

Overview

Crown Point Press Opens New York Gallery



Karen McCready at the opening party.



Kathan Brown in front of RAMELLZEE's *Palladium Protractor, Chase to Assassination*, (Gothic Futurism).

In opening our new print gallery at 208 Broadway, corner of Prince Street in SoHo we hope to establish a center where prints (both those published by Crown Point Press and eventually others as well) can be viewed under optimum conditions. The floorplan of the gallery was devised to show prints in three distinct ways—exhibited in a traditional gallery space, framed in open storage accessible to the public and unframed in print drawers. The print drawers are positioned in natural light surrounded by high stools for comfortable viewing. Daylight seems to enhance the velvety surfaces of the etchings and emphasize the vibrant colors of the woodblocks.

Visitors to the gallery can move easily from the exhibition space around the central storage cube, which is flanked on the gallery side by half-cruciform-shaped pilasters. These provide the only decorative element in the space and reinforce the verticality that the architect, Denise Hall, achieved throughout. That sense of light and scale creates an effect that is unusual in a space designed solely for displaying prints.

The gallery will have a calendar of changing exhibitions along with continuous use as a showcase for new Crown Point Press editions. The *Inaugural Exhibition*, February 8 to March 30, 1985, was very well received, and in fact garnered two reviews in *The New York Times*. John Russell, senior art critic, wrote on March 1, 1985 that "Among California print publishers, the Crown Point Press has been quietly pursuing a course of its own . . . Quite apart from the stars of the day—Diebenkorn, Frankenthaler, Clemente, Alex Katz and Ed Ruscha—whom every print publisher would get if he could, the Crown Point Press has diversified into composers (John Cage and Steve Reich), polemicists (Hans Haacke and Chris Burden), English solitary walkers (Hamish Fulton) and proliferators of stripes (Daniel Buren). Whether on the wall or in the racks, all this makes for a rewarding stock."

And indeed, it was good to see in the first show one print by each of the thirty-seven artists published by Crown Point since 1977. Prints by conceptual artists including Joel Fisher, Hans Haacke, Sol

LeWitt and Tom Marioni reflected the early publishing focus of the press and created a fresh presence in the gallery. In fact, Hans Haacke's *Tiffany Cares* was acquired by two major American corporations during the exhibition.

Our second show, *Richard Diebenkorn: Selected Prints 1964–1984*, will be on view from April 6 to May 13, 1985. The exhibit includes such favorites as color etchings *Large Light Blue* and *Large Bright Blue*, 1980 as well as woodblocks *Ochre* and *Blue*. The implied geometry of four early figurative etchings from *41 Etchings*, also on view, foreshadow Diebenkorn's continuing interest in exploring abstraction based on combining rectilinear planes of modulated color.

Karen McCready
Sales Director



Installation view of Daniel Buren's *Framed/Exploded/Defaced* with Sol LeWitt's *Stars*.

Dear Friends,

We've had a very busy three months since the beginning of 1985.

John Cage arrived on New Year's Day, and on January 2nd began two weeks of work in the studio. We always love to have Cage with us. This time he was (literally) starting fires—the monotypes *Fire* were made by burning a pile of newspaper on the press bed, then placing the damp etching paper on the flames and turning it through the press. After that the sheets were branded with a hot iron Japanese tea pot (John noticed these brands on my kitchen counter). Another series of monotypes, *Mesostics*, are—like the poetry Cage writes—based on an axis running down the middle of the page. Fire, Air, Earth and Water were

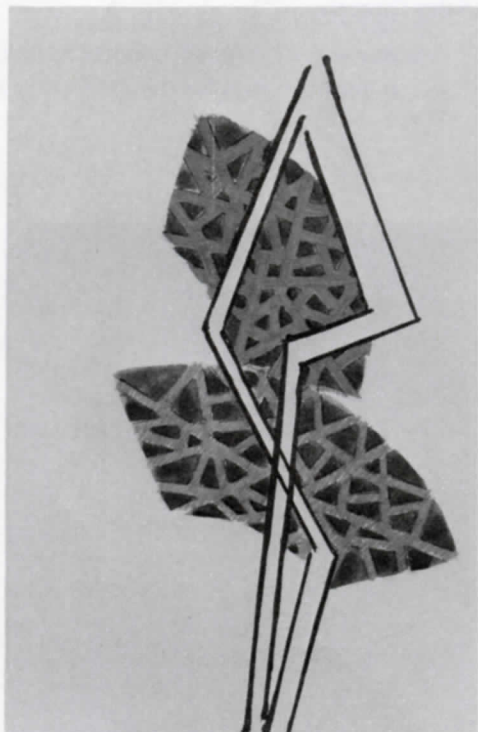
used to alter papers which were then glued into place along the axis. We were burning, burying, soaking and generally doing rather unconventional print-making! We ended up with only 9 of these large (for Cage) collage-monotypes.

John Cage also developed a new series of etchings, called *Ryoku*, 13 different but closely related images made up of small cut plates on which he traced the stones he used in last years *Ryoanji* series. Cage has used cut plates, which resemble shards of glass when inked and wiped, in several series in past years but in the earlier projects we did only two impressions of each image. This time we are going to produce the series in an edition of ten, which should bring the

price down considerably.

I spent the latter half of January in Japan with Alex Katz, working on *The Green Cap*. The print turned out to be absolutely splendid, very fresh and alive. Katz had two shows in New York recently and has been lauded by critics (especially in *The New York Times*) and by several young artists, including Eric Fischl and Francesco Clemente, so even people who have known the work for some time are looking at it in a fresh way now.

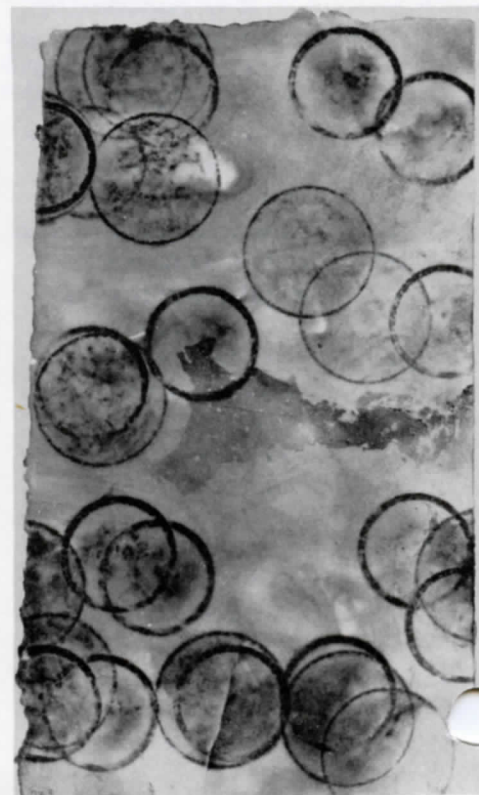
Our new New York gallery opened as scheduled on February 8—there is more about this in other parts of *Overview*. I'm very pleased with the gallery, and would like to take this opportunity to
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Richard Smith, *Silver Fan*, 1985. Softground, with sugarlift and spitbite aquatint, 27 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", edition 35.



Tom Holland, *Izio*, 1984. Aquatint, softground and drypoint, 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", edition 25.



John Cage, *Fire*, 1985. Monoprint, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".



Judy Pfaff, *Yoyogi II*, 1985. Color woodblock, $31\frac{1}{4} \times 35\frac{7}{8}$ ", edition 75.

New Editions

The editions released over the past months exhibit a range of techniques and styles that is extraordinary: from the use of methods perhaps never before attempted in an etching studio in Cage's *Fire* (see the photo on the back page) to the use of the traditional Japanese woodblock medium in the Pfaff and Katz prints. Pfaff's work is a second state of *Yoyogi I*; in this one she adds a dynamic red and black element which creates a new spatial relationship. Katz's *The Green Cap* is his first project with Crown Point Press, and the result is beautifully graceful. Smith's *Silver Fan* is one of a series of four etchings, all of which are strongly graphic; this one is done in shades of silver, blue and green. Holland's *Izio* is a soft collage-like image in deep jewel tones of blue, orange, yellow and green. (There is a version of the image done in pastels entitled *Tali*.) True's *Cold Romance* is one of the largest prints we have made, and it gets its power and presence from the tonal range of the deeply bitten aquatint.

Prices are available upon request.



David True, *Cold Romance*, 1985. Aquatint, $56\frac{1}{4} \times 48\frac{1}{2}$ ", edition 10.



Alex Katz, *The Green Cap*, 1985. Color woodblock, $12\frac{1}{8} \times 17\frac{7}{8}$ ", edition 200.

Friends . . .

(continued from page 2)

compliment Karen McCready on her success in turning the idea of the gallery into a concrete form. We also appreciate the skill and talent of our architect, Denise Hall.

During the month of February our Japanese printer delivered the Judy Pfaff woodblock prints. We now have *Yoyogi I* and *Yoyogi II*, each in an edition of 75. These are marvelous prints, and if you haven't seen them "in person" I hope you'll be able to do so soon.

David True has been working under our auspices with Jeryl Parker in New York, and his seven new enormous etchings (the largest is 48 x 64 inches) are being shown at the Edward Thorp Gallery in New York in April. These prints are black and white, strong and dramatic.

In our Oakland studio during the month of February Richard Smith made four beautiful color etchings, spontaneous and graceful. One is reproduced in this newsletter, and all are available to see in either our New York or Oakland galleries. We plan to have the editions finished by the end of June.

In March there has also been a great deal of activity. Tadashi Toda is editioning the Katz woodblock in Japan; it

should be ready in April. And Robert Kushner has just finished proofing in Japan a woodblock print in two states: *Daphne I* and *Daphne II*. Kushner has also been working with Jeryl Parker in New York, and has almost finished a very large color etching, many plates, many colors, very spectacular. Wayne Thiebaud has been working in Oakland, and two new black and white street scenes are ready to be released.

For the future, Rackstraw Downes and Francesco Clemente have projects in progress, and Al Held's woodblock print will be available in June. Elaine deKooning will be working in Oakland in May. We have William Brice scheduled to work in September and Diebenkorn in October (these prints probably won't be ready until 1986).

That's all for now. Very best regards to you all.

Kathan Brown

Kathan Brown
Director, Crown Point Press



John Cage working on *Fire* with printer Peter Pettengill.

Overview

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