

The Museum of Modern Art

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ARAKAWA: RECENT PRINTS AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Nine recent lithographs by the Japanese artist Arakawa will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from September 6 through October 27. The artist's examination of his lifelong subject The Mechanism of Meaning, in which he combines the written word with the more traditional elements of two-dimensional painting, is continued in these prints.

The series of six prints "No!" says the signified was executed in 1973 at the Graphicstudio of the University of South Florida in Tampa. They are a "synthesis or digest of the nineteen divisions of The Mechanism of Meaning as they had been formulated and explored by 1971," explains Riva Castleman, Curator, Prints and Illustrated Books and director of the exhibition. "That is to say, these lithographs include all the ideas established in Arakawa's paintings of 1963-71." Among the areas of Arakawa's investigation have been memory, intelligence, humor, paradox, etc. With his wife Made-line Gins, he has created in this work an infinite series of statements which are given extended and sometimes obscured meaning by their juxtaposition with color, diagrams, and objects. The artist has stated "... my symbols have many personal meanings but the viewer must seek his own... every part is empty but casts a shadow."

Arakawa's enthusiasm for lithography (often "collaged" with silkscreened and embossed elements) led to the use of as many lithographic techniques as could physically be carried out by the artist and his printers. He continued his work in the medium at Styria Studio in New York, where he completed the three larger prints shown in the exhibition.

Arakawa was born in Nagoya, Japan, in 1936. He moved to Tokyo in 1953 where he lived until coming to New York in 1961. He made his first print in 1964. Except for experimentation in blueprint, he did not find the print media a creative challenge until he began work on "No!" says the signified.

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