Since the Italian Renaissance, artists have intermittently debated whether color or drawing and design are more important in art-making. More than 450 years later, artists continue to engage with this issue, now using a modernist vocabulary and a plethora of artistic media. Celebrating the Spectrum: Highlights from the Anderson Collection illuminates important ways in which canonical artists of the past sixty years have investigated color as a primary subject in their printed oeuvres.

The exhibition includes many prints and print series—some shown in part, others in their entirety—in which artists explore color-based theories. Josef Albers (American, b. Germany, 1888–1976), for example, used an empirical approach in his White Line Squares series (1966) to discover that adjacencies are critical to human chromatic perception. Each lithograph in the series is printed using three inks, with a white frame set upon and dividing one of the colored squares, creating a delineation that produces the illusion of a fourth color. Albers explained the optical effect: "When the line is placed within a so-called 'middle' color, even when the color is very evenly applied, it will make the one color look like two different shades or tints cf that color."

In Color Numeral Series (1969), Jasper Johns (American, b. 1930) reused a set of lithography stones he had employed a year earlier to create his Black Numeral Series (1968), reimagining their use through a systematic application of color. Each color scheme in the Color Numeral prints is structured according to a system established by the artist in advance. Beginning with the primary colors (red, yellow, and blue) in Figure 0 and introducing the secondaries (orange, green, and purple) in Figure 1, Johns brought in bands of color at varying intervals from the top to the bottom of each print. The artist's signature signals the scheme: each print is signed with a colored pencil that matches the topmost printed band.
Deceptively simple, the six lithographs in Cathedral Series (1969) by Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923–1997) are composed entirely of dots printed in varying combinations of the primary colors plus black. Abstracted references to Claude Monet’s 1890s paintings of Rouen Cathedral, which he painted at various times of day and in diverse weather conditions to capture the changing effects of light, Lichtenstein’s prints achieve various optical effects as a result of changes the artist made to the registration of his compositions’ dotted structure and the order in which the colors were laid down. These basic modifications transmute our perception of the prints’ ostensible subject—the cathedral—because its architectural form is alternately in and out of focus.

Suzanne Caporael (American, b. 1949) used color to provide analytic interpretations of the chemical compositions of specific pigments in her Elements of Pigment series (1999). On the left side of each print, she stacked colors that denote the specific elements of the periodic table that compose the pigment shown on the right side of the print. The pigment cobalt yellow, for example, is composed of potassium, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen and cobalt \((K_2CO_3\cdot NH_2O)\); cobalt blue is made up of aluminum, oxygen, and cobalt \((CoO\cdot Al_2O_3)\).

One of this exhibition’s themes is how artists have used the qualities unique to modern print processes such as lithography and screenprint to investigate color as a principal, defining element of their compositions. The Meander series (1970–1971), by Anni Albers (American, b. Germany, 1899–1994), displays the transformative effect of layering a single hue through multiple applications of screenprinting. After selecting a color and printing it as the solid background, she employed the same color to print the design screen twice: first off-center, and then off-center and rotated 180 degrees. The color appears deeper in areas where the design screen overlaps. She
then printed a second, brighter color, diluted to translucency, with the same design screen upright but centered on the background.

Like Anni Albers, Sam Francis (American, 1923–1994) employed a single process to produce multiple iterations: Spleen (Red) and Spleen (Yellow) (both 1971) use the same stone and plate combination to demonstrate the dramatic changes that can be effected by simply altering a composition’s color. In a similar vein, Splendor of Duration, Triumph of the Moment (2013), by Kate Shepherd (American, b. 1961), consists of prints altered not in their composition but in their coloration, exposing what the artist calls “incremental emotional shifts” in the color blue over the course of the series. The three prints on view from this series were recently given to the Fine Arts Museums by the Andersons and are displayed at the de Young for the first time.

Celebrating the Spectrum features some of the most significant prints in the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco’s Anderson Graphic Arts Collection. The exhibition coincides with the opening of the Anderson Collection at Stanford University in September 2014, which exhibits the Anderson family’s holdings of twentieth-century painting and sculpture.

Notes
CELEBRATING THE
SPECTRUM
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ANDERSON COLLECTION

Anderson Gallery of Graphic Art, de Young
September 13, 2014–April 5, 2015

Exhibitions in the Anderson Gallery of Graphic Art at the de Young celebrate the 1996 gift of more than 650 American prints, monotypes, and multiples to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco from the collection of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson and their daughter, Mary Patricia Anderson Pence. In the intervening years, the Andersons have continued to add to this collection, and today it spans the years 1962 to 2013, chronicling one of the most exciting periods in this country's printmaking history with outstanding examples of print processes—woodcut, intaglio, lithography, screenprint, and monotype—from major fine art presses, including Gemini G.E.L. in Los Angeles; Universal Limited Art Editions in West Islip, New York; and Crown Point Press in San Francisco. Selections from the collection are featured in an ongoing series of exhibitions in the Anderson Gallery, and interpretive publications and programs reveal this important educational and art historical resource to museum audiences.

The Fine Arts Museums are dedicated to pursuing an active collection-sharing program, which makes the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection accessible as a resource to museums and galleries throughout the western United States. Individual loans, exhibitions organized by borrowing institutions, and exhibitions previously presented at the Fine Arts Museums are available to small and mid-size institutions at a nominal cost.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

All prints are from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco's Anderson Graphic Arts Collection and unless otherwise noted are gifts of the Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson Charitable Foundation. Sheet measurements for prints are in inches, and height precedes width. Where available, catalogue raisonné information is included after the medium description and is indicated by a letter and catalogue number; full catalogue information is listed at the end of the brochure.

Anni Albers (American, b. Germany, 1899–1994)
Yellow Meander
Blue Meander
Orange Meander
Red Meander II
All from Meander series, 1970–1971
4 color screenprints, W.D.20–23
28 x 24 ½ in. each
Printed by George (Scott) Lawther, Sirocco Screenprints, North Haven, Connecticut
Published by the artist
1996.74.2–5

Josef Albers (American, b. Germany, 1888–1976)
White Line Squares (Series 1), 1966
8 color lithographs, D.171.1–8
20 ½ x 20 ⅞ in. each
Printed by Bernard Bleha, James Webb, and Octavio Pereira
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.8–15

Suzanne Caporael (American, b. 1949)
Cobalt Yellow: K, N, O, H, Co
Cobalt Blue: Al, O, Co
Both from Elements of Pigment series, 1999
2 etchings with opaque watercolor, L.147–48
20 ¾ x 31 ½ in. each
Printed and published by Tandem Press, Madison, Wisconsin
Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, gift of the Achenbach Graphic Arts Council in honor of Karin Breuer
2000.84.1–2

Sam Francis (American, 1923–1994)
Spleen (Red), 1971
Color lithograph, L.2.L130
35 x 78 ¾ in.
Printed by James Webb
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.116
Sam Francis (American, 1923–1994)
*Spleen (Yellow)*, 1971
Color lithograph, L2.L.131
35 x 78 ¼ in.
Printed by James Webb
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.117

Helen Frankenthaler (American, 1928–2011)
*Free Wheeling*, 1971
Color pochoir and etching, H.31
41 ¼ x 30 in.
Printed by Donn Steward (etching) and Helen Frankenthaler (pochoir)
Published by Universal Limited Art Editions, West Islip, New York
1996.74.138

Jasper Johns (American, b. 1930)
*Color Numeral Series*, 1969
10 color lithographs, F.59–68
38 x 37 in. each
Printed by Charles Ritt, Daniel Freeman, and James Webb
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.204–213

Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923–1997)
*Cathedral #2*
*Cathedral #3*
*Cathedral #4*
All from *Cathedral Series*, 1969
3 color lithographs, C.76–78
48 ½ x 32 ½ in. each
Printed by Stuart Henderson and Charles Ritt
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.239–241

Ed Moses (American, b. 1926)
P.-F., 1980
Color monotype
Published by 3EP Ltd., Palo Alto, California
1996.74.303

*West Islip*, 1970
Color lithograph with hand painting, E.B.65
29 ½ x 41 ½ in.
Printed by Ben Berns and David Umholz
Published by Universal Limited Art Editions, West Islip, New York
1996.74.312

Ad Reinhardt (American, 1913–1967)
10 *Screenprints by Ad Reinhardt*, 1966
10 color screenprints
22 x 17 in. each
Printed by Sirocco Screenprints, North Haven, Connecticut
Published by Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut
1996.74.419.1–10

Kate Shepherd (American, b. 1961)
*Blue Print #01*
*Blue Print #05*
*Blue Print #16*
All from *Splendor of Duration, Triumph of the Moment* series, 2013
3 color monoprinted screenprints
39 ¼ x 25 ½ in. each
Anderson Graphic Arts Collection, gift of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson
2014.30.1–3

Frank Stella (American, b. 1936)
*Ifa I*
*Ifa II*
Both from *V* series, 1968
2 color lithographs, A.F.R.21–22
16 ¼ x 22 ½ in. each
Printed by James Webb and Charles Ritt
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.441–442

Frank Stella (American, b. 1936)
*Quatlamba I*
*Quatlamba II*
Both from *V* series, 1968
2 color lithographs, A.F.R.25–26
16 ¼ x 28 ½ in. each
Printed by Charles Ritt, Bruce Lowney, James Webb, Dan Gualdoni, and George Page
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
1996.74.447–448

Catalogues Raisonnés