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Garo Z. Antreasian

# Some Thoughts about Printmaking and Print Collaborations

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Approximately two decades have passed since collaboration became a household word in printmaking. During that period we have been alternately beguiled, bewildered, and finally benumbed by an extraordinary avalanche of printed art embracing every conceivable outlook and, depending on one's point of view, brightening or befouling every corner of the land. We are witness to prints by sports and film personalities of our time, by comic strip artists and by naïfs, by talented and by tasteless illustrators, by decorators and by some unabashed romanticizers of an America that never was. In addition to such popular and topical trivia peddled under the name of "original prints," we have also been astounded by some of the finest achievements in the history of American printmaking made by many of the leading artists of our time. Perhaps the only elements shared by these vastly differing outpourings are the uncommonly high quality of printing and the fact that the majority of these works were executed in professional workshops through the collaborative efforts of artists working closely with printers. The professional assurance and technical bravura of these endeavors far exceed printmaking achievements in this country during the first half of the century and, of course, printmaking is far different in scope and intention now than in earlier periods.

What is impressive is the relatively short period of time that it took to establish expert printing skills and a custom of collaboration where practically none had existed before. When by 1966 a publishing, marketing, and journalistic apparatus had become synchronized with this new activity, the key components of the print world of today were established. Thereafter, it remained for individual artists, printers, publishers, and entrepreneurs to elevate, refine, extend, manipulate, or corrupt the system, according to their particular talents and aspirations.

The proliferation of the print world has been so fluid and so multifaceted that there has scarcely been time to sort out the numerous ramifications of its activity in any really critical sense. A great deal has been written about prints and printmaking, most of it complimentary. The majority of the writing, however, has been of a journalistic or documentary nature. In the absence of more critical studies, it has tended to set the standards by which printmaking is measured today. There is an inherent irony and something naggingly worrisome to many artists who are seriously committed to making prints in this state of affairs. Why, for example, if printmaking is such an enormous and vital activity, is there such a lack of really substantive scholarly writing about it today? Why is there such a notable absence of enthusiasm among our more prominent critics in provoking issues about printmaking? Many artists feel that the absence of such effort is not only alarmingly unhealthy, it is perhaps a dismaying indication that printmaking has reached a new and uninspired plateau across which fresh illumination is urgently needed.

In view of the great volume of print production today, it is discouraging to find that the general appearance of the work is notable more for its similarities than for its differences. One asks to what extent the conventions of collaborative practice are contributing to this sameness. Why is it that so little work is being done in black-and-white printmaking? Why are there so few moving, genuinely repugnant, or truly terrifying prints—qualities easy enough to find in painting or photography today? And what ever became of woodcuts and wood engravings as vital art forms?

Returning to the theme of collaboration, we ask why it is that prints made by collaboration are mostly the ones that receive attention today. Or, from another approach, why are only certain artists being published and why are they the artists whose prints are being written about? What are the benefits of collaboration and what are some of the liabilities? More important, what are some characteristics of prints made by collaboration in comparison with those independently printed?

We know that since the earliest prints were made, they have been produced in two basically different ways. In one, the artist conceived and drew the image that was prepared and printed by another individual or group of specialists. Often the work proceeded under the artist's direct supervision; not so at other times. No matter; magnificient prints were produced in this way that otherwise could not have been created. In the other practice, the artist drew, prepared, and printed the entire work himself, with or without assistance. Equally magnificient work was created in this way. Custom, habit, historical evolution, and technical necessity as well as personal inclination and economic need have contributed to both approaches, whether we consider seemingly simple Oriental woodcuts or the most sophisticated printing processes of today. As the technology of printing became more complex after the eighteenth century, however, it became increasingly necessary for the artist to rely

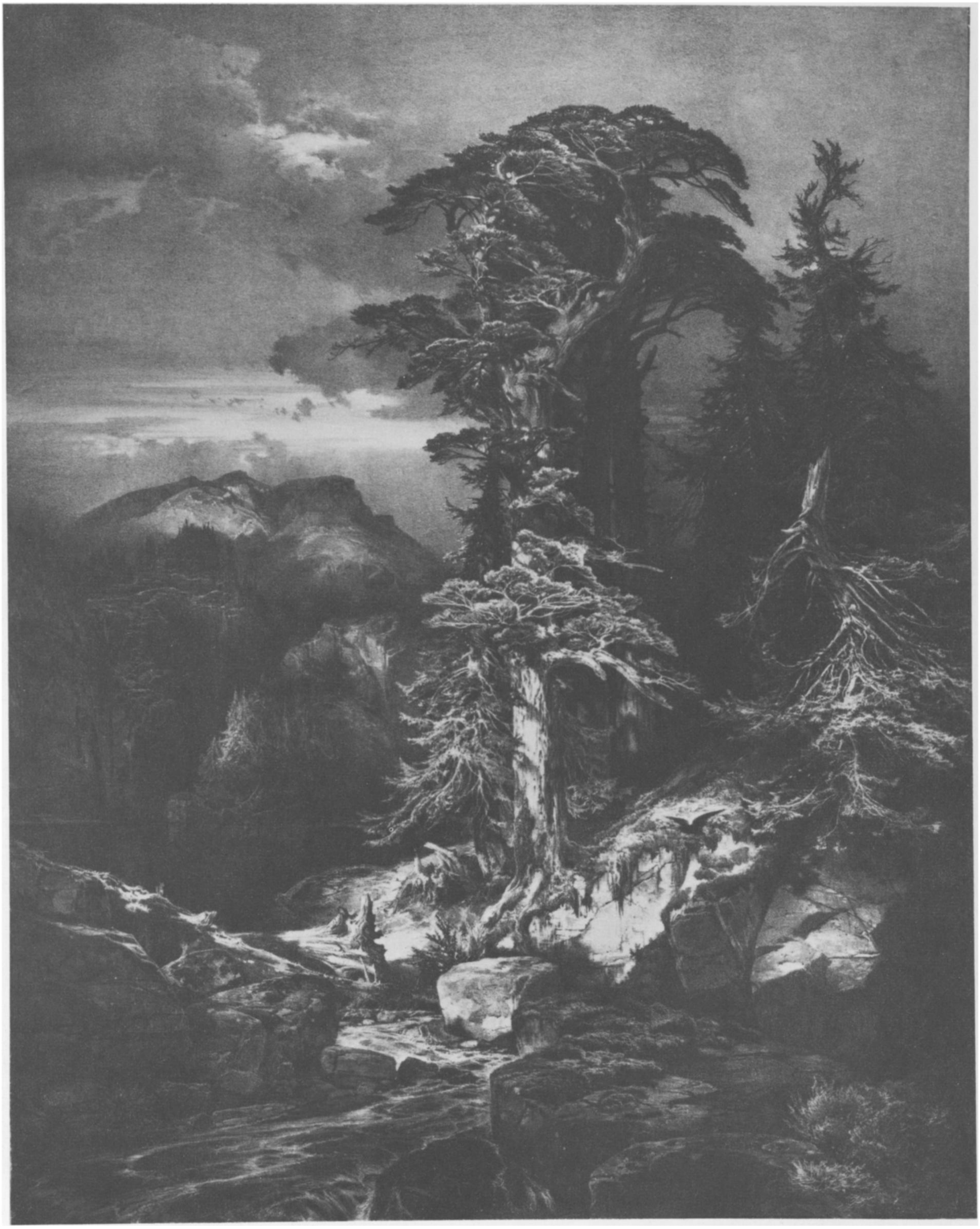

***Fig. 1** Thomas Moran,* Solitude, *1869, lithograph, 20½ x 16". James McGuigan, printer. The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, Prints Division.*

***Fig. 1***

on the services of printing specialists to produce his work. This was particularly true for lithography and it remains true today for the many complicated printing and photomechanical processes that require extensive equipment and technical mastery. It is for this reason that most collaborative work today occurs in lithography and screen printing, and it is particularly in those areas that the greatest abuses of collaborative practice, described below, seem to occur.

From their outset the printing arts of this country were commercially oriented, and during the nineteenth century their relationship to the fine arts was not as close as in Europe. Beginning with lithography, we find that the separation between the printer and the artist was universal by the time of the Civil War. Artists commissioned to make prints, be they Winslow Homer or Thomas Moran, were advised by the shop foreman, whose sensitivity to an artist's intentions was limited by the practices of his particular workshop and by his understanding of the simple technical and formalistic conventions employed in the popular print production of the time. At best, there was only limited discussion between the artist and the printer and no real collaboration as we understand the meaning of the word today. What was provided, quite simply, was printing service and little more. Small wonder, then, that few lithographs of major consequence were created during that early period. There were some surprising exceptions, however, such as the Washington portraits by Rembrandt Peale, those few lithographs that Thomas Moran drew with his own hand ***(Fig. 1)***, and a few rare lithographs by Thomas Cole and J. Foxcroft Cole.

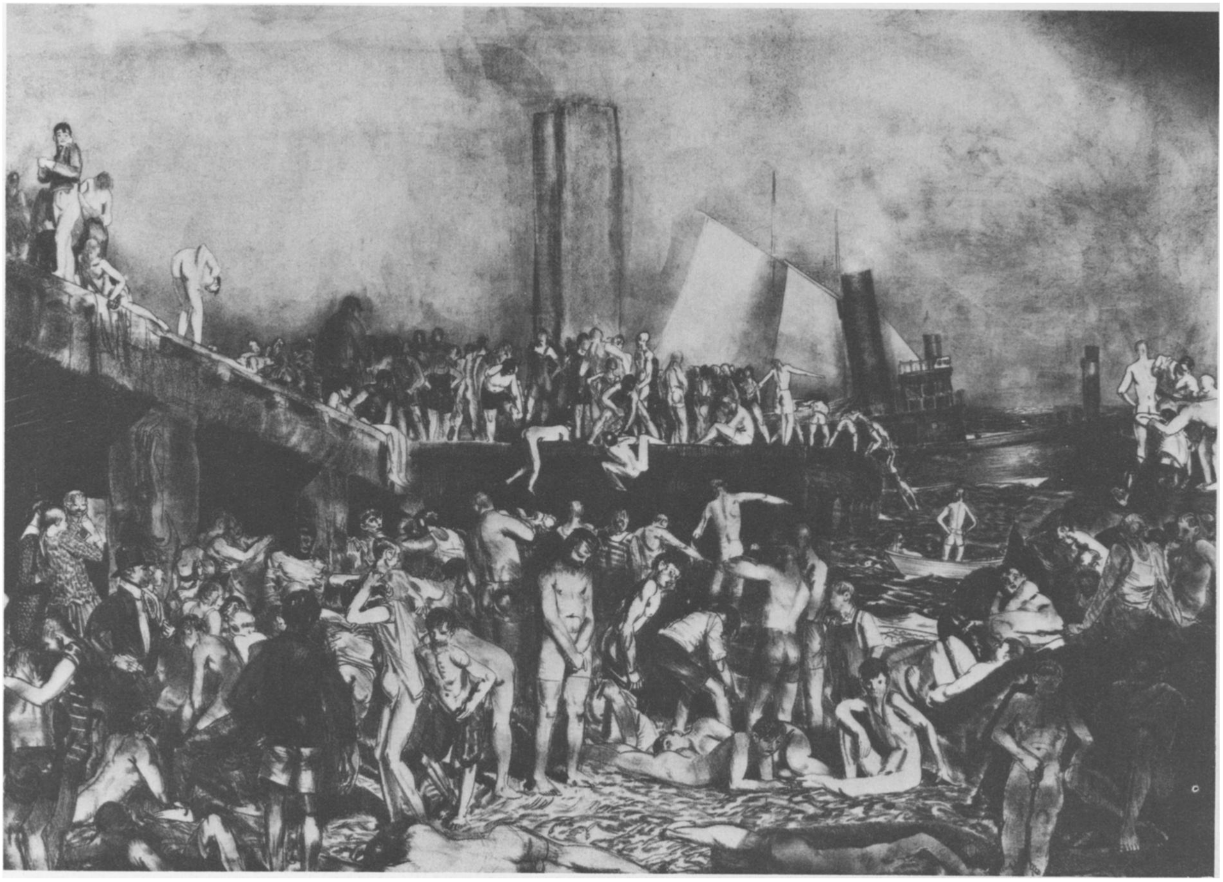

**Fig.2**

***Fig.2** George Bellows,* River Front, *1923-24, lithograph, 14¾ x 20⅞". Bolton printer. Albuquerque, The University of New Mexico, Art Museum.*

***Fig.3** James McNeill Whistler,* Nocturne, *1878, lithotint, 6¾ x 10⅛". Thomas Way, printer. The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, Prints Division, S.P. Avery Collection.*

Later in the century, the preference of American collectors for etchings and the growing influence of the European Peinture-Gravure movement stimulated in this country a brisk period of etching activity, with Whistler's English etchings in the forefront. By emphasizing the autographic and uniquely personal act of printing, Whistler popularized the earlier preference of certain printmakers from Rembrandt to Gauguin to print their own work.[1] Simultaneously he laid the cornerstone for one of the prevailing ideologies of twentieth century printmaking—that of the artist's being directly involved with the printing of his own work. Joseph Pennell was probably the best known, if not the loudest, advocate of this viewpoint, which he proclaimed equally for lithography and for etching. His sometimes penetrating, sometimes narrow, but always crusty opinions dominated thinking and teaching in printmaking for more than thirty years.

During this lively period of American etching, a few artists also became interested in lithography. Albert Sterner and George Bellows were sufficiently intrigued to purchase their own presses, and, along with John Sloan and Pennell, they experimented more or less independently with mixed success. Continuing technical difficulties eventually forced Sterner to seek assistance from George Miller, a professional lithographer. Miller saved Sterner's faulty stone and later did the same for Bellows. By 1914 he was printing the work of Sterner and Bellows as well as that of their friends, with the exception of Pennell, who, because of personal experience, was highly biased against most professional lithographers. According to Pennell, "The professional lithographer as a rule knows nothing about the art of etching and can't be taught; he usually has his method—the shop method—and by that he stands or falls—and the artist does too, if he depends on the professional."[2]

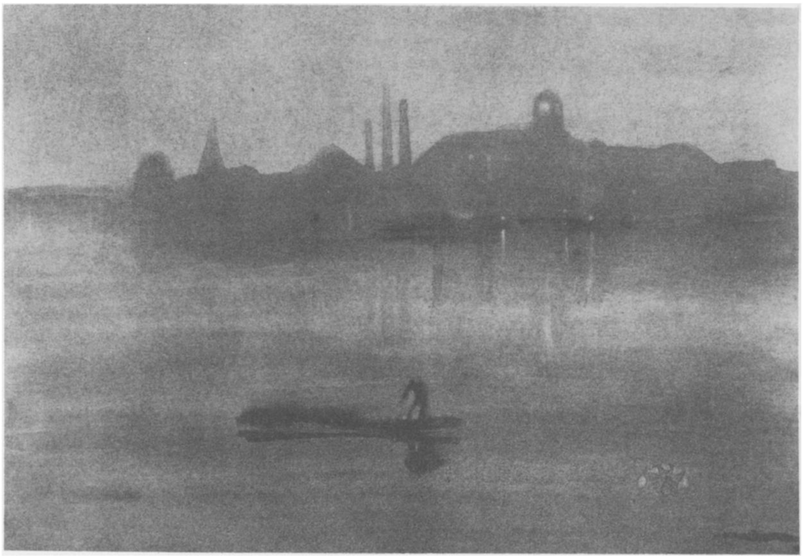

**Fig.3**

Nonetheless, Miller's association with Sterner, Bellows, and also with Arthur B. Davies was sufficiently gratifying for him to establish his own workshop after World War I. From that time until World War II this shop, located in New York, was the principal center for professionally printed lithographs in this country. Although George Miller was a master lithographer in every sense of the word, his special skill was in crayonstone printing. His relationship with artists was supportive and mainly advisory rather than collaborative, and he advocated classically simple and dependable technical approaches that would assure a predictable outcome for the finished print. The Miller workshop came into real prominence during the decade of the '30s and American Scene lithography. It continues to provide highly valued service today under the able guidance of George's son, Burr Miller.

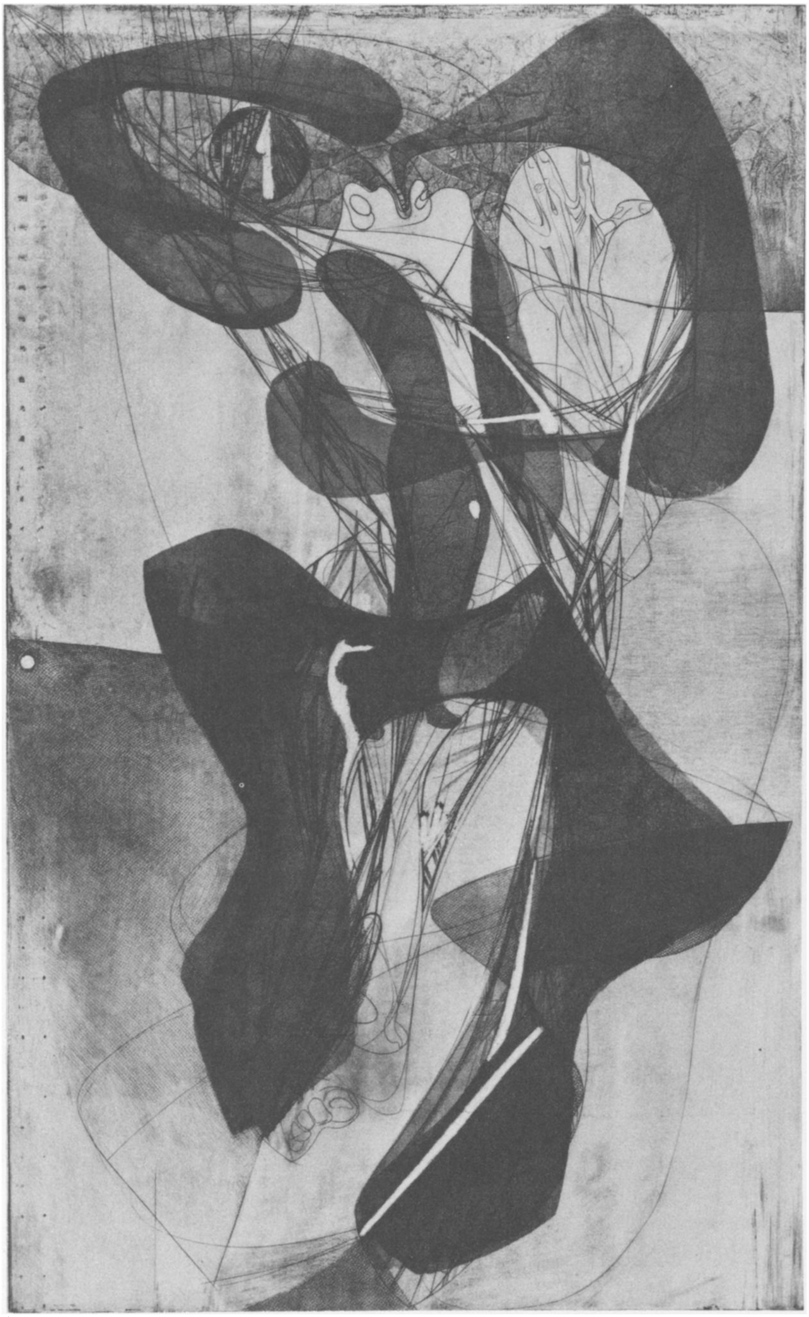

**Fig.4**

***Fig.4*** *Stanley William Hayter,* Tarantella, *1943, engraving and soft ground etching, 21¹¹/₁₆ x 13". New York, The Museum of Modern Art, Edward M.M. Warburg Fund.*

The creative and manipulative instinct in some artists is simply not satisfied unless they have a "hands-on" approach to the entire printmaking process. That is one reason why some artists have never been content with collaborative printmaking and why others seek a printer whose attitude and temperament will accommodate the artists' maximum involvement in the entire process. Bellows, for one, could not resist tinkering with his own work after it was on the press, usually in Miller's absence. This practice eventually led to his breakup with Miller, whom he had come to regard, perhaps unfairly, as too restrictive. He began a new relationship with Bolton Brown, whose penchant for experimentation with the process and materials of lithography was more conducive to Bellows's temperament. Brown's new formula for crayons, which provided firmness of stroke, was much preferred by Bellows, who also conceded that Brown had opened his eyes to the nuances of silvery tones ***(Fig.2)***.[3]

In spite of the extraordinary delicacy with which the printer Thomas Way printed his Thames lithotints, Whistler was another artist who was not content with collaboration, eventually parting from Way and later from his French printers as well ***(Fig.3)***. Referring to Whistler, Pennell said, "Yet alas! He knew little save drawing —nothing of etching and printing his lithographs. Had he known what we who have tried to follow him know, there would have been twice as many lithographs by him; he would have made ten times as many experiments and had a hundred times less difficulty. Mystery and expense drove him from lithography."[4]

Following a hiatus in the '20s and the regionalist and social scene printmaking of the '30s, Stanley W. Hayter's Atelier 17, during World War II, introduced American artists to a radically different concept of printmaking activity, one that functioned on informally organized group interaction and freely shared experience. Then, after the war, Picasso's staggering outpouring of lithographs from the Mourlot workshop revealed to American printmakers the totally unexpected possibilities in lithography that could be achieved by a major modern artist in close collaboration with highly experienced professional printers. Both types of workshop activity have had a pronounced effect on our attitudes and our achievements in printmaking ever since.

At Atelier 17, artists from this country and from abroad commingled in an atmosphere of common endeavor. Concentration centered on intaglio and relief processes. Because of Hayter's scientific education and personal proclivity, the historical, technical, and formalistic aspects of these mediums were keenly analyzed and reapplied with a twentieth century outlook ***(Fig.4)***. Results were arrived at by conjecture, discussion, and cooperative endeavor. A fresh and exciting spirit of questioning interchange and consciously shared experience was the outcome. Discussions about art and avant garde ideas were open, spirited, and frequent at Hayter's shop. The frontiers of art and of printmaking were under constant probe and there was no tolerance for academic pretension.

In this atmosphere, the individual artist stood at the center of his creative destiny. Though the artist was a participant in the give-and-take of ideas and in technical endeavor, the outcome of his own work was, in the final analysis, conditioned by

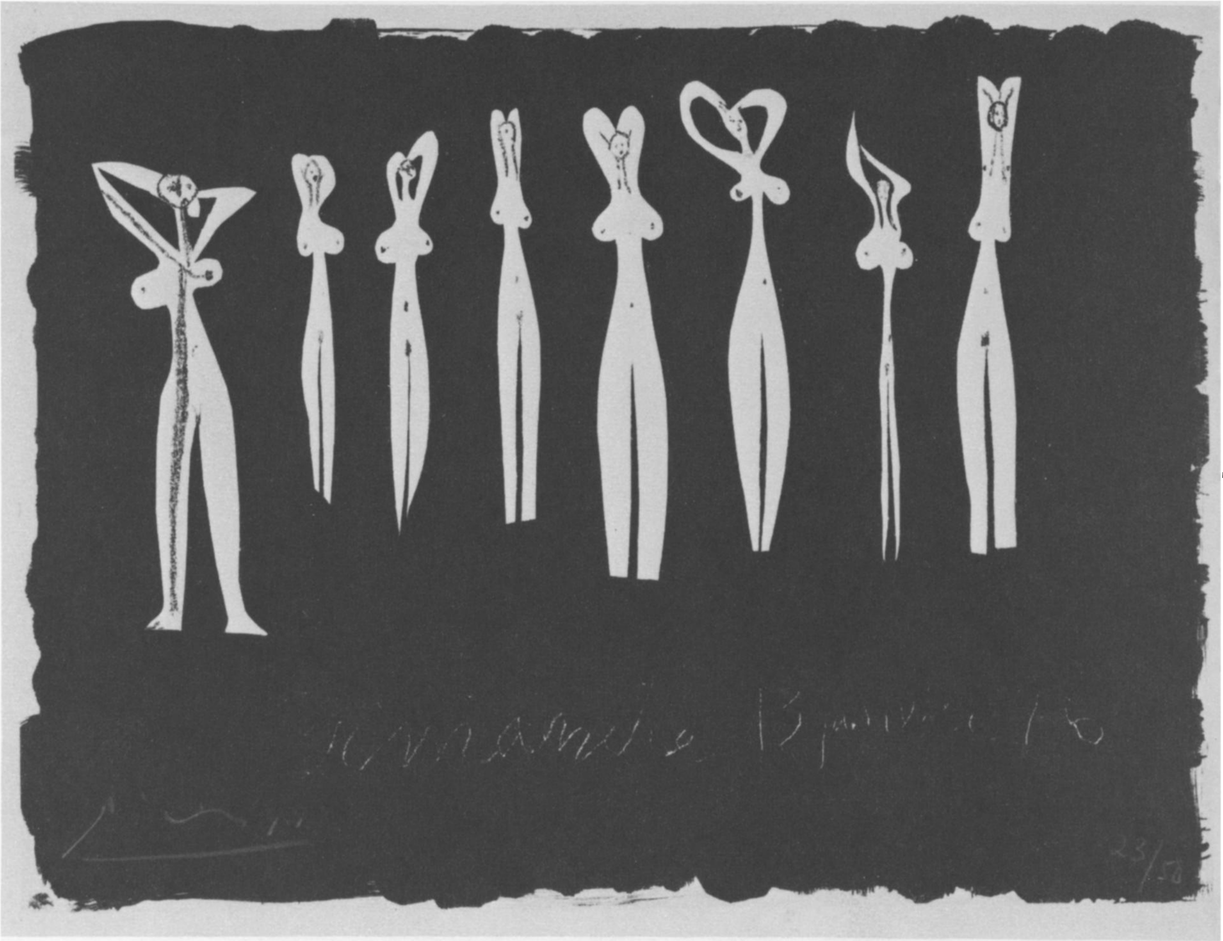

**Fig.5**

***Fig.5*** *Pablo Picasso,* Eight Nudes, *1946, lithograph,* $12^5/_8 \times 17^3/_8$''. *Mourlot 29, only state. New York, The Museum of Modern Art, Curt Valentin Bequest.*

his individual knowledge, expertise, and fortuitous decision-making during the work process. Unforeseen occurrences of foul biting, burnt grounds, and mishaps with the burin were often viewed as positive aspects of the unknown and unpremeditated phenomena of the creative act.[5]

Hayter's encouragement of open and freely shared experimentation, arising from a firm knowledge of process and craft, rapidly permeated printmaking education after the war, and it continues, though considerably modified, as an ideological foundation for much of the teaching in schools today.

How different this was from the loosely managed, enthusiastic, but mainly directionless graphic arts programs of the Federal Works Progress Administration in the 1930s, from the few essentially service-oriented professional printshops, and from the technically and artistically limited printmaking courses taught in the art schools and colleges at that time. It is truly difficult to assess the contributions of the printmaking teachers of the '30s and '40s beyond their mainly parochial but earnest and able craftsmanship.

Picasso's achievements at Mourlot's atelier arose from a different kind of workshop condition than that which existed at Atelier 17. Here was one of the great artists of the period with only marginal previous experience in lithography, beginning his work and within a very short time so grasping the potentiality of the medium that he transformed both the appearance of lithography and our attitudes about it ***(Fig.5)***. Such an achievement is all the more remarkable when we realize that Picasso's creative impulses and instinctive working methods compelled a brilliant but traditionally intransigent group of master craftsmen to find technical solutions outside routine and customary practice.

This intensive and sustained collaboration stimulated Mourlot's printers to achieve results they might never have conceived (nor even tolerated), but even more surprising is that they allowed it to happen in spite of themselves! Picasso's subsequent highly publicized collaborations in ceramics, linoleum prints, etchings, and aquatints focused additional attention on the potentialities of concentrated collaborative endeavor with highly skilled professional artisans.

The beginning of that sort of intense professional collaboration occurred in this country at Tatyana Grossman's Universal Limited Art Editions workshop in 1957 and in 1960 at June Wayne's Tamarind Lithography Workshop. It is interesting to realize that both ULAE and Tamarind focused on lithography and that both were modeled on European atelier practice. Whereas the publication and the printing of works having the highest possible artistic quality was and still is the sole objective of ULAE ***(Fig.6)***, Tamarind's aims were much broader in scope. Its programs began by reestablishing in this country the forgotten know-how of lithography and continued by training the first group of professionally qualified American lithographic printers. Simultaneously, Tamarind initiated a series of studies to analyze the as-yet unfamiliar and intricate aspects of collaboration and professional shop practice in an American setting ***(Fig.7)***. For the past twenty years, these studies and training programs, first in Los Angeles and since 1970 at Tamarind Institute, The University of New Mexico, have provided and continue to provide a superbly well-trained cadre of lithography specialists for the entire country. The prog- of these programs are by now extended through approximately ten generations of certified master printers who are either managing, printing, teaching, or creating their own prints in the majority of the leading lithography workshops in this country and also some abroad. The underlying ideology of this special group of individuals can be summarized by the remark made in 1968 by one of its members, Irwin Hollander: "The fact that I am not producing my own art, from my own imagery, means that when I have an artist in the shop, I live through that artist. I'm obligated to the medium and I want him to do the best he can for the medium, and to

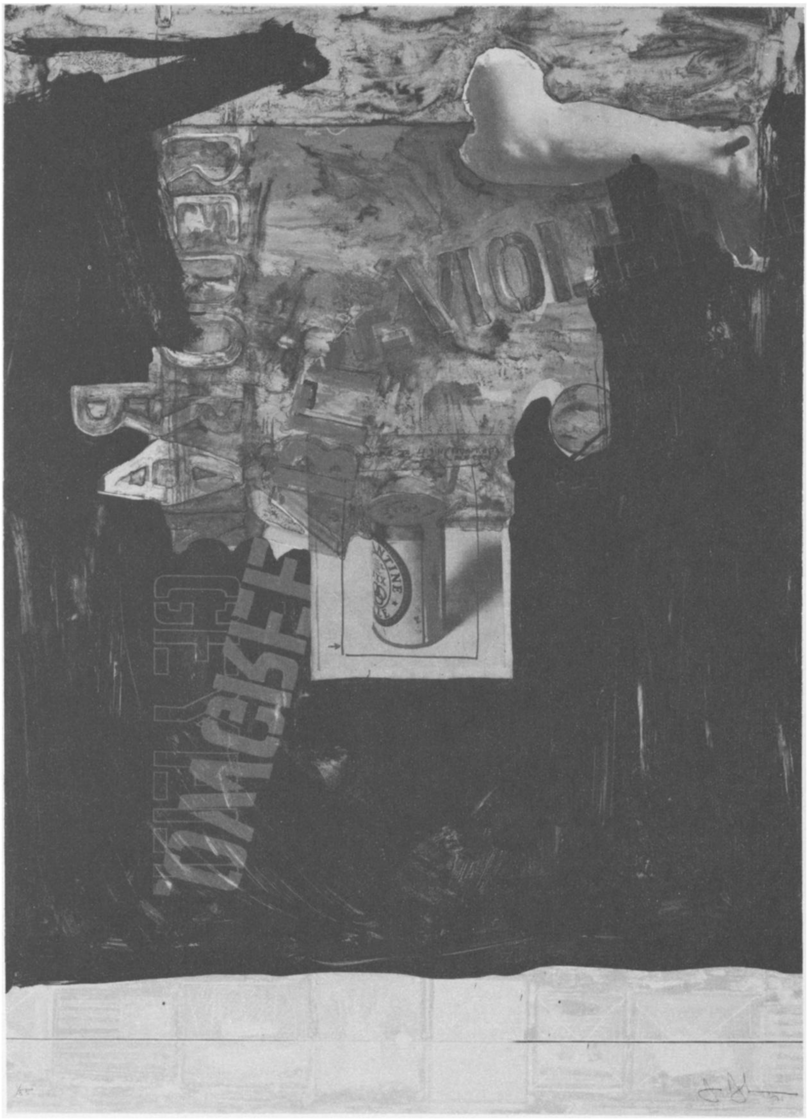

**Fig. 6**

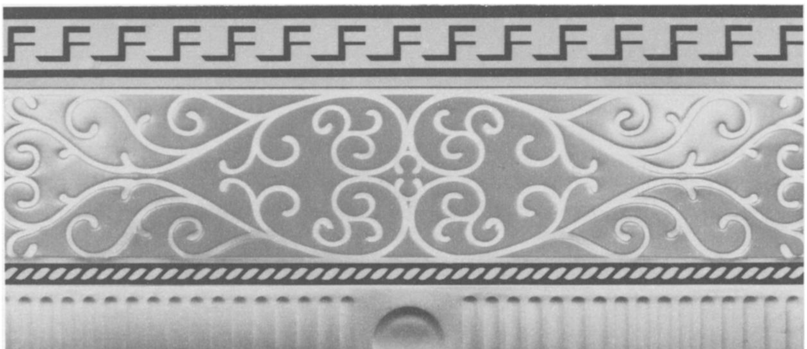

**Fig. 8**

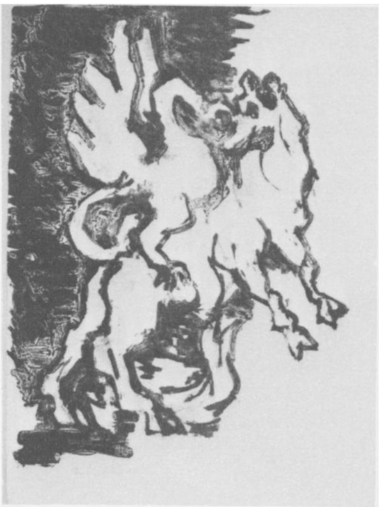

**Fig. 7**

***Fig. 6*** *Jasper Johns,* Decoy, *1971, color lithograph, 41 7/16 x 29 5/8". New York, The Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Celeste Bartos.*

***Fig. 7*** *Jacques Lipchitz,* The Bull and the Condor, *1962, color lithograph, 30 3/8 x 22 1/2". Sorini and Hollander, printers. Albuquerque, The University of New Mexico, Art Museum, Tamarind Collection.*

***Fig. 8*** *Roy Lichtenstein,* Entablature II, *1976, screen, lithograph with collaged foils, and embossing, 29 1/4 x 45". Tyler and Hutcheson, printers. Printed and published by Tyler Graphics, Ltd., © 1976, the artist.*

help him the best I can."[6]

Gradually, as prints became bigger, more complex, and more spectacular, some master printers' functions and attitudes shifted from the simple, straightforward, and altruistic selflessness expressed by Hollander to a more complex and catalytic role. This role is perhaps best epitomized by the master printer Ken Tyler, whose cunning and calculated utilization of present-day technological materials and processes, like the experimental outlook of Hayter in the '50s, stimulated the methodology of printmaking beyond its characteristically nineteenth-century confines ***(Fig. 8)***.

In this context, John Russell sees the master printer as serving the artist in the same way as a recording engineer serves the instrumentalist: "He showed the artist how to do things the artist had never dreamed was possible. Given in some cases the merest outline of an idea, the master printer came up with an end product that was astonishing in its vigor, assurance, and its breadth of resource. What the master printer had to offer was not printmaking in the old sense: it was printmaking as metamorphosis, and it was irresistible."[7]

This subtle shifting of functions in the collaborative relationship moved the focus of achievement away from the artist and towards the printer, whose role in the overall process became like that of a glamorous alchemist, one whose wizardry no one could understand, but whose achievements were acknowledged by all.

The dominance of an individual is essential to the collaborative process. This is one of the intriguing aspects that give flavor, definition, and public identity to a workshop and its output. At various times, artists, printers, workshop directors, or individual publishers have been the galvanizing forces behind successful print

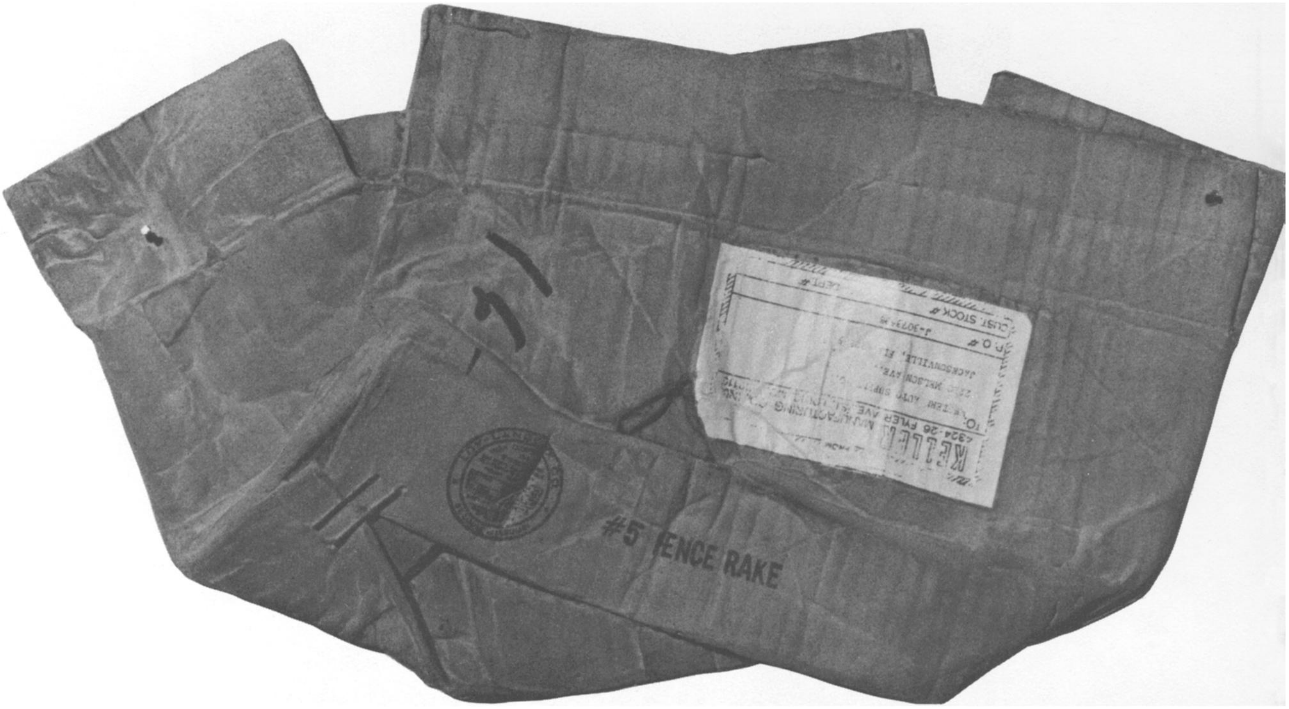

***Fig.9*** *Robert Rauschenberg,* Tampa Clay Piece 4, *1972, silkscreen ceramic decal and silkscreen lacquer decal, 9½x17x1½". Tampa, University of South Florida, Graphicstudio Collection.*

projects.

At Hayter's workshop and also at Mourlot's during Picasso's tenure, the artists dominated their surroundings by their towering personalities; their imagination, creative energy, and sheer sense of purpose provided the dynamics for the group activity in which they were engaged. Certainly the same can be said for Grossman and Wayne, whose legendary direction of their workshops perhaps at times overshadowed, but at the same time never ceased to stimulate, the production of prints. Donald Saff, at the now defunct Graphicstudio, University of South Florida, and Clinton Adams, at Tamarind Institute, are two other shop directors whose leadership has had direct influence on the unique ambience of their shops and on the special outcome of work ***(Figs.9,10)***. By comparison, it is interesting to note the relative anonymity of some of the great printers today: Robert Blackburn, Zugmundt Priede, and Donn Steward, all formerly at ULAE; John Sommers and Steve Britko at Tamarind; Charles Ringness, Theo Wujcik, Paul Clinton, and Julio Juristo, who were at Graphicstudio. Similarly, Serge Lozingot and the current technical staff at Gemini G.E.L. maintain an extremely low visability in comparison with the high public profile of their predecessor, Ken Tyler, who continues to be the center of focus in the collaborative enterprises undertaken at his present workshop in Bedford, New York. Like Tyler, Jack Lemon and Jean Milant are publishers and workshop directors, and, in addition, they are gallery operators of Landfall Press and Cirrus Editions respectively. More important, they are master printers who provide collaborative assistance and direction for the artist, with greater modesty and restraint than Tyler but with no less skillful technical authority and dedication to excellence ***(Fig.11)***. Judith Solodkin, Herman Shark, Maurice Sanchez, and others are among a younger generation of talented printers who have successfully returned to the concept of highly personalized service provided by independent small presses, a service which in the '60s was considered both inefficient and uneconomical.

As some printers' functions took on ever-greater dimensions in the collaborative effort, many artists became disenchanted because they realized that they had less and less involvement with their own creative process. Others adopted a detached aloofness to their work, and still other artists were perfectly happy to leave the most crucial creative decisions to an ever-accommodating master printer. The growing realization that the special ambience of a workshop and the sensitivity of its personnel were of enormous consequence to one's work contributed greatly to the breakup of old alliances and the formation of new ones between artists, printers, and publishers in the late '60s, as many artists sought more balanced circumstances in which to control the destiny of their projects.

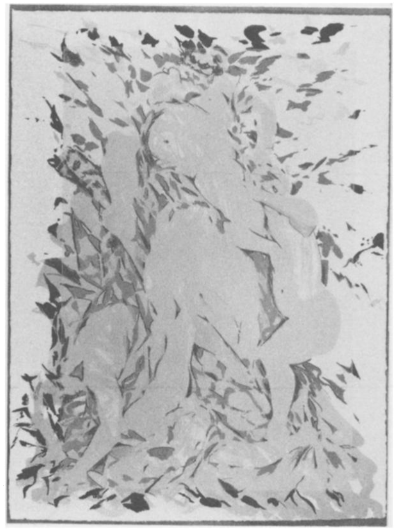
***Fig.10***

***Fig.10*** *Elaine de Kooning,* Jardin du Luxembourg I, *1977, color lithograph, 30x22". Albuquerque, The University of New Mexico, Tamarind Collection.*

It takes a long time for most uninitiated artists to become familiar with the nuances of the interplay between process and result in printmaking. Some have difficulty in responding to the special appearance and tactility of printed surfaces; others can't get used to the "feel" of the materials; most have difficulty in translating their ideas because of work procedures that are often indirect and interrupted by many stages between the first touch and the finished print. Then, too, the interplay of personalities and the meshing of skills between the artist and the printer are untested experiences requiring mutual accommodation. Ideally such experiences are gained through sustained and long-term contact, or, as is more often the case, through intensive short-term exposure in which the entire resources of the workshop may be required. Neither condition is economically feasible unless the stature of the artist can assure sufficient financial return on the speculation. Consequently, an increasing amount of collaborative shop practice entails quick, fairly simple, and straight-forward approaches. Crayon drawing and autographic brush lithography are heavily used, as are the impersonal cut-stencil and photographic techniques of serigraphy. Within the last few years, drawings on grained Mylar are being more frequently employed. It becomes unnecessary for the artist even to see the printing

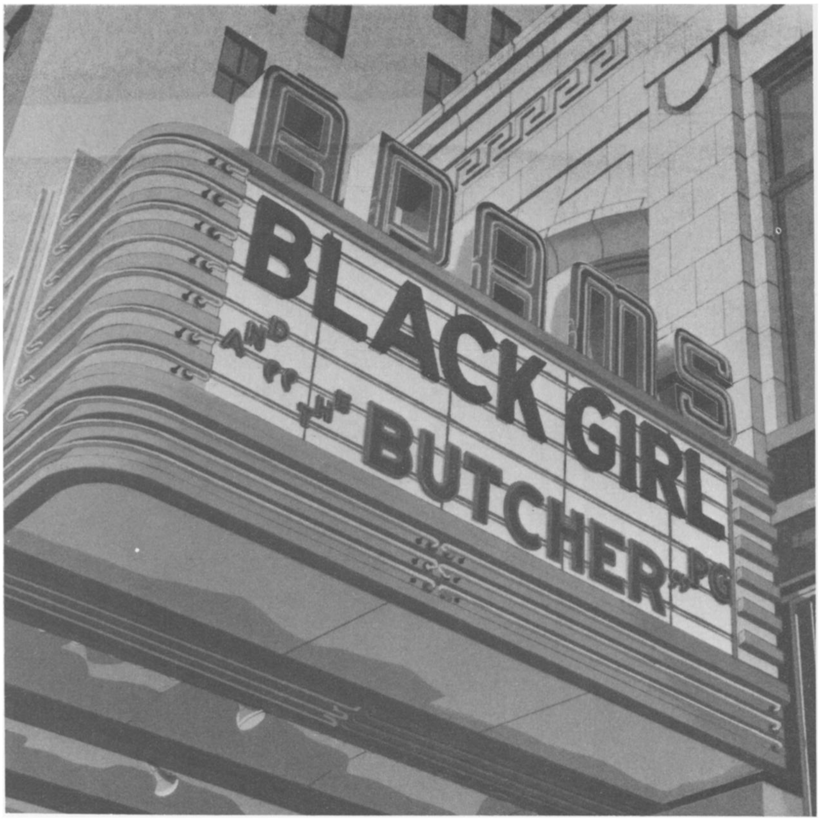

**Fig. 11**

***Fig. 11*** *Robert Cottingham.* Black Girl, *1978, color lithograph, $17^{3}/_{16}$ x $17^{5}/_{16}$". Jack Lemon, printer. (courtesy Landfall Press, Inc., Chicago)*

matrix; the entire processing of the drawing is done photomechanically. This distancing of the artist further and further from direct involvement in the work, while justifiable for certain concepts, ultimately desensitizes him to the inherent aesthetic of printed art; the outcome of his image becomes little more than the expression of the printer's own taste and skill, or worse, an outright facsimile of work the artist normally does in other mediums. The proliferation of such work today is alarming in its magnitude. Furthermore, because of the complexity of the processes employed and the questionable contexts of their advertising, prints made in this way continue to blur the distinctions between original and reproductive art. In many cases the appearance and sociological function of such art are not much different from the conventionalized and depersonalized banality of nineteenth-century chromolithography.

Another matter that tends to encourage these practices is demand from the commercial marketplace, which for some time has assigned to prints the role of surrogate paintings and drawings. So long as the buying public is beguiled by the notion that it is purchasing less expensive but equally "original" works by the hands of our popular masters—works that look like the paintings of drawings of those same masters—there will be less and less concern for the intrinsic properties of a print. Instead of those special qualities that can provide prints with distinctiveness from painting and drawing, we find an increasing abundance of works that has been printed to look more like those mediums.

Today, the very high cost of workshop operation cramps production and project schedules. Individual jobs are programed to start and finish with minimum delay and with little margin for adequate trial proofing or creative alteration. There is practically no incentive in commercial shop practice for the encouragement of projects whose evolution from conception to completion might be wholly unpredictable—as was often the case at Hayter's atelier and was most certainly the case with Picasso at Mourlot's. Similarly, very few projects are undertaken in which the print evolves as a direct outgrowth of the process itself, an approach in which the risks of process and intention can be so tenuous that everything might be lost if the wrong option were chosen. Even such theoretically enormous risks as these could be reduced by the splendidly high caliber of printing expertise available today. Such a procedure, however, is costly and time-consuming. It is regrettable that the majority of works are made by playing the safe odds. The printer has learned by sad experience to provide mostly the safest procedures and to withold the riskier but potentially more exciting possibilities. Thus, publishers and printers try to minimize negative factors by commissioning again and again only those blue-chip artists (1) whose market prices will support as much extra time and expense as is necessary to produce the work, (2) whose professional experience and work habits in the medium are highly reliable (those of a surprising number of artists by now have become so), and (3) whose projected work is reasonably predictable, hence conducive to both shop and marketing objectives. In such cases, many of the extra costs are passed on to the consumer, a practice ever more difficult to sustain in today's economy and in a marketplace already highly saturated with prints by a relatively small number of glamorous artists.

Another phenomenon of the marketplace is the apparently enormous demand for popularized prints produced by highly capable illustrators. Much of this type of work is relatively easy to print and not too costly to produce, hence some shops rely on a certain amount of this profitable work to provide income with which to finance more challenging projects. Nevertheless, the tedium of cranking out reams of predictable merchandise has disenchanted many dedicated printers, driving some into premature retirement and others to the teaching of printmaking and to the production of their own art.

In retrospect, were we to return to 1960, we might be surprised to find that quite separate from its well-publicized educational goals, there were equally important sociological objectives underlying the Tamarind concept that too few have recognized. The really challenging premise of the entire plan was that the economic potential for many American artists might be improved by stimulating the formation of a comprehensive network of print enterprises—from print workshops and master printers to print publishers, dealers, and collectors—and this system would at the same time pave the way for a flourishing of great prints. It was visualized that such a network would create additional jobs where none had previously existed for a multitude of support personnel, from curators and paper specialists to media specialists and middlemen. All of those things and more have come to pass during the past two decades, though of course not by Tamarind's initiative alone. How ironic that today we are witness to the towering success as well as to the incredible corruption of those fine objectives.

Along the way, during those two decades, some notions about printmaking were bypassed and others overlooked; still others were discounted, and in my view should be reexamined. Among them was the simplistic truism that "the best artists make the best prints" (certainly no quarrel with that). It followed that such artists were usually painters or sculptors, for they confronted directly the ideas of "high" art unfettered by the technical trivia that seemed to ensnare the "complete" printmaker. So long as painters and sculptors could collaborate with brilliant printing artisans, as had been the case in Europe, there was the potential that great works could be achieved. Unquestionably that occurred and continues to occur, with truly spectacular prints being created by some of our leading artists. Equally true but seldom acknowledged is the fact that reams of less than mediocre works have also been produced by equally important artists who have little or no serious interest or commitment to the art of the print. Often such prints have been glamorized by exotic technical manipulation, but in their way were no better and maybe a bit worse than the technically overadorned but none the less sincere works of some professional printmakers.

We are also aware of the tendency in many collaborations for the artist to be nudged ever further away from the direct creative manipulation and decision-making of his work process. We know that the anguish, as well as the luxury, of failure can seldom be accommodated within the pressurized atmosphere of high-volume print publishing. Consequently, much work produced under these circumstances displays a suave, safe, and impersonal patina of faultless printing that veils the underlying vacuity of the work. Certainly, identical characteristics may be found as well in the art of many printmakers who print their own work; an absence of substance or commitment is by no means unique to work done collaboratively. Nor do we mean to imply that being a "complete" printmaker is perferable to making prints collaboratively. Rather, what is needed is a shift of focus, to bring critical attention once again to the sadly neglected activities of artists who print and publish their own work. The intellectual ideas and technical abilities of such artists have changed, broadened, and grown considerably in every print area since 1960, when interest in their work shifted to collaborative endeavor. In addition, the ranks of artists who print their own work have multiplied considerably with the presence of newer, younger, and less familiar faces. Surely the very independence of their working method is providing an outcome quite different from that of the collaborating artists, and that difference, at the very least, is worthy of broad exposure and critical attention where none now exists.

Also, we need today the spirited search for the unknown and unexpected that was present in intaglio and relief printing in the '50s and in lithography and screen printing in the '60s. And that spirit is most likely to come from young and relatively unknown artists. Regrettably, there is too little opportunity today for promising talents to have access to workshop resources and, when desirable, to the printing expertise that would allow "hands-on" concentrated experimentation at little or no cost to the artist. The acknowledgment and accommodation of creative risk, faulty premise, and even perhaps ultimate failure must be encouraged in printmaking if progress is to occur. In order for that to happen there is a crucial need to separate serious endeavor from that which is currently overglamorized and commercially oriented. ***End***

### *Notes*

1 Pat Gilmour, *The Mechanized Image,* exh. cat., [London], Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978, 10. Referring to Whistler, Pat Gilmour has said, "Under the 'art for art's sake' banner, he boosted uniqueness by such devices as manipulating surface ink on his etching plates so as to confound mechanical ideas of regularity and identicality. He made a watchword out of spontaneity and intuition."

2 Joseph Pennell, "Lithography," *Print Collectors Quarterly*, II, 1912, 468. Pennell went on to say, "To the professional lithographer, the prints must look just like the artist's drawing, and all be alike. The fact that the artist sees the glimmer of new grace in his work as he prints—the germ of an idea as he goes on—a new scheme of color as he experiments—is to be suppressed, and the professional lithographer suppresses it; he has been trained to believe that lithographs ought to be as like as two peas."

3 Bolton Brown, "Prints and their Makers," *Prints*, I, Nov. 1930, 22. Brown was not modest in acknowledging his relationship to Bellows. He said, "I furnished him his entire set of materials, prepared exactly to suit his needs, by my own hands which, being the hands of an artist and an expert lithographer, could and did for him what no mere printer could come anywhere near doing. He said to me . . . 'I couldn't practice lithography if it weren't for you. Three-quarters of the prints I made before you came on the scene I wouldn't want anyone to see—now.' "

4 Pennell, "Lithography," 468, 470.

5 Graham Reynolds, *The Engravings of S.W. Hayter*, exh. cat., London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1967, 2. With reference to Hayter, Reynolds says, "By the partial abandonment of the will the burin on the copperplate becomes in his hand a sort of ouija-board, drawing to the light ideas and forms which otherwise might not become apparent to the artist."

6 Mary Welsh Baskett, *American Graphic Workshops: 1968*, exh. cat., Cincinnati Art Museum 1968.

7 John Russell, "A Connoisseur's Guide to the Fine Art of Print Collecting," *New York Times*, June 22, 1979, III 1.