

The Print Club of New York Inc

Winter 1998

President's Greeting

Julian Hyman

This year the Print Selection Committee decided to take the responsibility for packing and mailing our presentation print because of some difficulty with the mailing last year. The effort turned out to be greater than we had anticipated. With the help of six stalwart members it still took over two full days to package and label the prints. We owe thanks to Stephen Long of the Long Fine Art Gallery for allowing us to do all of this work in his gallery while he was curating a Milton Avery exhibition. Many visitors came by and they all wondered what we were doing with the many piles of mailers and the presence of work tables filled with labels, scotch tape etc. We want to thank the members of the Print Selection Committee and other volunteers who put in the time and effort needed to complete this task.

One of the interesting things that emerged from this effort was to discover while putting on address labels how many members of our Club were unknown to us. The sad thing is that many of these members live within a bus or subway ride of the events and meetings that the Club sponsors. It is our conviction that the main purpose of the Club is to educate members concerning all aspects of printmaking. There has been a great effort made by the Events Committee and the Publications Committee to accomplish this goal, but we are still not reaching out to all of you. Hence, we are asking our members to consider how individually they can become more active members of the Club. On the positive side there have been a number of members added to both the Print Selection and the Publications Committees. Prospective members will now be asked to submit letters to the Membership Committee Chairperson indicating what their interests are in prints and how they might contribute to the Club.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Muriel Moss and the members of her Program Committee for the excellent jobs they are doing and to thank Arlyne Lesser and her committee for the quality newsletters and for the descriptive notices of coming events. I would also like to

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Fourth Annual Artist's Showcase

The Print Club of New York held its Fourth Annual Artists' Showcase on October 14 at the beautiful National Arts Club on Gramercy Square. Events Chairman Muriel Moss welcomed the large turnout and presented five excellent artists who reflect what is happening in the 1990's. The artists were Lynne Allen, Sarah Brayer who lives and works in Japan and was represented by Allison Tolman, Margrit Lewczuk, Pamela Moore and Sergei Tsvetkov. Their differences in training, life experience and views of art are demonstrated through the medium of the original print.

Lynne Allen is Associate Professor, Mason Gross School of Art, Rutgers and Associate Director of the Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper, a center for leading-edge printmaking ideas and education. Ms. Allen described her work as focused on the theme of identity, a theme which took on personal resonance consequent to her experiences in Russia in the late 1880's and in 1990 when she was the first visual artist to be selected for the Fulbright Program to the former Soviet Union. Out of this experience came her interest in innocent people becoming victims and in survivors maintaining their spiritual strength. She displayed her Russian prints of 1988 and 1989, mainly lithographs, which focus on the experience of being imprisoned and trapped. When she returned to the United States she turned to the theme of her own identity and her Indian heritage, her grandmother having been born on an Indian reservation and sent to Indian schools. Her recent prints, mainly lithographs and lithographs with computer transfer, deal with the theme of victimization in relation to this Indian heritage. As an example she showed "And They Brought Smallpox" a work referring to an actual incident when the blankets of smallpox victims were brought to Indian reservations.

In contrast to the social activism evident in Ms. Allen's work, the prints of Sarah Brayer, presented by Allison Tolman, resonate with the traditional Japanese lyricism in the presence of natural beauty. Ms. Brayer's prints are a blend of Japanese traditions and western artistic influences. She uses traditional Japanese techniques and images, particularly landscape and nature representations, but at the same time she explores a variety of different processes — lithographs, carborundum prints, aquatints with mixed colors, talcum powder to depict snow in her print "Kyoto in the Snow" — in addition to the traditional woodblock technique which she went to Japan to learn.

Margrit Lewczuk also works in the woodcut medium, but her prints are in an abstract style with a sense of organic form. Ms. Lewczuk presented the woodcut prints she has been making in her summer studio in Siena, Italy for the past five years. Among her subjects are the stone floor of her 15th century building, the images of light passing through the leaves of her fig tree, the vertical lines of the studio's roof beams and, influenced by the work of

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Morandi, abstractions of still life compositions. Ms. Lewczuk's work is characterized by simple shapes of blocks and lines cut into the wood with a variety of washes applied to the uncut surfaces, often as many as five different colors. Ms. Lewczuk pulls her own prints and uses her woodcuts as experiments in imagery and color which she further develops as paintings upon her return to the United States.

Pamela Moore's work is marked by her interest in experimenting with images and techniques. Her monoprints and small editions are subtly composed collages of photos, written texts and swatches of paper juxtaposed with etchings printed on chine colle. Her images appear in serial form presenting a variety of subtle variations upon the themes of broken glass, roses, trees, the view from her window and, most recently, towers. As she explained, her aim is to take images from life around us and by combining them in unexpected ways to create "symbolic images" which allow for personal responses to the mystery of the symbols. Given this aim of creating a mood for the viewer, her use of color is particularly subtle and nuanced.

Sergei Tsvetkov received his training in Russia. It was there he met Lynne Allen and the husband and wife now

share a studio in Pennsylvania. His work is characterized by a variety of complex techniques and dramatic images. He particularly likes the challenge of intaglio and the mix of etching and monoprint techniques. He also experiments with layering through repetition of printing or silk screening so that the images are integrated with each other. M. Tsvetkov demonstrated a recent work on heavy handmade paper which printed the image on Chinese silk and then glued the silk on top of the print so that the translucency of the silk allowed the ground underneath to be seen. Mr. Tsvetkov likes to work with a series of individual images, each print taking a different perspective of the same subject, and the entire series is then put together as one print, thus creating a tapestry effect. Among his most recent images are old walls, each layer on the wall representing a different time, and prints incorporating images taken from icons.

At the end of the presentations, Club members had the opportunity to speak with the artists and to examine their portfolio of prints. A large and enthusiastic turnout marked the event and we wish to thank the Program Committee headed by Muriel Moss for the time and effort which they expended in making this event a success.

Louis Lozowick: Printmaker of the Modern Age

Elaine Hyman

Louis Lozowick was born in Ludinovka, Ukraine, in 1892. He came to New York City in 1906 and studied at the National Academy of Design from 1912 to 1915. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Ohio State University, and left for Europe in late 1919, not returning to the United States for five years. It is interesting to note that the painter and printmaker who is associated with the American cities, factories and machines did

not find his subject matter until he went to Europe. There in 1920-24 he met and was influenced by the Futurists and Russian Constructivists, many of whom shared his interest in a positive aesthetic of the mechanized and industrial world. Lozowick's particular focus, however, was the American city and the industrial centers of the Mid-West which formed the basis for his first successful one-man show of paintings in Berlin in 1922-23. In Berlin he was also introduced to lithography, a medium which he found particularly congenial for the rest of his life.

Upcoming Print Club Events

Thursday, February 19, 6-7:30 p.m.

Tour of the Center for Book Arts, 626 Broadway, 5th Floor and a talk on creating hand made books which include prints in the process.

Wednesday, March 18, 6-7:30 p.m.

Roberta Waddell, Curator of Prints, New York Public Library will speak on the Library's renowned print collection. The meeting will be held in the Art Division, Room 313, and due to limited space reservations are necessary. R.S.V.P by calling Harriet Burdock at (201) 944-0674 between 8 and 10 p.m.

Saturday, April 25, 10:30-12:00 a.m.

Gallery talk and tour of Tyler Graphics, 250 Kisco Avenue, Mount Kisco, NY. Tyler Graphics is one of the foremost publishers of contemporary prints.

Wednesday, May 20, 6-7:30 p.m.

An invitation to view the Cuban art collection, including prints, of Carole and Alex Rosenbeg in their

home at 3 East 69th St, Penthouse floor.

Also of interest to Print Club members

The Connecticut Graphics Art Center, a non-profit workshop and gallery devoted to printmaking in Norwalk, CT is sponsoring an exhibition from Feb. 8 through April 4 of "Modern Japanese Prints From the 1950's Through the 1980's". The exhibition is from the collection of Jeanne Davidson Fine Prints in New York City, a specialist dealer in Japanese prints, and features wood blocks, etchings and lithographs by major artists. The Center is at 299 West Ave., Norwalk, in a renovated 19th century carriage house on the grounds of the well-known Lockwood-Matthews Mansion Museum. Hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

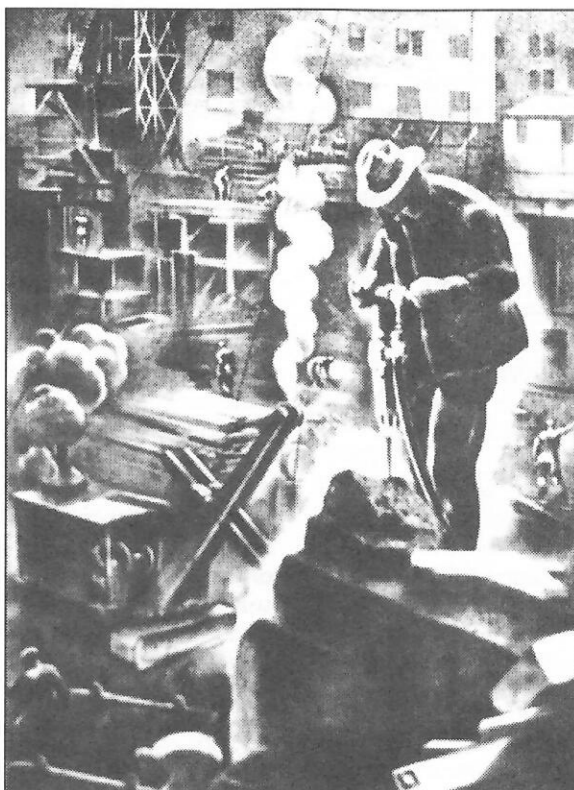
The Center is also holding its first Print Fair at the Lockwood Matthews Mansion on May 15-16. Paul Cadmus will be present at the opening on May 15 and will be honored by the Center. For further information call (203) 839-7999.

In 1924 Lozowick returned to the United States where his drawings generated the same enthusiasm he had experienced in Berlin. These drawings were semi abstract and cubist in style, favoring machine parts in strong solid blacks against stark white paper. This affinity for black and white is also apparent in the more than 270 lithographs he created throughout his career. Carl Zigrosser of the Weyhe Gallery encouraged Lozowick to work in the graphic medium, and in 1929 gave the artist his first exhibition of lithographs in America. Although Lozowick worked in other graphic media—etching, drypoint, woodcut, silkscreen—lithography was his favored medium.

The artistic credo behind these works of the late 1920's and early '30's was expressed by Lozowick in the 1927 catalog of the *Machine Age Exposition* where he wrote:

the dominant trend of America today, beneath all the apparent chaos and confusion, is towards order and organization which find their outward sign and symbol in the rigid geometry of the American city: in the verticals of its smokestacks, in the parallels of its factories, the arc of its bridges, the cylinders of its gas tanks.¹

These forms provided the basic structural elements of his lithographs of city and industry created at this time. Lozowick is often linked with the American Precisionists such as Charles Sheeler, Niles Spencer and Charles Demuth who also tried to develop an aesthetic based on the machine and were concerned with a high degree of order and organization. However, Lozowick always consciously maintained a balance between realism and abstraction, and in the late 1920's and 30's he moved toward more realistic rendering of his images. His lithographs always contain a sense of the life of the city or the energy of the machine. These scenes are seldom devoid of human presence and the construction scenes also remind us that these skyscrapers, bridges and factories are the creations of men.



Birth of a Skyscraper 1930

From the collection of Julian and Elaine Hyman

In his later work of the 1930's and 40's during the Great Depression and the War that followed Lozowick's lithographs show a greater realism and social consciousness. He was employed by the New York Graphics Section of the Works Progress Administration, and in these prints and others produced during this period images of the worker took precedence over the city and the machine. His imagery continued to evolve and his "attention again shifted from the worker as major focal point, to the worker in his environment. A lyricism and peace can be seen in these new organic works...."²

In his prints of the 1950's and 60's, Lozowick's subjects were divided between figures and landscapes as well as contemporary and historical buildings. In these later prints the drawing is still precise but there is greater softness.

Lozowick today is considered a master of the lithographic technique. Using this medium he developed very personal and flexible techniques. His prints are notable for his ability to produce a variety of tones ranging from soft, silvery greys to rich blacks. He also introduced textures, spattering and other more experimental techniques in his later work. He completed his last lithograph, "Interior," in 1973, shortly before he died at the age of 80. This last lithograph is considered as "fine, inventive and beautifully articulated as any he ever produced."³

¹ Louis Lozowick, "The Americanization of Art," *Machine Age Exposition* catalog of an exhibition held in Steinway Hall (New York City, 1927, pp.18-19, quoted in *Louis Lozowick: Drawings and Lithographs* catalog of an exhibition held at the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, (Washington, D.C.), 1975, curated by Janet A. Flint.

² Elke M. Solomon, *Louis Lozowick: Lithographs*, catalog of an exhibition held at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, NY) November 21, 1972 – January 1, 1973.

³ Janet Flint, catalog introduction, see note above.

Sylvan Cole Honored for his Lifetime Achievement in the Arts

The International Fine Print Dealers Association and the Art Dealers Association of America honored Print Club member Sylvan Cole with a dinner at the Cosmopolitan Club in New York City on November 4. More than 150 guests attended including dealers, collectors, curators, artists and other friends and

print world notables. Mary Ryan of the Mary Ryan Gallery gave the welcoming speech in honor of the "dean" of the print world and we wish to thank her for allowing us to print excerpts from her remarks in our Newsletter. She began with a catalog description:

Sylvan Cole dates from 1918, is in excellent condition, makes a fine impression, measures six feet two inches with full margins and is light stained in the summer.

A native New Yorker, Sylvan attended the Horace Mann school and graduated from Cornell University with a degree in English literature and a minor in art history. After serving in the Army during World War II, entering as a Private and leaving as a Major, Sylvan went to work for the Associated American Artists Gallery in 1946 at the age of 28. In that year, fellow workers at the AAA included Andre Emmerich and Helen Frankenthaler. Sylvan knew of the AAA because his parents bought prints from their catalogues that promoted \$5 prints. When Sylvan began working at the AAA in the mail order division 50,000 catalogues were mailed out three or four times a year.

Twelve years later, in 1958, Sylvan was made president of the AAA where he presided for 25 years until 1983. During this period Sylvan published prints by scores of artists including Thomas Hart Benton, Raphael Soyer, Carol Summers, Will Barnet and David Hockney. At the AAA he held over 200 print exhibitions ranging from retrospectives of Ensor, Vallotton and Rembrandt to Picasso,

Werner Drewes, John Taylor Arms and Karl Schrag. During Sylvan's tenure at AAA several dealers began their careers there including Estelle Yanco, Carol Evans, Aldis Browne, Susan Teller, Steven Long and Margo Dolan. In 1983 upon leaving the AAA he started the Sylvan Cole Gallery which to this day is a mecca for those interested in American prints.

Sylvan has made major contributions in the field of print scholarship. He has written catalogue raisonnés on Raphael Soyer, Grant Wood, John Stewart Curry, Joe Hirsch, Will Barnet and Stuart Davis (with Jane Myers). He is a long standing member of the Art Dealer's Association of America and one of the five founding members of the International Fine Print Dealer's Association of which he is the immediate past president.

Sylvan Cole embodies all the hallmarks of a great print dealer — a good eye, vast knowledge in his field, a fabulous inventory, and a knack for knowing what the client needs. There is no dealer who has done more for the field of prints than Sylvan Cole, and it is a rare and special person who could bring together such a distinguished group of dealers, curators, collectors, family and friends to honor him.

Fall and Winter Membership Events

William Dane Speaks at the Newark Public Library

Members who attended William Dane's lecture and tour of the Newark Public Library's print collection on Saturday, November 15 came away with a wealth of information on a most valuable resource for print collectors. The library's collection, begun in the 19th century, is housed in an architectural gem near the Museum and the new Performing Arts Center, an area of the city which is now undergoing a Renaissance. Mr. Dane, Curator of Prints, who has had a distinguished career as art historian and author was also an engrossing lecturer with an encyclopedic knowledge of the history of prints which he presented with the verve of a story teller. For those not familiar with the Library's holdings, he presented a tour of its highlights, particularly its large collection of American prints from the 1920's and 30's, including a very fine John Sloane collection bought directly from Sloane. The Library also owns a collection of Old Masters, Gernam Expressionists and important Picasso prints. Other interesting holdings which may not be as well known include extensive collections of New Jersey printmakers, contemporary Japanese prints which Mr. Dane believes are some of the most important prints being made today, and a large group of prints from Cuba and Puerto Rico. For those members who were unable to attend the lecture, we recommend a visit to become acquainted with this remarkable collection and to meet its gracious Curator. We thank Mr. Dane for his informative and witty introduction to a remarkable collection.

Demonstration of Printmaking by Frederick Mershimer

Frederick Mershimer who created the first Presentation Print for the Club invited members to the Manhattan Graphics Center at 481 Washington St. for a demonstration of printmaking in various techniques. Twenty-six members attended and were given a unique opportunity to participate directly in the printmaking process. Mr. Mershimer had prepared plates so that each person could have the hands-on experience of making a print. He explained and demonstrated many different techniques, showing how the plates are inked and wiped, how different papers affect the print, and how time in the acid bath affects the shading of the print. Since Mr. Mershimer is noted for his mezzotints, participants were particularly intrigued by his demonstration of how he works in this medium. Members present had the opportunity to use different tools to make a small design on soft ground aquatint, line etching on copper and on a resin coated resist plate. The handiwork was then put through the press for a view of the finished print.

This direct experience with printmaking techniques was a wonderful learning experience. Members were also introduced to the Manhattan Graphics Center which provides classes on printmaking at every level of experience, from beginner to advanced. We would like to thank Mr. Mershimer and the Manhattan Graphics Center for making such a delightful evening possible.

Craig McPherson Speaks to Members

On Wednesday, January 28, the Mary Ryan Gallery opened an exhibition of Craig McPherson's prints, *Craig McPherson: A Retrospective of Mezzotint*, and members were invited to hear a gallery talk by the artist as well as to enjoy the opening reception. A large and enthusiastic membership turnout marked the event as members listened to the artist's account of the genesis, composition and technical problems involved in each individual print.

Mr. McPherson explained his love of the mezzotint process, a time consuming technique with which he has produced approximately one print a year since 1978. After explaining the process in which the darkness of the rocked plate with its ink containing burr is then burnished into tones of gray and heightened accents of white, Mr. McPherson took our members on a chronological tour of his work beginning with the flower images he created in 1978 as he learned his craft. Scenes from his studio windows in Washington Heights provided the images for his first serious group of mezzotints. These were large New York urban scenes depicted at night: the much acclaimed *Yankee Stadium at Night*, which first brought him into prominence as a mezzotint artist, *FDR Drive* and *Girders*. In these prints, Mr. McPherson explained his aim as the painterly one of creating tonal compositions. He also explained how he begins with a detailed image prefaced by extensive drawings and then works by reduction, burnishing the details into shaded areas in order to get to the "bones" of the image. The artist's *Chop Shop* series of five prints, begun in 1983-84 but recently completed, he views as a commentary on printmaking. The cars in the images are progressively reduced, a process he likens to that of

the printmaker who works from a minutiae of detail to the abstracted essence of the image.

The arduousness of the mezzotint process became clear as Mr. McPherson described how it took from 9 to 12 months to rock a plate and from 6 weeks to 9 months to burnish the image out of the plate. He uses numerous progress proofs during the process. Mr. McPherson also explained that he pulls his own prints because he uses a wiping technique which creates painterly effects, selectively wiping away ink so that almost a watercolor wash or glaze is left on the print.

Mr. McPherson's most recent works, printed in 1997, *Clairton* (the Cleveland Print Club's 75th Anniversary Print), *Edgar Thomas* and *Braddock* deal with images of Pittsburgh. In these prints Mr. McPherson returns to his image of the urban scene at night, using shadowy forms contrasting with concentrated light. *Braddock* depicts the urban decay left after the great mills closed, *Clairton* and *Edgar Thomas* capture the plumes of steam and smoky clouds from the working mills drifting through the shaded tones of the wintry skies.

Mr. McPherson is currently being honored by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England. He is the first contemporary American artist to receive a one-person show at the Museum. The exhibition entitled *Darkness Into Light: Craig McPherson and the Art of the Mezzotint* is running concurrently with the retrospective exhibition at the Mary Ryan Gallery, from January 13 to March 15. Catalogs for the Fitzwilliam exhibition are available at the Mary Ryan Gallery.

Club members were truly fortunate in being able to meet and discuss his work with this fine contemporary practitioner of mezzotint. We wish to thank Mr. McPherson and Mary Ryan of the Mary Ryan Gallery for making this memorable occasion possible.

Membership Notes

E laine Hyman wrote to tell us that she and her husband Julian, President of the Print Club, along with other Club members Charles and Carol Rosenblatt and David Kiehl, Curator of Prints at the Whitney Museum, attended the opening of the Fitzwilliam Museum's exhibition *Darkness Into Light: Craig McPherson and the Art of the Mezzotint* in Cambridge, England on December 12. This exhibition marked the first time a contemporary American has had a one-person show at the Museum. Many of the donations which made the exhibition possible were given through the American Friends of the Fitzwilliam founded by New York Print Club members, Reba and Dave Williams.

Duncan Robinson, Director of the Fitzwilliam took the group of Americans who attended the opening, among them many collectors of the artist's work, on a tour of the

museum's collections. Craig Hartley, Keeper of the Print Collection and responsible for curating the exhibition and creating the catalog also displayed some of the Museum's fine Rembrandt prints and discussed their various states. After a viewing of the exhibition which includes preparatory drawings and paintings, progressive proofs, and the original plates, the group was hosted at a private dinner in the elegant dining room of King's College, Cambridge.

On the following day, the Hymans were invited by Anthony Griffiths, Keeper of Prints of the British Museum to view the Museum's print collection. This trip was a wonderful opportunity not only to view Craig McPherson's work in the beautiful Cambridge setting but also to see some of the American prints being held in the permanent collection of the British Museum.

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thank our member Frederick Mershimmer, a very fine artist and exceptional printmaker, for conducting an event for us at his new print workshop. Fred was the artist chosen for the first Presentation Print in 1992, and it set the standard for all of the fine prints to follow. I also want to thank Craig McPherson who gave a gallery talk for Print Club members before the opening of his retrospective exhibit at the Mary Ryan Gallery.

Michael A. Glass has agreed to become consultant to the Board for legal affairs. Mr. Glass, a member of the Club, is General Counsel and Secretary of the University at Fairleigh Dickinson University. We look forward to working with him in this important area.

I want to express our condolences to Board of Trustees member Geri Mickenberg on the loss of her husband, Morton Mickenberg.

Finally, a happy, healthy and enlightening New Year to all of you.

**Editor's Note:
Books on Prints:**

Many of our members have expressed a desire for information on significant books dealing with prints. We would like to make this an on-going feature in the Newsletter and we urge all members to let us know which books they have found particularly valuable as print collectors. All we need is the name of the book, author, publisher and date as well a few lines of description. We hope to hear from many of you. Please share your knowledge and enthusiasm with other Print Club members. Send your suggestions to: Arlyne Lesser, 119 Buckingham Road, Tenafly, NJ 07670 or call 201-567-0170 for further information.

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