

Progressive Printmakers

Wisconsin Artists and the Print Renaissance

Starting in 1946, the University of Wisconsin printmaking program rapidly rose to national prominence. The program was founded by Alfred Sessler, who was joined over the next decade by Dean Meeker and Warrington Colescott. Ray Gloeckler, Jack Damer, Bill Weege, Frances Myers, and David Becker have since brought their talents to the department, allowing students access to their artistic insights. In addition, the long-standing visiting artist program and the 1988 inception of Tandem Press have brought a host of artists to campus to share their own insights.

The department has long been distinguished for the range of techniques students were able to study here. Such traditional methods as etching, wood engraving, lithography, and letterpress are preserved and challenged by new insights and interests, new technology and techniques. The dialogue between past and future is played out in artists' works, and the conversation surrounding printmaking has been particularly active among the university's printmakers.

The influence of this rich resource is part of the reason that the Elvehjem has such a strong print collection, and also contributed to Madison's unusual strength in print collectors and makers. This exhibition celebrates a varied group of artists who have contributed to the vitality of printmaking in Madison.

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