

PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATED BOOKS REINSTALLATION SHOWCASES COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS AND NEW ACQUISITIONS

Works Exhibited in New York City's Only Museum Galleries Devoted Solely to Prints; New Acquisitions Demonstrate Recent Collecting Activity in the Department

Artists & Prints: Masterworks from The Museum of Modern Art

The Paul J. Sachs Prints and Illustrated Books Galleries, second floor
November 20, 2004–March 14, 2005

NEW YORK, November 15, 2004—The Department of Prints and Illustrated Books presents highlights from its expansive collection, the largest in the Museum and comprising over 50,000 works for the inaugural installation of their new galleries in the renovated and expanded Museum of Modern Art. **Artists & Prints: Masterworks from The Museum of Modern Art** showcases 30 artists, ranging from Paul Gauguin in the late nineteenth century to Damien Hirst in the twenty-first century. Many are represented by several examples to demonstrate the range of their experimentation with printmaking techniques. Masterworks by Pablo Picasso and Jasper Johns, and 23 new acquisitions including those by Henri Matisse, Edward Ruscha, and Lucian Freud, are some of the featured works. To provide visitors with an overview of modern printmaking's development, and to underscore the contribution of the medium to modern art generally, these works are exhibited chronologically in The Paul J. Sachs Prints and Illustrated Books Galleries, the only museum galleries in New York City devoted solely to this medium. The reinstallation celebrates the return of this permanent collection gallery, closed for construction since 1999. The inaugural exhibition on view from November 20, 2004 to March 14, 2005, demonstrates how artists have expanded their creativity through such techniques as woodcut, etching, lithography, and screenprint. *Artists & Prints* will be presented in three changing rotations, each including from 75 to 100 works.

Some prints on view in this first rotation are gifts specifically to celebrate the Museum's reopening, including Lucian Freud's *Solicitor's Head* (2003), Henri Matisse's *Marie-José in a Yellow Dress* (1950), and Edward Ruscha's series of screenprints from the 1960s on the subject of a Standard gas station. Among other new acquisitions are Max Beckmann's *At the Toilette* (1923), Kiki Smith's *Peacock* (1997), Joan Miró's *Untitled* from *Series II* (1947), Shahzia Sikander's *Afloat* (2001), Martin Puryear's *Untitled* (2001), Christian Marclay's *Untitled* (1991), and Damien Hirst's *Burning Wheel* from *In a Spin, the Action of the World on Things* (2002). All add further dimension to what already is considered the finest collection of its kind in the world.

On the second floor of the Museum, The Paul J. Sachs Prints and Illustrated Books Galleries present the collection in a newly renovated area with a spacious open floor plan that is different from the traditional way prints are displayed. In addition, new frames, with non-

reflective plexiglass, allow these works to be seen with unusual clarity. Finally, specially designed vitrines for illustrated books display such masterworks as Matisse's *Jazz* (1947) and Miró's *Á toute épreuve* (1958), and also serve as architectural components of the new galleries.

In the first of two galleries, *Artists & Prints* presents modern printmaking from its beginnings, featuring advances in color lithography that occurred in the late nineteenth century. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's poster for the artistic journal *La Revue blanche* (1895) is an example of how this technique flourished. The exhibition goes on to showcase two of Picasso's landmark etchings, *The Weeping Woman* (1937) and *Minotauremarchy* (1935). New acquisitions, such as Beckmann's *At the Toilette* (1923), Miró's *Untitled from Series II* (1947), and Matisse's *Marie-José in a Yellow Dress* (1950) round out the history of the medium during these years, while several works by Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg signal a transition to the contemporary period.

The second gallery, The Tatyana Grosman Gallery, is devoted to contemporary printmaking. Artists include Louise Bourgeois and Lucian Freud, both of whom have brought new attention to the traditional etching technique. Kiki Smith's *Peacock* (1997), a new acquisition, demonstrates how younger artists have also returned to etching. Other works in this section include Martin Puryear's illustrated book and portfolio entitled *Cane* (2002), an example of the recent use of woodcut that underscores its evolution from Gauguin's *Noa Noa* woodcuts of the late nineteenth century, seen earlier in the exhibition.

While contemporary artists have contributed to the continuing vitality of traditional printmaking techniques, some have ruptured these traditions with altogether new approaches. One such unconventional method is found in Christian Marclay's *Untitled* (1991). Marclay, who frequently combines his interests in music and visual art, inked a variety of records and ran them through a printing press, to create this work. Damien Hirst also re-conceived the printmaking process with *Burning Wheel* (2002). He placed a copper etching plate onto a spinning machine and scraped and scratched it with needles, screwdrivers, and other sharp tools from a platform above. This method became a performance-like ritual resulting in a portfolio of prints. Related to Hirst's spin paintings, *Burning Wheel* demonstrates how an artist adapts his artistic practice to the challenges of a new medium.

Works from the Prints and Illustrated Books Collection are also included in other departmental galleries in the Museum, illuminating the interchange of mediums by modern and contemporary artists. Several important recent works are found in the Contemporary Galleries on the second floor; one of Robert Rauschenberg's lithographs from the 1960s can be found in The Edward Steichen Photography Galleries on the third floor; numerous prints and books by German Expressionists, Italian Futurists, and artists of the Russian avant-garde are featured in the fourth and fifth-floor Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Painting and Sculpture Galleries; and prints are also found in various public spaces around the Museum.

Artists & Prints will be presented in three rotations during the inaugural year: Part 1 is on view November 20, 2004–March 14, 2005; Part 2, April 5–July 4, 2005; and Part 3, July 26–October 24, 2005.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

Abby Aldrich Rockefeller was the greatest force behind the collection of Prints and Illustrated Books at The Museum of Modern Art. An avid print collector herself, Mrs. Rockefeller donated 1,600 prints from her own collection in 1940 in order to foster appreciation of the medium. Earlier, in 1929, the first acquisition by the Museum was a gift of eight German Expressionist prints and one drawing, donated by scholar and collector Paul J. Sachs. Fifty years later, in galleries named for him, *Artists & Prints* is now on display.

The first installment of *Artists & Prints*, on display through March 14, 2005, was organized by Deborah Wye, The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Chief Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books. The second and third rotations will be organized by other curators in this Department.

RESEARCH PRINT ROOM

The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room, located within the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books offices on the fourth floor of the Museum, is a place for the public to view and study works that are not currently on display in the galleries. This public resource, named for Abby Aldrich Rockefeller in 1949, is the only print room dedicated solely to modern art. Comprising a library research area as well as a study center, the Print Room will open in early 2005, three days a week, by appointment. To schedule an appointment, the public may call the Department's offices at 212/333-1224.

PUBLICATION

A publication entitled *Artists & Prints: Masterworks from The Museum of Modern Art*, by Deborah Wye, The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Chief Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books (\$49.95, published by The Museum of Modern Art), accompanies the exhibition. It not only serves as a catalogue of works that will be shown in the inaugural year in the Prints and Illustrated Books Galleries, but also provides an overview of printmaking in the modern period. This 288-page book is the most comprehensive volume devoted to the Department's collection. Included are color plates of 350 works from the late nineteenth century to the present and texts on individual artists, as well as essays on the history of modern printmaking and the history of collecting prints at MoMA. The volume concludes with a scholarly bibliography, indices of artists, publishers, and printers, and a glossary.

SPONSORSHIP

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