

The Print Club of New York Inc

Fall 1999

President's Greeting

Julian Hyman

The Print Club of New York continues to thrive because of the effective and dedicated management of its committees as well as the addition of excellent and productive new members. Almost all of our membership for 1999-2000 has been filled, although a few openings remain for qualified members.

Our 1999 Presentation print is a beautiful color lithograph by the well known artist Paul Jenkins. The print was created and printed in Paris where the artist was the subject of a recent successful solo exhibition of his oil paintings. Mr. Jenkins presented his print and discussed the work with almost 60 members who attended the October 5 meeting. October also brought us the Artist's Showcase. This exciting event has been an annual favorite of Club members and great effort went into its organization by Dr. Muriel Moss and her Events Committee. The Events Committee has also scheduled many other outstanding educational events for the 1999-2000 season.

We continue to look forward to membership participation in our events. We also hope that more of our members consider joining a committee. You may have noticed a box to check for participation in a committee on your membership renewal form. If you indicated an interest in joining a committee, the committee chairperson will be in touch with you shortly. If you have not yet done so, please think about joining a committee. Our committees are: Print Selection, Events, Newsletter, Publicity and Membership. Each of the committee chairs would be delighted to speak with you. Please write to us at P.O. Box 4477 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 or call and leave a message at (212) 479-7915. We would love to hear from you and welcome your input and suggestions as well. I hope to hear from many of you, and I am looking forward to another banner year for the Print club of New York.

The Print Club of New York, Inc.

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"At Stroke of Twelve"

The Print Club's 1999 Presentation Print

by Paul Jenkins

"At Stroke of Midnight," an abstract color lithograph by Paul Jenkins is the 1999 Presentation Print of the Print Club of New York. Mr. Jenkins is noted for his color abstraction in paintings and prints, works which have been praised for the way in which they both emanate and capture light. In discussing the creation of this print, Mr. Jenkins commented that capturing the essence of sound became the essential subject of the color abstraction. Living in France, the daily sounds of church bells have become part of his being, and as the print evolved he felt the sounds and vibrations of these bells moving into it. Capturing the resonance and vibration of these sounds through the integration and interpenetration of its colors provided the essence of the image.

Mr. Jenkins has had a distinguished career as an artist and writer. He has won numerous awards for his work in paint, watercolor and stone lithography. He also conceived and wrote a dance drama for the Paris Opera, planning the sets, designs and costumes. His work has appeared in galleries and museum shows world wide, and he is represented in the collection of major museums including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum, the Brooklyn Museum of Art and numerous museums abroad including the Tate in London, the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris. This past year the Brooklyn Museum of Art included his watercolor in their exhibition, "Masters of Color and Light: Homer, Sargent and the American Watercolor Movement." This fall the Emily Lowe Gallery at Hofstra University is mounting a solo exhibition of his work entitled "Paul Jenkins, 1954-1960, The Early Years in New York and Paris," from September 7 to December 17. The Joseph Rickards Gallery in New York is also exhibiting his "Eyes of the Dove: Paintings from 1957-1959," from October 14 through November 20.

We are fortunate in having the opportunity to add a Paul Jenkins print to our collection. We also would like to thank Mr. Jenkins for agreeing to speak to Club members at the October 5 meeting at which he introduced the 1999 Presentation Print. Speaking informally, Mr. Jenkins reviewed his development as an artist as well as his approach to printmaking and the genesis of this print.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri of Welsh descent, Mr. Jenkins came to New York in 1948 where he studied at the Art Student's League including 4 years with Yasuo Kuniyoshi. In 1953 Mr. Jenkins went to Europe and he has ever since shared his time between New York and Paris, exhibiting with various galleries in both cities. He commented that Paris was his destiny, although living and working in both cities has had its difficulties. He comen-

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ed that he is viewed as an American in Paris and a crazy expatriate in the United States but, he added, it doesn't matter. Mr. Jenkins has an atelier in Paris and in New York he uses the loft on Broadway which de Kooning turned over to him in 1963.

Although Mr. Jenkins had studied lithography with Will Barnet when a student at the Art Student's League, his major work in stone lithography began in the 1960's with the master printer Fernand Mouriot in Paris. With Mouriot he began to work directly on stone, without transfer or plates. When in New York his studio on Broadway was in the same building as Pratt Graphics and he worked there on stone. He also worked with Tyler Graphics and others in America. In France, however, he continued to work with Mouriot and subsequently with Franck Borda, Mouriot's grandson. His most recent lithographs as well as those from his Canadian series are currently featured in the exhibition, "Regard Sur l'estampe en France du 1945 à nos jours," which began its itinerary in Angers, France.

Speaking of his printmaking, Mr. Jenkins noted that while he believes painting and lithography grow within each other and that in both media spontaneity and discovery in the act of creation are paramount, the approach to each is different. Printmaking is an isolated event which must be accomplished with others, so that he carves out a specific time for it and does no painting while engaged in printmaking. He works on four separate stones at once, and although he starts with a proof, he then finds his way directly on the stone. The proof is a guide line only; the

process of creation is not cut and dried, but a discovery process while creating the image in the stone and directly on the press. Hence, the importance of collaborating with the master printer in the act of creation.

Using liquid tusche, Mr. Jenkins' primary concern while working on the lithograph is the fidelity and maintenance of color throughout the process. He will add color, superimpose one color on another, integrate, coalesce and interpenetrate colors as he discovers the image on the stone. He may also erase with acid what he has done before. Sustaining color is paramount as he works with the printer directly on the press, sustaining the transparency of one color against the dense opacity of another. The color, he stressed, is not just painted on the paper, but soaks into it. Mr. Jenkins noted that working directly on the press is crucial to the whole process, and that for the Presentation Print he asked for five pulls rather than the usual four before he was satisfied.

Discussing the Presentation Print itself, in addition to the desire to capture and emanate sound through color, Mr. Jenkins stressed the relation of the print to paintings he made in 1997 and 1998 which were exhibited this past spring at the Gallerie Patrice Trigano in Paris. The lithograph was created at the same time as the exhibition, and although the print is not a by product or offshoot of the paintings, the resonance of its color, its scale and the contraction and expansion of its image, something which he feels he has never before achieved in a lithograph, reveal the same intentions of the artist, boldly and spontaneously set forth at approximately the same time.

Officers and Board of Trustees Elected at Annual Meeting

The annual membership meeting of the Print Club of New York was held on June 1. Members were invited to a get-acquainted cocktail party and to vote on the Print Club slate of Officers and Members of the Board of Trustees. A large turnout marked the event. The Officers are:

President: Dr. Julian Hyman
Vice President: Charles Seidman
Treasurer: Norman Brock
Recording Secretary: Elaine Hyman
Corresponding Secretary: Geri Mickenberg

The Board of Trustees include:

Marvin Bolotsky
Harriet Burdock
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Committee Chairs are:

Print Selection: Dr. Leonard Moss
Membership: Marvin Bolotsky
Events: Dr. Muriel Moss
Newsletter: Arlyne Lesser
Publicity: Dorothy Kretchmer

All members are invited to communicate their suggestions as to the direction of the Club, comments on the programs and ideas for future events to the Officers, Board members and Committee Chairs.

What is Mat Burn and What Can be Done About it?

Laura Stirton Aust

Have you ever seen a dark brown line framing the margin of a print? What about a thick band of discoloration covering most of the margin? This staining is probably mat burn. Mat burn is caused by

an acidic window mat. It is the cut edge of the matboard which is most acidic and damaging to a print. Usually it is not terribly visible on a matted and framed print. But an acidic mat is a slow fire which burns the paper, marring its appearance and reducing its value.

Winterthur Museum paper conservator John Krill

Upcoming Print Club Events

Wednesday, November 17, 1999, 6:30 p.m.

Cheryl Palavin Fine Arts gallery, 13 Jay Street, in Tribeca (between Hudson and Greenwich Sts., three blocks north of Chambers St.). Artist Valentina Dubasky will discuss and demonstrate how monotype prints are created.

Tuesday, January 11, 2000, 7:30 p.m.

Frank Feldman who teaches Art Law at Columbia University will speak on "Stolen Art: The Law Relating to Stolen Art, Pros and Cons." The meeting will be held at the Liederkrantz Club, 6 East 87th Street.

Tuesday, February 8, 2000, 7:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion: "How to Evaluate Prints". Details will follow.

March will feature a trip to the Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper. Details will follow.

dates the first window mats to the 1850's at the British Museum. These mats were used on prints removed from books for framing. Before this time the display of prints was not fashionable. But, as framing prints became popular, acidic matboard began to make its mark. After almost a century of poor quality matboard stock, the paper company Andrews, Nelson, Whitehead started manufacturing a cream mat board which was all cotton. This was the first rag board meant to protect prints because it was acid-free. The demand for acid-free mat board increased as knowledge of preservation and conservation grew. In the late 1970's alpha cellulose boards were developed. These

mat boards are similar to rag board but are made from tree pulp which has been purified to remove lignin and other non-cellulose material. Acid-free or archival quality framing materials are expensive and used by many framers only upon request. Because non-archival matboard is still used today, and acid-free matboards have been in use for less than 50 years, mat burn in prints is extremely common.

Acid breaks down paper fibers, causing irreparable damage. To stop the chemical reaction of acid in paper, non-archival mats must be removed. Whether or not conservation treatment is necessary will depend upon the print, the strength of the paper and the stability of the media. Trying to restore a damaged print to its original appearance through bleaching may diminish what is visible of the mat burn. However, this will inevitably weaken the paper fibers. Therefore, bleaching should be considered only as the last option.

Most prints have a margin of several inches on top, bottom and sides. A window mat usually hides much of the margin and may also hide the mat burn. But some prints have little or no margin. These prints often look best "floated" on matboard in the frame without a window mat to hide the edges of the paper. On these pieces mat burn can be particularly disfiguring and take the eye away from the image. Bleaching of the stained areas may be the only way to visually recover the print.

If you think that you have acidic mats in your print collection, then have your framer remove the mats and replace them with acid-free materials. Or, call a conservator to survey your collection and advise you where to begin. Remember, getting an acidic mat off of a print is one of the most important steps in caring for your artwork. Isn't it time to put out the fire in your collection?

Laura Stirton Aust is a paper conservator. This is the second column of a planned regular feature to appear in the Print Club of New York newsletter. The next column will address Deacidification. Please send your conservation questions and concerns to the Newsletter Editor, Arlyne Lesser, 119 Buckingham Road, Tenafly, NJ 07670 for consideration in future issues.

Recent Membership Events

Jean Yves Noblet Speaks on New Printing Techniques

Arlyne Lesser

"There is no reason to be afraid of IRIS prints." This was the message which Print Club members who attended the May 20 meeting at the Karen McCready Fine Art gallery took away with them after a demonstration by master printer Jean Yves Noblet of how prints are made in this new medium. Starting with a photo he took of the group, Mr. Noblet then demonstrated how he collaborated with the artist first on the computer and then using the IRIS printer to attain a final, best image. The original image can be a photo, a drawing, a watercolor, even a three dimensional object which can be scanned into the computer. Working on the screen of the computer, the

artist is then free to change the color, color intensity, contrasting levels of color, perspective and size. He can scan in different elements to create a collage. The screen becomes his editing tool and the artist has the flexibility to directly add, delete and revise until he gets the exact image he wishes to print. The IRIS printer itself using four ink jets is able to control the color on each print within a 1% range, a better capability than silkscreen. The artist chooses the paper, which affects the final image, and almost anything that can fit on the printer's drum can be used for printing as well. Mr. Noblet has even printed on wood veneer, though this almost destroyed the machine because of the dust. Images can also be left on the drum and repeatedly printed until the intense colors and dense blacks the artist wishes are achieved.

Although the inks used in IRIS printing are not as permanent as those used in lithography, they now carry a 40 year warranty. Also, since the ink is water soluble, a var-

nish must be applied on the print in order to preserve it. Mr. Noblet believes that since so many artists are now using the IRIS printer, technical improvements in the process will follow. He likened the state of IRIS printing today to the issues raised when photography was in its early stages. He also likened the issue of edition size to that of photography, pointing out that the artist can limit the size of his edition, and, unlike lithography, can print the entire edition or single prints at a later time.

The flexibility and variety which the artist can achieve with the new technique was demonstrated in prints displayed at the McCready gallery such as Sandy Gellers, "Ocean Fragments, Parrot Fish, 99" an IRIS print on Somerset velvet or Rebecca Quayton's "Bookcase 1999" printed on wood veneer. Mr. Noblet concluded by emphasizing that these examples demonstrate that the IRIS print is indeed a print, and a highly complex rendering, but done in a new medium which will continue to advance both artistically and aesthetically.

Judith Brodsky Discusses the Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper

Arlyne Lesser

On Sept. 15, Judith Brodsky, Director of the Center for Innovative Print and Paper at the Mason Gross School of the Arts introduced Print Club members to the Center and presented a cross section of recent works created there. Ms. Brodsky founded the Center thirteen years ago. The Center, now housed in a new space a block from the main Rutgers campus provides comprehensive print and paper making facilities. Center projects are funded through external grants such as a recent State of New Jersey grant enabling four artists to do a print for exhibition dealing with Holocaust themes, a grant related to the State's mandate to teach Holocaust and genocide issues in schools.

The Center invites professional artists to spend two weeks in residence working with master printers and papermakers. Although they may have made prints before, many of the visiting artists who are primarily painters and sculptors did not identify themselves as printmakers. Others are introduced to printmaking at the Center and become fascinated with the complex, innovative techniques they are able to achieve when working with master printers. Ms. Brodsky noted that contemporary artists are attracted to printmaking as a way of developing complex ideas through layering and working in a modular framework. These visiting artists are chosen twice a year by the professional staff. The staff may also choose a theme and invite artists whose work they feel to be appropriate for this theme. Thus, the artists chosen for the Holocaust theme this past year included Melissa Gould and Philip Oronstein who had family experiences related to the Holocaust. Ms. Brodsky also noted that the Center has invited artists from different countries where identity issues are a concern for artists, including those from South Africa, the Pacific Rim, Eastern Europe and Russia. Scotch artists, too, are currently reflecting an identity problem. Scotland may secede from Britain, and artists are concerned with this issue. Both Glasgow and

Edinburgh have flourishing printmaking workshops, and Elspeth Lamb from Glasgow has been a visiting artist at the Center.

Editions printed at the Center are small, 28 in all, 20 of which are numbered, half going to the artist and half going to the Center where they are for sale. Seven prints bear the Rutgers impress and go into the Center and the Rutgers' archives. The Bon a Tirer print goes to the printer. Proofs belong to the artist and are labelled as such.

In addition to the visiting artists, six New Jersey artists out of 200 applicants are chosen yearly by a selection committee. Prints from these editions are deposited in collections throughout the state such as the Newark Public Library, the New Jersey State Museum, and the Montclair and Zimmerle Museums in order to aid these New Jersey artists become better known.

Although the Center provides a broad spectrum of printmaking techniques, most of the visiting artists have chosen to work on the Center's large lithographic presses. The Center uses plates rather than stone, and Ms. Brodsky commented that working with master printers the artists can get from the plate all of the effects they could get with the stone. Plates also enable the artist to make larger works and modular works, and these have a great appeal for the contemporary artist. Use of the plates for lithography has also opened up the use of new materials such as toner prints wherein toner is used as a drawing material on the plate. Other innovative techniques used at the Center include digital material and digital processing used as an aid in the process of creating a lithograph, complex layering using collés, three dimensional prints whose plates are deeply carved like an etching and pulp painting in which the artist works with the paper maker to incorporate the image directly into the paper so that the paper contributes to the aesthetic of the print.

Using slides and displaying a generous number of prints, Ms. Brodsky surveyed some of the recent work done by visiting artists at the Center. Among them were Faith Ringgold's depiction of African-American heroines making their own sunflower quilt in Van Gogh's sunflower field, and ignoring Van Gogh; Leon Golub's image of oppression in South Africa, a print which has been sold to major museums and was achieved through manipulating the image on a photocopying machine; Miriam Shapiro's homage to Frida Kahlo including colléd fabric and drawn flowers; Igor Makarevich's Pinocchio figure which embodies his image of all of Russia being fooled by lies; Juan Sanchez's combination of symbols from Puerto Rico's mythic ages and contemporary life; Michi Itami's Japanese-American family history using photos transferred onto the lithographic plate; Roger Shimamura's image embodying the conflict between Japanese and American culture created by using the computer for a clear line and then transferring the computer generated image onto the lithographic plate, and Sam Gilliam's three dimensional print created by carving heavily into the plate.

The number and variety of prints made by these visiting artists, their size, color and use of innovative paper and print making techniques invoked much comment and discussion by Club members. The prints in many

instances evoked exclamations of admiration for both the images and the technical dexterity which went into their creation. Members commented that they felt they were at the forefront of what is happening in the print world. Ms. Brodsky graciously answered questions and invited members to visit the Center. Responding to the enthusiasm of those who attended the meeting, the Program Committee chaired by Dr. Muriel Moss plans to schedule a meeting at the Center in the early spring. Given the excitement generated by these prints, members will find this future visit both informative and enjoyable.

Members View New Prints from Major Print Workshops at the LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies at Columbia University

Elaine Hyman

Print Club members who attended a special invitation on March 21 to view a unique exhibition of new prints at the LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies at Columbia University were rewarded with a fascinating afternoon. The Center, founded in 1995, with a six million dollar gift from LeRoy Neiman accommodates up to 200 students each year in graduate and undergraduate studies, and under Allan Hacklin, Director of the Center, is becoming a major university print center concentrating on exploring new

techniques, aiding artists who are still early in their careers, and working with major artists who will print at the Center.

The Center invited New York area and other printshops to show the prints on which they were currently working at an exhibition coinciding with a meeting of the Print Council of America, a group primarily made up of museum professionals. These new prints, never before exhibited, were hung salon style at the Center and Director Allan Hacklin and master printer, Kevin Falco took members through the exhibit as well as showing the facilities of the Center and explaining their goals.

The dominant impression from viewing the work being done at the many and varied printshops on display was the importance of innovative ideas. Artists are not afraid to expand and open themselves to fresh images and new techniques. The printshops in turn showed their willingness to work with the artists, using complex techniques and exploring all the resources available to the master printer in order to accomplish what the artist wished to convey. Many of the print workshops exhibiting at the Center were afterwards contacted by the Events Committee, headed by Dr. Muriel Moss, in their search for artists to be presented at the Print Club's annual Showcase presentation. These printshops graciously responded, and we wish to thank them for their helpfulness. Among these presses were Brand X Press, Palavin Editions, The Lower East Side Print Shop, Manhattan Graphics, Lothar Osterburg, K. Caraccio Printing Studio, Galamander Press and Solo Impressions.

Museum of Modern Art Forms a Young Print Collectors Group

The Museum of Modern Art has formed a new affiliate group, The Young Print Collectors. This group is designed to help young art-lovers thirty-five years of age or under to discover the world of prints, learn the "how to" of collecting, and gain special access to the Museum's resources. Organized by the Print Department's young curators, the Young Print Collectors meet six times a year for activities such as hands-on viewings of prints from the Museum's vast collection, talks with contemporary artists about their printed work, meetings with print specialists at the

major auction houses, question and answer sessions with print dealers and publishers at leading galleries, and visits to print workshops for printmaking demonstrations. Events begin with a cocktail reception. Members of the Young Print Collectors also receive monthly bulletins listing special events and print exhibitions on view in New York galleries and museums, as well as invitations to all MoMA print exhibition openings. To become a member or to receive further information, call the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books at The Museum of Modern Art at (212)708-9562.

Exhibition and Gallery Show Reviews

George Bellows Prints Exhibited at the Adelson Galleries

Elaine Hyman

The Adelson Galleries in New York City presented an exhibition from May 7 to June 5 highlighting George Bellows career as a printmaker. This exhibition of 40 lithographs entitled "George Bellows (1882-1925): Lithographs from the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Harold Rifkin" formed part of one of the world's largest private holdings of works on paper by Bellows.

Bellows was one of America's best loved artists. He was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1882 and left college in 1904 in order to come to New York and study with Robert Henri. A realist painter of gritty urban life, Bellows was part of Henri's Ashcan group. He became an accomplished artist at an early age and had many solo gallery shows. In 1909 at the age of 27 he was elected as an associate member of the National Academy of Design, the youngest man to receive this honour. In 1910-11 he taught at the Art Students' League; in 1912-18 he taught with Henri at the Ferrer School; and in 1913 he was made a full member of the National Academy. Bellows expanded his career in 1912 to include professional illustration, a field

that had also appealed to Winslow Homer and Childe Hassam. In 1916 he started printmaking, at a time when lithography was viewed in this country solely as a commercial medium. In 1918 he exhibited his first lithographs and he continued to print until his untimely death in 1925. During the last ten years of his life he completed 193 prints. Bellows commented that lithography allowed him to produce "the blackest black and whites on earth," and his prolific output as a printer was widely recognized and praised. At the time of his death he was considered the finest lithographer in the country.

Bellows' subjects varied greatly from scenes of his family and personal friends to sporting scenes, the famous boxing series, war scenes and renditions of urban life. Despite Bellows large stature and great physical strength, he was a pacifist and the war and boxing scenes were intended to show the cruelty of man.

The 40 lithographs in the Adelson show spanned his entire career, their depth and scope emphasized by the thematic rather than chronological arrangement of the exhibition. Among these were 16 prints from the boxing series including his most famous fight scene, "A Stag at Sharkey's" (1917), "Training Quarters" (1916) and "Dempsey Through the Ropes" (1923-24). His forceful image of himself as an artist, "Self-Portrait" (1921) shows him working on a lithograph stone, observing himself in a mirror, a reminder perhaps to the viewer of the difficulties faced by a printmaker who must work with a reversed image. Other notable prints in the exhibit were "Splinter Beach," (1916), Bellows urban image of nude bathers not in an idyllic setting but against a city landscape with boats in the river spewing smoke; and "The Black Hat" and "Polo Sketch" both from 1921, the former a quiet portrait of a woman and the latter a vivid, dynamic image of horses and men contending in a game of polo.

Among the excellent books written about George Bellows are the biography, *George Bellows, Painter of America*, by Charles Morgan, published by the Reynal Company, New York, 1965 and a catalogue raisonné, *The Lithographs of George Bellows* by Laura Maison. Despite his short life George Bellows achievement in art placed him as one of the great American artists.

Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and Print Collecting

Gillian Greenhill Hannum

"Abby Aldrich Rockefeller and Print Collecting: An Early Mission for MoMA" (The Museum of Modern Art, June 24-September 21, 1999) was a delight for print aficionados. Occupying three galleries on the museum's ground floor, the exhibition provided viewers with an insight into the collecting practices of one of the premiere American patrons of modern art in the first half of this century.

One of the three founders of MoMA (the others being Lillie P. Bliss and Mary Quinn Sullivan), Abby Aldrich Rockefeller (1874-1948) had a particular interest in prints, which she saw as a prime vehicle for raising interest in contemporary art. She was the driving force behind the

museum's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room, a behind-the-scenes area established in 1949 and open to the public by appointment, designated for the care and study of prints. Abby Rockefeller wanted to encourage the collecting of prints by museum visitors, both for its own reward and as a means of supporting living artists. She donated 1,600 of her own prints to MoMA to make her vision a reality. The exhibition this summer celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Print Room's inauguration.

The galleries for the show were specially arranged to mimic Mrs. Rockefeller's personal Art Deco print gallery, designed by Donald Deskey (who did interiors at Radio City Music Hall) and built in 1931 on the top floor of her home at 10 W. 54th Street. The location of this gallery, which was featured in a 1931 issue of *Vogue*, reflected the fact that her husband, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., disliked modern art. Nevertheless, her print gallery, despite its out-of-the-way location, reflected the latest design trends. It had gray Bakelite walls, streamlined furniture and a system of horizontal metal strips that held easily changed matted prints under sheets of glass. The MoMA exhibition included similar wall treatments and several examples of Art Deco furniture designed by Deskey. This, combined with the presence of enlarged photos of the 54th Street space, gave a good sense of what the Rockefeller print gallery must have looked like.

Abby had begun collecting prints about 1925, and she emphasized the work of living American artists. She bought from Weyhe Gallery, Keppel and Company, Kraushaar Gallery and The Downtown Gallery; indeed, Edith Halpert, owner and director of the Downtown, was a close friend and perhaps Mrs. Rockefeller's most trusted art advisor. The exhibition included catalogs and correspondence from these dealers as well as one of the collector's binders, in which she kept detailed records of her acquisitions.

The first room in the show was entirely given over to American work, the area in which Mrs. Rockefeller collected most actively. Most of the work was figurative or architectural, and much focused on New York City. Included were lithographs by Louis Lozowick, John Sloan, Stuart Davis, George Bellows, and Charles Sheeler, among others. The 1918 drypoint of "The Avenue of the Allies" by Childe Hassam was a gem. A selection of etchings by Sloan, Edward Hopper, and Reginald Marsh culminated in a wall featuring three etchings of New York scenes by John Marin which had originally been published by Alfred Stieglitz. Mrs. Rockefeller owned eleven Marin etchings in all.

The other two rooms in the exhibit featured European work and lithographs by the Mexican muralists, José Clemente Orozco, David Siqueiros and Diego Rivera, whose mural for Rockefeller Center was ordered destroyed by John D. Rockefeller because of its leftist content.

After American prints, it was French work, especially that of the late 19th century, that most appealed to Mrs. Rockefeller. She, like many of the French artists, responded to the flattened perspectives and juxtapositions of pattern inspired by Japanese woodblock prints. The MoMA show included two lithographs of women by Matisse and three by Degas—two café-concert scenes and one of a

bather drying herself. Degas completed 67 print compositions in his long career, and Rockefeller owned five of them.

She owned eight of the 78 prints executed by Gauguin, and four colored woodcuts of Tahitian subjects were included in the exhibition. From Rockefeller's collection of 40 works by Odilon Redon, the curator chose three lithographs, including *Béatrice*, a delicate and mysterious image of 1897 from the Vollard album, one of only two color lithographs executed by the artist. Seven color lithos by Toulouse-Lautrec rounded out the French selections. The great Spanish master, Pablo Picasso, was represented by two etchings, one drypoint and one lithograph.

Also included was an exquisite selection of work by German expressionist artists—mainly members of the Brücke group from Dresden—Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Otto Müller, Erich Heckel, Max Pechstein, and Emil Nolde. Mrs. Rockefeller once said Nolde made the greatest impression on her of all the German artists; she owned thirteen of his prints. She also collected work by independent expressionists Max Beckmann and Käthe Kollwitz.

Among the relatively few examples of pure abstraction in the show were a group of works in various media—drypoint, litho and woodcut—by Russian-born Vasily Kandinsky (1866-1944). Clearly, although she preferred figurative art, Mrs. Rockefeller was not afraid of avant-garde modernism. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller's collecting of European art was much influenced by the German-born art historian William Valentiner, whom she met in the mid 1920s. Valentiner went on to become Director of the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The exhibition provided an opportunity not only to see highlights from one of America's finest collections of late 19th and early 20th century prints, but also to understand how Mrs. Rockefeller went about building her collection, displaying it and, ultimately, sharing it with the public.

The Malleable Medium: Proofs, States and Variations in Prints

by Gillian Greenhill Hannum

Among the most interesting of the Spring 1999 print exhibitions in Manhattan galleries was a show mounted by Theodore B. Donson Ltd. at 24 West 57th Street. Entitled "The Malleable Medium: Proofs, States and Variations in Prints," the exhibit included examples of prints by well-known masters spanning a period of 500 years. The premise of the show was to demonstrate the various qualities of hand and mind brought to bear on the printmaking process. By showing several states or variations of the same image in close proximity, the exhibition provided insight into the choices artists are able to make while working with different printing techniques. The very informative wall labels and the handsome full-color catalog published in conjunction with The "Malleable Medium" added significantly to the show's educational value.

The earliest examples in the exhibit were two wood-

cuts by Albrecht Dürer of "The Birth of the Virgin." One was a proof, c. 1503-04, and the other was an impression from the 1511 edition of "Life of the Virgin." The comparison clearly revealed the ways in which the delicate woodblock broke down as a result of both storage and use. The proof was far more crisp and luminous.

A series of five variations of an etching and drypoint by Rembrandt of "The Descent from the Cross by Torchlight" of 1654 was also instructive. One print, with considerable burr, perfectly represented the artist's intent. A later impression from the late 17th or early 18th century was without burr; however, the plate (now in the Morgan Library), while showing some wear, remained in fairly good shape. A third, poor, late impression showed significant deterioration of the plate. The remaining two images included a hand-drawn copy and a 19th century photogravure reproduction. Various other Old Masters, including Anthony Van Dyck, Claude Lorrain and Piranesi were also represented, as was, of course, Goya.

Interesting examples by 19th century artists included two working proofs of two different states of "Femme vidant une brouette (Woman Emptying a Wheelbarrow)," an etching, drypoint and aquatint of 1880 by Pissarro. There were eleven states in all, but no edition was ever published. The comparison in the exhibit showed substantial reworking of the plate between States Nine and Ten and also the effects of printing on different papers.

Several comparisons of images by James Tissot included an impression of the cancelled plate of an 1876 drypoint, "Portrait of Mme. N..." (a portrait of the artist's lover, Kathleen Newton), demonstrating that the edition of salable prints was complete. Other leading 19th century masters represented in the show were Renoir, Bonnard, Roussel, Toulouse-Lautrec and Munch, the latter represented by two versions of his "Madonna (Liebendes Weib)," a lithograph of 1896-1902. An impression of the First State in black on pale green paper was compared with a later printing on Japan paper using black, blue and red ink, showing how the woman's hair had been reworked in the lower right. A particularly lovely lithograph from 1914, a portrait of "Miss Stuart" by Albert de Belleruche appeared in two proofs, one in brown ink and one in sanguine.

Picasso was the most featured artist in the exhibition, with versions of ten different prints included. His work also commanded the highest prices, \$120,000 being listed on the price sheet for several of his images. Lithographs, etchings and drypoints by the Spanish master were included. Other 20th century artists who were well represented were Vlaminck, Leger, Chagall, Miro and Dali, the last represented by a 1935 etching of "Fantastic Beach Scene," one of his finest prints. The original, uncanceled, copper plate was in the exhibition, along with two other impressions, one in black ink and one in cadmium red.

The most recent work in the show, and also the least expensive of the original prints, was by Robert Rauschenberg, the only living artist included. An impression of his 1997 mezzotint "Window at Dusk" (edition of 60) could be had for \$850. (The Rembrandt reproductions were priced at \$50 and \$100.) The Donson Gallery is one that serious print collectors will want to often visit.

Membership Notes

Board of Trustee member Harriet Burdock has presented the Paul Jenkins 1999 Presentation Print, "At Stroke of Midnight" to the New York Public Library print collection. This print is the first Jenkins work to enter the collection.

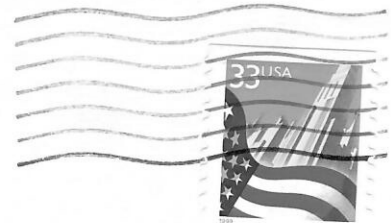
Many of our Print Club members attended or showed prints at Cleveland's Fine Print Fair, October 2-3, a benefit sponsored by the Print Club of Cleveland for the Department of Prints and Drawings of The Cleveland Museum of Art. Club President Julian Hyman and Recording Secretary Elaine Hyman attended. Members showing prints at the fair were Robert Newman, Sylvan Cole and James Goodfriend. Charles Rosenblatt was Co-Chairman of the event and David Kiehl, Curator of Prints at the Whitney Museum of Art spoke on "Prints I Dream About: Whistler to Rauschenberg." Also, Dr. Jane Glaubinger, Curator of Prints at the Cleveland Museum of Arts who lectured on "Introduction to Print Collecting" is

the daughter of Print Club member Raymond Glaubinger.

An interesting book which members may want to add to their list of books on prints was submitted by Alice Grieco. The book is entitled *The Great Wave: The Influence of Japanese Woodcuts on French Prints* Colta Feller Ives, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1974. Ms. Grieco writes that the author Colta Feller Ives was Associate Curator of Prints at the Metropolitan Museum of Art during the 1970's. The prints in this book were originally selected for an exhibition at the Museum in 1975. Examples of Ukiyo-e woodcuts were juxtaposed with French prints of the late 19th century. The purpose of the book is to illuminate in a very specific way what the Europeans gained from exposure to Japanese aesthetics. The artists studied are Manet, Degas, Cassat, Bonnard, Vuillard, Lautrec and Gauguin, alongside Japanese artists including Utamaro, Hokusai, Hiroshige, and Sharaku, among others.

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CORRECTED EDITION

