Selections from the

Anderson Graphic Arts Collection:

Contemporary Screenprints

FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO
Anderson Gallery of Contemporary Graphic Art
California Palace of the Legion of Honor
6 May – 23 August 1998

The prints in this exhibition are from the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, 655 works given to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in 1996 by Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson and their daughter, Mary Patricia Anderson Pence. Selections from this outstanding collection are featured in an ongoing series of exhibitions in the Anderson Gallery of Contemporary Graphic Art at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor. In addition, the collection is available for loan to small and midsize institutions in the western United States through the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection Sharing Program.

Contemporary Screenprints
by Karin Breuer, Associate Curator
Collection Manager, Anderson Graphic Arts Collection

Screenprinting, also called silkscreen or serigraphy, is a printing method in which a stencil is affixed to a screen or fine mesh fabric (traditionally silk, but now usually synthetics such as nylon or polyester). Ink or paint is forced through the screen onto a sheet of paper, passing through the open areas of the stencil. The ink is blocked in the area covered by the stencil and the corresponding area of the paper remains blank. There are three basic methods of making a screenprint stencil: the cut-stencil method, the block-out method, and the photographic method. Screenprinting differs fundamentally from other printmaking processes in that no press is required and, because the image is passed through a surface rather than transferred from a surface, there is no mirror reversal.

Screenprinting has come of age in the twentieth century. First patented in England in 1907, it was utilized almost exclusively for commercial purposes in the U.S. until the 1930s when it was promoted as an artistic medium in WPA graphic arts workshops. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s the screenprint struggled to find widespread acceptance among fine art printmakers, probably because of its commercial origins and associations.

Screenprinting enjoyed new popularity in the 1960s, however, when Pop artists recognized it as a medium well-suited to their imagery that was itself derived from advertising, packaging, and comic books. While there were some fine art screenprinting firms active in the U.S. during this period, artists such as Robert Indiana made most of his important screenprints in the 1960s with Domburger in Stuttgart. The photo-realist Richard Estes continued this practice in the 1970s, primarily because Domburger was so adept at handling his projects that often required over one hundred color screens.

By the early 1970s, screenprinting had found its way into American fine art publishing workshops, such as Gemini G.E.L., because of its adaptability for printing hard-edged, flat patterns and photographic manipulation. The use of the stencil process by artists as diverse as Frank Stella, Ken Price, and Robert Rauschenberg established screenprinting as a suitable vehicle for a broad range of artistic expression. In the work of these artists, screenprint was often combined with other media such as lithography, giving birth to a new breed of print called the combination or “combo” print. In combination prints, screenprint was often included because it was the best choice to achieve certain technical effects.

Radically new directions in screenprinting were demonstrated in the late 1970s and 1980s with work produced at Simca Print Artists in New York City. Simca, working with such artists as Jasper Johns and Jennifer Bartlett, had perfected the use of multiple screens to convey the artists’ multilayered, painterly approaches. Because of their much-hailed efforts, the screenprint no longer struggles with identification as a commercial rather than a fine art process. In the hands of American artists and their collaborators over the past thirty years, screenprint has reached new levels of subtlety and sophistication.

Exhibition Checklist

Unless otherwise noted, all prints are from the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, gift of the Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson Charitable Foundation. Sheet measurements for prints are in inches, height preceding width.

Anni Albers
Berlin, Germany 1899–1994 Orange, Connecticut

Blue Meander, 1970
Color screenprint, 27 3/8 x 23 7/8 in.
Published by Brooke Alexander, Inc., New York
Printed by Sirocco Screenprint Co.
1996.74.3

Josef Albers
Botrop, Germany 1888–1976 New Haven, Connecticut

Golden Gate from the portfolio Homage to the Square: Soft Edge, Hard Edge, 1965
Color screenprint, 17 x 17 1/16 in.
Published by Yves-Sillman, Inc., New Haven, Connecticut
Printed at Yves-Sillman, Inc.
1996.74.7.1

Jennifer Bartlett
b. Long Beach, California, 1941

Autumn, 1990, from the series The Four Seasons
Color screenprint, 33 x 34 3/4 in.
Copublished by the artist and Simca Print Artists, New York
Printed at Simca Print Artists
1996.74.32

Winter, 1991, from the series The Four Seasons
Color screenprint, 33 x 34 3/4 in.
Copublished by the artist and Simca Print Artists, New York
Printed at Simca Print Artists
1996.74.33

Jonathan Borofsky
b. Boston, Massachusetts, 1942

Molecule Men, 1982
Screenprint, 96 1/2 x 79 3/4 in.
Published by Gemini G. E. L., Los Angeles
Printed by Ron McPherson, Robert Sexton, and Ernie Garcia
1996.74.44

Richard Estes
b. Kewanee, Illinois, 1936

Urban Landscapes I, 1972
Portfolio of eight color screenprints, each 19 13/16 x 27 5/8 in.
Published by Parasol Press, Ltd., New York
Printed by Lutpfold Domberger at Domberger KG, Stuttgart
1996.74.105–112

Robert Indiana
b. New Castle, Indiana, 1928

Four, Five, and Six from the portfolio Numbers, 1968
Color screenprints, each 25 9/16 x 19 5/8 in.
Published by Edition Domberger, Bonlanden bei Stuttgart, and Galerie Schmela, Düsseldorf
Printed at Domberger KG, Bonlanden bei Stuttgart.
1996.74.192.4–6

Elsworth Kelly
b. Newburgh, New York, 1923

Two Whites and Black, 1973
Screenprint and embossing, 23 1/4 x 47 1/4 in.
Published by Gemini G. E. L., Los Angeles
Printed by Ron McPherson and Bruce Walker
1996.74.233

Ken Price
Figurine Cup VI from the Figurine Cup Series, 1970

Roy Lichtenstein

The River, from the series Landscapes, 1985
Color screenprint, lithograph, and woodcut, 40 1/8 x 55 1/2 in., Carlett 214
Published by Gemini G. E. L., Los Angeles
Printed by Serge Lozingot, Krystine Graziano, Ken Farley, Ron McPherson, Margot Andrew, and Raul Mendez
1996.74.268

Ken Price
b. Los Angeles, California, 1935

Figurine Cup III from the Figurine Cup Series, 1970
Color photo offset lithograph and screenprint, 18 1/2 x 15 in.
Published by Gemini G. E. L., Los Angeles
Printed by Adolf Riechner
1996.74.397

Figurine Cup IV from the Figurine Cup Series, 1970
Color lithograph and screenprint, 22 x 18 in.
Published by Gemini G. E. L., Los Angeles
Printed by Andrew Vlatedy
1996.74.398

Figurine Cup VI from the Figurine Cup Series, 1970
Color lithograph and screenprint, 22 x 18 in.
Published by Gemini G. E. L., Los Angeles
Printed by Charles Ritt
1996.74.400
Robert Rauschenberg  
b. Port Arthur, Texas, 1925  
**Cardbird I from the Cardbird Series**,  
1971  
Cardboard, paper, tape, photo offset lithograph, and screenprint, 45 x 30 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Jeff Wasserman  
1996.74.402

**Cardbird II from the Cardbird Series**,  
1971  
Cardboard, tape, steel staples, photo offset lithograph, and screenprint, 54 x 33 1/2 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Jeff Wasserman and Richard Ewen  
1996.74.403

Frank Stella  
b. Malden, Massachusetts, 1936  
**Bonne Bay from the Newfoundland Series**, 1970  
Color lithograph and silkscreen, 38 x 70 in., Axsom 55  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Stuart Henderson, Ron McPherson, and Jeff Wasserman  
1996.74.465

**Del Mar from the Race Track Series**, 1972  
Color screenprint, 20 1/4 x 80 1/8 in., Axsom 73  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Robert Dressen, Robert Kinsel, and Jeff Wasserman  
1996.74.469

**Los Alamitos from the Race Track Series**, 1972  
Color screenprint, 20 1/4 x 80 1/8 in., Axsom 74  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Robert Dressen, Bruce Walker, and Jeff Wasserman  
1996.74.467

**Agua Caliente from the Race Track Series**, 1972  
Color screenprint, 21 5/8 x 81 1/2 in., Axsom 75  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Bruce Walker, Jeff Wasserman, and Robert Kinsel  
1996.74.468

**Double Gray Scramble**, 1973  
Color screenprint, 29 x 50 3/4 in., Axsom 93  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Jeff Wasserman and Marie Porter  
Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson