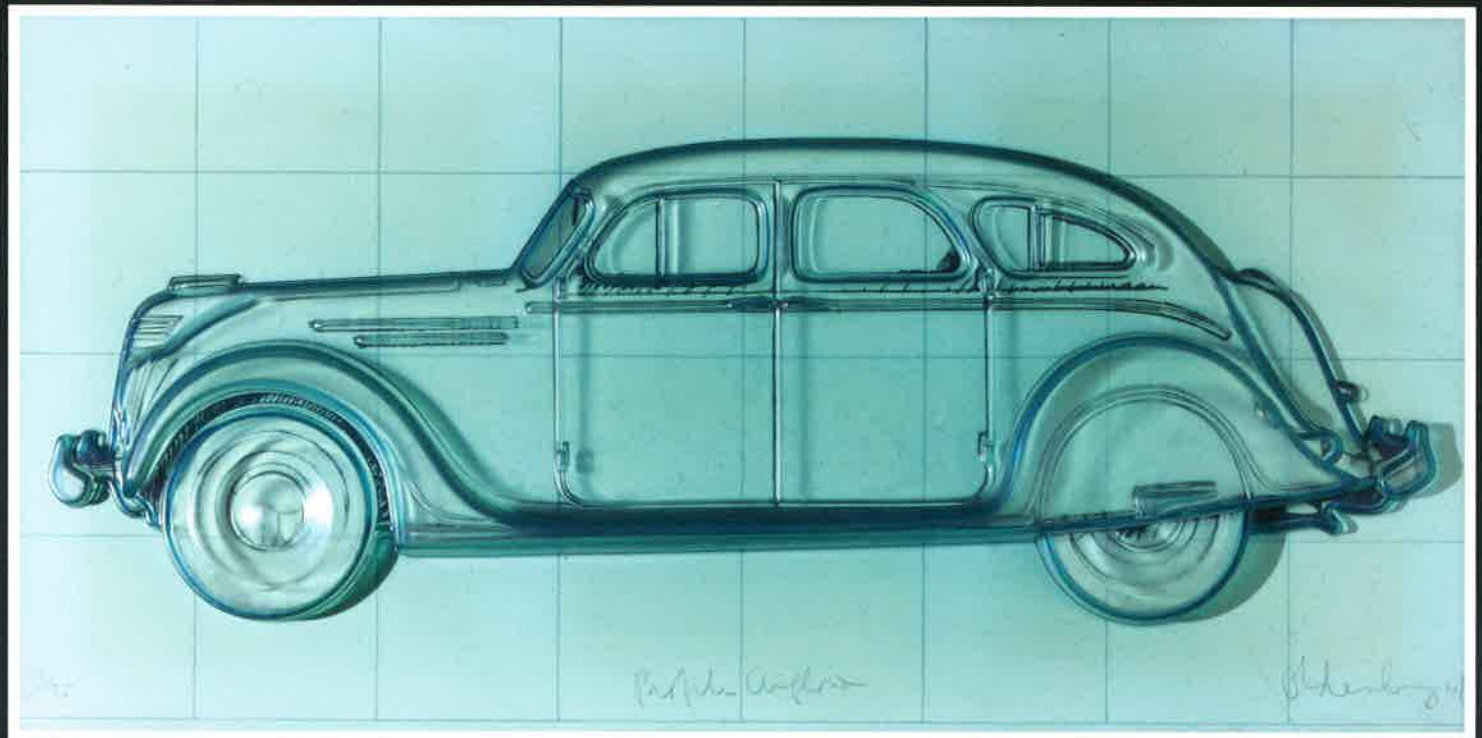


# New Dimensions

Prints and Multiples from the Anderson Collection



## Multiples at Gemini 1969–1972

When the Los Angeles–based Gemini G.E.L. relocated and enlarged its studio space in 1969, the artists' workshop and publisher was able to extend its working practice to include the production of multiples (small-scale sculptures produced in editions). It also expanded its program to explore printing on unconventional surfaces, such as aluminum and lead. The use of new materials resulted from Gemini's explorations in technological applications to fine-art practices, which sometimes led to advances in commercial applications as well. For approximately three years, Gemini printers worked actively in this vein, experimenting with any number of sculptural materials. All this came to an end with the departure of art fabricator and project manager Jeff Sanders from the shop in 1972; Gemini subsequently closed the sculpture workshop that it had operated in a rented building next to the primary studio. At the same time, the popularity of multiples was seemingly on the wane among art enthusiasts. As a result of personnel and financial changes, Gemini contracted all further sculptural projects with outside collaborators.

During the brief period when Gemini was making multiples onsite, many major art world figures of the day came to work at the press. Artists investigating the multiples format were often interested in breaking free from the expectations of previous art movements—specifically the physical evidence or "trace" of the artist as promoted by Abstract Expressionism—and Pop's machine aesthetic was a perfect complement. Popular culture was a topic worthy of creative expression, and such iconic figures as Disney's Mickey Mouse were subjected to independent artistic interpretation, as in Claes Oldenburg's *Geometric Mouse—Scale C* (1971). The simple, geometrical form is far removed from the playful cartoon character, and the anodized aluminum material further distances the reference to the world's most famous rodent.

### Claes Oldenburg



Claes Oldenburg, *Geometric Mouse—Scale C*, 1971

was found, polyurethane, that seemed to exhibit all the necessary properties. It wasn't long, however, before the transparent relief began to discolor. In true auto-industry fashion, a recall was placed on the entire edition of *Profile Airflow* (1969), and each was remade.

The original *Airflow* was conceived by Carl Breer, who drew inspiration from a squadron of Army Air Corps fighter planes that he mistook for a flock of geese flying overhead. Breer wondered why the design for airplanes was increasingly streamlined, while the automobile remained much as it had for decades. Breer subsequently designed the first "streamlined" car, which Chrysler produced from 1934 to 1937. In 1966, while working on a group of soft sculptures, Oldenburg had a chance to see one of the few surviving examples of this groundbreaking car and drew inspiration from its form.



Jasper Johns, *Bread*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969



Jasper Johns, *High School Days*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969

At the time, Oldenburg considered the car to be one of the mechanical forms closest to the human body, a subject that had long interested him. The natural movement of the body served as an inspiration for *Ice Bag—Scale B* (1971), a variant on Oldenburg's first mechanized kinetic sculpture: *Ice Bag—Scale A*, which was featured at the entrance to the United States pavilion at the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka, Japan, and revealed to the world some of the creative manufacturing technologies that American companies were developing at the time. The slow, almost imperceptible undulating movement of *Ice Bag—Scale B* mimics the body at rest, lungs slowly breathing in and out.

### Jasper Johns's Lead Reliefs

Using motifs such as the American flag that were familiar from his painted and printed works, Jasper Johns focused his attention during his time at Gemini G.E.L. on new materials, experimenting with the properties of sheet lead to create reliefs that are at once prints and bas-relief sculptures. Johns remembered his initial inspiration for his work at Gemini: "Ken Tyler told me that the shop was equipped to do embossing, and I thought to do in these reliefs what I had done in three dimensions, only suggesting a three-dimensional object in a not quite so three-dimensional way."<sup>2</sup>

To make the reliefs, Johns created the original models in wax and plaster. The team at Gemini then made molds of cast metal and epoxy. Soft, thin sheets of lead were placed over the molds and, with pressure applied from a hydraulic press, embossed with relief images (much like paper embossment). To support the thin lead and protect it from denting, the embossed sheet was subsequently affixed to a polystyrene backing and wood support. Finally, the layers were encased in a welded-aluminum frame made specifically for each work.

*Bread* was an anomaly in the *Lead Reliefs* series, not only in how it was made, but also in its depiction of a subject that Johns had not previously explored. Made of cast lead with rag paper embossed and laminated to its top surface, each bread slice in the edition was hand painted by Johns. The Gemini team chose this different method of production after the upper edge of the sheet kept fracturing when embossed with the hydraulic press during trials.

### Roy Lichtenstein's Modern Heads

During a visit to the Pasadena Art Museum in 1968, Lichtenstein saw an exhibition of portrait heads by the Russian Expressionist artist Alexei Jawlensky (1864–1941). Inspired by the modernity of the previous generation, Lichtenstein undertook to make his own versions of portrait heads using the latest technologies available to printmakers. He explained, "What interested me was—'what in the world a modern head could be about'—I mean to make a man look like a machine."<sup>3</sup>



Roy Lichtenstein, *Modern Head #1*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970



Roy Lichtenstein, *Modern Head #4*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970



Roy Lichtenstein, *Modern Head #5*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970



Roy Lichtenstein, *Modern Head Relief*, 1970

Lichtenstein integrated Pop's machine aesthetic with industrial materials and processes in the design for his series. To create *Modern Head #4*, Gemini was assisted by Angell Manufacturing in Los Angeles in engraving the anodized aluminum surface. A hydraulic press was used to emboss the graphite surface of *Modern Head #5*.

In many of his *Modern Head* works, Lichtenstein incorporated a commercial graphic device: benday dots. Such dots were a time-saving device in the hands of cartoon printers, who used manufactured transparent celluloid sheets covered in this motif to add texture and shading to their compositions. Benday dots had played a large role in Lichtenstein's painted and graphic works for nearly a decade, but in the sculptural forms taken for the Gemini work, their presence required sophisticated machine tooling eased by working at a publishing workshop like Gemini.

### Robert Rauschenberg's Cardbird Series

When Robert Rauschenberg moved from New York to Captiva, a small island off the coast of Florida, in the early 1970s, he noticed an abundance of cardboard boxes around him. He used this material as an inspiration for his *Cardbird Series*, in which cardboard serves as both the art image and the material. Referring to his medium as "a material of waste and softness,"<sup>4</sup> Rauschenberg alluded to the disposability of his chosen material in a consumerist society.

To make the series of eight (the other seven are smaller, wall-mounted pieces), photographs of real cardboard boxes were taken, transferred to offset, printed, and laminated onto another piece of cardboard. Shipping tape, labels, dirt, and oil stains were then carefully printed onto the surface. Finally, Rauschenberg applied rubber stamps and bills of lading to give the "cardboard" an additional patina.



Robert Rauschenberg, *Cardbird Door*, from the *Cardbird Series*, 1971

### More Multiples



Willem de Kooning, *Untitled*, 1972

Many artists working in the multiples format were intrigued by its immense production possibilities, which, by applying commercial techniques and materials to fine-arts ends, theoretically made multiples an art form accessible to all. In reality, however, multiples production was not quite as seamless as its proponents supposed, and the price often proved prohibitive for the mass market.

For his untitled Gemini multiple—related to a small-scale bronze that he had made in Rome three years earlier—Willem de Kooning eventually chose cast pewter, a more inexpensive material that would put his work more within reach of the general public. Accessibility was not necessarily his primary concern, however (just one hundred copies comprised the edition). Before settling on pewter, de Kooning experimented with a variety of metals, including silver, which corresponded to the Gemini dictate to use materials that were most suited to the artistic concept.

Along with other artists, Mark di Suvero was interested in the philosophical implications of a multiple, where the "original" could exist in numerous places simultaneously. In the display of his untitled multiple of 1972, this interest comes to the fore; since there are many possible configurations of the interlocking parts, di Suvero's work provides an opportunity for singularity through creative arrangement of its five torch-cut steel pieces.

#### Endnotes

1. Claes Oldenburg, *Multiples in Retrospect 1964–1990* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991): 84.
2. From an interview with Joseph E. Young on January 24, 1969, in Los Angeles, California, as reprinted in Joseph E. Young, "Jasper Johns' Lead-Relief Prints," *Artists Proof* 10 (1970): 36.
3. John Coplans, *Roy Lichtenstein: Graphics, Reliefs & Sculpture, 1969–1970* (Irvine: University of California, 1970): 10.
4. As quoted in Josef Helfenstein, "Introduction," in *Robert Rauschenberg: Cardboards and Related Pieces* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007): 11.



## Works in the Exhibition

Unless otherwise noted, all works are from the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection of the 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 preceding depth. When available, catalogue raisonné information is included following the medium description.

### **John Chamberlain** (American, 1927–2011)

#### *Le Molé*, 1971

Polyester resin, aluminum, and silicon oxide  
7 x 7 1/2 x 7 in.

Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Collaboration and supervision by Kenneth Tyler  
and Jeffrey Sanders, assisted by John Battenburg  
and James Robie  
Collection of Mary Patricia Anderson Pence

### **Willem de Kooning**

(American, b. Netherlands, 1904–1997)

#### *Untitled*, 1972

Cast pewter  
6 1/2 x 11 x 2 3/8 in.

Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Produced by Kenneth Tyler and Jeff Sanders,  
assisted by Tom Papaleo and Mel Schelbauer  
Collection of Mary Patricia Anderson Pence

### **Mark di Suvero** (American, b. China, 1933)

#### *Untitled*, 1972

Torch-cut steel  
10 x 8 x 2 in.

Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Produced by Jeff Sanders and Kenneth Tyler,  
assisted by Gary Reams  
Collection of Mary Patricia Anderson Pence

### **Jasper Johns** (American, b. 1930)

*Bread*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969  
Sheet-lead relief and embossed rag paper,  
hand painted by the artist, F.122

23 x 17 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Kenneth Tyler  
1996.74.215

*The Critic Smiles*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969  
Sheet-lead relief, cast gold, and tin leaf, F.119

23 x 17 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Kenneth Tyler  
1996.74.218

*Flag*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969  
Sheet-lead relief, F.120

17 x 23 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Kenneth Tyler  
1996.74.214

*High School Days*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969  
Sheet-lead relief with mirror, F.118

23 x 17 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Kenneth Tyler  
1996.74.216

*Light Bulb*, from the series *Lead Reliefs*, 1969  
Sheet-lead relief, F.121

39 x 17 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Kenneth Tyler  
1996.74.217

### **Ellsworth Kelly** (American, b. 1923)

#### *Mirrored Concorde*, 1972

Chrome-plated steel with oak base  
22 3/4 x 26 1/2 x 10 in. (sculpture)  
28 1/2 x 25 3/4 x 13 1/2 in. (base)  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Edition produced by Kenneth Tyler and  
Jeff Sanders, assisted by Lucius Hudson  
Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, gift of  
Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson  
1999.134

### **Roy Lichtenstein** (American, 1923–1997)

#### *Modern Head #1*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970

Color woodcut, C.91  
24 x 19 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Richard Royce  
1996.74.244

#### *Modern Head #2*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970

Color lithograph and line-cut with embossing, C.92  
24 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by George Page  
1996.74.245

#### *Modern Head #3*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970

Line-cut with embossing, C.93  
24 1/2 x 18 1/2 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by George Page  
1996.74.246

#### *Modern Head #4*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970

Color lithograph on engraved and anodized  
aluminum, C.94  
20 3/4 x 17 1/4 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Joseph Stratman  
1996.74.247

#### *Modern Head #5*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970

Embossed graphite with die-cut paper overlay, C.95  
28 x 19 1/2 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by George Page  
1996.74.248

#### *Modern Head Relief*, 1970

Brass  
24 x 17 3/4 x 3/4 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Collaboration and supervision by Kenneth Tyler  
and Jeff Sanders, assisted by Dean Barlow,  
Pete Hoefler, Robert McCullough, John Radcliffe,  
Don Takatsuka, and Herbert Tomkins  
Collection of Gemini G.E.L.

#### *Untitled Head I*, 1970

Brass  
25 5/8 x 10 1/4 x 3/8 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Collaboration and supervision by Jeffrey Sanders  
and Kenneth Tyler, assisted by Pete Hoefler,  
Obed Silverwood, and Herbert Tomkins  
Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson  
1970.03

#### *Untitled Head II*, 1970

California English walnut  
30 x 12 x 9 1/4 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Collaboration and supervision by Kenneth Tyler  
and Jeff Sanders, assisted by Herbert Tomkins,  
Pete Hoefler, and Obed Silverwood  
Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson  
1970.031

### **Claes Oldenburg** (American, b. Sweden, 1929)

#### *Geometric Mouse—Scale C*, 1971

Black anodized aluminum  
24 x 20 in. (face), 9 in. (ears)  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Collaboration and supervision by Jeff Sanders and  
Kenneth Tyler, assisted by Frank Doose and  
Lou Faibish  
Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson  
1971.055

#### *Ice Bag—Scale B*, 1971

Nylon and fiberglass with mechanical components  
40 x 48 x 48 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Edition production by Kenneth Tyler and  
Jeff Sanders, assisted by Frank Arnott, Frank Doose,  
Lou Faibish, Pete Hoefler, Myron Johnson, Paul Muff,  
and Bud Rogers  
1996.74.354

#### *Profile Airflow*, 1969

Molded polyurethane relief over color lithograph, P.59  
33 1/2 x 65 1/2 x 4 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Printed by Richard Wilke, assisted by Ronald Adams  
Polyurethane fabricated at CalPolymers  
1996.74.353

### **Robert Rauschenberg** (American, 1925–2008)

#### *Cardbird Door*, from the *Cardbird Series*, 1971

Corrugated cardboard, Kraft paper, tape, wood,  
and metal, with photo-offset lithograph and  
screenprint  
80 x 30 x 1 in.  
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles  
Edition production by Jeffrey Sanders and  
Kenneth Tyler, assisted by Timothy Isham,  
James Robie, and Jeffrey Wasserman  
Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson  
1971.056

### **Catalogues Raisonnés:**

- C. Corlett, Mary Lee. *The Prints of Roy Lichtenstein, A Catalogue Raisonné, 1948–1997* ([1994]  
New York: Hudson Hills Press, 2002).
- F. Field, Richard S. *Jasper Johns Prints 1960–1993, A Catalogue Raisonné* (West Islip, New York:  
Universal Limited Art Editions, 1994).
- P. Axsom, Richard H. and David Platzker. *Printed Stuff: Prints, Posters, and Ephemera by Claes Oldenburg: A Catalogue Raisonné 1958–1996*  
(New York: Hudson Hills Press in association  
with Madison Art Center, Wisconsin, 1997).



Images, clockwise from top: Roy Lichtenstein, *Modern Head #2*, from the *Modern Head Series*, 1970. Ellsworth Kelly, *Mirrored Concorde*, 1972. Mark di Suvero, *Untitled*, 1972. Jasper Johns,



Anderson Gallery of Graphic Art  
January 28–July 1, 2012