artists including Ed Ruscha, Kiki Smith and Judy Pfaff. As a print collector, and knowing that under U.S. law Americans visiting the island may not visit as tourists but are required to travel with a schedule of programming offering educational or cultural understanding, the prospect of a visit to Havana organized by Tamarind was extremely appealing.

Though the itinerary was solidly grounded on the visual arts, it was not exclusively focused on printmaking and printmakers. Our group toured the Cuban art collection of the National Museum of Fine Arts, the classroom and studio facilities at the Fine Arts Institute (ISA), the home studios of Manuel Mendive, Aimee Garcia, and Carlos Montes de Oca and the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba – a non-governmental, internationally-funded arts center. The experience of being in a city about which I had almost no prior historical knowledge beyond the general understanding that it has had a lengthy and tumultuous history, particularly with the United States, was helped immensely by a tour of the Old City and a lecture by an architect and city planner from the University of Havana. For the purposes of this article, I will focus specifically on the visits we made to print artists that we met and the work they shared with us.

To set the scene, our meetings with these artists were always in their homes, which also housed their studio space. Everyone we met was incredibly gracious and had prepared a display of their work for us to view. Our first artist home studio visit was to a pair of sisters, Yamiles Brito Jorge, a printmaker, and Jacqueline Brito, a painter and ceramicist. Yamiles produces lithographs and mixed media prints. Her work juxtaposes images against each other which challenge ideas of religion, politics or gender and sexual identity. She chooses recognizable and sometimes highly charged images of objects with text, sometimes adhering other materials to the surfaces – not only cut illustrations from other sources, but also punched metal pieces, pop tops and other ephemera. Much of her imagery is derived from both U.S. and Cuban political and military symbols but also the natural world or religious iconography. Displayed on one table were images of U.S. soldiers equated with graphically bold, stereotypical representations of ideal 1950s era U.S. consumerism. On each print, a piece of thin copper foil had been punched with Spanish words in all caps to give a Cuban commentary on the figures above with respect to the embargo. Other prints used images of Fidel Castro or the Cuban military caps. Another showed a net with boxing gloves punching or volleying balls made from round propaganda images of "Remember the Maine." Among some stacked prints were large vertical images, one displaying an aged black and white photo-



Taller Experimental Gráfica de la Habana.
PHOTO BY KIMBERLY HENRIKSON

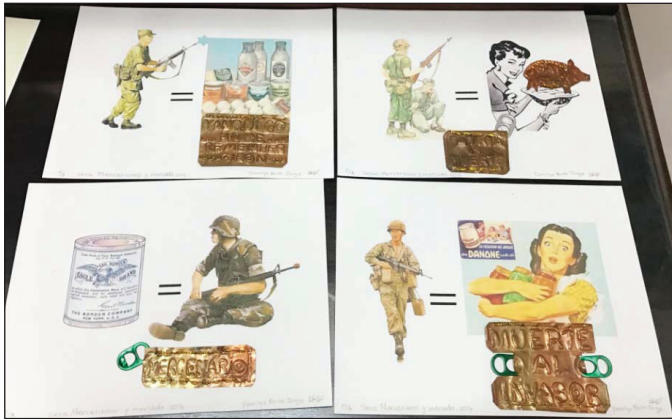
graph of a cathedral placed above a woodcut image of a burning witch. Another print showed a different cathedral set above a woodcut figure of Cuba's patron Saint, the Virgin of Charity of Cobre, also known in the local Santaria religion as Ochun, with a voodoo figure below.

It was clear that the impact of the U.S. embargo on the Cuban people, who will only refer to it as the "blockade" as we learned after a meeting with representatives of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), permeates every aspect of life for citizens there. Also of great importance is the integration and blending of the various peoples which make up the Cuban citizenry. Their rich histories and religious and cultural practices have yielded uniquely Cuban approaches to agriculture, medicine, religion and more. These successes are heralded and very much top of mind when part of conversational dialogue, both verbal and visual. And that was very much the case looking through Yamiles Brito's works.

The next artist we visited was Abel Barroso, trained since 2000 as a printmaker of woodcuts but who has taken his practice well beyond two-dimensionality, building 3-D sculptures in an effort to develop a non-traditional experimental practice. Though he does make prints, he also will



Cuban printmaker Osmeivy Ortega Pacheco.
PHOTO BY KIMBERLY HENRIKSON



Prints by artist Yamiles Brito Jorge.
PHOTO BY KIMBERLY HENRIKSON

go through the wood carving step on a woodblock, but then he'll ink the wood block to show the image and not actually print it. The image-making process has been halted mid-production with the promise of what it could be, though not realized. Surrounding us was a wide variety of three-dimensional wood objects, prints and other two dimensional pieces which were amalgamations of printed pieces along with adhered objects such as layers of colored pencil shavings or other razor-thin cut wood slices shaped as maps. The objects were fascinating: primitive-looking wood machines representing an attempt at a third-world version of technological innovations, from a hand-crank computer to a similarly-cranked and scrolling paper screened "smart phone" to wooden games of chance, all gave voice to Cuba's international challenges using both Spanish and English words. Much of the work centers on the U.S.'s laws on immigration controls, underdeveloped countries and the globalization of developed countries, outsourcing and technology, and the connection between artists who have left Cuba and returned. The theme he gave to his works for the 2000 Havana Biennial "To Continue the Work" reflected on the country's Special Period, which we repeatedly heard in conversations but were delayed in receiving an explanation of for many days.

We eventually learned that the Special Period is another very frequently referenced moment in Cuba, though it remains such a dark period for those who lived through it that everyone we encountered was reluctant to share many, if any, details of their experience. In a general sense, it was the time when economic and material support to the island from the Soviet Union disappeared in the mid-1990s after the fall of Communism and the Soviet Union. It was clear that those who survived experienced literally unspeakable suffering — primarily starvation and lack of basic goods — as the island at the time had no means of its own food production beyond sugar and coffee. This was due to the hundreds of years of focus on these as exportable goods for trade. There was no other agricultural production, no locally-grown vegetables, no protein beyond beef (fish was, oddly enough for an island, not a common staple), leading to such a slaughter of the island's population of cattle that they were almost completely wiped out. Cuba's government outlawed the killing of cattle in an effort not to lose the entire population. Today, cows are



Artist Abel Barroso. PHOTO BY KIMBERLY HENRIKSON

venerated in an almost religious way, and no one would ever consider slaughtering one for fear of the consequences. We observed a handful of cows along the highways during our travels beyond the borders of Havana proper, but not many. It was also interesting to note the repeated inclusion of cows into artists' work. They are not represented in what would traditionally be considered a pastoral way, but more as an iconographic image.

The natural world was omnipresent in the work of Osmeivy Ortega Pacheco who makes large-scale woodcuts of plants and animals, juxtaposed by the work of his talented partner, Lisandra Ramirez, who investigates alternative cultural histories and processes through mixed media sculptural pieces made from resins, fabric and clothing items. Osmeivy began studying lithography at ISA, the Instituto Superior de Arte/University of the Arts, which is the country's most well-respected institute of higher education in the arts. While there, he planned to research the development of culture in Cuba but found it very difficult because it naturally required referencing politics, and he preferred not to refer to issues through his work. His reluctance to do so stemmed from observing artists in the 1990s who used their work to speak to political issues because it would sell their work, but he prints to talk about the island. His themes and imagery are very personal, referencing his family and memories. For Ortega, his choice of titles is extremely important as it tells of a favorite song of his grandmother or some other part of his life.

Like Abel Barroso, Osmeivy makes use of the wood blocks he uses for printing as stand-alone artworks. Because of the scale of his printmaking, the wood blocks make impressive wall-mounted sculptures with the rich black ink revealing the reverse image cut into the wood. A show-and-tell presentation of his prints generated repeated gasps as the prints themselves vibrate with life. Ortega chooses to print only on either white or a brown kraft-like paper, and each yields a completely different experience for the same image, one warm, one bold. But they all speak sharply with their patterns of cut lines forming the most complicated natural textures and shapes. We had a chance to climb up to the top-floor studio space where the artist works to see the 8 foot wide imprints he was working on at the moment. A pile of partially-printed and

crumpled-up kraft paper attested to the labor-intensive process he uses and how the slightest mistake can so easily ruin an entire work. Ortega showed us the bent-handled spoon he uses to burnish his prints and the large blocks he places on top of the paper to keep it in place as he methodically works over the paper's reverse surface with his burnishing spoon. There really is nothing quite like seeing an artist in their studio with the tools of their practice. It illuminates the creation step in a way that words cannot fully describe.

Our last full day in Havana included a tour of the Taller Experimental Gráfica de la Habana situated in a beautiful and spacious old building in a very short alley just to the side of the Cathedral in Old Havana. Yamiles Brito, who is a Director there, met our group to give us an overview of the space and organization. The workshop is a production space for member artists, as evidenced by the many presses, litho stones and drying racks that take up the main space at the back of the building. The entry space is dedicated to print exhibitions, and our visit coincided with a show of woodblock prints about a fictitious Water Man comic book character. The Taller also housed a small shop where visitors could purchase prints for sale by artist members of the workshop. There were varying techniques among the offerings, and of course, varying price points and quality of work. But as a whole, I found

that the workshop supports a large number of very talented artists who come from a rich tradition of art-making and specifically graphic arts. It was impressive to see a city with such a wealth of culture to choose from promoting art making in a very public and prominent location, which encouraged visitors as much as residents to walk in and enjoy.

This writing does not comprehensively represent the many people or organizations our group encountered, though I do hope it fairly represents a few of the many talented artists making excellent quality work among Havana's artistic community. You may have seen Abel Barroso's 2012 work, *Emigrant's Pinball*, at the Armory Show this spring on the mezzanine of the entry pier. And Osmeivy Ortega Pacheco has been shown at the IFPDA Print Fair through Childs Gallery. Despite its close proximity to the U.S., due to its isolation because of politics, it is a very different culture with a unique perspective on historical events and approach to life. At first glance, what it has to offer may seem lacking in many ways, but its situation has also helped it to develop a sometimes enviable emphasis on education and the arts. With the changes to travel requirements President Obama put in place in 2014 and the expansion of direct flights between New York City and Havana, it is a destination worth adding to any future travel plans.

Past Presentation Print Artists

Audrey Flack (2013) received a Women's Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award at a ceremony held at New York Institute of Technology on Saturday evening, February 18. The event was held in conjunction with the WCA's annual meeting and the annual meeting of the College Art Association. Recognized along with Mary Schmidt Campbell, President of Spelman College in Atlanta and former director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, and fellow artists Martha Rosler and Charlene Teters, Flack was cited for being "at the forefront of stylistic change in the art world" since the heyday of Abstract Expressionism (*Artlines*/Winter 2017). Perhaps best known for her Photorealist still life paintings in the 1970s, Flack has also worked in prints and, more recently, in sculpture. As with the Club's print, that plays upon Bernini's masterpiece, *The Ecstasy of St. Teresa*, much of Flack's work "reinvents traditional subjects," including a number from Classical mythology (*Artlines*/Winter 2017).

The WCA LTA Awards were first presented in 1979 in President Jimmy Carter's Oval Office to Isabel Bishop, Selma Burke, Alice Neel, Louise Nevelson, and Georgia O'Keeffe. In the following year, Audrey Flack nominated Lee Krasner, who was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award. The Awards were the first awards recognizing the contribution of women to the arts and their profound effect on society. Today, the LTA Awards continue to honor women, their work, their vision and their commitment (*Artlines*/Winter 2017).

Former Showcase Artists

Yasuyo Tanaka was among the speakers at two events focusing on *Fukushima Remembered* on March 10 at the Goddard Riverside Community Center in New York City and March 11 at the Peekskill Presbyterian Church in Peekskill. A New York City-based artist, Tanaka uses her art as a tool for social change and is active in a number of causes, including anti-nuclear and environmental.

Print Donations Sought

The Princeton University Art Museum is interested in adding the Print Club's commissioned print by Elizabeth Catlett to their collection. Please contact Print Club Board member Mona Rubin via info@printclubofnewyork.org if you would like more information. Also, Hudson County Community College in New Jersey, home to the Benjamin J. Dineen III and Dennis C. Hull Gallery, has a set of the Print Club's presentation prints thanks to a gift from the late Benjamin Dineen III and Dennis Hull. The college would welcome donations of other prints to complement the collection. Contact Andrea Siegel, Ph.D., Coordinator, Permanent Collection, Hudson County Community College at (201) 360-4007 or ASiegel@hccc.edu for further information.

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