

PAULSON BOTT PRESS



UNLESS I EVER SEE WINE FOR ALL TIME

Paulson Bott 2016

Anderson Gallery of Graphic Art, de Young | July 16–October 23, 2016



PAULSON BOTT PRESS: CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS marks the Fine Arts Museums' inaugural presentation of prints from the Paulson Bott Press Archive, which was acquired in 2015 as a gift from the press and as a foundation purchase through the Phyllis C. Wattis Fund for Major Accessions. Comprising nearly five hundred prints by more than forty artists, it complements existing holdings to represent the entirety of the press's output to date. The archive will continue to grow, receiving an impression of every editioned work the press publishes in the future.

The Paulson Bott Press Archive joins other significant holdings in the Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts. These include the Crown Point Press Archive (acquired in 1991), the Anderson Graphic Arts Collection (acquired in 1996), and the Edward Ruscha Graphic Arts Archive (acquired in 2000). Together, these important collections extend the Museums' commitment to preserving and displaying contemporary American prints.

Founded in 1996, Berkeley's Paulson Bott Press has become a leader in intaglio print publishing over its twenty-year history thanks to the vision and leadership of press owners Pam Paulson and Renée Bott. The two met in 1987 while working as master printers for Crown Point Press in San Francisco. Over the years their friendship grew, and the two discussed establishing their own workshop. In 1993 Paulson left to establish a small press in Emeryville, California, where she provided contract printing for local artists. Three years later Bott joined her, and Paulson Press, as it was originally named, was born. In 2010 its name was changed to its present iteration to reflect Paulson and Bott's partnership.

Within its first summer of operation, Paulson Press published its initial editions— four prints by Christopher Brown, including *Start* (fig. 2) and *Window*—selling out of each edition of forty within a matter of weeks. Bolstered by the success of their venture, Paulson and Bott were encouraged to expand their offerings, and were soon inviting multiple artists to come to their Berkeley workshop every year. During the early years, when the press was still finding its direction, many of its artists, including Brown, Squeak Carnwath (see fig. 3), and Hung Liu (see fig. 4), were based in the Bay Area. But the printers were reluctant to limit their practice to Northern California artists, and soon their reach would expand to include collaborators from around the United States. As Bott once explained, "We're going to work with

artists whose work we both respect and like personally."¹

Paulson and Bott often seek advice on potential collaborators from their visiting artists. As a result, threads link many of the artists to one another. For instance, Margaret Kilgallen (see fig. 1), an artist of the San Francisco Mission School who was inspired by hand-lettered signs, American folk art, and street

art, led the master printers to her friend Chris Johanson (see cover), another Mission School artist, whose work shares with Kilgallen's a preoccupation with the vernacular.

As the reputation of the press has grown, so has the reach of its circle of artists. To date the press has produced more than half of its editions with creators outside of the art world's mainstream. After first working with



Fig 5. Radcliffe Bailey, *By the River*, 2000

Atlanta-based artist Radcliffe Bailey (see fig. 5) in 1997, Paulson and Bott began to think about the underrepresentation of artists of color in printmaking. Sometime later, Bailey—in another example of linking threads between artists—introduced them to curator Matt Arnett, who had worked closely with Mary Lee Bendolph (see fig. 6), Louisiana Bendolph (see fig. 7), and other quilters in the community of Gee's Bend, Alabama. Though these women had never made prints before, and might not have thought of themselves as artists in the traditional sense, Paulson and Bott saw in their work original voices, a criterion that must always be met when the pair selects a new artist to work at the press. Furthermore, the quilters' practice—which involved an arrangement of materials that might be replicated on the soft ground of a plate—

would easily adapt to the nature of intaglio printmaking.

When Mary Lee Bendolph arrived at the press for the first time, in 2005, she drew inspiration from familiar materials: second-hand fabrics, which she sourced from local thrift stores. She pieced together fragments of used pants and shirts, pushing them into soft-ground-covered etching plates, thereby capturing the textures, stitching, and seams of the fabrics when the plates were later etched in acid. Printing colors were then matched to the source material, resulting in the simulacra of quilts that the artist hoped to achieve.

Whether working with creators new to the medium or experienced printmakers, Paulson and Bott, known for their ingenuity and technical expertise in intaglio processes, push the boundaries of printmaking, developing new methods and using traditional methods in unconventional ways to accommodate the

desires of their visiting artists. During New York-based artist Caio Fonseca's third visit to the press, in 2001, he expressed a desire to create texture, which he described as "ridges," in his artwork. Experimenting with formal printmaking methods brought no results he was satisfied with, and, as Bott later recalled, he kept saying, "I want something soft, like a string."² From that analogy resulted a series of works that share the title *Seven String Etchings* (see fig. 11), referring to the seven strings the artist collaged into each print, under layers of Hosho paper and etching ink, incorporating a dimensionality not often seen in prints.

Similarly, Tauba Auerbach found success through textural experimentation at Paulson Bott. Since 2009, Auerbach has been investigating surface and volume in a wide range of works, twisting, folding, and manipulating untreated canvases before applying pigment. The resulting artworks,



Fig 6. Mary Lee Bendolph, *Past and Gone*, 2005



Fig 7. Louisiana Bendolph, *As I Leave Shall I Return*, 2013



Fig 8. Tauba Auerbach, *Fold / Slice Topo I*, 2011



Fig 9. Gary Simmons, *Starlite Theatre*, 2012

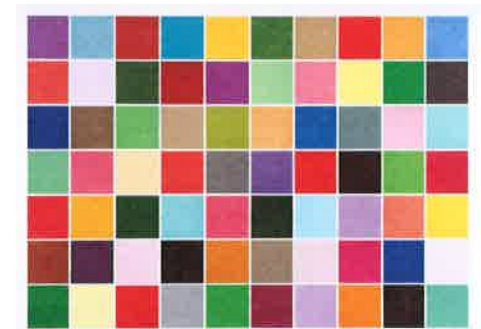


Fig 10. Spencer Finch, *Back to Kansas*, 2015



Fig 11. Caio Fonseca, *Seven String Etching No. 1*, 2001

although stretched flat again, appear multidimensional through a trompe l'oeil effect. In 2011, a year after showing these “fold” paintings in the Whitney Biennial, Auerbach continued her artistic preoccupation with spatial exploration at the press, exploring new ways to create an image utilizing the tremendous physical strength of the printing press itself. Auerbach referred to her process in the title of *Fold / Slice Topo I* (fig. 8), which resulted from her flattening an irregularly folded sheet of paper in the press, slicing it into strips, and then reassembling it on top of the printing plate. Every second strip was removed, and those that remained were used as a stencil for aquatinting the plate. Each band of color in the finished print corresponds to the elevations of the original paper strips so that, in the artist's words, “there is a graduated progression, like on a topographic map.”³

Artists are inspired at the press to discover alternative forms of expression, which they use to extend their regular practices. When New York-based artist Gary Simmons (see fig. 9) came to the press in 2012, he had long been apprehensive about making prints, believing the process (in which ink is typically added

to paper) to be incompatible with his usual “erasure” technique, in which he wipes away or blurs parts of his images. However, reflecting on his experience of making prints at Paulson Bott, he later remarked, “It does force me into thinking about [my usual practice] from another direction. . . . It's kind of great to put yourself in a situation where you're not comfortable and you almost relearn certain things that you take for granted in your studio, that you just do, and that's been a joy.”⁴

The opportunity to reflect on habitual practice may also explain in part the enthusiasm with which so many artists return to Paulson Bott Press. Sculptor Martin Puryear (see fig. 12) began making prints there in 2001, revisiting intaglio print processes for the first time since his student days in Stockholm. Over the last fifteen years, he has worked at the press seven times, appreciating that his time there permits a sustained investigation of his drawing practice, without the temptation to escape into sculpture. Of the role of printmaking within his oeuvre, he has said, “I think I try to make work that's about the ideas in [my] sculpture without making pictures of the sculpture.”⁵



Fig 12. Martin Puryear, *Untitled (State II)*, 2014

With such a wide variety of artists making it their temporary studio, Paulson Bott Press avoids having a “shop look,” or common aesthetic, in its output. Prints made there do, however, tend to reflect the enthusiasm that Paulson and Bott bring to their craft, with many resplendently printed in an array of colors. Certainly Spencer Finch brought this aspect to the fore in one of the press's most recent projects. For *Back to Kansas* (fig. 10), the New York artist specified that more than forty colors be printed in a grid of seventy squares, with each hue matching one the artist selected from the classic 1939 film adaptation of *The Wizard of Oz*. In this way, Finch, too, was able to expand upon his practice, using printmaking to translate the transitory wall painting on which this print was based into a permanent work of art with the same proportions.

1. “Ten Years of Paulson Press,” *OKTP* (May 15, 2006), n.p.
2. *ibid.*, n.p.
3. “Taub Auerbach,” *OKTP* (January 1, 2012), n.p.
4. “Gary Simmons at Paulson Bott Press,” YouTube video, posted by theartaction, March 28, 2012, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_84vZ6EvKI.
5. “Martin Puryear: Printmaking I Art21 ‘Exclusive,’” posted by Art21, February 22, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIQwUY9bGjc>.



Top, left to right: Fig. 1. Margaret Kilgallen, *Sloe*, 1998. Fig. 2. Christopher Brown, *Start*, 1996. Bottom, left to right: Fig. 3. Squeak Carnwath, *Random Events*, 2002. Fig. 4. Hung Liu, *Shui-Water*, 2012.

WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION

All prints are from the collection of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Dimensions indicate the size of the sheet, height preceding width.

Taub Auerbach (American, b. 1981)
Fold / Slice Topo I, 2011
Color aquatint, printed in eleven colors
45 x 35 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.9

Radcliffe Bailey (American, b. 1968)
By the River, 2000
Color photogravure, aquatint, spit-bite
and sugar-lift aquatint, soft-ground and
hard-ground etching with scraping and
burnishing, and drypoint, printed chine
collé in fifteen colors
40 ½ x 49 in.
Printed by Scott Brubach
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.17

Louisiana Bendolph (American, b. 1960)
As I Leave Shall I Return, 2013
Color soft-ground etching and aquatint,
printed in seven colors
34 x 26 ½ in.
Printed by Sam Carr-Prindle
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.31

Mary Lee Bendolph (American, b. 1935)
Past and Gone, 2005
Color soft-ground etching, aquatint, and
spit-bite aquatint, printed in ten colors
40 ½ x 35 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.38

Ross Bleckner (American, b. 1949)
Leader Sequence, 2002
Color aquatint, printed in two colors
37 ¾ x 35 ¾ in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.59

Christopher Brown (American, b. 1951)
Start, 1996
Color soft-ground etching and aquatint
with scraping, burnishing, and roulette,
printed in nine colors
16 x 17 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.47

Christopher Brown (American, b. 1951)
Window, 1996
Color soft-ground etching and aquatint
with scraping, burnishing, and roulette,
printed in five colors
16 x 17 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.48

Squeak Carnwath (American, b. 1947)
Random Events, 2002
Color aquatint, sugar-lift aquatint, and
etching, printed in sixteen colors
35 x 34 in.
Printed by Emily York
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.163

Kota Ezawa (active United States,
b. Germany, 1969)
Kota, 2006
Color aquatint, printed in eight colors
19 ½ x 23 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.187

Kota Ezawa (active United States,
b. Germany, 1969)
Polaroid Land Camera, 2006
Color aquatint, printed in nine colors
20 ½ x 21 ¾ in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.189

Spencer Finch (American, b. 1962)
Back to Kansas, 2015
Color aquatint, printed chine collé in
forty-two colors
43 x 60 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.200

Caio Fonseca (American, b. 1959)
Seven String Etching No. 1, 2001
Color aquatint, spit-bite and sugar-
lift aquatint, and soft-ground etching,
printed chine collé in ten colors; and
string
38 x 48 ½ in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.219

Isca Greenfield-Sanders (American,
b. 1978)
Blue Suit Bather, 2006
Color aquatint with scraping and
burnishing, printed in thirteen colors
32 x 31 ¼ in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.49

Lonnie Holley (American, b. 1950)
Our Journey, 2013
Color soft-ground etching and aquatint
with roulette, printed in four colors
40 ½ x 34 in.
Printed by Alexander Groshong
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.263

Chris Johanson (American, b. 1968)
*Forever Is Both Ways for All Time
(Perceptions #2)*, 2007
Color sugar-lift aquatint, printed in
twenty colors
37 x 45 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.299

Amy Kaufman (American, b. 1956)
Loop Knot 1, 2009
Color soft-ground etching with spit-bite
aquatint and drypoint, printed chine collé
in seven colors
35 ½ x 31 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.335

Margaret Kilgallen (American, 1967–2001)
Sloe, 1998
Color sugar-lift aquatint, printed chine
collé in eleven colors
36 x 24 ½ in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.56

Hung Liu (American, b. China, 1948)
Shui-Water, 2012
Color soft-ground etching, aquatint, and
spit-bite aquatint with gold leaf, printed
in twelve colors
47 x 36 in.
Printed by Sam Carr-Prindle
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.341

Kerry James Marshall (American, b. 1955)
Vignette (Wishing Well), 2010
Color hard-ground and soft-ground
etching with spit-bite and sugar-lift
aquatint and drypoint, with scraping and
burnishing, printed chine collé in thirteen
colors
53 x 41 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.367

Martin Puryear (American, b. 1941)
Three Holes, 2002
Color spit-bite aquatint and soft-ground
etching, printed in three colors
29 x 34 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.66

Martin Puryear (American, b. 1941)
Untitled (State II), 2014
Color soft-ground etching and drypoint,
printed chine collé in three colors
35 x 28 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Gift of Paulson Bott Press
2015.42.83

Clare Rojas (American, b. 1976)
Bleeding Hearts, 2009
Color sugar-lift aquatint, printed chine
collé
22 x 18 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.395

Clare Rojas (American, b. 1976)
Forget-Me-Not, 2009
Color sugar-lift aquatint, printed chine
collé
22 x 18 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.397

Clare Rojas (American, b. 1976)
Tulips, 2009
Color sugar-lift aquatint, printed chine
collé
22 x 18 in.
Printed by Renée Bott
Published by Paulson Press, Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.401

Gary Simmons (American, b. 1964)
Starlite Theatre, 2012
Color soap-ground aquatint and aquatint,
printed in three colors
32 x 40 in.
Printed by Pam Paulson
Published by Paulson Bott Press,
Berkeley
Foundation purchase, Phyllis C. Wattis
Fund for Major Accessions
2015.37.407

Cover Image:
Chris Johanson, *Forever Is Both Ways for
All Time (Perceptions #2)*, 2007