

# The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

No. 99

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

TAMARIND: HOMAGE TO LITHOGRAPHY by Virginia Allen, recently published by The Museum of Modern Art, documents the nine-year history of the Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles and provides an historical context for the revival of lithography in America during the 1960's.

...Printmaking today is an international concern of great vitality, and its center is the United States because most major American artists have again found meaningful vehicles in the multiple media. To some extent, this renaissance -- for that is what it is -- was made possible by the discovery of new media, but it is also due in equal part to the revival of traditional methods like lithography. Tamarind is at once product and progenetrix of this renaissance.

The book catalogs part of the promised gift to the Museum of the complete Kleiner, Bell and Company Collection of Tamarind Impressions on view at the Museum through September 1. Forty-six illustrations (8 in color) include prints produced at this unique Workshop by Josef Albers, Paul Brach, José Luis Cuevas, Sam Francis, Philip Guston, David Hockney, Allen Jones, Nicholas Krushenick, Louise Nevelson, Henry Pearson, Leon Polk Smith, Ed Ruscha, Esteban Vicente.

"Lithography at its best is a collaboration between artist and printer. Technically the most difficult of all fine-printing techniques, it requires specialized skills, equipment, and physical agility beyond the reach of most artists," states Miss Allen. Tamarind Lithography Workshop is a non-profit organization, which provides fellowships for both artists and printers and the opportunity to collaborate.

The drystamp or "chop" that appears on all Tamarind lithographs is embossed on the cover of this publication, which includes a text by Virginia Allen, former curator of Tamarind and now Assistant to William S. Lieberman, Director of the Museum's Department of Drawings and Prints. Mr. Lieberman, who has been recently appointed Director of Painting and Sculpture, serves on Tamarind's Board of Directors and Panel of Selection, and wrote the preface in the book.

In the text, Miss Allen examines the importance of the Tamarind Workshop, and provides a brief history and development of lithography both in France, where it first achieved

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importance as an art form, and in America. While French artists were experimenting with lithography as a means of artistic expression throughout the nineteenth century, lithography in America at that time was used primarily for mass-producing book illustrations, posters, advertisements, and genre pieces. From 1900 to 1940, a number of American artists worked in lithography, but artists' aesthetics finally outdistanced the rather traditional techniques of lithography as it was being taught and practiced. Also in 1940, Stanley William Hayter moved his intaglio studio Atelier 17 to New York, so the printmaking focus shifted from lithography to intaglio, where it remained throughout the forties and fifties.

This need to insure the survival of lithography created the *raison d'être* of Tamarind. June Wayne, Tamarind's organizer and director, developed the concept of the Workshop and founded it in 1960, with funds from the Program in Humanities and the Arts of the Ford Foundation. Tamarind's facilities and stress on quality and experimentation have since enabled collaborating artists and printers to extend and adapt lithography as a very individual means of artistic expression, illustrated by the wide range of images produced at the Workshop.

In the preface, Mr. Lieberman quotes Miss Wayne: "The importance of Tamarind is by no means only the opportunities offered here. It is what happens elsewhere and after that will tell the whole story." As of May 1, 1969, 95 artist-fellows, as well as 57 guest artists, and some printers and staff members have produced over 2,500 editions of lithographs containing some 75,000 prints, while 67 printer-fellows have received highly specialized training in the art of lithographic printing.

The Museum's exhibition of the same title, co-directed by Mr. Lieberman and Miss Allen, is scheduled to travel in Latin America under the auspices of the Museum's International Council after the New York showing.

**TAMARIND: HOMAGE TO LITHOGRAPHY** by Virginia Allen; preface by William S. Lieberman; complete exhibition catalog. 64 pages; 46 illustrations (8 in color). Hardbound \$6.95; Paperbound \$3.95; Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

**DISTRIBUTION OF HARDBOUND EDITION:**

United States and Canada: New York Graphic Society Ltd.

United Kingdom: Trans Atlantic Book Service, Ltd.

International: Feffer and Simons, Inc.

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