

# The Museum of Modern Art

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PRINTSEQUENCE, an exhibition of works in series by 16 artists who have explored the sequential possibilities inherent in the print media is on view now through January 18 in the Sachs Galleries of The Museum of Modern Art. All of the works, though varying greatly in style, subject matter, and even method of printing, share one common denominator: each series has one invariable element. The discovery of this invariable is the challenge the exhibition presents.

The variations from print to print within a series can be either quite subtle or immediately obvious, as is the case with Andy Warhol's ten serigraphs Mao Tse-Tung. The size and the photographic image of Mao's face remain constant, but all ten are printed in greatly differing line and color combinations. With Josef Alber's Embossed Linear Constructions, however, only after careful observation can it be seen that the changing spatial illusions have been created solely by stressing or eliminating various embossed lines.

In a few cases the invariable element in the series is difficult to associate with the image. This is true of both Mel Bochner's Q.E.D. and Emmett Williams' Six Variations Upon a Spoerri Landscape. In Williams' series, the six images are different, but all are of the remains of his meals on specific days, Monday through Saturday. Other artists whose work is included are Robert Mangold, Frank Stella, Robert Rauschenberg, Daniel Buren, and Joel Bass.

While it is natural that these contemporary artists show a concern with the "process" area of printmaking, the exhibition also includes earlier prints by Emil Nolde and Picasso which provide historical insights into this mode of printmaking. Nolde's lithograph Young Couple is printed in two different colors, and Picasso's David and Bathsheba is seen in two radically different states:

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in one, the image is black on white, in the other, white on black. As Riva Castleman, Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books and director of the exhibition says, "To Picasso, there were many 'states' of his work worthy of publication."

Because the works on view make visible the progressive changes made during the execution of a print, they provide a rare glimpse into the artist's mind. As Riva Castleman states, "An examination of the successive prints in which an artist has dealt with a chosen theme, evolving new compositions or varying the color relationships, will divulge considerably more information about that artist's work than could ever be presented in a single painting. In these serial prints the artist challenges the spectator to a complex game of perception in which the sharpest senses win the most points."

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