LIMITED EDITIONS

an exhibition of
original prints from the collection of

The Storm King Art Center

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The Print As An Original

To fully appreciate the implications of the words "limited edition" as applied to prints, one has first to understand the meaning of the term "original" as applied to fine graphics.

Before the advent of sophisticated printing processes, to speak of an original print was to indicate that the artist both conceived and executed it. These graphic creations should not be confused with printed reproductions of an existing work of art -- such as those often obtainable in museum sales shops.

Even that definition has had to remain flexible as artists widened their techniques. According to the Print Council of America (in 1961), the original print was a work of art that satisfied three criteria:

(1) The artist alone created the master image in or upon the plate, stone, wood block, or other material for the purpose of creating the print. (2) The print is made from the said material by the artist or pursuant to his directions. (3) The finished print is approved by the artist.

Today's graphic arts technology makes the first requirement obsolete. The Print Council no longer offers a definition, but some states legally require the seller to provide a statement that describes the artist's involvement in the creative process.

At the very least, the print signed by the artist indicates that he either supervised the printing process and/or approved the quality of the resultant print. It is even acceptable for an artist to sign in pencil a copy made by someone else of his work, provided the print is clearly labeled a copy.

Obviously, a photomechanical reproduction of an original work cannot be said to be an "original" and, consequently, has diminished esthetic and monetary worth.

The creator of the original print takes care to document his work. By limiting the number of prints he "pulls" from any block or plate, the artist increases the value of each print in that particular "edition."

The artist numbers each print with a fraction, such as 12/45. The numerator of the fraction announces the print's place in the quantity of the entire edition -- as indicated by the denominator of the fraction. The individual print number seldom corresponds to the actual order in which the print was pulled.

Occasionally one finds on the market a signed print that has no such number, but is labeled "A.P." Those initials signify "artist's proof," and the print may be of quality equal to those in the numbered edition and of no less value.

The addition of the artist's penciled signature to his prints is a practice less than a century old. It is his claim that the print is his work and that he approved the final appearance. Some artists may choose to sign their names in the plate or block, but this does not establish their approval of the appearance of a particular print.

An artist limits a given print edition by destroying -- or "cancelling" -- the plate or block. This assures that no subsequent prints can be made.

All of the prints in this collection from the Storm King Art Center are signed originals, in limited editions. They include direct prints, lithographs, etchings, silkscreens and aquatints.

The concept of printmaking in Western culture dates to the 15th Century and involves woodcuts, a *relief* process so-named because every area except the design itself is cut away. The projecting design is inked and transferred to paper under pressure. The opposite of a relief is an *intaglio,* wherein a design is incised below the plane surface of a metal plate. Ink is forced into the lines, and these ink channels are transferred to paper through a roller press under high pressure.

Those two methods comprise a duplication process known as "engraving." But a third method has grown up in modern times and is known as *planographic* or *surface* printing. The most common method in this category is the lithograph, a surface printing process that involves no cutting in the block or plate. Developed in 1798 by Alois Senefelder, the technique is based on the fact that water runs off a greasy surface. The artist draws his design on the stone or metal plate with a greasy chalk or crayon and then the stone is wetted. When the greasy ink is rolled on the stone, it sticks not to the wet parts, but to the portions already greasy. Paper is laid upon the inked surface and the image transferred through pressure.

In etching, a copper plate is covered with a resinous ground, impervious to acid, and then the etcher draws on the ground with a sharp instrument, exposing the copper wherever he wants a line to print. The plate is put in an acid bath, which eats away the exposed parts, then is removed and "stopped out" with varnish. This process of acid immersion and stopping may be repeated several times to develop lines of varying thickness. Ink is forced into the incised lines by roller and is transferred to paper under pressure.

The aquatint is developed in the same manner, except that the artist dusts the plate with a powdered resin which after acid submersion, produces gradations of tone in the plate -- coarse or fine as desired. The result is that a fine mist of ink is laid down in addition to the etched lines, thus giving the resultant print the appearance of having been tinted.

Silkscreen printing, or serigraphy, involves the principles of the stencil. Paint is brushed over a screen so that the paint penetrates those parts of the screen that have not been masked. Prints in several colors can be achieved by using successive masks on the same screen, while different colors are possible by printing one color over another.

Print expert Carl Zigrosser has remarked that printmaking is "a democratic form of art" in that it enables not one but many persons to own and enjoy the same piece of original art. The average person cannot afford regular expenditures of $1,000 or more for paintings, but for $100 he can purchase a fine original print in color or black and white.

Fine original prints, Mr. Zigrosser has noted, are really "multi-originals" in that they exist in more than one example, each of which is an original.

References

Felix Brunner. *A Handbook of Graphic Reproduction Processes.* New York, Hastings, 1962.

Riva Castleman. *Modern Art in Prints.* (With an essay on The Care and Preservation of Prints by Antoinette King.) New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1973.

Riva Castleman. *Technics and Creativity: Gemini G.E.L.* New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1971.

Carl Zigrosser and Christa M. Gaehde. *A Guide to the Collecting and Care of Original Prints.* New York, Crown, 1966.

Storm King Art Center

The Storm King Art Center, now in its sixteenth year, is located in Mountainville, New York. The Center received much of its initial support from Ralph E. Ogden and is now maintained by private contributions and public grants.

Open to the public April through October, the Center has achieved national recognition for its extensive sculpture collection. Thirteen works by David Smith form the nucleus of the holdings that include work by Alexander Calder, Kenneth Campbell, Hans Schlee, Max Bill, Mark Di Suvero, Anthony Caro, Barbara Hepworth, and others.

In recent years, under the guidance of former director Dorothy Mayhall, the Center has increased its paintings and graphics collection, the excellence of which is indicated by the work seen in this exhibition. Included in these holdings are works by Sloan, Marsh, Peterdi, Baskin, Chagall, Fuller, Nevelson and Chillida.

Frontpiece: "Bubble Blower" by John Clem Clarke (1970)

Prints in the Exhibition

ANNI ALBERS
U.S. born Berlin, Germany 1899
"TR I", 1969
silkscreen 1/44, 19 7/8" x 21 7/8"
PR 75.11

ANNI ALBERS
"TR II", 1970
silkscreen 1/45, 20" x 22"
PR 75.10

STEPHEN ANTONAKOS
U.S. born Greece 1925
"Madison", 1971
lithograph 6/10, 35" x 23"
GR 74.10.16

ENRIQUE CASTRO-CID
Santiago, Chile 1928
"Dislocated Landscape", 1968
lithograph 49/60, 22" x 27"
GR 74.10.8

JOHN CLEM CLARKE
Bend, Oregon 1937
"Bubble Blower", 1970
lithograph 42/90, 22" x 30"
GR 74.10.19

BEN CUNNINGHAM
Cripple Creek, Colorado 1904-1975
"Scarlet Tesseract", 1970
silkscreen on plastic (ed. 125), 30" x 30", 2 parts
GR 74.10.24

GENE DAVIS
Washington, D.C. 1920
"Black Watch", 1974
silkscreen 48/150, 72" x 45"
PR 75.15

DON EDDY
Long Beach, California 1944
"Rosen Bros. Strictly Kosher Meats and Poultry", 1973
lithograph 178/250, 27 1/2" x 22 1/2"
GR 74.10.14

SAM FRANCIS
San Mateo, California 1923
"Freshet"
silkscreen AP VI/100, 38 3/8" x 29 3/8"
PR 75.12

ROBERT GOODNOUGH
Cortland, New York 1917
"Pastel Color Statement", 1972
silkscreen 45/144, 80" x 40"
PR 75.20

SUSAN HALL
Reyes Station, California 1943
"The Carrot Salad", 1973
hand colored etching AP/30, 20 1/4" x 17"
PR 75.14

SUSAN HALL
"The Dinner", 1973
hand colored etching AP/12, 17 1/4" x 22 1/2"
PR 75.13

CHARLES HINMAN
Syracuse, New York 1932
"Banded Blocks", 1969
lithograph 33/60, 29" x 22 1/14"
GR 74.10.6

CHARLES HINMAN
"Color Wind", 1968
silkscreen 39/65, 29 1/2" x 21 1/2"
GR 74.10.7

ALFRED JENSEN
Guatemala City, Guatemala 1903
"Untitled", 1973
silkscreen 111/150, 35" x 35"
PR 75.22

ALFRED JENSEN
"Untitled", 1973
silkscreen 103/150, 35" x 35"
PR 75.23

ELLSWORTH KELLY
Newburgh, New York 1923

"Black-Green"
silkscreen 7/75, 23 1/4" x 19 1/8"
PR 75.28

ELLSWORTH KELLY
"Red Orange/Yellow/Blue", 1973
silkscreen 7/75, 42 1/2" x 30"
PR 75.40

LYMAN KIPP
Dobbs Ferry, New York 1929
"Untitled", 1973
direct print 1/1, 46" x 35"
PR 75.1

GERALD LAING
New Castle-on-Tyne, England 1936
"Swamp Rat IV", 1968
silkscreen 80/150, 23" x 35"
GR 74.10.4

GERALD LAING
"Third Skydiver", 1968
silkscreen 50/75, 35" x 23"
GR 74.10.5

RITA LETENDRE
Drummondville, Quebec, Canada 1928
"Twilight Phase III", 1972
silkscreen 1/50, 28" x 38"
GR 74.10.9

SOL LEWITT
Hartford, Connecticut 1928
"Four Color Horizontal", 1970
silkscreen 98/150, 18" x 40"
GR 74.10.17

SOL LEWITT
"Grid, Circles, Arcs From Four Sides and Four Corners", 1972
silkscreen 32/144, 72 1/2" x 40"
PR 75.19

SOL LEWITT
"Two Part Composite", 1971
silkscreen 29/60, 40" x 30"
GR 74.10.18

ROY LICHTENSTEIN
New York, New York 1923
"Modern Print", 1971
silkscreen AP XIV/200, 31" x 31"
PR 75.27

ROBERT MANGOLD
Tonawanda, New York 1937
"Portfolio of Seven Aquatints", 1973
aquatint 31/50, 27" x 22"
PR 75.51
PR 75.52
PR 75.53
PR 75.54
PR 75.55
PR 75.56
PR 75.57

NICHOLAS MARSICANO
Shenandoah, Pennsylvania 1914
"Untitled", 1973
silkscreen AP XIII, 35" x 27"
GR 74.10.25

ROBERT NATKIN
Chicago, Illinois 1930
"Apollo II", 1971
lithograph 109/125, 23 3/4" x 35 1/2"
PR 75.24

LOWELL NESBITT
Baltimore, Maryland 1933
"Lily With Stairs", 1968
silkscreen 31/75, 38 1/16" x 26 7/8"
GR 74.10.3

LOWELL NESBITT
"Poppy '74", 1974
silkscreen 3/175, 35" x 35"
GR 74.10.15

CLAES OLDENBURG
Stockholm, Sweden 1929
"Lake Union, Seattle, Washington" 1972
lithograph 94/300, 24 3/4" x 32 3/8"
PR 75.47

HENRY PEARSON
Kingston, North Carolina 1914

"Nuee Rouge-Ocre", 1968
lithograph 16/40, 29 1/2" x 21 3/4"
GR 74.10.2

KATHERINE PORTER
Iowa 1941
"Newport", 1972
silkscreen 17/144, 67 1/2" x 39 3/4"
PR 75.18

STEPHEN POSEN
St. Louis, Missouri 1939
"Untitled", 1972
lithograph 289/300, 34" x 24"
GR 74.10.22

BABE SHAPIRO
Irvington, New Jersey 1937
"Untitled", 1972
silkscreen 35/75, 35" x 35"
GR 74.10.26

ALAN SHIELDS
Lost Springs, Kansas 1944
"Rose Bowl", 1974
silkscreen 14/19, 19 1/2" in diameter
PR 75.45

ALAN SHIELDS
"untitled", 1973
silkscreen 66/144, 40" x 40"
PR 75.17

FRANK STELLA
Malden, Massachusetts 1936
"Club Onyx-Seven Steps", 1967
lithograph 81/100, 16" x 22"
PR 72.16

FRANK STELLA
"Lake City", 1972
lithograph 51/75, 16" x 22"
PR 72.18

FRANK STELLA
"Union Pacific", 1970
lithograph 40/75, 16" x 22"
PR 72.17

MARJORIE STRIDER
Guthrie, Oklahoma
"Nestle's Box", 1973
lithograph 27/30, 21" x 27"
GR 74.32

JACK TWORKOV
U.S. born Biala, Poland 1900
"Portfolio of Four Prints", 1973
silkscreen 10/25, 30" x 22"
GR 74.10.10
GR 74.10.11
GR 74.10.12
GR 74.10.13

JOHN WILLENBECHER
Macungie, Pennsylvania 1938
"Spectral", 1969
silkscreen 50/65, 28" x 28"
GR 74.10.1

WILLIAM T. WILLIAMS
U.S. 1942
"Four Prints; Untitled", 1970
silkscreen 51/144, 23 1/4" x 17 1/2"
PR 75.41
PR 75.42
PR 75.43
PR 75.44

LARRY ZOX
Des Moines, Iowa 1936
"Black Diamond Cut", 1968
silkscreen 50/75, 26" x 23"
GR 74.10.20

LARRY ZOX
"Orange Gemini", 1968
silkscreen 50/75, 26" x 23"
GR 74.10.21

LARRY ZOX
"Untitled", 1971
silkscreen 76/198, 80" x 40"
PR 75.16