

The Print Club of New York Inc

Fall 2023

President's Greeting – Fall 2023

Suzanne Lesser

Welcome to the 2023-2024 membership year with the Print Club of New York. Returning members may realize that I am not Kim Henrikson. After eight years of expertly and patiently leading the Print Club, including through the pandemic, Kim has stepped down and I am her successor. Though Kim has moved on to Membership, she has provided me with a comprehensive catalog of her time as president and generously responds to my numerous emails seeking guidance. As I step into her shoes, I look forward to a seamless transfer. I offer my sincere thanks to Kim for her expertise and years of service to the Print Club, its board and its members.

For those of you whom I have not yet met, I'm Suzanne Lesser. I'm not an artist, but I am an art lover, and somewhere along the way I became a collector. My introduction to the art world came from Japanese prints, and over the years it has expanded. I now have an eclectic collection of prints, original works and photography by artists from all over the world. In my professional life I manage Learning & Development for a small technology company. In my personal life, my husband Marlon and I divide our time between Harlem and Milford, CT. I was introduced to the Print Club by longtime member Allison Tolman and was on the Showcase and Presentation Print committees before joining the board. I love being exposed to new art and meeting artists, but for me, the highlight of

the Print Club is getting to know the other members.

Since we have returned to in-person events, one of my goals is to bring back the very social aspect of the Print Club. Many of our longtime members have become great friends over the years, and my hope is that everyone will look forward to our events, not just for the beauty and experience of finding new art, but also for the people who are sharing the experience with you. In the spring, we hosted a gallery stroll during which we were treated to a fabulous tour of the Heller Gallery, viewed an amazing Red Grooms exhibit, examined the remarkable photographs of Markus Brunetti's *Facades*, and then got to know each other over lunch. Two weeks ago, during Art on Paper, Caroline Samuels opened her home to club members, inviting everyone to view her personal collection of prints while enjoying a glass of wine, snacks and each other's company.

Our next event kicks off Print Week in October. We have a special guided curatorial tour with Ferris Olin and Judith Brodsky at the Zimmerli Art Museum of the exhibition *The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986–2017*. The details of the exhibit have already been emailed to everyone, so be on the lookout for the next email detailing the guided tour date and time. After that we have the IFPDA Print Fair, and once again we are pleased to be able to offer free passes to our members. We'll be sending out those links soon. We are also looking to build stronger relationships with other New York print clubs, so we have invited members of the print clubs of Albany and Rochester who are in town for the Print Fair to join us on Saturday afternoon at Cedric's at the Shed. You'll be seeing an invitation to that soon.

I hope to see many of you at our events this year and look forward to getting to know everyone. If I haven't already met you, please come introduce yourself. If you'd like to get more involved with the Print Club, please let me know. We have many committees you can join.

The Print Club of New York, Inc.

P.O. Box 4477 Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

Suzanne Lesser, *President*
Caroline Samuels, *Vice President*
Harriet Stratis, *Treasurer*
Natalia Kolodzei, *Corresponding Secretary*
Newton Paul, *Recording Secretary*
Morley Melden, *Founding President*
Julian Hyman, *President Emeritus*
Leonard Moss, *President Emeritus*
Mona Rubin, *President Emeritus*
Kimberly Henrikson, *President Emerita*

Board Members:

Paul Affuso
Kay Deaux
Stephanie Feingold
Gillian Greenhill Hannum
Kimberly Henrikson
Mona Rubin
Allison Tolman
Bonnie Yousaf

Membership Chair

Kim Henrikson

Events Committee Chair

Natalia Kolodzei

Print Selection Co-Chairs

Mona Rubin and Kay Deaux

Publications Committee:

Chair: Gillian Greenhill
Hannum

Recent Print Club Events

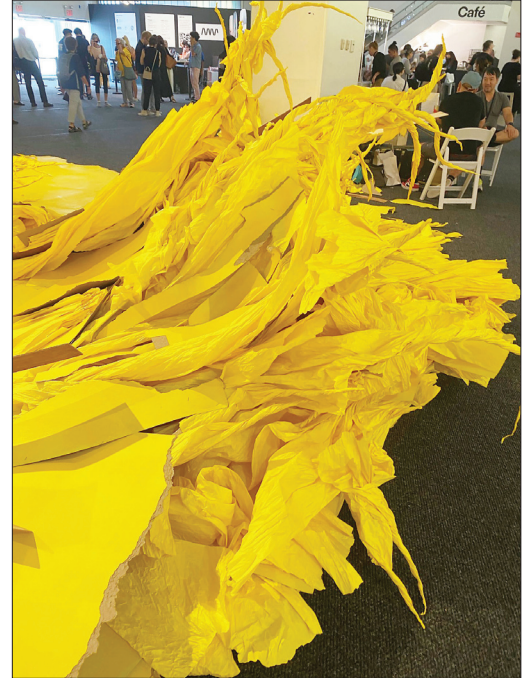
Art on Paper Fair and Print Club Open House

Stephanie Feingold

The Art on Paper Fair at Pier 36 in New York City was held from September 7-10 this year. There were many familiar galleries and some new ones. It is amazing to consider the endless possibilities of working with and working on a variety of paper types. Does the paper inspire the art? Is it merely the surface chosen for its weight, color, type of medium to be placed on it—graphite, charcoal, pastel, watercolors, gouache? Is the paper altered in some way—cut, torn, mashed, layered, or simply the repository of an image? Do the mediums dictate the paper chosen for its responsiveness, durability,



View of Art on Paper Fair. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.



Art on Paper Fair showing Striped Canary (Stephen B. Nguyen and Wade Kavanaugh), *Proposal for a Future Forest*, 2023. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.



Donald Teskey, *Pharos*, 2020, carborundum print, at Stoney Road Press. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.

suitability or feel? Has the artist created the paper or chosen a particular brand? And the size.... How does the artist decide which size best suits the image and its impact on the viewer? While a huge image immediately has an impact, it is also true that the smallest image can draw you in to look closer and be amazed at what the artist is able to achieve in such a small space. And paper can be transformed from a 2D plane to 3D, providing other impactful possibilities.

Those are some of the questions that might have been pondered as one wandered up and down the aisles, eyeballing galleries that were beckoning "come in" on each side. Did you gravitate to the familiar galleries where perhaps you could view Alex Katz images or other favorites? Or perhaps you were pulled in by the beauty of a piece and surprised by the medium used to create the image. Likely both occurred, which makes going to the Art on Paper Fair accessible and memorable.

A riot of yellow greeted the visitor in the form of an amorphous sculpture with a flame-like quality. Were recent fires the inspiration? A couple of our former Presentation Artists were exhibited at the fair: Swoon and



Swoon, *Katherine G*, 2017, silkscreen and hand painting on handmade dyed cotton pulp paper, at Art Mora. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.

Upcoming Print Club Events

October 22, 2023, 3 p.m.

Special tour of *The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986 – 2017*, Zimmerli Art Museum, 71 Hamilton Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

October 26 - 28, 2023

IFPDA Print Fair, VIP Pass is being sent to all Print Club members, Javits Center, NYC.

November 14, 2023, 5 p.m.

Curatorial tour with Christina Weyl of [A Model Workshop: Margaret Lowengrund and The Contemporaries](#), curated by Christina Weyl and Lauren Rosenblum, Print Center New York, 535 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011.

Also of Interest to Print Club Members:

Through October 29, 2023

Visible Rhythms: Pattern and Color and *Evan Lindquist Engraves Engravers*, Center for Contemporary Printmaking, Mathews Park, 299 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850, <https://contemporaryprints.org/exhibition/>.

Through December 10, 2023

Art for the Millions: American Culture and Politics in the 1930s, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10028, <https://www.metmuseum.org/>.

Through December 22, 2023

The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986 – 2017, Zimmerli Art Museum, 71 Hamilton Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, <https://zimmerli.rutgers.edu/>.

Through December 23, 2023

[A Model Workshop: Margaret Lowengrund and The Contemporaries](#), curated by Christina Weyl and Lauren Rosenblum, Print Center New York, 535 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011, <https://www.printcenternewyork.org/a-model-workshop>.

Through January 7, 2024

Meji Modern: Fifty Years of New Japan, Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021, <https://asiasociety.org/new-york/exhibitions>.

Through January 13, 2024

Ed Ruscha/Now Then, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, NY, NY 10019, <https://moma.org>.



MORIUMURA Ray, *Lotus Pond*, 2007, woodblock, at The Tolman Collection. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.

Donald Teskey. Stoney Road Press prints for Donald Teskey. Swoon now has a monograph *Swoon: The Red Skein*. It, as well as her work, is available by going to her website www.swoonstudio.org. Distinctive contemporary Japanese prints were on view at The Tolman Collection, New York.

Then there were the surprises. This large portrait (next page) seemed to be a photograph...but it wasn't. Have you figured out what the artist used? Here was another surprise.... What was used to create this image? As always, Art on Paper did not disappoint!

Caroline Samuels, Vice President of the Print Club of New York, invited Club members to meet each other at her home on Saturday, September 9, during the Art on Paper Fair. Caroline and her husband are avid print collectors. They have transformed their apartment into a gallery of prints acquired on travels and online, among them a beautiful interior of Grand Central by former Presentation Print artist Fred Mersheimer and prints by Showcase artist Deann Prosia (2016). It was a wonderful way to meet each other and a visual treat. Caroline later shared some of her resources for mini prints, a topic that

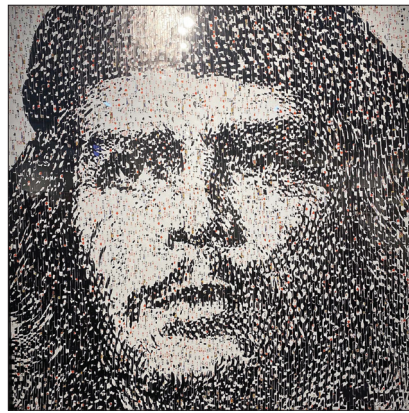


Clio Newton, *Laura's Shirt*, 2023, colored pencil on Coventry Rag Paper, at Forum Gallery. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.

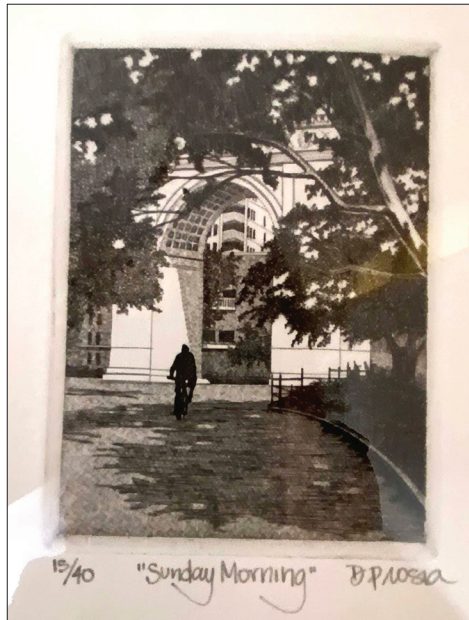
came up in conversation at the Open House: **SAGA (Society of American Graphic Artists)** has a member show at the Old Print Shop, 49 West 24th Street, from October 10 - November 11. The **International Print Exchange** has more than 2000 prints available online, and they're 5 1/2" x 5 1/2" and cost about \$37. They come from artists all over the world. You can search by artist name, country, or technique. **Rochester 6 x 6** are prints that are 6" x 6". They are sold to raise money for the Rochester Contemporary Art Center.



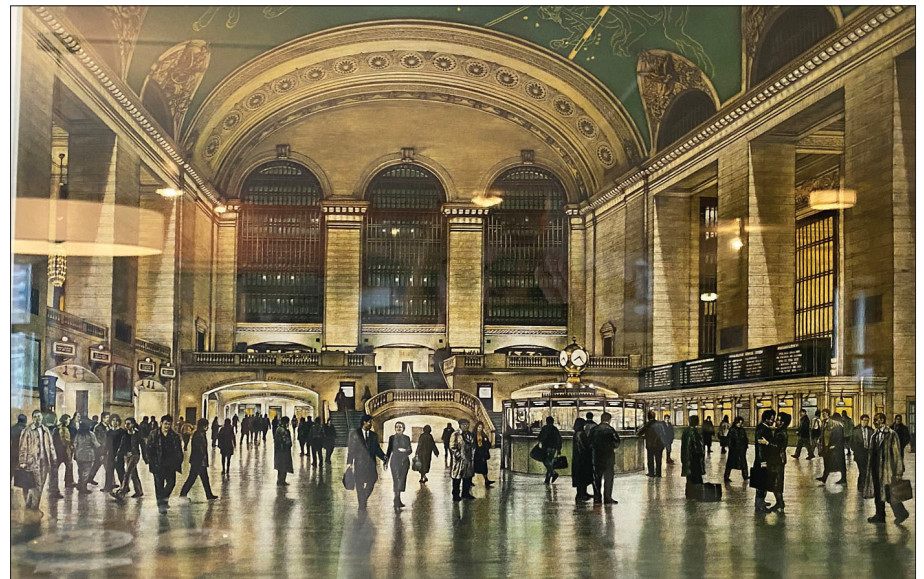
Detail, David Mach, *Dead Hand*, 2013. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.



David Mach, *Dead Hand*, 2013, postcard (playing cards) collage on wood backing, at Forum Gallery. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.



Deann Prosia, *Sunday Moring*, 2007, line etching. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.



Fred Mersheimer, *Across the Floor*, 2011, color mezzotint, aquatint and watercolor. PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE FEINGOLD.



The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986–2017 at the Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey. PHOTO COURTESY OF NATALIA KOLODZEI.

Opening Reception for *The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986 – 2017*

Natalia Kolodzei

The Print Club's fall events calendar included a special invitation for members to attend the September 13 opening reception of the Zimmerli Art Museum's exhibition *The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986–2017*. The show is a must-see for anyone interested in innovation and experimentation in printmaking, papermaking, or contemporary art. The exhibition celebrates the legacy of the Brodsky Center, a renowned printmaking and papermaking center that was founded at Rutgers in 1986 by visionary artist and Rutgers University Distinguished Professor Emerita Judith K. Brodsky. The exhibition features more than 100 works on paper by 93 artists, ranging from lithographs, collages, and photographs to handmade papers and experimental digital technologies. The exhibition was organized by guest curator Dr. Ferris Olin, Rutgers Distinguished Professor Emerita, with collaborating curator Christine Giviskos, the Zimmerli's curator of prints and drawings and European art. Both Judith Brodsky and Ferris Olin are long-time members of the Print Club.

The exhibition is divided into nine thematic sections, including: Innovations, Visualizing Texts, Looking at Portraits, Icons and Symbols, Escaping the Unitary Linear, Cultural Vitality and Social Justice, Documenting Place: Real and Imagined. The show is well-curated and informative, providing visitors with a good understanding of the Brodsky Center's history, mission, and impact. The works on display are diverse and engaging, representing a wide range of styles and techniques. A selected list of artists includes Faith Ringgold, Melvin Edwards, Jaune Quick-To-See Smith, Buzz Spector, Emma Amos, Miriam Schapiro, Carolee Schneemann, Elizabeth Catlett, Joan Snyder, and June Wayne.

Instead of extended labels, the curators chose to include QR codes leading to a conversation between



Print Club Board Member Natalia Kolodzei with Judith K. Brodsky at the Zimmerli Art Museum. PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNA KOLODZEI.

Ferris Olin and Judith Brodsky. These interactive elements of the exhibition are a great way for visitors to learn more about printmaking and papermaking and to experience the Brodsky Center's work firsthand.

To complement the exhibition, the Zimmerli highlights new works by Judith Brodsky in *Judith K. Brodsky: Inside and Outside*, curated by Maura Reilly, a collection of wall-sized color drawings by Brodsky based on photographs the artist took of herself during the pandemic lockdown.

The Print Club of New York was privileged to collaborate with The Brodsky Center on several Presentation Prints, including Elizabeth Catlett (2005) (on view) and Joan Snyder (2006). Save the date for a special guided

curatorial tour with Ferris Olin and Judith K. Brodsky at the exhibition *The Brodsky Center at Rutgers University: Three Decades, 1986–2017* at the Zimmerli Art Museum, New Brunswick, New Jersey on Sunday, October 22 at 3:00 p.m.. The exhibition will be on view until December 22, 2023 and is accompanied by a full-color, 222-page catalogue of the same title edited by Ferris Olin. <https://zimmerli.rutgers.edu/art/exhibition/brodsky-center-rutgers-university-three-decades-1986-2017>.

Unveiling of the Annual Commissioned Print

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

On Wednesday evening, September 27, Print Club members and their guests assembled in the Sculpture Court of the National Arts Club to hear artist Lesley Dill talk about the print she created for our Club this year. The room was buzzing with excitement as attendees enjoyed wine, hors d'oeuvres, and cookies ahead of the formal program. At 7 p.m., Print Club President Suzanne Lesser asked guests to take their seats. She thanked former President Kim Henrikson for her eight years of service in that role and expressed appreciation for all the support she was receiving in the transition. Suzanne introduced herself as a collector, who started out with an interest in Japanese prints, but who is now building a collection with a wide range of prints, photographs, and other sorts of art work. Suzanne then called Selection Committee member Janice Oresman to the podium to introduce our commissioned artist.

Jan began by noting that Lesley is an old friend. The two met in Chicago in 1992 at the Chicago Art Fair. Jan was taken by how different Lesley's work was from most of what else was being created at that time. Lesley had traveled extensively, and traces of those travels can be found in her work. Jan also commented on Lesley's very unique and original use of materials. The artist also loves literature, especially Emily Dickinson, and references to poetry run throughout her *oeuvre*. She is a painter of ideas, a painter of love, an artist who radiates optimism—something we badly need right now.

The artist thanked Jan for her introduction and said how happy she was to be in a group of such enthusiastic print lovers and was honored to have the Print Club select her as our artist this year. Her print, on display on an easel next to the podium, is titled *Dream World of the Forest: Man Carrying the Wilderness*. It is a relief print with thread on Azabu paper based on lines from poet Tom Sleight, "Man Carrying the Wilderness Far Away on the Frontier / where Trees Still Bleed / Birdmen rustle feathers & Griffins guard!" Viewers' readings of the image vary; some see the man as stabilizing, others see him as fragile. The artist says words are the engine by which she lives. She is also influenced by place. She grew up in Maine and summered in the upper Adirondacks; these locations were formative influences. She loves nature and themes of transcendence.

The artist began her talk by posing the question, "How does creating a work of art start?" To answer, she quoted Franz Kafka: "My life is a hesitation before birth." For



Artist Lesley Dill with Print Club President Suzanne Lesser at the National Arts Club.

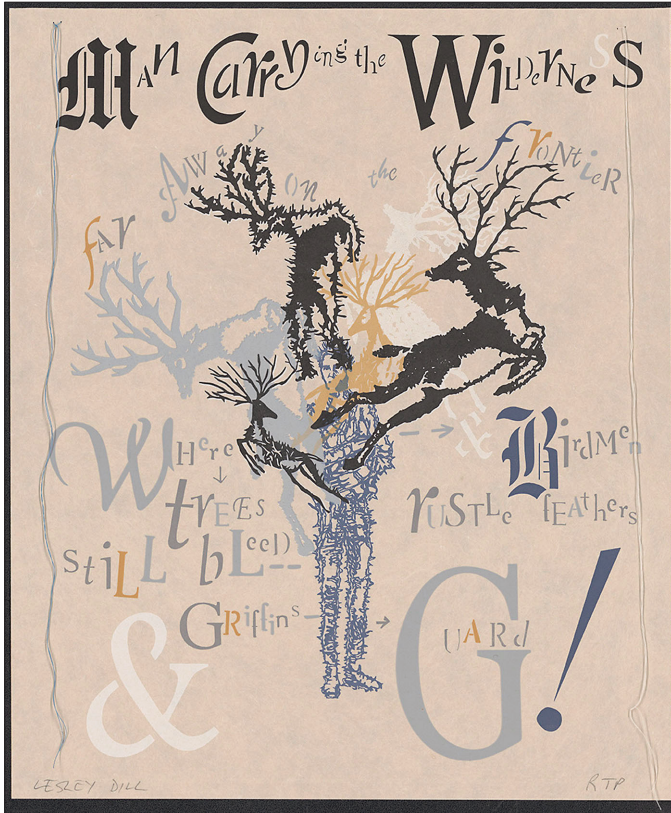
PHOTO COURTESY OF GILLIAN HANNUM.

Lesley Dill, each art work begins with an idea through which one looks for a gateway of recognition to rediscover an almost-new self. It can be a memory or a dream; turning to Kafka again, she quoted, "He felt as if the way were opening before him to the unknown nourishment he craved." She went on to quote Tom Sleight: "Change me / heal me / make me other than I am," words that she explored in a painting she created this year.

Lesley spoke about how she gets ideas, describing the process as a "blind, electrical nudging" — when the cognitive mind becomes alert, and we are aware. For Lesley, images come from words, and she searches for words urgently, looking to be affected. She spends time with books, muting the external senses, becoming lost in what she is reading. Images for the words begin to rise up from the page. Quoting another favorite poet, Emily Dickinson: "I felt my life with both my hands / To see if it was there." As long as there is a grounding in poetic language, Lesley is led to create in a wide range of media. She has even created an opera based on Dickinson's texts.

Lesley shared that the words tell her what sort of materials she should use for a piece. She doesn't give the viewer a clear reading of the words; rather, she wants the words to evoke a personal response in the viewer. The artist described living in India for two years where she was surrounded by a language she did not understand, but she found it melodic in its unintelligibility. She wants her work to intrigue, to pull the viewer in, to make us search.

Lesley said she has been lucky to work with some great



Lesley Dill, *Dream World of the Forest: Man Carrying the Wilderness*, artist proof. PHOTO COURTESY OF TANDEM PRESS.

presses for her prints, including Landfall, Graphicstudio, Tamarind, and Tandem Press. For prints, she feels the choice of paper is the first important decision. For the Club's print, she wanted something on the light side. The artist also noted that for her, printmaking is about working with a team. She loves that collaboration. In fact, she no longer likes working alone. Our print involved collaboration with a team at Tandem Press: Joe Freye, Patrick Smyczek, and Jason Ruhl. It also involved a group of young women hired by the artist to cut out deer; as a result, each deer carries a young woman's psyche.

During the Q & A, Lesley was asked if she ever created art from words in languages she does not speak. She replied that she has created pieces in both Spanish and French. Another attendee asked her to comment on her use of thread and stitching. In her reply, the artist described a time in Nepal where she found a temple with an unusual door covering — a sort of metal ribbon that, she was told, carried prayers to God. She also noted that a thread on a flat piece of work also adds a feeling of hands and touch. The thread is a gift, embedded in the art work. Someone else asked why the letter "G" is so prominent in the piece. Lesley noted that choosing the size, font, etc. of the letters in her art is a musical process, almost like notating a score. Another attendee noted that we tend to think of people as being "left brain" or "right brain" in terms of being verbal or visual, but that Lesley seems to combine the two. The artist replied that she doesn't really find a conflict between verbal and visual. One just has to be very alert. She seeks to find words that draw the viewer beyond the image, and images that will draw viewers beyond the words.

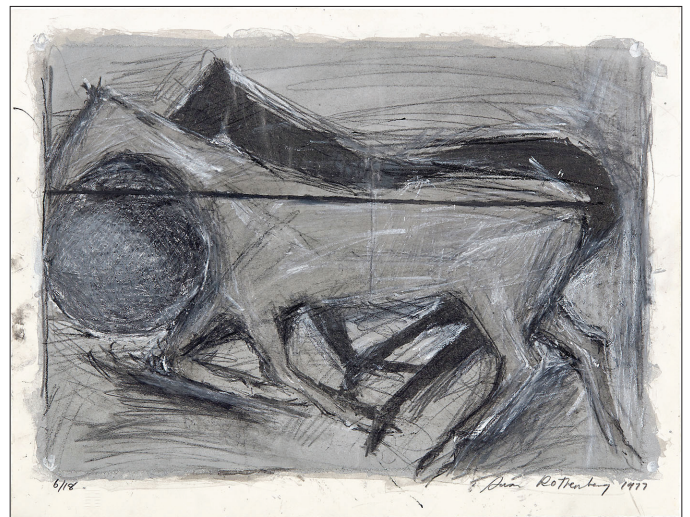
Exhibition Reviews

"Susan Rothenberg: Painter, Printmaker"

Maryanne Garbowsky

This summer and fall, at the Hall Art Foundation in Reading, Vermont (<http://www.hallartfoundation.org>), the work of Susan Rothenberg is on view. Beginning in May through the 26th of November, her art will be exhibited, a reminder of what the art world has lost since her untimely death in May 2020. Although the show features her large paintings, Rothenberg was also a printmaker. Compared with her paintings, the number of her prints is modest in size, but by studying them we realize that she is working with similar motifs and imagery as she did in her paintings.

When you think of Rothenberg, the horse naturally springs to mind—in full gallop actually — since it was an image she used over and over again. She was drawn to the horse intuitively and discovered it while doodling "on a scrap of canvas" back in 1974. "When she saw the image that was emerging" . . . she "decided to make paintings based on it" (Simon 27). According to Rothenberg herself, "she had 'found her voice'." The artist admits that "I find things out by stumbling on them...I



Susan Rothenberg, *Untitled*, 1977, lithograph. IMAGE COURTESY OF HALL ART FOUNDATION.

find things out kind of after they happen" (Simon 26-27). Peter Schjeldhal, an art critic, called it a "eureka moment."

Her artistic bond with the horse is undeniable. Whether she paints it on a canvas or draws it on a plate, she challenges the shape and form of the horse, representing it as a whole or in parts. Symbolically it may be a stand-in for a human being. She would do the same with hands, faces, heads, and fingers — using them separately

as isolated parts, fragmented, and abstract.

In 1978, her work was included in an exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art entitled *New Image Painting*. Along with nine other artists, the best-known being Philip Guston, her paintings were part of a new movement blending representation with abstraction. Their work was large scale and used expressionist brushwork with “the visual and metaphorical appeal of representation” (Oxford Dictionary 419).

It wasn’t until 1977 that Rothenberg began to make prints, enjoying the companionship and collaboration that it offered in contrast to the isolation of her studio. Her first print, a lithograph, was a horse printed in three colors and “colored by the artist” (Simon 57). In 1984, an exhibition of her prints — *Susan Rothenberg Prints 1977-1984* — was held at the Barbara Krakow Gallery in Boston. The exhibition catalogue credits the artist’s graphic work as one of “discovery and invention” using “the prime symbols” of her paintings, namely “the horse, the tuning fork figure, heads and hand in profile.”

In all, the show exhibited 16 prints, including lithographs, woodcuts, dry point, and etchings. The first, *Untitled* (1977) depicts horses running side by side, the one in the forefront is white while the other behind is black. These could be two horses, or it could be one with its shadow alongside. Another, also untitled, is more abstract, showing a horse’s two front legs looking down from atop them. In the middle of the legs is an oval form that represents the horse’s distinctively shaped head, but with no other features to distinguish it as “horse.”

Two other prints, also based on the horse, are known as May #3 and May #4, though they are listed as untitled. May #3 is an etching showing a horse running out of the print directly at the viewer, the horse’s left front leg flexed in a gallop. It is abstracted with no details, except its distinct equine form. The second, May #4, is even more abstract, speeding forth out of the picture plane as spontaneous white streaks emerging from a black ground. This latter emphasizes Rothenberg’s gestural drawing technique as well as her quick but sure strokes defining the horse.

As a printmaker, the artist enjoyed trying new print techniques, such as lithographs, woodcuts, etchings, and mezzotints. Mezzotints and woodcuts appealed to her especially since she could work “out of black, creating space by erasing it rather than using additive processes,” such as etching (Maxwell 11). She also enjoyed working with lithographs; however, her work with this technique had to be adapted to suit her style. Since she wanted to draw on the stone with charcoal, the charcoal had to first be wrapped in cotton towels soaked in oleic acid for several days to make it “greasier.” Thus, she could use charcoal as an alternative to a lithographic crayon to draw on the stone. Now she had “the freedom to just make marks” (Maxwell 12).

Autobiography also played a role in her work. As her marriage to George Trakas, a Canadian-born sculptor, dissolved, her work became more fragmented and showed signs of “emotional upheaval” (Simon 57). We see this change reflected in *Pontiac* (1979), an oil painting of a “charging horse” held back by a barrier of what appears to be a bone.

Another print based on her own life is *Plug* (1983), done when she tried to give up smoking. Here she depicts a head coughing out smoke. “To give the piece the correct balance, composition, weight, and psychological tension,” Rothenberg added the plug, which, according to Maxwell, was made possible by “the impregnated charcoal” and created a more forceful and “aggressive quality” (13).

In *Susan Rothenberg: The Prints*, a catalogue raisonné by Rachel Robertson Maxwell published in 1987, there are 34 prints. While the collection is small, it is solid, representing the artist’s style as it evolved over her career. Her ability to make marks with energy and openness to change, to express both identifiable forms through suggestion and abstraction, and to experiment and explore space, form, and content is quickly apparent in her prints. Taken together, Rothenberg’s paintings and prints inform each other, giving viewers a double lens through which to appreciate her artistic skill and talent. Unfortunately, her life was cut short, denying us the opportunity to see the artist’s work continue to grow and develop through the years.

Works Cited:

Simon, Joan. *Susan Rothenberg*. New York: Harry Abrams, Inc., 1991.

[Susan Rothenberg Paintings, Bio, Ideas | TheArtStory](#)
Susan Rothenberg Prints 1977-1984. Exhibition Catalogue. Barbara Krakow Gallery, 1984.

Susan Rothenberg The Prints. Catalogue Raisonné by Rachel Robertson Maxwell, 1987.

Ellsworth Kelly: Centennial Celebration

Maryanne Garbowsky

For this exhibition, I may need to borrow words from foreign languages, words like *delectio* or *delizioso*, or maybe even invent my own. This small, exquisite show at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts forces one to search for new words to describe its classic beauty and stunning simplicity. The show—*Ellsworth Kelly: The Plant Lithographs*—highlights the centennial of Kelly’s birth in 1923. A multi-faceted artist with an *oeuvre* that includes paintings, sculpture, drawings, and prints created over his 92 years — Kelly died in 2015 — the artist celebrates the beauty in everyday surroundings, specifically in the natural world.

Kelly’s drawings of plants are delicate and exacting, based on close observation and a deep appreciation for nature. They are contour drawings that suggest more than they are, seeming to have volume which they don’t, but rather curvilinear lines drawn confidently and accurately that capture the experience of seeing form—unadorned and real. Plant tendrils are graceful, his leaves delicate, like whispers, they suggest when you listen. You can almost hear them. Bearing witness to Nature’s variety and beauty, the drawings are there but barely. For instance, the *Ailanthus Leaves II* appear to be floating in space; colorless and weightless, they descend down the paper with their growing tip firmly rooted in place.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts' exhibition, which opened June 28, is only one of many exhibitions that museums and galleries worldwide are having to honor Kelly. New York's Museum of Modern Art, Chicago's Art Institute, Philadelphia's Museum of Art, Santa Barbara's Museum join international galleries like La Fondazione Nicola Del Roscio in Rome and Peder Lund Gallery in Oslo, Norway to display various aspects of his prodigious accomplishment. This year-long celebration will include a scholarly symposium, new publications, as well as a documentary film along with other special tributes.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts features ten lithographs from Kelly's *Suite of Plant Drawings*. These drawings, begun in 1964, were a life-long interest and eventually totaled 72 in all. According to art reviewer Karen Rosenberg, his drawings of plants started even earlier, in the 1940s, and were first shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1970. The Met show, a survey of Kelly's work up to that date, devoted one room solely to the plant drawings.

His plant series, or suites as they were called, demonstrate the artist's mastery of line, his attention to subtle detail, and his love of nature. His minimalism eventually led him to abstraction, the drawings serving as "a kind of bridge to a way of seeing that was the basis of the very first abstract paintings" (Rosenberg). In June 2012, the Met mounted another Kelly exhibition entitled *Ellsworth Kelly Plant Drawings*, which focused on the plant designs themselves. The artist called them "portraits of flowers," insisting that they were "not anonymous," but rather specific plants that he "found." According to the artist, they recorded the places he had been. In an interview with Marla Prather, a curator of the show, Kelly explained that the poppy in his drawing *Poppy* 1984, was found in a "ditch in California." "It's seeing a fragment, a flash—what one was waiting for. And it says 'Here I am'" (Rosenberg).

Looking at the lithographs, one can see that the artist is trying to make clear what he sees, the reality in natural forms. According to John Storr, the Dean of Yale School of Art in 2012, "Ellsworth is purely a visual artist...there is no message, just an experience" (Rosenberg). Influenced during his time in Paris by artists such as Jean Arp and Constantin Brancusi, Kelly embraced the concept of "sim-

plification of natural forms" (Vogel). Accurate and honest observation allows Kelly to pin down on the page the graceful outlines of nature, while also suggesting their mystery as well. The edge of a leaf, the curve of a branch — no detail escapes his exacting eye. Yet it is with a reverence and feeling of transcendence that Kelly imbues his drawings.

In his 1836 essay "Nature," Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote of man's connection to the Oversoul through his contact with nature: "To the attentive eye, each moment of the year has its own beauty, and in the same field, it beholds, every hour, a picture which was never seen before, and which shall never be seen again." Kelly would agree with this observation as well as with those from Henry David Thoreau, the friend and contemporary of Emerson, who for two years lived an unconventional life in the woods of Walden Pond. What Thoreau learned by living in nature was something Kelly knew from his own studies of plants:

Thus it seemed that this one hillside illustrated the principle of all operations of Nature. The Maker of this earth but patented a leaf. What Champollion will decipher this hieroglyphic for us, that we may turn over a new leaf at last? (Walden)

Did Kelly read the Transcendentalists? Emerson and Thoreau? If not, he certainly discovered similar lessons that Nature taught. Like twentieth century artist Georgia O'Keeffe, Kelly tried to make people "really" see. "Nobody sees a flower really; it is so small. We haven't time, and to see takes time—" (O'Keeffe). Ellsworth Kelly in his plant drawings and lithographs makes us see, and for this we are grateful.

Works Cited:

Axson, Richard H. *Drawn from Nature: The Plant Lithographs of Ellsworth Kelly*. Grand Rapids Art Museum. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

Rosenberg, Karen. "Loving Flowers and Vines to Abstraction." *New York Times*. June 7, 2012.

Vogel, Carol. "True to His Abstraction." *New York Times*. January 22, 2012.

www.ellsworthkelly.org/centennial

Print Club's Archival Prints Exhibited

This summer, work from the PCNY Archive was on display in the lobby level gallery of the Heller Museum at Hebrew Union College in Lower Manhattan, which holds the Club's Archive. It was mostly older work—including two views of Manhattan (Fred Mersheimer and Richard Haas), the Brooklyn Bridge (Richard Bosman), Will Barnet's *Life After Life*, and Warrington Colescott's *Picasso at Mougins*. Also on the walls were the Club's commissioned prints by Swoon, Amze Emmons, Craig McPherson, Paul Jenkins, and Alex Katz.

Member News

Print Club Corresponding Secretary and Board member **Natalia Kolodzei** served as co-editor for *Leonardo*, Vol. 55, Issue 6, along with Anna Frants of the CYLAND Foundation Inc., USA. Published by MIT Press, this issue of *Leonardo* accompanies the 2022 CYLAND International Festival of Media Art CYFEST, featuring international contributions on the theme of *fermentation* through the dual lenses of art and science as well as the extensive metaphorical possibilities that this theme offers (See Winter 2023 issue of the *Print Club Newsletter*).

A Day in the Storage Unit

Mona Rubin

As most of you know, each year the Print Club of New York selects an artist to do a commissioned print for the Club in an edition of 200 (plus some number of artist proofs, printer proofs, and one print for the Club's archive). The number 200 coincides with the maximum number of members in our Club. (In earlier years of the Club, this number was set at 150.) In some years, however, for example, some of the Covid years, the membership is less than 200. What happens to the prints that are not sent to members?

For many years, this was a problem for the President of the Club, who would generally store them in his or her home, wherever they could find a reasonable, environmentally-safe space. When I became President, a fairly substantial number of prints had accumulated. I realized at that point that the Club needed a viable storage unit. I found one near my home in New Jersey with climate control and enough space for our inventory. I managed it myself, selling lots of prints out of there to new members who wanted the older images. Every year, I would just pile up the new batch of prints until I got to the point where it was impossible for me to retrieve anything. Nothing was properly labeled, and older prints were buried at the bottom of the stack.

That's when I reached out to Harriet Stratis, a member of the PCNY Board and our new Treasurer, who is an expert in paper conservation and knowledgeable in museum storage techniques. In June of this year, Harriet came to New Jersey to assist with a remodel of the unit. Kay Deaux, Board Member, also joined to help label and sort things out. Harriet assembled shelving and organized the prints in a way that made access much easier. In the process, I learned that prints should be both organized and sold in sequential edition number. I extend a huge thank you to both Harriet and Kay for their work on this much-needed project.

Unfortunately — or perhaps fortunately — I don't have a before photo. However, I can share the excellent result (see photo above). A unit that I thought was filled to capacity now has room for more. And the good news is that once again I can retrieve and ship out prints.

I hope that our members will take advantage of this collection. We currently have available a limited number of the commissioned prints by Audrey Flack, Paul Binnie,



The Print Club's storage unit.
PHOTO COURTESY OF HARRIET STRATIS.

Victoria Burge, Swoon, Anze Emmons, Kiki Smith, and Didier William. Anniversary Books that celebrate our first 25 years are also available for only \$25 each.

These great images are available for our current membership price of \$250 each plus \$25 shipping. Only members of the Club are eligible to buy prints at this price. Several members have purchased them as gifts for friends and family. If you are reading this *Newsletter* and are not a member, perhaps you will consider joining once you have looked at the selection of prints on our web page. The ability to purchase available early images is only one of the myriad benefits of membership.

If you're interested in any of the prints, you can find details on our website, and you can email me directly at monarubin@gmail.com.