PAPER TRAIL:
15th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE BURT CHERNOW GALLERIES

June 20 - July 23, 2012
HOUSATONIC MUSEUM OF ART
This catalogue was conceived in conjunction with the Housatonic Museum of Art’s temporary exhibition, Paper Trail: 15th Anniversary Celebration of the Burt Chernow Galleries, June 20-July 23, 2012. The culmination of a nearly year-long project to catalogue the Museum’s print collection, Paper Trail highlights the objects of note from the institution’s nearly 2,000 works on paper.

The Burt Chernow Galleries opened in 1997 as a dedicated space for changing exhibitions. Named after the late founder and Director Emeritus of the Housatonic Museum of Art, the galleries provide a location for the display of objects on loan or from the permanent collection. Since works on paper are most susceptible to damage from light, temperature and humidity, they cannot be on permanent view. With almost half the Museum’s collection in storage because it is on paper, it is fitting that an anniversary exhibition and catalogue should focus on these fragile works.

Selecting which works best represent the print collection of the Housatonic Museum of Art is no easy task. Many factors go into such a decision, including considerations that are specific to the work and considerations that relate to the collection as a whole. For object-specific criteria, one must consider the art historical value of the piece, the importance of the artist, the condition of the work, the quality of the impression, and the strong graphic nature of the art. For collection-specific criteria, one must make sure the breadth of the collection is represented with a variety of styles, media and historical time periods included, while also making the strengths of the Museum’s holdings clear. With so many factors to keep in mind, making a final decision on what to include is daunting. What has served as the best guide through this survey of the print collection is what we can learn from these objects. Since this Museum is part of a larger educational institution, the pedagogical value of each print has been of greatest relevance to me.

Maura Brennan
Curator of Prints and Drawings
Since the Housatonic Museum of Art’s founding in 1967, prints have been part of the collection. Although not a comprehensive representation of the history of printmaking, the holdings are noteworthy for a community college, and do touch upon the major artistic movements of the last few centuries. Offering a variety of media, the collection bridges the distance between the earliest Old Master print of the 15th century and contemporary work done in the last decade.

Assembled through a combination of purchases and gifts, the prints reflect an array of well-known styles, including Impressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, De Stijl, COBRA, and Abstract Expressionism, to name a few. Like most museums, over time certain artistic styles or artists become better represented than others. One such strength is the School of Paris, epitomized in the collection with works by Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall and Joan Miro. This loose grouping of artists that gathered in Paris after WWI was an amalgamation of nationalities, drawn together not by style, but rather by location. Members of the School of Paris enjoyed the exchange of creative ideas that the artistic mecca afforded them until the outbreak of WWII, when many fled to America.

Another strength of the Housatonic Museum of Art’s print collection lies in the work of artists of the 20th century, particularly those working in America in the 1960s and 1970s. Examples by Andy Warhol, James Rosenquist and Roy Lichtenstein serve as strong representations of Pop Art, while Ellsworth Kelly, Anni Albers and Victor Vasarely’s prints reflect Op Art’s visual concerns. Photorealism finds its expression through the work of Tom Blackwell and Robert Cottingham, while Stanley William Hayter and Gabor Peterdi’s prints demonstrate technical virtuosity in Abstraction, across the decades.

Most notable, however, are the contributions made specifically to printmaking that emerged during the 1960s at lithography workshops in California. With over 40 prints from Collector’s Press in San Francisco, and a whole portfolio from Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles, the Museum well represents these institutions’ efforts to encourage a new generation of artists to embrace the medium of lithography. Prints by Elaine de Kooning, Jose Luis Cuevas, Philip Guston and Nathan Oliveira represent the success of these important workshops.

In addition to strong holdings in particular styles or time periods, the collection also boasts caches of works by singular artists. With 50 prints by Enrico Baj, 20 by John Taylor Arms, and 15 by Lester Johnson, the Housatonic Museum of Art becomes a necessary stop for anyone interested in the work of these individuals.

Any discussion of the Museum’s prints would be incomplete without recognition of the influence of Burt and Ann Chernow. As Museum founder, Burt helped shape the permanent collection by giving numerous prints to the institution and encouraging many of his contacts in the art world to do the same. After his death, his wife Ann (a printmaker in her own right), continued supporting the Museum, and their mark on the collection is indelible. The success of their efforts and the Museum’s collecting practices is seen in the trail of works on paper left behind as a legacy.
Together with Georges Seurat, Signac developed the theories of Neo-Impressionism which combined the light and color of Impressionism with the scientific approach of Pointillism. Devoid of figures, this work exemplifies Signac’s favorite subject matter, boats. It also illustrates one of the inherent difficulties of printmaking—that is, that the image drawn on the plate is reversed in the printing process. Although the artist remembered to sign his name in reverse, he neglected to reverse the names of the boats, so they printed backwards.

Dürer stands as one of the giants in the history of art and printmaking. Recognized as one of the Northern Renaissance masters, he imbued his work with classical motifs that showed his knowledge of Italian art. This particular print has many interpretations, but some scholars see it as the artist’s 15th century representation of the mythological story, The Judgment of Paris. In the story, Paris judges a beauty contest between the goddesses Hera, Athena and Aphrodite. By choosing Aphrodite, Paris inadvertently causes the Trojan War and his own demise.
Honoré Daumier, French, 1808-1879
*Le Barbe Bleue Prussien se Disposant à Occire une Nouvelle Chambre from the Actualités series*, 1866
Lithograph
Gift of Robert Doty, 1970.3.3

Daumier made over 4,000 lithographs in his lifetime. Known for his scathing, political caricatures, he created images which were social commentaries on the times. This work depicts Otto von Bismarck, the Ambassador to France, hiding in the wings of Parliament, waiting to attack. Bismarck formed the German Confederation in 1866 and Daumier capitalized on this perceived threat to France. The artist lampooned the political leader in 55 of his lithographs.

Pablo Picasso, Spanish, 1881-1973
*Vallauris Painting and Light 10th Anniversary Exhibition Poster*, 1964
Linocut
Purchase, 1993.7.2.01

One of the most highly regarded and well-known artists of the 20th century, Picasso was a prolific, creative force, producing over 20,000 objects in his lifetime. A co-creator of Cubism with fellow artist, Georges Braque, Picasso was a key figure in The School of Paris and influenced countless artists. He was well-versed in all media, creating paintings, sculptures, drawings, ceramics and prints. This work was carved from a piece of linoleum and printed to advertise the 10th Anniversary Painting and Light Exhibition held in Vallauris, France. Vallauris is a small town on the Côte d’Azur where Picasso lived from 1948-1955. Known for its ceramic tradition, it is where Picasso first made pottery and where he practiced the linocut technique.
An early proponent of the engraving medium, Hayter opened a cooperative workshop in Paris in 1927 to ease the demands on time, labor and costs associated with printmaking. When the studio moved in 1933 to 17 rue Campagne-Première, the workshop took the name Atelier 17. At Hayter’s groundbreaking Atelier 17 studio, artists honed their skills in etching and engraving while reveling in a collaborative atmosphere of creativity. In 1940 Hayter moved the studio to New York where he experimented with printing color intaglias from only one plate. This was a major accomplishment, as prior to that, a separate plate had to be made for each color printed. Hayter shared his secrets in the studio and through his book, New Ways of Gravure.

The son of a rabbi, Baskin’s aesthetic was informed by his religious education. A committed artist at a young age, he had his first exhibition at age 17. He attended Yale University and the New School for Social Research, graduating in 1949. In 1950 he went abroad, studying in Paris and Florence. From 1953-1974 he taught printmaking and sculpture at Smith College. An author, illustrator, sculptor and printmaker, he founded Gehenna Press, a specialist in fine book production. Baskin was a prolific artist, credited with reviving monumental woodcuts, of which this is his first and most famous. Depicting a man trapped in barbed wire holding a struggling dove of peace, this work represents the genocide committed against the Jews by the Nazis.
Peterdi was among those artists working with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17, first in Paris and then later in New York. Beginning in the late 1940s the artist’s prints were dominated by gestural imagery, a sign of his exposure to Abstract Expressionism in America. Like Hayter, Peterdi was innovative, and he experimented with increasingly larger plates. Also seeking to produce multiple color prints from one pass through the press, he introduced the use of thin copperplates superimposed over the main plate and inked separately. Peterdi influenced a new generation of printmakers through his classes at the Brooklyn Museum and Hunter College. A major force in printmaking in America, the artist lived and worked right here in Connecticut, where he was a professor at Yale University.

The father of Op Art, Vasarely explored kinectics via the plastic arts. Juxtaposing areas of hard-edged, flat color in black and white or complementary colors, the artist sought to give the viewer a nontraditional experience of light, movement and illusion. The “Vega Series,” begun in 1968, was Vasarely’s source of artistic exploration for over ten years. A study in surface distortion, works from the series show the important link the artist saw between form and color. Vasarely began his “Vega Series” in paint, but later created prints through silkscreen. The crisp, hard edges possible through the screenprinting process translated the artist’s studies in paint quite well, and appealed to the artist’s penchant for making art accessible to everyone.
Alexander Archipenko, Ukrainian, active in France and United States, 1887-1964
*Meditation*, 1952
Lithograph and screenprint
Gift of Romola Dyson, 1986.6.2

Known primarily as a sculptor, Archipenko nevertheless made over fifty prints during his career. This rare impression not only represents the artist’s first attempt at reproducing one of his sculptures in print form, but also is the first print he ever made in mixed media. The work is a perfect representation of the abstracted economy of form that characterizes Archipenko’s sculptures. This print is based on a sculpture made by the artist in 1938.

John Taylor Arms, American, 1887-1953
*Porta del Paradiso, Venezia*, 1930
Etching
Gift of Henry Arms, 1976.15.7

While some etchers like Rembrandt and Whistler used plate tone and wiping techniques to instill shadow and emotion in their prints, Arms concentrated on the exacting detail the medium afforded him to produce outstanding works. He was a student of architecture who held both undergraduate and graduate degrees in the field, so his abilities as a draftsman were second nature. Known for his architectural subjects, he frequently worked in series. This print comes from the Italian series of 1929. In the 1920s Arms traveled throughout Europe, creating more than half the prints he made in his entire life.
Along with Andy Warhol, Lichtenstein was a key figure in the Pop Art movement of the 1960s. By elevating recognizable commercial forms like comic book pictures to the level of art, Pop artists made public commentaries on society, materialism and popular culture. Coming on the heels of the emotionally-charged Action Painting of the 1950s, artists like Lichtenstein reacted to Abstract Expressionism with artwork that was seemingly flat and devoid of feeling. With a limited palette comprised of primary colors, this print represents a simplification of form derived from commercial prototypes. Even the choice of medium, screenprinting, has inherent commercial associations as the traditional, preferred method for mass producing images on T-shirts.

An outstanding printmaker known for his monotypes, Oliveira was the West Coast’s answer to the non-objective, abstract art that came out of New York in the 1950s. A pioneer in the California Bay Area’s return to figuration, he shifted the tide in American painting. Oliveira created this print at Collector’s Press in San Francisco, working with Master Printer, Maurice Sanchez. Typical of his work, it combines the gestural strokes of Abstract Expressionism with the unmistakable representation of a human face. In 1965 he became a permanent member of the art department at Stanford where he created a printmaking program.
Elaine de Kooning, American, 1920-1989
Jardin de Luxembourg I, from “Tamarind Suite Fifteen,” 1977
Lithograph
Gift of Nicholas Krushenick, 1978.29.3

This work is part of a portfolio of prints created to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Tamarind Lithography Workshop. Founded by June Wayne in Los Angeles to introduce and encourage artists to use the lithography medium, Tamarind became a driving force in American printmaking. Renowned artists like de Kooning were invited for a six-week fellowship to try their hand at making lithographs in collaboration with master printmakers. As was often the case, artists who had never made prints before were inspired by their Tamarind experience to continue making lithographs. This print is typical of de Kooning’s abstracted style where she never fully abandons the human figure.

Enrico Baj, Italian, 1924-2003
La Duchessa Jolanda di Polignac, 1971
Lithograph
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Lust, 1978.18.20

Founder of the Movimento Nucleare, Baj sought to bring back the avant garde as a reaction to the situation after WWII. Using grotesque forms in the guise of military, political and social figures, the artist’s work served as an affront to the bourgeoisie. This impression is a unique proof with notes in the margins to the printer. While some of the inscriptions are erased and others are a bit too light to decipher, the Italian word eliminare is unmistakable in the center of the right margin, highlighting an area the artist wished to have removed.
A first generation Photorealist, Blackwell is a prolific artist with a large body of work. Photorealism was a movement that started in the late 1960s and advocated the use of photography in creating illusionistic images. Like the Pop Art movement that preceded it, Photorealism centered on banal, commercial subjects, with artists frequently depicting signs, store fronts or automobiles. This large print mimics Blackwell’s work in paint, which centers on the subjects of cars, planes and motorcycles. His prints evolved from large-scale canvases which featured shiny, metal objects attached to them that came from motorcycles.
10. Mary Cassatt, *Margot Wearing a Bonnet No. 3*, 1904, drypoint on cream paper, Gift of Student Government, 1969.23.2, 23.2 x 16 cm (plate)

11. Jacques Callot, *Temptation of St. Anthony*, 1635, etching on cream laid paper, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Burt Chernow, 1992.4.11.05, 35 x 45.1 cm (image)


13. Robert Cottingham, *Orph*, 1972, lithograph on paper, Gift of AT&T, 2011.19.09, 51 x 76.5 cm (image-sight)


15. Enrico Baj, *La Duchessa Jolanda di Polignac*, 1971, lithograph on cream wove paper, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Lust, 1978.18.20, 59.4 x 49 cm (image)


17. Albrecht Dürer, *The Four Witches*, 1497, engraving on cream laid paper, Gift of Stanley Manasevit, 1976.2.1, 18.5 x 12.6 cm (image-sight)

18. Anni Albers, *Do-Ci*, 1973, screenprint on cream laid paper, Gift of the Artist, 1974.7.1, 39 x 39 cm (image)


22. Adja Yunkers, *Third Dream of Infanta Isabella*, 1972, lithograph with embossing on cream wove paper, Gift of Naomi Lazard, 1973.30.40, 62.7 x 75.7 cm (image and sheet)

23. Bob Stanley, *Trees*, 1970, screenprint on cream wove paper, Gift of Katherine Goodman, 1980.46.1, 73.8 x 57 cm (image)

24. Honoré Daumier, *Le Barbe Bleue Prussien se Disposant à Occire une Nouvelle Chambre* from the Actualités series, 1866, lithograph on paper, Gift of Robert Doty, 1970.3.3, 24.8 x 22.5 cm (image)

25. Hans Bellmer, *Marionettes*, c. 1969, etching on paper, 1996.5.43.05, 25.3 x 28.2 cm (plate)

26. Paul Signac, *Boats on the Seine*, c. 1927, etching on buff paper, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Burt Chernow, 1978.20.2, 12.5 x 19 cm (plate)

27. Joan Miro, *Les Essencies de la Terra*, 1970, lithograph with hand coloring on cream paper, Gift of S. Herman Klarfeld, 1996.29.4.03, 48.3 x 35.6 cm (image)

28. Philip Guston, *Untitled*, 1963, lithograph on cream wove paper, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Kahn, 1982.5.1, 53.5 x 76.2 cm (image)


30. Gabor Peterdi, *Wings of the Ocean*, 1958, hard and soft-ground etching and engraving on cream paper, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Major, 1997.8.56.34, 57.8 x 80 cm (plate)

32. Pablo Picasso, *Vallauris Painting and Light* 10th Anniversary Exhibition Poster, 1964, linocut on cream paper, Purchase, 1993.7.2.01, 64 x 53.2 cm (image)


34. Federico Castellon, *Untitled* from the portfolio “Self-Portrait in Symbols,” 1965, lithograph on cream wove paper, Gift of Benjamin Weiss, 1967.19.8, 36 x 30.8 cm (image)

35. Allan D’Arcangelo, *Gulf Sunrise*, 1969, screenprint on paper, Gift of Dr. Sabre W. Calland, 1984.5.1, 58.6 x 63.3 cm (image-sight)

36. Maurice de Vlaminck, *La Mare*, 1927, etching on paper, 1981.34.1, 10.5 x 16.5 cm (plate)

37. Antonio Frasconi, *The Meadows I*, 1960, woodcut on paper, Gift of Harvey Koizim, 1970.5.1, 56.4 x 85.4 cm (image)

38. Henri Matisse, *Tête de Femme*, from Jules Romain’s *Pierre Levées*, 1948, lithograph on paper, Gift of Student Government, 1969.5.1, 20.5 x 14.8 cm (image)

39. Jose Luis Cuevas, *Title Page* from the series “Cuevas’ Comedies”, 1971, Gift of Naomi Lazard, 1973.30.1, 56.5 x 76.2 cm (image and sheet)


41. Kurt Seligmann, *The Riddle* from “The Myth of Oedipus,” 1944, etching on cream paper, Gift of Ann Chernow, 2010.4.01, 45.2 x 29.5 cm (plate)

42. Victor Vasarely, *Tri Vega*, from the “Vega Series,” screenprint on cream paper, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George Schonberg, 1984.3.1, 60.8 x 60.8 cm (image)


44. Romare Bearden, *The Open Door*, 1981, lithograph on cream paper, Gift of Bruce Cappels, 1991.19.115.03, 59.8 x 44.7 cm (image)


47. Pierre Soulages, *Composition*, from “The Official Arts Portfolio of the XXIV Olympiad,” 1988, lithograph on cream paper, Gift of Mark Greenstein, 1997.18.5.03, 73.7 x 54 cm (image)


49. Lester Johnson, *City Scene*, c. 1970, intaglio on cream paper, Gift of Dr. Lawrence Dubin, 1983.5.4, 19.1 x 18.8 cm (plate)

50. Burt Chernow, *In Art We Trust*, 1971, lithograph with pencil, colored pencil and collage on cream paper, Gift of Robbin Zella, 2006.4.01, 50.3 x 41.7 cm (image)

51. Ann Chernow, *In the Still of the Night*, 1980, lithograph on cream paper, 1982.23.3, 53.5 x 73.5 cm (image-sight)
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