

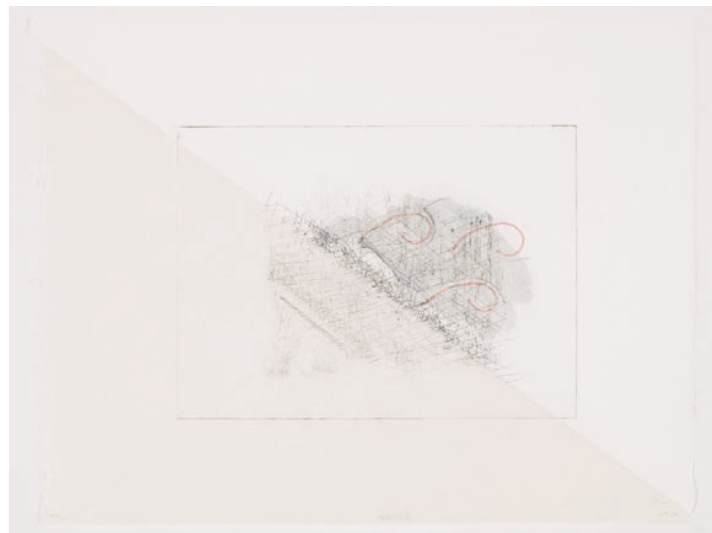
Naked



Naked, I



Naked, II



Naked, III

I want to write about why
I chose "Naked", as the title for
these prints.
There is no reason, goal, nothing
to gain, just an urge,
Which grows.

To read a book, Kenneth Clark's,
"The Nude", long overdue, seemed
A direction to take, but
1, he is an art historian
2, has a hard time keeping
nude and naked separated
3, finds his subject evaporates.
I thought to stay closer to the bone.

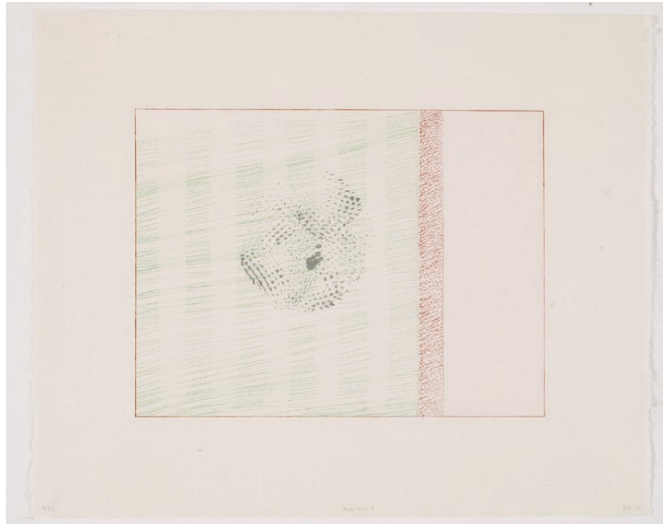
Two projects before "Naked", was
"Costume"—would it follow to make
"Naked"? If "Costume" represents
The apogee of ink on paper, is
Inking both sides of the paper
Dividing the ink, just as the textile
In "Type" divided the paper?
Indicating ink coming from two
Sides is naked, to me, for you have
Stripped the surface of the paper
Of its reserve, from nude into naked.

“Nakedness is like a bulb torn from
The soil”, says Clark. Why do I feel
There is more art value in naked than nude?
We are pushing Adam and Eve from behind.
Are we nude and want to be naked?

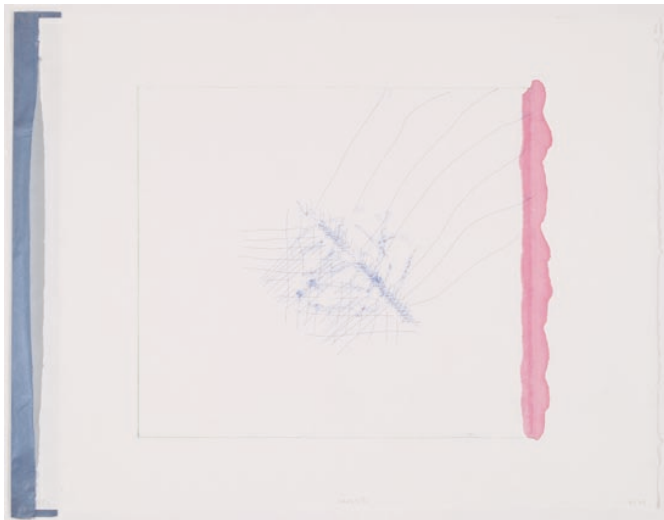
Are there really two states of being-
Nude and naked? Sin-free and full of sin?
Is not this the way to gain consciousness,
The moment of passing from one state
To the other? Cannot we gain this in
Regaining the Garden of Eden, lost
Innocence, unselfconsciousness in our
Nakedness? A piece of paper called “Naked”
Will eventually reflect on the human body.



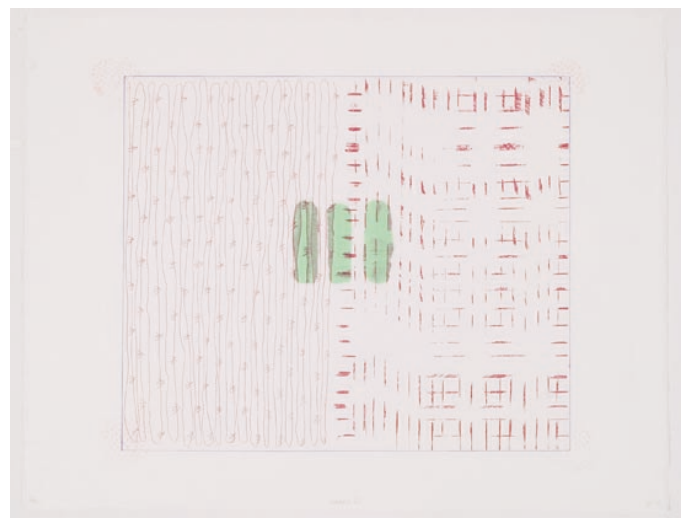
Naked, IV



Naked, V



Naked, VI



Naked, VII

I thought of a frame immediately after
Making “Naked”. Was this to protect
Them, their delicate condition, like
Putting ointment on burned skin, or clothing?
I kept my idea in letter form next to my
Telephone for over a year. My idea would
Have to be adapted by others to each. . .

The importance of a definition of matter,
Like the origin [sic] of the universe, is
In inverse proportion to the lie we accept.
You cannot get out of bed in the morning
Without a definition of matter in your head.



Naked, VIII



Naked, IX

The major trick in forming a definition
Of matter is to take something to the next
World and bring it back unchanged. [sic] The nude
Is a part of the Greek solution giving us the
3rd dimension, scientific intuition, all at once.
Conservatives and liberals use this solution.
Christ is nude, not naked, on the cross.

A print is a photograph. The plate is more
Sensitive than film; it is best when it is
Most naked, for then it absorbs most. What
Is the information we want to absorb?



Naked, X

The nakedness we seem loath to accept
Because it hurts or is painful may be
Just the sign of a material dilemma, or
May be the best way to question the
Part of an earlier solution, which made
Nudity part of art, but not nakedness?

Richard Tuttle

Richard Tuttle: Seven Years at Crown Point Press

As I write this in the summer of 2005, Richard Tuttle is the art-world man of the moment. In the past few months, major articles about him have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Art News*, *W*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. And more are to come as his retrospective exhibition opens July 2 at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, then (over the next two years) travels to the Whitney Museum in New York, the Des Moines Art Center, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Somehow it is fitting (and, I am sure, uncalculated) that just at this moment Tuttle is releasing a set of prints he has titled *Naked*.

I use the word “uncalculated” because last summer when Tuttle was making the plates for the *Naked* prints, I didn’t have the feeling that he was concerned at all with how he would be feeling this summer as the long-planned exhibition opens to view. Now, the vulnerability of the prints with their faint images sometimes stained from back to front, and their thin papers sometimes hanging loose, seems to have some relevance. The really interesting thing about any artist’s retrospective—to the audience, but more especially to the artist—is seeing a life’s work laid out in one continuous space. Will the art expand beyond the space into minds and hearts, or will it seem to be repetitive, or lost? The press will not allow Tuttle to forget a critic’s comment about his first major exhibition thirty years ago at the Whitney Museum in New York. “Less has never been as less as this,” Hilton Kramer wrote. But no one is complaining now. *W* magazine, after quoting Kramer and then pointing out Tuttle’s tremendous influence on younger artists, says that his work is “among the most groundbreaking and subversive of the last forty years.”

It is subversive of big, rowdy, impersonal, or violent art. It is groundbreaking in that it is, as one critic said, a “space-giver, not a space-taker.” It is self-effacing, not highly finished, and not obviously concerned with current art ideas like “objecthood.” In common with much of the best art of our time, it seems simple at a glance but becomes oddly complex as you give it thoughtful attention. If you are willing to go along with it, it opens up after a while and takes you somewhere else, a hopeful place. “I just think that people who have art in their lives have better lives,” Tuttle has said.

How does art get into our lives? How is it made? “Techniques exist because they have particular benefit to artists for search and research,” Tuttle told me the first day he walked into the Crown

Point studio in 1998. “A printing plate is material that is immaterial. The print has complete integrity right from the start.” And in his 2005 poem, printed in this newsletter to accompany the *Naked* prints, he says: “A print is a photograph. The plate is more/Sensitive than film;. . .” I was concerned at first about using the word “photograph” since there are still people out there who think of prints as reproductions. But Tuttle’s meaning is quite different: he sees the printing plate as a photograph of the artist’s soul. Like many other artists of our time, he consciously makes his art out of the situation he is in and the materials he is using, but he is different in that his execution is more quick and sure than most. To me, it often seems that Tuttle is notating something already in his mind, as Mozart did.

Tuttle’s first Crown Point etching project was seven years ago, and every summer since then he has spent a week in our studio in San Francisco, working long hours each day with our printers. The intensity and momentum of the situation affects both the quantity and the character of what is possible. In seven week-long projects, Richard Tuttle has made 72 etchings at Crown Point Press.

The seven prints of the first of those projects, *Mandevilla* (1998) are included in the museum retrospective because, Tuttle says, “They are so important to me.” They broke a cycle of work that was mostly brown, white, and black. The first print is mainly brown, and is followed by six others in colors arrived at by what Tuttle described as “call and response” from an “underworld” into our own world. Something like this notion appears again in Tuttle’s writing on *Naked*, a much less formal set of prints: “The major trick in forming a definition /Of matter is to take something to the next/World and bring it back unchanged. . . .”

Between *Mandevilla* and *Naked* are five projects, four of which are series presented in startling portfolios designed by Tuttle and including texts written by him. These are: *Any 2 Points* (1999) eight prints, *Purple* (2001) seven prints, *Costume* (2002) six prints, and *Type* (2003) twenty-six prints. *Up, to 7* (2000) is a set of eight prints linked by the inclusion of a tiny ziggurat in the lower part of each one but without portfolio or title page. Each of these print projects looks very different from the others, but they are linked. They have developed from year to year. We look forward to future developments in this body of Tuttle’s work as he moves beyond this year, 2005, the exciting year of the museum retrospective.

—KATHAN BROWN



Richard Tuttle in the CCP studio, 2004

Naked, a series of ten etchings by Richard Tuttle, in an edition of ten.

Naked I, 2004

Color soft ground etching with fowl biting and hand staining printed on White Hosho. Paper size: 27 × 21 inches; image size: 20 × 18 inches.

Naked II, 2004

Color hard ground etching with fowl biting and hand staining printed on Senka-shi. Paper size: 25 × 20 inches; image size: 14 × 14 inches.

Naked III, 2004

Color soft ground etching and fowl biting with hand staining and dyed string printed on Senka-shi and White Hosho. Paper size: 19 ½ × 25 inches; image size: 11 × 15 inches.

Naked IV, 2004

Hard ground etching with drypoint and color hand staining printed on Black Gampi. Paper size: 30 × 21 ½ inches; image size: 19 × 14 inches.

Naked V, 2004

Color soft ground etching with hand staining printed on Senka-shi. Paper size: 20 × 25 inches; image size: 12 × 16 inches.

Naked VI, 2004

Color soft ground etching with hand staining and attached Gampi strip, printed on White Hosho. Paper size: 21 × 27 inches; image size: 15 × 17 inches.

Naked VII, 2004

Color hard ground and soft ground etching with hand staining printed on White Hosho. Paper size: 21 × 27 inches; image size: 16 × 19 inches.

Naked VIII, 2004

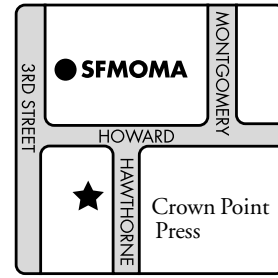
Color hard ground etching with drypoint and hand staining printed on Senka-shi. Paper size: 20 × 25 inches; image size: 18 × 22 inches.

Naked IX, 2004

Color soft ground etching with hand staining and chine collé, printed on White Hosho. Paper size: 27 × 21 inches; image size: 12 × 20 inches.

Naked X, 2004

Color soft ground etching with drypoint and hand staining printed on Senka-shi. Paper size: 25 × 20 inches; image size: 20 × 19 inches.



IN THE CROWN POINT GALLERY

Richard Tuttle: A Printmaking Survey

June 30–September 3, 2005

Please join us in the gallery at a reception for the artist Friday, July 1, 6–8 p.m.

The Art of Richard Tuttle

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

July 2–October 16, 2005

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

November 10, 2005–February 5, 2006

Des Moines Art Center

March 18–June 11, 2006

Dallas Museum of Art

July 15–October 8, 2006

Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

November 11, 2006–February 4, 2007

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

March 18–June 25, 2007

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Overview



Richard Tuttle: Naked