

National Gallery of Art News Release



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INNOVATIVE ART FROM GRAPHICSTUDIO AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, SEPTEMBER 15

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A survey of more than ninety prints and edition sculptures produced during the last two decades at Graphicstudio by some of America's foremost contemporary artists will be presented September 15, 1991, through January 5, 1992, in the West Building of the National Gallery of Art. Graphicstudio, founded in 1968 by artist Donald Saff at the University of South Florida, Tampa, has become one of the leading workshops in the United States engaged in unique research in the production of fine art editions.

Graphicstudio: Contemporary Art from the Collaborative Workshop at the University of South Florida will feature a diverse selection of subjects, styles, and media, produced by twenty-four artists working with Graphicstudio's versatile staff. In addition to the completed works, the show will include a selection of working drawings and other preparatory materials never before exhibited.

"This exhibition, drawn from the Graphicstudio Archive which was established at the National Gallery in 1986, includes extraordinary prints and edition sculptures produced with a great deal of imagination, innovation, and technical complexity by some of America's most talented artists," said J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art.

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"The Graphicstudio exhibition at the National Gallery is the ultimate recognition of our mission at the University of South Florida, which is to create new knowledge through art," said Alan Eaker, director of Graphicstudio.

The exhibition will showcase many of the works of art that have helped Graphicstudio maintain its reputation as a center for creative and technical experimentation, including Robert Rauschenberg's Made in Tampa Clay Pieces (1972), which at a glance appear to be composed of cardboard or burlap; and Jim Dine's dramatic cast aluminum five-part sculpture, The Metamorphosis of a Plant into a Fan (1974-1975), in which elements from nature are transformed into a mechanized scheme. The production of Philip Pearlstein's ten-foot-long woodcut, Jerusalem, Kidron Valley (1987-1989), involved the use of the heliorelief process--a method of cutting a finely detailed image into large-scale woodblocks by a process of sandblasting developed at Graphicstudio. Waxtype, a means of printing "encaustic" waxes, was also developed at Graphicstudio and first used for a series of editions by Roy Lichtenstein, including Roads Collar (1987-1989). James Rosenquist's Welcome to the Water Planet (1987-1989), with its lush surface and innumerable shades of gray, is a tour de force of aquatint etching.

Outstanding works by Richard Anuszkiewicz, Arakawa, Charles Hinman, Nicholas Krushenick, Edward Ruscha, Richard Smith, Chuck Close, Michael Glier, Alfred Leslie, Miriam Schapiro, Vito Acconci, Alice Aycock, Oscar Bailey, Robert Fichter, Lee Friedlander, Robert Mapplethorpe, Joel-Peter Witkin, Sandro Chia, and Nancy Graves are also included in the exhibition.

Graphicstudio, like Gemini G.E.L. in Los Angeles and Long Island's Universal Limited Art Editions, played a major role in the revitalization of American printmaking since the 1960s. During its first phase Graphicstudio produced more than a hundred prints in lithography, screenprinting, woodcut, and photography, as well as sculptures in clay and cast aluminum. The workshop was closed down in 1976 for financial reasons, but was reopened in 1981. During the following decade Graphicstudio completed some of the most daring prints and edition sculpture of the period. In all, between 1969 and 1990, Graphicstudio completed more than 250 publications, all of which are included in the National Gallery's Graphicstudio Archive.

Ruth Fine, the National Gallery curator of modern prints and drawings, selected the works for the exhibition. The full-color exhibition catalogue to be published by the National Gallery of Art includes an essay by Fine about the development of Graphicstudio, complete entries by Fine and Mary Lee Corlett for each object in the show, artists' biographies, and a checklist of all works of art produced at Graphicstudio since its first publication in 1969.

The National Gallery will be the sole venue for Graphicstudio: Contemporary Art from the Collaborative Workshop at the University of South Florida. The Gallery will sponsor two "Conversations with Artists" programs for the public, free of charge, featuring Jim Dine on September 29 and Nancy Graves on October 6, at 4:00 p.m. in the East Building auditorium. For more information call (202) 842-6182. Seating is first-come, first-served.