MISCH KOHN

ARCHIVES
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The Philadelphia Museum of Art

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MISCH KOHN

"Misch Kohn's choice of profession"—as I had occasion to say in the foreword to his last exhibition in New York—"his activity as an artist of the printing press, somehow carries with it a suggestion of inevitability, of destiny. Destiny is admittedly a formidable and awesome word, but the artist's achievement is so compelling and his involvement in the graphic problem so direct and natural that one cannot imagine him as other than the distinguished graphic artist that he is. One might say that as a printmaker he is a natural."

Although he has painted in oil or water color from time to time, Misch Kohn's primary allegiance is to graphic art. He was born in Kokomo, Indiana, in 1916. He had no doubts about his career: he wanted to be an artist. He was encouraged by his parents, for they, underprivileged immigrants to this country, had a genuine love and respect for culture. His six sisters all studied music, and all of them went to college. At the age of eighteen, therefore, he went to Indianapolis, forty miles away, and enrolled in the John Herron Art Institute. The instruction there was modeled on the Beaux Arts Schools. The relation of art to architecture was stressed; problems in design were set up, mural projects and the like, but there was no instruction in graphic arts. It was when he saw an exhibition of prints by Käthe Kollwitz that he knew he wanted to be a printmaker. In his last year two teachers arrived from The Chicago Art Institute to set up a graphic workshop and give a five weeks' course. He helped install the presses, broke in lithographic rollers, and spent all his time in the shop. The two artist-teachers were Francis Chapin and Max Kahn; and with the latter he struck a lifelong friendship.

Soon after graduation he hitch-hiked to New York. Max Kahn had given him the names of Louis Lozowick and Theodore Roszak; Boris Artzybasheff was helpful and tried to get him commissions for illustrations. But the times were bad: even established artists were on relief. He did odd jobs as a house painter
or chauffeur. Meanwhile he went to exhibitions and looked at art; he frequented An American Place and had long talks with Alfred Stieglitz; he visited the studio of Gaston Lachaise, one of his great admirations, and met Madame Lachaise, for the artist himself had died a few years previously. Although New York was exciting and stimulating, living there was precarious. When Max Kahn invited him to come to Chicago in the autumn, he was soon thumbing his way to the Windy City. He arrived one morning at Max's studio dead tired, but, seeing a prepared stone ready, proceeded at once to make a lithograph, Sleeping Woman. (Plate i)

It did not take him long to become established in Chicago. He managed to get on the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. Norman MacLeish, brother of Archibald MacLeish, was the administrator. There happened to be a specially gifted group of artists working there at the time. Mitchell Siporin and Julio de Diego he met the first day, and he soon got to know Edward Millman, Aaron Bohrod, June Wayne, Adrian Troy, and Carl Hoeckner, who was head of the graphics section. For almost a year he shared a studio with Max Kahn, Eleanor Coen, and Isadore Weiner, until he took over Nelson Algren's studio in the heart of the slums. Kohn learned much from his fellow artists, the camaraderie and discussion in the studios, but especially through the opportunity just to work and experiment. This in the last analysis was the great benefit of the Project. Though some excellent prints were produced in the Chicago Division, notably the color lithographs of Max Kahn, most of the graphic work was apprentice work, that is to say, steps toward the mastery of technique and métier. For Kohn this was certainly true, and it was then that he began to lay the foundation of his subsequent technical proficiency. In other respects his early work was not especially distinguished, for it was not until later that he really found himself and his personal style. His work—and indeed almost all the work on the Project—was a reflection of the emotional climate and grim realities of the time. It was
the period of depression and unemployment, of critical examination of existing institutions, of the rise of Fascism and Nazism with their potentialities of aggression, war, and genocide. In art, social content was dominant and the Mexican School influential. Such prints as Wasteland (plate 4), John Brown (plate 2), Franz Biberkopf (a character in Alfred Döblin's proletarian novel Alexander Platz, plate 5), and the satiric Solomon Cucumber (plate 6), are typical examples of Kohn's participation in the Project.

Kohn was on the Project for about a year and a half. Then, after a year as a draftsman in a war plant, he decided to go to Mexico. He held an auction of his paintings and prints—Peter Pollock was the auctioneer—and with the proceeds he was on his way in November of 1943. Through Max Kahn, who had been in Mexico the previous year, he was introduced to the Taller de Grafica Popular, and in particular to such members as Alfredo Zalce, Leopoldo Mendez, and Pablo O'Higgins. He printed his stones in the common workshop. He also painted many watercolors, enraptured, as everyone is, by the profusion of color in the Mexican scene. Of lasting consequence, however, was his contact with Orozco. He would sit on the scaffold while the great artist would paint a huge mural with no preliminary studies except a shorthand sketch perhaps six inches square. The spontaneous and creative interaction between the mental concept and the exigencies of the material was the enduring lesson which Misch Kohn learned from this experience. He later became friendly with Diego Rivera, one bond between them being their common liking for Pre-Columbian art.

The year 1945, back in Chicago, brought commercial work and marriage. The succeeding years were fallow creatively, and his dissatisfaction with the involvement of commercial work mounted until in 1948 he made a break and swore he would do no more. The following year he started teaching at the Institute of Design, that school on Bauhaus principles which Moholy-Nagy had started on
a shoestring in 1937. In 1950 it became affiliated with the Illinois Institute of Technology as one of its branch schools. Kohn became head of the Department of Visual Design until he left for his Guggenheim Fellowship. He returned later as Associate Professor and Head of the Graphic Workshop.

It was in 1949 that he emerged as a mature and creative artist—a transformation as sudden and dramatic as that from pupa to butterfly. No doubt there were gradual developments which led up to this metamorphosis, but they were not at all obvious. Certainly the difference between the two wood engravings of 1948 and the first of 1949 is striking; the *King of Thule* was merely illustration without any spark; *Fantasy*, though the first of the large wood blocks, was fanciful without control; but *Bull Fight* (plate 10) was the first of a series of masterpieces that were innovations in many ways. Technically, they were innovations because of their large size, unprecedented for wood engraving; also because of their combination of minute textures and big over-all design, and because of the way in which they were printed, that is to say not in a regular woodcut press but in a lithographic press. As far as I know, no one had thought of printing wood engravings in a lithographic press. The size of the blocks and the pressure required made hand-rubbed printing not practical. Faced with the problem of using a press, he naturally turned to the one press he had, a lithograph press, to see if he could make it do. He found that there are advantages to the method, for it produces crisp, clean impressions under great pressure without the troublesome make-ready. Since large blocks are made by gluing together small pieces of end-grain boxwood, the technical difficulties increase in proportion to the area. There is always danger that the blocks will crack or break apart. One of his blocks (*Prisoners*, plate 12) broke after only five impressions had been taken. Another difficulty is the warping occasioned by the printing paper, which must be applied in an unusually damp state. The artist has found that he must give his blocks a rest after about six printings, and then counter-warp the block. In general he has
overcome all the difficulties posed by this unusual medium; and it was a tribute to his technical proficiency that later the famous printer, Mourlot, allowed him to use one of his lithographic presses when Kohn was in Paris on his Guggenheim Fellowship. The patron and the whole shop gathered around incredulously while he successfully demonstrated his printing method.

More important than these technical innovations, however, was the change in the artist’s outlook and creative approach. He suddenly revealed the largeness of conception, the universal utterance which bespeaks the mature and major artist. But before commenting specifically on his achievement, I should like to offer a few observations on prints in general. The millions of prints which have been made since the invention of the art obviously do not exhibit equal merit. The huge bulk of them are either utilitarian or reproductive. But even those which are made by artists can be arranged, it seems to me, in some scale of ultimate value. There are many prints which contribute to our knowledge of the past or of the world as it is, such as portraits, views, historical scenes, or illustrations of modes and manners. There are many prints in which the intent is decorative without further meaning. There are many prints in which the artist, motivated solely by self-expression, limits himself to a specific problem in color or composition, or the exposition of a private mythology in the fashionable mode. There are many which are, in the last analysis, derivative and based upon the accomplishment of others. But there are relatively few prints which may be said to exemplify the highest achievement of graphic art, the Great Tradition. Mantegna, Rembrandt, or Goya, for example, have made such prints, which combine memorable expression with great imaginative potential. They are trivial neither in meaning nor in execution. The specific illustrative observation has been merged in a synthesis of many impressions to produce a significant and symbolic statement. This generalized expression, the idioma universal of Goya, moreover, is always cast in an aesthetically pleasurable form. Such prints can be studied
at different levels, sometimes with sensuous delight in textures and patterns, in line and form, and sometimes, reflectively, in the probing of deeper and deeper meanings. Their affective potential is not exhausted by a single glance; they can be viewed again and again always to discover new beauties and new insights. They share with great poetry and great music the quality of transcendence. In them the artist bestows out of the fullness of his creative powers.

Misch Kohn is one of the few contemporary printmakers whose work approaches the high calibre of this great print tradition. The important phase of his work was inaugurated in 1949 with the large wood engravings Bull Fight and Tiger (plates 10 and 11). In contrast to his earlier and smaller engravings of bullfights (based upon his Mexican experience) Bull Fight is a full-rounded statement. It is not just another bullfight but a portrayal of the essential drama of life and death, a ritual ballet in which the elegance and precision of the matador and the power and fury of the bull play their part. In addition to the elemental savagery of the Tiger and the delightful interplay of minute textures, there are overtones of meditation on the nature of good and evil. A number of the engravings of this period seem to be occupied with themes of death and frustration, for instance also, Death Rides a Dark Horse, the frenzied Prisoners, Sleeping Soldier (is it sleep or death that is suggested?) and finally the notable Season In Hell that tortured drama of conflict within the self, as in Rimbaud’s poem (plates 13, 12, 14, 15).

His motifs, however, were not exclusively negative in character. He could also affirm splendidly, as in Mountain Climber (plate 16), based upon personal experience. Pageantry inspired some of his most striking work as in Kabuki Samurai (plate 20) and in a group of prints which led up to The City (plate 23) of 1957. During a sojourn in Italy, he had been impressed by the sumptuous pageantry of Italian life and art (Florence, Siena, Venice). These impressions were transformed and translated into such engravings as Three Visitors with Entourage (the
motif of the Three Kings), Processional, and Florentine Figure, and eventually built up to the monumental synthesis of The City in lithograph and wood engraving (plates 17, 21, 22, 23). The subject is not a modern industrial city but an evocation of a romantic past, the city of poetic imagination. With this masterpiece, the largest of his wood blocks, the production of big engravings more or less came to an end, not so much because his creative energy diminished, but because his supply of blocks ran out. The only available source of good boxwood is now behind the Iron Curtain. The discipline involved in cutting the big blocks was arduous, and the span of execution was long, especially since he never made complete or detailed preliminary sketches, relying on a certain amount of improvisation in contact with the actual material. It is astonishing how he could always hold the big design intact while executing minute passages of textured pattern. In his technique he found a precedent in the work of G. Aubert, a professional wood engraver who worked for the book publishers in translating drawings into wood engravings (Rouault's Cirque and Passion). Although he was a purely reproductive engraver, he was very inventive in the way he manipulated the material to create tones and vary textures. Kohn generally enjoys cutting the blocks; after the emotional and intellectual labor of conception and design, the physical labor of execution is a pleasure. Nevertheless, it is also an exacting discipline. To compensate for the tension and concentration, he painted a great deal during the wood engraving years.

He found a substitute for the wood block, or rather he discovered a new mode of expression—the metal plate. In 1956, he experimented with two small intaglio plates and the sugar-lift process. In the following year, after several more experiments, he burst forth full grown with the large and engaging Lion (plate 24). Working on metal with acid was more direct and spontaneous than cutting on wood; and he was fascinated by the calligraphic possibilities opened up by drawing on the plate with the viscous liquid which is the key to the sugar-lift aquatint
process. It is a positive drawing medium and can be manipulated in various ways: in all kinds of curls and swirls, or in haphazard or controlled dots and spots. He continued in the same exuberantly calligraphic vein with the heraldic Horseman, the playful Little Lion, and the imposing Oedipus (plates 25, 30, 36). In Prometheus (plate 35), the calligraphy is turned, as it were, into magnetic lines of force defining the figure and the gestures. Having played with lines and contours, the artist then tried to see if he could define form without linear emphasis, as in two prints of horses. The title of the first, Horse as Constellation (plate 32), gives a clue to the approach: an agglomeration of globules and spatters to eliminate hard edges and give the effect of floating freely in space. The method is especially fitting and effective in Colossus (plate 34), that terrifying personification of gigantism—mass, inchoate, insensate. There were still other variations. The big Lion had been printed in two ways, in intaglio as black on white, and in relief as light on dark. He continued his research in the latter method of printing metal plates as wood engravings in Three Kings (plate 26), a highly experimental plate with mixed methods, including etching and aquatint in twelve successive bittings to produce a three-dimensional recessive effect and a profusion of subtle textures.

His interest in the trappings of pageantry had another aspect—a fanciful consideration of ancestors. In 1958, he made an experimental plate of an Imaginary Ancestor, and followed this with a pair of imaginary portraits of his two grandfathers, Grandfather’s Mustache and The General (plates 28 and 29). The portraits, with their jolly bravura swirls, have an added technical interest. Most of the impressions were printed over collages of colored papers. The flat color notes add to the gaiety and also serve to destroy the naturalistic illusion of the portraits. Kohn continues to be interested in portraiture, both real and imaginary. Stephan, with its bristly incisive strokes, is a real person; and so is Oma—a compassionate portrait of old age, his wife’s grandmother in her nineties (plates 31 and 38).
In his intaglio prints, as in his wood engravings, Misch Kohn has thus made a tangible and important contribution, both technically and as visual communication. In his work, form and content are equally important. But with him the conception always comes first, the flash in his mind of an all-embracing idea. Then he makes drawings, one after another, searching for, elaborating on, or refining the original image. Sometimes he ends up with stacks of drawings (which he usually destroys) and an uncut block or plate. But in this way there is a winnowing process, eliminating the trivial and commonplace; also, the concept has a chance to grow and gather to itself overtones of added meaning. When he achieves the drawing which is the ultimate, he begins to work directly in the wood or metal, using the drawing only as the skeleton upon which to create flesh and blood. The procedure is fluid; details change constantly as he progresses, until, at the fateful moment, everything clicks in place. Only through a discipline which involves all the faculties can meaning and execution be rendered equally significant.

Misch Kohn belongs to no particular school. He is a modern artist, alert to all the tendencies of twentieth century culture, including expressionism and abstraction; but his creative motivation comes from within himself. He is a distinguished American printmaker working in the Great Tradition of graphic art.

Carl Zigrosser
CHECKLIST OF PRINTS

Note: Dimensions are given in inches, with height listed first. Because the expansion and contraction of paper is not uniform, one may expect to find a difference up to about one quarter inch between listed dimensions and those of individual prints. States of prints are listed only in one or two instances because the artist seldom places trial proofs on the market, even if occasionally trial proofs exist. Titles marked "Project" were made on the Chicago Division of the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration. Wood engravings are on boxwood, and etchings and aquatints on copper, unless otherwise specified. A few woodcuts, done in Indianapolis in the artist's student days, are not listed. The compiler is greatly indebted to the artist for data and information without which the catalogue could not have been made.

1939
1. SLEEPING WOMAN, lithograph, 18 3/4 x 14 1/2, 1939, edition 10
2. EXILES, woodcut, 7 5/8 x 13 3/8, 1939, (Project), edition 10
3. JOHN BROWN, woodcut, 8 1/8 x 6, 1939, (Project), edition 10

1940
4. CLOWN, four-color lithograph, 17 3/4 x 13 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 10
5. TAMAR'S DREAM, woodcut, 17 5/8 x 6 3/8, 1940, (Project), edition 18
6. THE FISHERMAN, four-color lithograph, 14 3/8 x 10 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 18
7. CELLO PLAYER, four-color lithograph, 18 x 12 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 20
8. GIRL WITHOUT VIOLIN, four-color lithograph, 18 3/4 x 10 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 18
9. CHICAGO, lithograph, 12 3/4 x 20 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 6
10. GOING HOME, four-color lithograph, 12 x 16 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 18
11. JOB, lithograph, 19 1/2 x 14 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 6
12. ELEGIE, four-color lithograph, 16 3/4 x 12 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 10 (trial proofs in monochrome exist)
13. THE PAINTER, lithograph, 8 x 4 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 10
14. WASTELAND, lithograph, 12 3/4 x 17 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 10
15. EXODUS, lithograph, 10 1/2 x 19 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 18
16. FRANZ BIBERKOPF, four-color lithograph, 19 3/8 x 10 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 19
17. "THEY ALSO SERVE", four-color lithograph, 11 x 14 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 11 (some of the prints were dated 1939 when signed)
18. LUCY CHAVEZ, four-color lithograph, 10 3/8 x 10 1/2, 1940, (Project), edition 5
19. WOMAN WITH RED JACKET, four-color lithograph, 12 x 8 1/4, 1940, (Project), edition 18

1941
20. SOLOMON CUCUMBER, four-color lithograph, 13 1/4 x 9, 1941, (Project), edition 18
21. ACROBATS, four-color lithograph, 11 x 8 3/4, 1941, (Project), edition 8
29. THE GENERAL, 1958
Wood engraving as practiced by the early exponents in America and abroad has seldom exceeded the format of the printed page and has been used mainly for book illustration or as a reproduction process. These uses of the medium naturally had a profound effect upon the artist's approach.

I have been attempting to overcome the limitations of the medium, so that I not only could engrave and print wood blocks of large size, but also widen the scope of the creative approach. I have solved the technical problems of printing large engravings, but more important than technical solutions, I find that my original conception of a work in progress constantly changes and develops to its final stage during the engraving process so that the design grows out of the inherent qualities of the wood block rather than having been superimposed upon the medium.

Misch Kohn

22. Polish Man, four-color lithograph, 17 1/2 x 12, 1941, (Project), edition 10
23. Chicago River (Bridge and Tugs), color lithograph, 9 3/8 x 11 3/4, 1941, (Project), edition 18
24. Woman in Magenta, three-color lithograph, 18 1/4 x 10 3/4, 1941, (Project), edition 18
25. Arletty, four-color lithograph, 17 1/4 x 11 1/8, 1941, (Project), edition 15
26. Lupe, four-color lithograph, 16 3/4 x 10 3/4, 1941, (Project), edition 18
27. Lake, Summer Steamers, four-color lithograph, 12 x 17 3/8, 1941, (Project), edition 18
28. Girl with Cat, four-color serigraph, 23 1/4 x 14 3/4, 1941, (Project), edition 10
30. Camouflage, four-color serigraph, 24 x 15, 1941, (Project), edition 10
31. Artist in His Studio, wood engraving, 6 1/4 x 3 1/2, 1941, (Project), edition 10
32. Pursuit of Freedom, a series of 16 small wood engravings for a book (see Prints in Publications)
33. Christmas Eve, five-color lithograph, 3 1/2 x 8 5/16, 1941, edition 165 (sent out as a Christmas greeting)

1942
34. The Mare, lithograph, 9 3/8 x 14, 1942, edition 18
35. The Park Is A Lonely Place This Day, lithograph, 10 3/4 x 8 3/4, 1942, edition 6
36. Creek in Winter, lithograph, 12 1/2 x 8, 1942, edition 10 (also called Winter in Park)

1943
38. The Studio (Artist and Wife with Gas Masks), lithograph, 13 3/4 x 19 3/4, 1943, edition 10
40. The River, lithograph, 10 3/4 x 16, 1943, edition 10
41. Uncle Harry, color lithograph, 15 1/4 x 11 1/4, 1943, edition 12
42. Machinist (Piece Work), woodcut, 10 x 8, 1943, edition 30
43. Street Scene, lithograph, 25 x 19, 1943, edition 10
44. Still Life, lithograph, 16 1/2 x 10 3/8, edition 5
45. Survivors, two-color lithograph, 10 3/4 x 11 3/4, 1943, edition 27 (included in the exhibition America in the War, sponsored by Artists for Victory, 1943, and shown simultaneously in twenty-six museums)
46. Parachutists, color lithograph, 18 x 10 1/2, 1943, edition 10
47. Landscape in Sicily, lithograph in sepia, 9 x 11 5/8, 1943, edition 10
48. Max (Kahn), lithograph, 8 1/2 x 5 3/4, 1943, edition 10
49. Junk Man, lithograph, 8 3/8 x 5 1/2, 1943, edition 10
50. Chicago Street Scene, lithograph, 7 x 9 1/4, 1943, edition 5

1944
51. Seated Woman, color lithograph, 14 1/2 x 8 1/2, 1944, edition 20
52. SEATED MEXICAN WOMAN, color lithograph, 14¼ x 8¼, 1944, edition 10
53. MEXICAN WOMAN, three-color lithograph, 14¼ x 8¼, 1944, edition 18
54. BLUE REBOZO, four-color lithograph, 13½ x 8¾, 1944, edition 18
55. MEXICAN LANDSCAPE (Pnwuatlan), two-color lithograph, 9½ x 13¾, 1944, edition 18 (the five above lithographs were printed at the Taller de Gráfica Popular in Mexico)
56. TWO MEXICAN WOMEN, wood engraving, 2½ x 4¼, 1944, edition 20
57. BULL, wood engraving, 2½ x 4¼, 1944, edition 20
58. MAN AND BULL, wood engraving, 4¼ x 6¼, 1944, edition 20
59. BULL FIGHT, wood engraving, 6¼ x 9½, 1944, edition 20
60. BULL FIGHTER, wood engraving, 4¾ x 3½, 1944, edition 20
61. BULL FIGHTER (Arruza), wood engraving, 10 x 3, 1944, edition 18
62. SAND, ROCKS, AND TREE STUMP, wood engraving, 3½ x 7½, 1944, edition 8
63. MAN WITH BIRD, color lithograph, 11½ x 7½, 1944, edition 16 (eight are in black and white only)
64. THE PARK LAGOON, three-color lithograph, 11 x 17½, 1944, edition 18

1945
65. THE CITY, four-color linoleum cut, 7½ x 4¾, 1945, edition 15 (abstract textile pattern)

1946
66. THE CITY IN BLACK AND IN WHITE, linoleum cut, 12 x 20, 1946, edition 30

1947
67. MARIONETTE DANCE, two-color linoleum cut, 14 x 12, 1947, edition 10
8 impressions on Peruvian linen (with considerable variation in shrinkage) and 2 on India paper. The actual size of the block is 14 x 12

1948
68. THE OLD KING OF THULE, wood engraving, 12½ x 9½, 1948, edition 10
(maple wood block)
69. FANTASY, wood engraving, 24 x 12, 1948, edition 39 (maple wood block)

1949
70. BULL FIGHT, wood engraving, 13½ x 23½, 1949, edition 30
71. TIGER, wood engraving, 16½ x 23½, 1949, edition 21
72. PRISONERS, wood engraving, 15¼ x 23½, 1949, edition 5
73. DEATH RIDES A DARK HORSE, wood engraving, 11½ x 15½, 1949, edition 30
74. STRUGGLE, wood engraving, 23½ x 15½, 1949, edition 30
75. TROO, wood engraving, 23 x 15½, 1949, edition 30

1950
76. MEDEA, wood engraving, 16½ x 22½, 1950, edition 30
77. FISHERMAN, wood engraving, 24 x 13½, 1950, edition 30
78. GLASS BLOWER, wood engraving, 27¾ x 16½, 1950, edition 30
79. TWO FISH, wood engraving, 4 x 6½, 1950, edition 30
(a few sent out as Christmas greetings)
1951
80. SLEEPING SOLDIER, wood engraving, 173/4 x 233/4, 1951, edition 30
81. PORTRAIT OF A CONTEMPORARY, wood engraving, 21 x 14, 1951, edition 30
82. SEASON IN HELL, wood engraving, 29 x 197/8, 1951, edition 30
83. MOUNTAIN CLIMBER, wood engraving, 273/4 x 101/2, 1951, edition 30
84. FALLEN HORSE, wood engraving, 101/4 x 14, 1951, edition 30

1952
85. THREE VISITORS WITH ENTOURAGE, wood engraving, 133/4 x 173/4, 1952, edition 30 (printed at Mourlot's in Paris)
86. BOWL OF FISH, lithograph, 113/4 x 16, 1952, edition 20 (printed at Clot's in Paris)
87. SEA STUDY, wood engraving, 133/4 x 173/4, 1952, edition 30 (printed at Mourlot's in Paris)

1953
88. HOSTILE LANDSCAPE, four-color lithograph, 133/4 x 183/4, 1953, edition 20 (printed at Clot's in Paris)
89. FISH, burin engraving, 8 x 30, 1953, edition 5 (printed in Atelier 17, Paris. There is a second state with addition of aquatint, also edition 5)
90. ECCE HOMO, wood engraving, 173/4 x 27, 1953, edition 5 (the block was planed off after a few impressions were taken and then used to cut the Phoenix composition)
91. HOSTILE LANDSCAPE, wood engraving, 83/4 x 273/4, 1953, edition 30 (printed at Mourlot's in Paris)

1954
92. PHOENIX, wood engraving, 173/4 x 27, 1953, edition 30 (printed at Mourlot's in Paris)
93. HORSEMAN, wood engraving, 43/4 x 33/4, 1953, edition 30 (this and the following blocks were cut in France but not printed until the artist's return to Chicago)
94. LANDSCAPE FORMS NO. 2, wood engraving, 53/4 x 113/4, 1953, edition 20 (this and the following number also appeared in the Student Independent. See Prints in Publications)
95. LANDSCAPE FORMS NO. 3, wood engraving, 73/4 x 5, 1953, edition 20 (see above)
96. LANDSCAPE, four-color lithograph, 133/4 x 183/4, 1953, edition 20 (printed in Paris)

1955
98. THE WARRIORS, wood engraving, 13 x 173/4, 1954, edition 30 (this and the succeeding wood blocks were printed in Chicago)
99. ECCE HOMO, wood engraving, 16 x 173/4, 1954, edition 30
100. LONG LANDSCAPE, wood engraving, 8 x 263/4, 1954, edition 30
101. NIGHT LANDSCAPE, wood engraving, 53/4 x 233/4, 1954, edition 30
102. CATHEDRAL NO. 1, wood engraving, 7 x 43/4, 1954, edition 60 (sent out as a Christmas greeting)
103. CATHEDRAL NO. 2, wood engraving, 83/4 x 83/4, 1954, edition 20
105. Cathedral No. 4, wood engraving, 9 3/4 x 6, 1954, edition 20
110. Chicken, wood engraving, 3 1/4 x 3 3/4, 1954, edition 60 (sent out as a Christmas greeting)
111. Head, wood engraving, 17 1/8 x 11 5/8, 1954, edition 30
1955
115. Cathedral No. 5, wood engraving, 10 3/4 x 6 3/4, 1955, edition 30
116. Prometheus, wood engraving, 8 3/4 x 9, 1955, edition 30
1956
119. Florentine Figure, etching on zinc, 16 x 9 3/4, 1956, edition 30
120. Processional, etching, 7 3/4 x 14 3/4, 1956, edition 30
121. Florentine Figure, wood engraving, 15 3/4 x 8 3/4, 1956, edition 30
1957
122. Costumed Figure, etching on zinc, 19 5/8 x 8, 1957, edition 15
126. Horseman (Herald), sugar-lift aquatint on zinc, 20 x 16, 1957, edition 30
127. My Other Ancestor, mixed method, 19 1/8 x 15 3/4, 1957, edition 10 (regular and sugar-lift aquatint, printed in relief)
128. Three Kings, mixed method, 28 x 22, 1957, edition 30 (regular and sugar-lift aquatint, printed in relief)
129. Wild Onion, etching, 18 x 6, 1957, edition 30
130. Bird, wood engraving, 4 x 6, 1957, edition 60 (sent out as Christmas greeting)
131. Three Kings, wood engraving, 13 1/4 x 4 3/4, 1957, edition 60 (sent out as Christmas greeting)
1958
133. Grandfather's Mustache, sugar-lift aquatint, 17 x 9, 1958, edition 30 (most
impressions printed over a collage of
colored papers)

134. IMAGINARY ANCESTOR, sugar-lift aquatint, 20×13¼, 1958, edition 30
135. THE GENERAL, sugar-lift aquatint, 17×9, 1958, edition 30 (most impressions
printed over a collage of colored papers)
136. A GARDEN, etching, 15⅝×19⅝, 1958, edition 30
137. THE LITTLE HERALD, sugar-lift aquatint, 12×7⅛, 1958, edition 30
138. UNCLE V, etching and aquatint, 18¼×11¾, 1958, edition 30 (the width of the
lines necessitated aquatinting, although the image is in straight line-etching)
139. LITTLE LION, sugar-lift aquatint, 14×17, 1958, edition 30 (most impressions
printed over a collage of colored papers)
140. THREE KINGS, wood engraving, 10¾×6¾, 1958, edition 10
141. BAROQUE FIGURE, wood engraving, 27¾×8¾, 1958, edition 30
142. SIGMUND, etching and mixed methods, 16¾×13¼, 1958, edition 10 (direct
etching over spit-bitten aquatint; spit biting is painting with brush and acid
over aquatint ground)
143. STEPHAN, sugar-lift aquatint on zinc, 17¾×15, 1958, edition 15
144. MARGARET, etching and aquatint, 14¼×9¾, 1958, edition 30
145. ROOSTER, sugar-lift aquatint, 14×19½, 1958, edition 30

1959

146. JOB, wood engraving, 23⅝×13¾, 1959, edition 10
147. GIANT, sugar-lift aquatint on zinc, 24×20, 1959, edition 30
148. GOLIATH, sugar-lift aquatint, 24×20, 1959, edition 30
149. HORSE AS CONSTELLATION, sugar-lift aquatint, 17¾×19½, 1959, edition 30
150. HORSE NO. 4, sugar-lift aquatint, 20×24, 1959, edition 30
151. COLOSSUS, sugar-lift aquatint, 32×20, 1959, edition 30
152. JOB, sugar-lift aquatint, 24×20, 1959, edition 30
153. PROMETHEUS, sugar-lift aquatint on zinc, 18×22, 1959, edition 30
154. ABSALOM, sugar-lift aquatint, 20×15½, 1959, edition 30
155. OEDIPUS, sugar-lift aquatint on zinc, 32¼×21¼, 1959, edition 30
156. BASKETBALL, sugar-lift aquatint, 17×11, 1959, edition 30 (most impressions
printed over a collage of colored papers)

1960

157. OMA, hard ground etching on zinc, 24×20, 1960, edition 30
158. MAN, sugar-lift aquatint, 29⅝×19¾, 1960, edition 30
159. BARON VON Z, sugar-lift aquatint, 32¼×13¾, 1960, edition 50 (most
impressions printed over a collage of colored papers)
160. ADAM KADMON, etching, 30×20, 1960, edition 30
161. BATTLE OF THE TEN MEN, etching
aquatint, 15⅝×24, 1960, edition 30
CHRONOLOGY

1916  Born March 26th, Kokomo, Indiana, eldest son of seven children.
1934  Entered the John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis.
1939  Graduated with a degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts. Studied color lithography with Francis Chapin and Max Kahn.
1939-41  Worked on the W.P.A. Art Project in Chicago doing painting, wood engraving and color lithography.
1942  Taught at Indiana University, Summer Session.
1943-44  Spent a year in Mexico. Worked at the Taller de Grafica Popular. Contact with Orozco, Rivera, Mendes, and Zalce.
1948-49  Beginning of large wood engravings.
1949  Was taken up by the Weyhe Gallery in New York, which continues to handle his work today. Began teaching at the Institute of Design, Chicago, organizing the Graphic Workshop there.
1951  Head of Department of Visual Design.
1952  Guggenheim Fellowship for one year in France. While in Paris, invited to exhibit with Salon de Mai and with Jeune Gravure.
1953  Guggenheim Fellowship renewed but not used until February, 1955. Appointed Associate Professor at the Institute of Design, now part of the Illinois Institute of Technology.
1957  Taught at the University of Wisconsin, Summer Session.
1960  Awarded Tamarind Fellowship in Lithography.

PRINT AWARDS

1938  Indiana State Fair—2nd and 4th Prizes in Fine Arts
1940  Indiana State Fair—First Prize in Fine Arts
1941  National Exhibition of Contemporary Jewish Artists, Chicago—First Prize for oil painting
1941  Indiana State Fair—2nd and 5th Prizes in Fine Arts
1942  John Herron Art Institute Exhibition—Third Prize
1946  Indiana State Fair—Print Prize
1948  The Art Institute of Chicago: Chicago and Vicinity Exhibition—Town & Country Prize
1949  Pennsylvania Academy of The Fine Arts Exhibition—Alice McFadden Eyre Gold Medal
1949  Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1950  Northwest Printmakers Exhibition, Seattle—Purchase Prize
1950  Brooklyn Museum Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1950  Library of Congress, 8th National Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1951  Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1951  Brooklyn Museum Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1951  The Art Institute of Chicago:
Chicago and Vicinity Exhibition—Pauline Palmer Prize
1952 John Herron Art Institute Exhibition—Art Association Prize
1952 The Art Institute of Chicago: Chicago and Vicinity Exhibition—Renaissance Prize
1952 Pennsylvania Academy of The Fine Arts Exhibition—Pennell Medal
1954 John Herron Art Institute Exhibition—Art Association Prize
1955 Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1956 Boston Printmakers Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1956 National Academy of Design Exhibition—$200 Prize
1956 Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1958 Library of Congress Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1958 Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1958 The Art Institute of Chicago: Chicago and Vicinity Exhibition—Pauline Palmer Prize
1959 Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1959 Library of Congress Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1959 The Art Institute of Chicago: Chicago and Vicinity Exhibition—Pauline Palmer Prize
1959 Print Council of America Exhibition—Special Prize
1960 Philadelphia Print Club Exhibition—Purchase Prize
1960 Philadelphia Free Library Exhibition—Burr Memorial Gold Medal

ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS

1942 Indiana University, Bloomington, also 1952.
1943 Taller Grafica de Popular, Mexico City.
1950 Institute of Design, Chicago.
1951 The Art Institute of Chicago.
1953 ETC. Gallery, Chicago.
1954 Philadelphia Art Alliance.
1955 The Weyhe Gallery New York, also 1959; High School of Music and Art, New York; Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.
1956 Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri.
1957 Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles.
1958 Michigan State University, East Lansing; St. Mary’s College, South Bend, Indiana.
1959 The Little Gallery, Chicago.
1960 Chicago Public Library; Brooks Memorial Gallery, Memphis; The University of Texas, Austin.
1961 Retrospective Exhibition circulated by The American Federation of Arts, opening at The Cincinnati Art Museum, January 16.

WORK IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

UNITED STATES:
Akron Art Institute
Albion College
Allegheny College
Art Institute of Chicago
Baltimore Museum of Art
Boston Public Library
Brooklyn Museum
Brooks Memorial Gallery
Brown University
Cincinnati Art Museum
City Art Museum
Corning Museum of Glass
Free Library of Philadelphia
Fogg Art Museum
Library of Congress
Los Angeles County Museum
Louisiana State University
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Montclair State College
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Museum of Modern Art, New York
National Gallery of Art, Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection
New York Public Library
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Rochester Memorial Art Gallery
Seattle Museum of Art
Smithsonian Institution
University of California at Berkeley
University of Michigan
University of Nebraska
University of Southern Illinois
University of Texas
University of Wisconsin
Walker Art Center
Wesleyan University

FOREIGN COLLECTIONS:
Bezalel National Museum, Jerusalem
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
Ministère des Arts et des Lettres, Paris
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyons, France
Musée National d’Art Moderne, Paris
Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro
Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo
National Museum, Stockholm
Slade School, University of London
United States Information Service: Nine American Embassies abroad
Victoria Museum, Melbourne

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY
References are arranged alphabetically by author or title, with exhibition catalogs listed under the name of the city in which the museum or gallery is located. The place of publication of books is New York unless otherwise noted.

Abbreviations: Ag August, Am American, April 1938, D December, F February, il illustration(s), ja January, je June, j j July, Mr March, My May, N November, O October, p page(s), por portrait, S September.

BOOKS
Heller, Jules: Printmaking Today, 1958, p 75. i il.
Pennsylvania State University: Prints and Printmaking, a study discussion manual, 1960, i il.
Peterdi, Gabor: Printmaking, 1959, p 267, 270.
Wick, Peter A.: Modern Prints, a Picture Book, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1955, Fig. 26.

PERIODICALS
Drummond, Dorothy: Coast-to-Coast. Art Digest 27:11 N 15, 1952. 1 il.
Indiana's First Biennial. Art Digest 26:11 Je 1952. 1 il.
———: New Expressions in Fine Printmaking. Brooklyn Museum Bulletin 15:6, 7 Fall 1952. 3 il.
Section on Graphic Arts. Tiger's Eye 1:20 Je 1949. 1 il.

EXHIBITION CATALOGS
Bombay, India. Auspices of U.S.I.S. American Graphic Art, Frontispiece.
Bordighera, Italy. IV Mostra di Pittura Americana, 1957. Nos. 71, 72.
Brooklyn, N.Y. The Brooklyn Museum,
Introduction by Una E. Johnson. p 22, 23, 44, 46, il. 9, 10, 11.
_Fifty Contemporary Printmakers_. Nos. 74–78.
Front cover.
_The Biennial of Prints, 1960._
No. 406, il. on title page.
_Modern American Graphic Art_. No. 19.
Front and back cover.
Indianapolis, Ind. John Herron Art Museum.
_Xylon._
_Nos. 649–653._
_Nos. 574–576._
_Prints 1942–1952_, selected by four leading Print Curators. _Tiger_ was chosen by three, and _Death Rides a Dark Horse_ by the fourth.
Frontispiece.
_Prints: Miss Kohn 1949–1959._ Foreword by Carl Zigrosser. 5 il.
_Between Two Wars: Prints by American Artists 1914–1941._ No. 204.

Print Council of America, _American Prints Today 1959_. Nos. 28, 29.
Rome, Italy. Calcografia Nazionale. _Incisioni degli Stati Uniti_ arranged by A. W. Heintzelman. No. 65 and cover.
Salzburg, Austria. Galerie: _Kunst der Gegenwart 1952_. _Internationale Graphik._

**PRINTS IN PUBLICATIONS**

The Pursuit of Freedom, sixteen small wood engravings for the book of that name; consisting of a frontispiece (3×4), title page ornament (3×1½) and fourteen chapter headings (each 2½×4) with the following titles: I Pursuit of Freedom, II Freedom of Religion, III Freedom of the Press, IV Censorship, V Academic Freedom, VI Rights of
Political Minorities, VII Freedom without Equality, VIII Rights of Aliens, IX Anti-Semitism, X Organized Mob Violence, XI Unconstitutional Police Methods, XII Rights of Unemployed, XIII Rights of Labor, XIV Freedom of Conscience. The series was started on the Project in 1941, interrupted by its liquidation, and finally published by Chicago Civil Liberties Committee in 1942 under the title The Pursuit of Freedom, a History of Civil Liberty in Illinois 1787—1942. Eight sets of proofs were printed on China paper. The illustrations in the book are from the original blocks but are poorly printed.

Announcement for Exhibition at The Chicago Art Institute, wood engraving, 4 x 3 3/4, 1951 edition 200.


The Student Independent, a book published by the design students of the Illinois Institute of Design, and containing original prints made by the class, along with two wood engravings by their teacher, Misch Kahn (see check list numbers 94, 95), and a third print (3 3/4 x 11) which, being a zinc reproduction, does not count as an original, small folio, Fall 1953, edition 500.


Announcement for Exhibition at the Little Gallery, Chicago (Mrs. Carl Schneewind), sugar-lift aquatint, 4 3/4 x 5, 1939, edition 300.

CATALOG

All works in the exhibition are illustrated. Dimensions are in inches. Height precedes width. All works are lent by the artist, unless otherwise indicated. Many of the prints are for sale and may be obtained from the artist or his authorized dealer, The Wayhe Gallery, New York City. Number in parentheses refers to checklist number.

1. SLEEPING WOMAN, 1939, lithograph, 18 3/8 x 14 3/4 (1)
2. JOHN BROWN, 1939, woodcut, 8 3/4 x 6 (3)
3. CLOWN, 1940, four-color lithograph, 17 9/16 x 13 3/4 (4)
4. WASTELAND, 1940, lithograph, 13 3/4 x 17 9/16 (14)
5. FRANZ BERBERKOPF, 1940, four-color lithograph, 19 9/16 x 10 1/2 (16)
6. SOLOMON CUCUMBER, 1941, four-color lithograph, 11 3/4 x 9 (20)
7. MAN WITH PIPE, 1941, five-color serigraph, 2 3/8 x 14 3/8 (29)
8. BLUE REBOZO, 1944, four-color lithograph, 13 3/8 x 8 3/4 (34)
9. MEXICAN LANDSCAPE, 1944, two-color lithograph, 9 3/4 x 13 3/4 (55)
10. BULL FIGHT, 1949, wood engraving, 13 3/4 x 23 3/4 (70)
11. TIGER, 1949, wood engraving, 16 1/2 x 23 3/4 (71). Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Stanley W. Hayter.
12. PRISONERS, 1949, wood engraving, 13 3/4 x 23 3/4 (72)
13. DEATH RIDES A DARK HORSE, 1949, wood engraving, 11 3/8 x 13 3/4 (73)
14. SLEEPING SOLDIER, 1951, wood engraving, 17 3/8 x 23 3/8 (80)
15. SEASON IN HELL, 1951, wood engraving, 29 x 19 1/4 (81)
16. MOUNTAIN CLIMBER, 1951, wood engraving, 27 5/8 x 10 5/8 (83)
17. THREE VISITORS WITH ENTOURAGE, 1952, wood engraving, 13 5/8 x 17 1/4 (84)
18. HOSTILE LANDSCAPE, 1951, wood engraving, 8 3/8 x 27 5/8 (91)
20. KABUKI SAMURAI, 1955, wood engraving, 20 x 14 1/4 (144)
21. PROCESSIONAL, 1955, wood engraving, 4 1/4 x 11 3/4 (18)
22. FLORENTINE FIGURE, 1956, wood engraving, 13 5/8 x 8 1/2 (121)
23. THE CITY, 1957, lithograph, 20 1/4 x 36 3/4 (124)
24. LION, 1957, sugar-lift aquatint and burin, 17 5/8 x 29 1/2 (123)
25. HORSEMAN, 1957, sugar-lift aquatint, 10 x 16 (126)
26. THREE KINGS, 1957, mixed method, 28 x 22 (128)
27. THE CITY, 1957, wood engraving, 13 5/8 x 31 (132)
28. GRANDFATHER'S MUSTACHE, 1958, sugar-lift aquatint, 17 x 9 (133)
29. THE GENERAL, 1958, sugar-lift aquatint, 17 x 9 (135)
30. LITTLE LION, 1958, sugar-lift aquatint, 14 x 17 (139)
31. STEPHAN, 1958, sugar-lift aquatint, 17 5/8 x 15 (143)
32. HORSE AS CONSTELLATION, 1959, sugar-lift aquatint, 17 5/8 x 29 3/4 (149)
33. HORSE NO. 1, 1959, sugar-lift aquatint, 20 x 24 (150)
34. COLOSSUS, 1959, sugar-lift aquatint, 32 x 20 (151)
35. PROMETHEUS, 1959, sugar-lift aquatint, 18 x 33 (153)
36. OEDIPUS, 1959, sugar-lift aquatint, 20 x 15 3/4 (155)
37. BASKETBALL, 1959, sugar-lift aquatint, 17 x 12 (156)
38. OMA, 1960, hard-ground etching, 24 x 20 (157)
40. BARON VON Z, 1960, sugar-lift aquatint, 32 3/4 x 11 3/4 (159)
1. SLEEPING WOMAN, 1939
2. JOHN BROWN, 1939
3. **Clown**, 1940
4. **Wasteland**, 1940
5. FRANZ BIBERKOPF, 1940
6. SOLOMON CUCUMBER, 1941
7. MAN WITH PIPE, 1941
8. BLUE REBOZO, 1944
9. MEXICAN LANDSCAPE, 1944
12. PRISONERS, 1949
13. DEATH RIDES A DARK HORSE, 1949
14. SLEEPING SOLDIER, 1951
15. SEASON IN HELL, 1951

16. MOUNTAIN CLIMBER, 1951
17. THREE VISITORS WITH ENTOURAGE, 1952
18. HOSTILE LANDSCAPE, 1953
19. BARRIER, 1954
20. KABUKI SAMURAI, 1955
21. PROCESSIONAL, 1955
22. FLORENTINE FIGURE, 1956
23. THE CITY, 1957
24. LION, 1957
25. HORSEMAN, 1957
26. THREE KINGS, 1957
27. THE CITY, 1957
28. GRANDFATHER'S MUSTACHE, 1958
30. LITTLE LION, 1958
31. STEPHAN, 1958
32. HORSE AS CONSTELLATION, 1959
34. COLOSSUS, 1959
35. PROMETHEUS, 1959
36. OEDIPUS, 1939
37. BASKETBALL, 1959
38. OMA, 1960
39. MAN, 1960
40. BARON VON Z, 1960
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The purpose of the Federation is to cultivate the appreciation and foster the production
of art in America. This is carried out through a program of activities including
traveling exhibitions, publications, national and regional conferences and consultation
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