

MAPPING
THE
CONTEMPORARY
PRINT



Anderson Gallery of Graphic Art
February 23–July 7, 2013

Mapping the Contemporary Print explores some of the myriad ways graphic artists of the last fifty years have looked upon the land, sea, and sky, and represented the world they faced. Some of the prints chosen for this exhibition depict expanses far too vast to fully comprehend, the artists reducing their subjects to those elements most critical for identification and contemplation. Other prints reveal artists' intimate knowledge of particular locales, offering frames of reference for the viewer and rendering otherwise unknown and unbound "spaces" as more concrete "places."

Perhaps one of the most familiar modes of representing space in Western culture is through linear perspective, a geometric technique that has its roots in the early Renaissance. However, since then artists have explored ever-more modern approaches. Oblique and aerial perspectives, binocular vision, and magnified zoom are just some of the many visual tools that they have used to translate their multisensory experiences of the world into pictorial terms. Their works challenge viewers to consider alternative modes of seeing and understanding spaces that are themselves subject to continual reformation.

In addition to their critical use in way-finding, maps and the act of mapping have historically offered a means to understand spaces too large, complex, or remote for a particular audience to experience firsthand. The landscape genre has provided yet another window onto the natural world. Both expressive types can represent the current state of knowledge and can equally suffer from biased viewpoints, depending on the motivations and circumstances that lead to their design. And whether or not spectators are privy to these external factors, they are likely to bring their own perspectives to bear on a given artwork, as well.

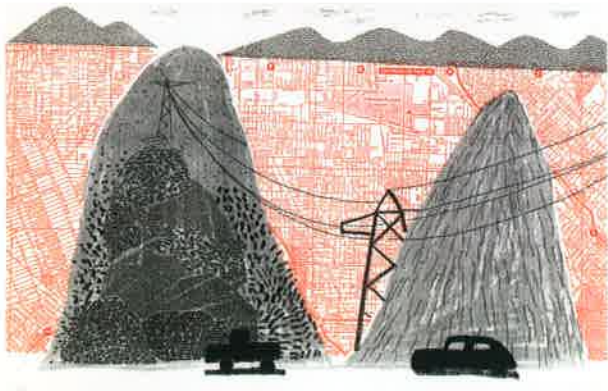
The traditional large, grand vista format of American landscape representation has lost traction with many cutting-edge artists over the last fifty years, but the desire to represent spatial aspects of the world has remained undiminished. *Mapping the Contemporary Print* showcases some of the alternative, nontraditional methods that modern and contemporary American artists have developed for containing space on the printed page.

The exhibition features selections from the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, the Crown Point Press Archive, and the Ed Ruscha Archive, all special collections within the Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts.



Journeying by air from Albuquerque to San Francisco in 1951, Richard Diebenkorn identified an alternative way to represent the vast American landscape. His approach—which evolved in his painting practice during his Berkeley years, 1953 to 1966—was to flatten aerial perspective, thus breaking with American conventions of representation that have historically emphasized the grand panoramic view. We see some element of this in #33 (*hillside streets*) from the portfolio *41 Etchings Drypoints* of 1965.

Richard Diebenkorn, #33 (*hillside streets*) from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965.
Published by Crown Point Press, Berkeley



Mulholland Drive is a street in Los Angeles that **David Hockney** frequently traversed as he went between his home and studio in the 1980s. Such familiarity might suggest that his *Mulholland Drive, June 1986* would be a literal representation of the place, especially since the composition incorporates a city map. However, close inspection reveals that the artist rotated and repeated on the left a section of the mapped neighborhood that he obscured on the right.

David Hockney, *Mulholland Drive, June 1986*, 1986

Vija Celmins offers an alternative way to make sense of infinite space, limiting the field of vision to a region of the night sky captured on film. In *Constellation—Uccello* (1983) she has juxtaposed her intangible galaxy with a copy of a drawing of a chalice by the Renaissance master Paolo Uccello. This image epitomizes the Renaissance perspectival technique for rendering three-dimensional objects and offers a point of contrast to Celmins's intaglio star field, which essentially flattens time and space.



Vija Celmins, *Constellation—Uccello*, 1983. Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles



In 1955 **Al Held** spent time as a construction worker, helping to build the Embarcadero freeway that once traversed much of downtown San Francisco's eastern waterfront. The roadway suffered structural deficiencies as a result of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and was subsequently demolished. *Embarcadero*, made at Crown Point Press in 1994 after the freeway's destruction, offers the artist's memory of a place with which he was intimately familiar, abstracted into the twisting, three-dimensional geographies typical of his graphic style.

Al Held, *Embarcadero*, 1994. Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco



Inspired by the natural character of the city as a place in flux, **Julie Mehretu** builds webs of information throughout her painted and printed work. Her process of layered mark-making is exemplified in the maplike, gridded structure of *Auguries*, a twelve-panel print that the artist made at Gemini G.E.L. in Los Angeles in 2010. Its large-scale composition encourages block-by-block or panel-by-panel observation, approximating the way a city is experienced, one little bit at a time.

Julie Mehretu, *Auguries*, 2010. Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles

Ed Ruscha exhibits an awareness of topographic variation through the materiality of his *Petroplots Suite* (2001), a series of four prints delineating intersections of specific Los Angeles streets. The artist uses the Mixografia process—which simultaneously prints the image and forms the paper’s textured surface—to conceptual effect, implying the varied dimensionality of his chosen terrain.

Ed Ruscha, *Pacific Coast Highway / Sunset Boulevard* from *The Petroplots Suite*, 2001. Published by Mixografia Workshop, Los Angeles



In *Passage* (2006) **Mary Heilmann** refers to video games and their “deep space,” using a central vanishing point that also places the work within the tradition of Renaissance perspective. Heilmann explains that in her understanding of modernism, representing “deep space” is usually regarded with disapproval, but it is for precisely that reason that she finds the representational model exciting. She goes on, “So I like to play deep space against flat space and when I’m doing that I’m also thinking about Japanese screens, which channel or use several kinds of space in one piece.”¹

Mary Heilmann, *Passage*, 2006. Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco

Notes

¹ “Mary Heilmann interview,” 2008. <http://artforum.com/video/id=20857&mode=large>

Works in the Exhibition

Unless otherwise noted, all prints are from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, gift of the Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson Charitable Foundation. Sheet measurements for prints are in inches, height preceding width. When available, catalogue raisonné information is included following the medium description.

Vija Celmins (American, b. Latvia, 1938)

Constellation—Uccello, 1983

Aquatint and etching, R. 12

27 ¼ x 23 ½ in.

Printed by Kenneth Farley and Doris Simmelink

Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles

1996.74.56

Globe, 2010

Hand-constructed, hand-colored photopolymer gravure printed on Echizen Washi "Shikibu" gampi paper, with wood pole, bracket, and string
Diameter: 12 in.

Printed by Doris Simmelink

Published by Simmelink Sukimoto, Ventura, California

Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson

Richard Diebenkorn (American, 1922–1993)

#32 (*street scene—trees, houses, lawns*) from
41 *Etchings Drypoints*, 1965

Drypoint

17 ¾ x 14 ¾ in.

Printed by Kathan Brown

Published by Crown Point Press, Berkeley

1996.74.76.32

#33 (*hillside streets*) from 41 *Etchings Drypoints*, 1965

Aquatint, hard-ground etching, and drypoint

17 ¾ x 14 ¾ in.

Printed by Kathan Brown

Published by Crown Point Press, Berkeley

1996.74.76.33

Mary Heilmann (American, b. 1940)

Passage, 2006

Color aquatint, spit-bite and sugar-lift aquatints, and drypoint

40 x 30 ½ in.

Printed by Catherine Brooks

Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco

Crown Point Press Archive, gift of Crown Point Press

2010.39.8.4

Al Held (American, 1928–2005)

Embarcadero, 1994

Color aquatint with spit-bite aquatint

41 x 54 in.

Printed by Renée Bott

Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco

Crown Point Press Archive, gift of Crown Point Press

1999.90.9

David Hockney (English, b. 1937)

Mulholland Drive, June 1986, 1986

Color xerographic print

11 x 17 in.

1996.74.187

Yvonne Jacquette (American, b. 1934)

Clouds Obscuring San Diego, 1987

Color spit-bite aquatint, and soft-ground and hard-ground etchings

25 ⅝ x 21 ½ in.

Printed by Doris Simmelink

Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco

Crown Point Press Archive, gift of Crown Point Press

1992.167.715

Alfred Jensen (American, b. Guatemala, 1903–1981)

Untitled, plate on pp. 8–9 in the book *1¢ Life* by

Walasse Ting (Bern: E. W. Kornfeld, 1964)

Color lithograph in a book with 62 lithographs and 19 reproductions

16 ⅙ x 22 ⅙ in.

Printed by Maurice Beaudet, Paris

1996.74.1.2

Julie Mehretu (American, b. Ethiopia, 1970)

Auguries, 2010

12-panel aquatint, spit-bite aquatint, and color soft-ground etching

87 x 180 in.

Printed by Case Hudson

Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles

Collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson

Dorothy Napangardi (Australian, b. ca. 1952/1956)

Sandhills, 2004

Color soap-ground and spit-bite aquatints with aquatint

25 ½ x 30 ¾ in.

Printed by Dena Schuckit

Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco

Crown Point Press Archive, gift of Crown Point Press

2006.18.4

Markus Raetz (Swiss, b. 1941)

Gaze, 2001

Color spit-bite aquatint

29 ¼ x 36 in.

Printed by Case Hudson

Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco

Crown Point Press Archive, gift of Crown Point Press

2006.44.14.4

Ed Ruscha (American, b. 1937)

The Petroplots Suite, 2001

4 Mixografia prints on handmade paper

Hollywood / Vine, 24 x 32 in.

Laurel Canyon / Ventura Boulevard, 26 x 38 in.

Pacific Coast Highway / Sunset Boulevard, 29 x 39 ½ in.

Pico / Sepulveda, 27 ½ x 37 in.

Printed by Shaye Remba

Published by Mixografia Workshop, Los Angeles

Gift of the artist

2003.85.1.1–4

Ben Shahn (American, b. Lithuania, 1898–1969)

Paterson, 1953

Screenprint with color pochoir, P. 19

30 ¾ x 22 ¾ in.

1996.74.433

Wayne Thiebaud (American, b. 1920)

Down Mariposa, from the portfolio *Recent Etchings I*, 1979

Etching

22 ½ x 29 ¾ in.

Printed by Stephen Thomas, Crown Point

Press, Oakland

Published by Parasol Press, Ltd., New York

1996.74.474

Catalogues Raisonnés

P. Prescott, Kenneth W. *The Complete Graphic Works of Ben Shahn*. New York: Quadrangle / The New York Times Book Company, 1973.

R. Rippner, Samantha. *The Prints of Vija Celmins*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002.

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