

Artists Achieve Interesting Effects Through Printmaking

Reviewed by
Ilona Altshuler Weissman

Printmaking is not a recent discovery. Making prints can be traced back to primitive people who learned to incise on bone and wood. These when colored with natural pigment and stamped, produced the first "prints." But it wasn't until the 16th century when paper was produced in large enough quantities

for general use that printmaking became popular. Gradually, woodblock printing, then etching, became respected fine art forms. Lithography was invented in the 18th century. The techniques of usage remained fairly standard until this century. During the last decade or so artists have experimented with all these forms and discovered countless new ways of preparing the blocks, plates and stones to

achieve printed effects like no other in history. EXAMPLES OF these new technical approaches to printing are included in the current "Contemporary American Printmakers" exhibition at Little Gallery. Not all the artists included in this exhibit are primarily printmakers. Some are better known for their painting or sculpture, but it is interesting to see the effects

they achieve in this medium. Big-name, along with lesser-known artists are represented in a variety of prints ranging in style from realistic to non-objective. Here we describe some notable pieces. Joan Parrar, as seen in her metal collage "Ofertory," is one of many artists presently working to achieve a sculptured, three-dimensional effect in their etchings. One way of producing a raised surface effect, as explained to this writer by Theo Wujcik, is to weld objects to the plates and print with special spring presses which adjust themselves to surface heights. Caro Antreasian and M. Ponce De Leon are both well known artists who show examples of this technique in their work exhibited here.

OTHER NOTABLE pieces in this exhibit include Dick Swift's "Pillar of Salt," a color intaglio etching and John Dale's intricate little "Orange Temple," with its primitive symbols. "Bird, Figure and Animal," is another rich intaglio by Sajo Engel. Karl Schrag's circular "Snow Falling at Night" is a beautiful etching in blue. Detroit's own Robert Broder, an extremely talented artist, is represented by a monochromatic etching "Constellation," unfortunately, not one of his best works. Walter Rogalski's excellent engraving "Cock of Socrates," a detailed study of the head of a rooster, was recently reproduced in "Artist's Proof," the magazine of printmaking published by Pratt. It is interesting to note the difference between the reproduction and the original seen here.

UNFORGETTABLE pieces are "Death Among the Thistles" and "Bird in the Sun," by Leonard Baskin, one of America's outstanding printmakers. These are haunting works. Among the more traditional prints on display is Norma Morgan's "David in the Wilderness," an ambitious engraving. More works of this nature include black and white etchings by Jack Levine and Raphael Soyer whose names are synonymous with the art movements of the Thirties and Forties. These are studies of people. Ben Shahn is represented by a small uncharacteristic illustration from "Levana." A joint venture, and unusual because of this, is "Embattled Turkeys." It was designed by LeBrun and cut from the block by Baskin. Certainly a collector's item.

SAN FRANCISCO, a well-known figure in the world of painting, achieves some very free effects in his bright splattering "Hurrah for the Red, White and Blue." "Capriccio," a striking lithograph, is by another big-name painter, Robert Motherwell. "La Lune et La Montagne" is a bold lithograph by the man behind the mobile—Calder. Robert Goodenough, also a well-known painter,

is represented by a black and white lithograph study of three figures. OTHER LITHOGRAPH which deserve mention are John Levee's "L'Orage" and "Autumn." "Migration Upward" is an impressionistic study of birds in black and white by the old-time respected artist Adolph Dehn. A dramatic quality is found in Jack Bookbinder's realistic series of lithographs, also in black and white. When we think of American woodcut artists, we think of Irving Amen. His use of strong black line, his vivid colors and appealing subjects make him a popular artist. The particular piece in this show, "Pisa," is one of many that he did which deal with Italian subjects. This is a large exhibit with many prints, too numerous to mention. But among other works look for are those by Altman, Frascini, Hiroch, Paterni and Schwarzbinder's realistic series of lithographs, also in black and white. It is a strong collection worth paying a visit to. The show will be up through May 9.



"SKOGAN," SIGNED ORIGINAL WOODCUT BY BRUCE CARTER



"ARCHETYPE," COLLAGE BY PONCE DE LEON

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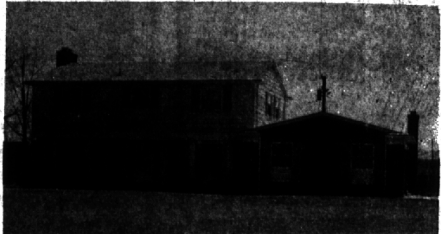
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