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Sat. November 29, 1975

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SAT

Art: Radiant Prints by Richard Smith

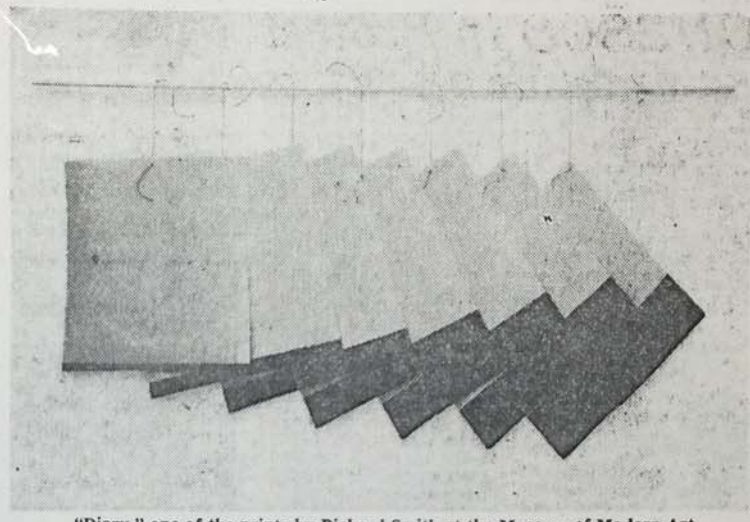
By JOHN RUSSELL

For the best part of 20 years Richard Smith has been one of the most inventive colorists around. But what to do with that gift? How best to support it, structure it and keep it from getting out of hand? Difficult questions, those. But he solved them to general admiration in a retrospective at the Jewish Museum, and at the British pavilion in Venice, when the Venice Biennale was still the most important exhibition of its kind, and in a second retrospective last summer at the Tate Gallery in London.

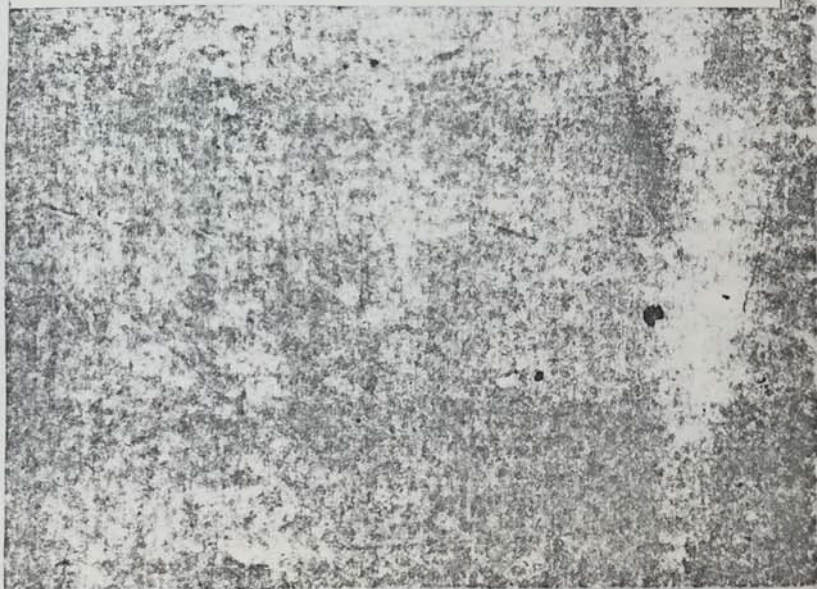
What he did was to shift his ground with a swordsman's agility. Sometimes the color was carried by a construction of wood and canvas that jutted out into the room. Sometimes it fell downward like a waterfall, or folded backward like the flap of an envelope, or was stretched taut on metal struts like a smoked haddock. Sometimes it was skied like a kite, and sometimes it was stepped and graded like a baroque staircase. In every case a neat and nimble intelligence was behind it.

In physical terms Mr. Smith's new prints (at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53d Street, through tomorrow) are quite slight. They consist of overlapping plaques held together with string and tacked onto the wall. But the color has a disembodied radiance that gains by that very lack of pretension.

Where other artists strive to arrange areas of pure color in patterns that might conceivably say something new, Richard Smith just hangs them in a carefully thought-out sequence and leaves them to speak for themselves. They remain what they are—discrete and disparate patches of color, arranged in a variety of simple progressions—but magic comes of it.



"Diary," one of the prints by Richard Smith at the Museum of Modern Art



Robert Ryman, born in Tennessee in 1930, is represented in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art by his painting, *Twin*, 1966. Richard Smith, born in Great Britain in 1931, is also represented in the collection by

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D R A F T

New Prints by Robert Ryman and Richard Smith

During the month of November new prints by Robert Ryman and Richard Smith will be on view for the first time in New York at The Museum of Modern Art. Both artists are important painters who have used the print media with exceptional inventiveness. Their newest prints "confirm that the integration of printmaking into the artist's primary expression is complete with Ryman and Smith", writes Riva Castleman, Director of the Museum's Department of Prints and Illustrated Books.

2 Ryman, whose paintings and work in various media during the past decade have utilize^d white pigment exclusively, has created six three ^{foot} square aquatints. Their subject is the relationship of an aquatint field of white ink to the white paper upon which it is printed. The varying shades of white act ~~simply~~ to clarify the basic theme of confrontation and mediation of printed and unprinted textures.

3 Richard Smith, ^{an} (the British) artist best known for his shaped paintings, has most recently produced works consisting of overlapping squares of canvas mounted on rods. (like kites). His new prints, like the paintings, hang from string at angles allowing the underlying sheets to be nearly, but not completely secret. ⁴ ~~Diary~~, seven silkscreened sheets of paper hanging from a wood rod, is the largest and most complex printed work by Smith to date.

Robert Ryman, born in Tennessee in 1930, is represented in the ^{Museum's} collection of The Museum of Modern Art by his painting, Twin, 1966. Richard Smith, born in Great Britain in 1931, is also represented in the collection by

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a painting done in 1966, Ring-A-Lingling. Both works are on view.

Recent prints by other contemporary artists may be seen in the current exhibition PRINTSEQUENCE in the Museum's Paul J. Sachs Galleries.

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The Museum of Modern Art

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

NO.91

FOR RELEASE: November 7, 1975

NEW PRINT SHOW AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

New Prints by Robert Ryman and Richard Smith, works by two important painters who have used the print media with exceptional inventiveness, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from November 7 through November 30. These recent prints, according to Riva Castleman, Director of the Museum's Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, "...confirm that the integration of printmaking into the artist's primary expression is complete with Ryman and Smith."

Ryman, whose paintings and work in various media during the past decade utilize white pigment exclusively, has created six three-foot-square aquatints. Their subject is the relationship of an aquatint field of white ink to the white paper upon which it is printed. The varying shades of white act to clarify the basic theme of confrontation and mediation of printed and unprinted textures.

Richard Smith, the British artist best known for his shaped paintings, has most recently produced works consisting of overlapping squares of canvas mounted on rods, somewhat like kites. His new prints, like the paintings, hang from string at angles, allowing the underlying sheets to be nearly, but not completely, secret. Diary, seven silkscreened sheets of paper hanging from a wood rod, is the largest and most complex printed work by Smith to date.

Robert Ryman, born in Tennessee in 1930, is represented in the Museum collection by the painting, Twin, 1966. Richard Smith, born in Great Britain in 1931, is also represented in the collection by a painting done in 1966, Ring-A-Lingling. Both works are on view on the Museum's first floor.

Recent prints by other contemporary artists may be seen in the current exhibition PRINTSEQUENCE in the Museum's Paul J. Sachs Galleries.

Additional information available from Michael Boodro, Assistant, and Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019.
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