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PRESS CONTACTS:

Jennifer Bethke, Curator
(707) 774-5624

jbethke12@yahoo.com

Claudia Molloy, Gallery Interim Dir.
(707) 664-2295

molloy@sonoma.edu

University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University
Print Press Play! Selected Prints from the SSU Art Collection
February 22 - April 7, 2024



The University Art Gallery at Sonoma State University is pleased to present ***Print Press Play! Selected Prints from the SSU Art Collection***, which will be on view February 22 - April 7, 2024. Featuring art by luminaries including Alexander Calder, Salvador Dalí, Roy de Forest, Hung Liu, David Alfaro Siqueiros and many others, *Print Press Play!* explores the how and why of printmaking with over thirty artworks on display, videos of the printmaking process, and a hands-on interactive area.

The remarkable diversity of print techniques is a key feature of *Print Press Play!*, which includes woodblock prints, lithographs, etchings, screenprints, monotypes, mezzotints, and more. Videos interspersed in the exhibition will show "how-to's" of the printmaking process for visitors. "We're excited to give people a view into how prints are made, by virtually bringing folks into the studio and showing them some step-by-step highlights. It's a fascinating process, and almost kind of magical to see unfold," says co-curator of the exhibition Jennifer Bethke. A hands-on area of the exhibition will also elucidate the materials and techniques of printmaking: visitors will be able to try their hand at drawing on a lithography stone, examine printing tools, and sample the feel of common print paper types.

Printmaking – which is at root the transfer of image or text from one surface to another – has been a crucial image-making and communications tool in human society for nearly 2,000 years. The earliest prints were Chinese woodblock designs printed onto silk that date from the 3rd century. Printmaking exploded when moveable type printing presses and mass-manufacture paper were invented, first in Asia and then in Europe in the 15th century. The oldest two works in *Print Press Play!* date from 16th

century Europe and 18th century Japan; the modern and contemporary periods are showcased with dozens of prints by a broad roster of artists.

The artworks in *Print Press Play!* are drawn from Sonoma State University's exceptional collection of prints. Established in 1978, SSU's art collection originally held a few hundred artworks. Over the ensuing decades it has expanded to over 1,500 works, and the collection continues to grow through the generosity of individual and corporate donors. SSU's prints collection has also been established in part thanks to the impressive printmaking facilities of the SSU Art Department, which are unusual for their large size and range of specialized print media equipment. SSU's printmaking studios have attracted a roster of well-known print media faculty over the years, and trained many students who are now practicing artists.

SSU's art collection holds prints by artists of national and international stature. On exhibit in *Print Press Play!* are works by famous 20th and 21st-century American and European artists including Salvador Dalí, Jean Dubuffet, Hung Liu, Sol LeWitt, Joan Miró, Andy Warhol, and others. SSU has been gifted several prints by important Mexican modernist masters including David Alfaro Siqueiros, a selection of which are on display. Also featured in the exhibition are Northern California favorites such as Roy de Forest, Squeak Carnwath, Robert Hudson, and Peter Voulkos. The exhibition additionally includes a few prints created by local artists, including the SSU Art Department's current printmaking faculty members.

Print Press Play! is co-curated by Jennifer Bethke and Eileen Parent. Bethke is an independent curator and art historian; the former director of the Sonoma State University Art Gallery, she now manages the permanent collection at the Museum of Sonoma County. Parent is a Bay Area artist working in print media. She is a lecturer in studio art at Sonoma State University and Napa Valley College, where she teaches printmaking and drawing.

Programming

- Opening Reception - Thursday, February 22, 4:00-6:00 pm

The opening reception is free and open to the public and the SSU campus community. Visitors driving to the SSU campus must purchase a \$5-8 parking pass from any automated parking kiosk.

- Printmaking Workshop - Thursday, March 14, 4:00-5:30 pm

Hands-on relief printing workshop with co-curator and printmaker Eileen Parent. The workshop is free and open to all; space is limited and advance RSVPs will be required. Contact molloy@sonoma.edu for more information.

General Information

Press Contacts: Jennifer Bethke, jbethke12@yahoo.com (707) 774-5624 or Claudia Molloy, molloy@sonoma.edu (707) 664-2295.

High-resolution images available upon request

Location: University Art Gallery, Art Building, SSU, 1801 E. Cotati Ave, Rohnert Park, CA

Hours: Tuesdays - Saturdays 12:00 - 5:00

Admission: Free

Parking: \$5-8 pass in any lot on campus

Telephone: (707) 664-2295

Website: <http://artgallery.sonoma.edu/>

Email: molloy@sonoma.edu

Images, left to right:

Alexander Calder, *Nez et Oreilles Tres Gais*, 1969, color lithograph, Sonoma State University Art Collection.

Salvador Dalí, *Ace of Diamonds*, 1971, color lithograph, Sonoma State University Art Collection.

Roy de Forest, *Untitled* from the *Dogmatic Art Series*, ca. 1970, color lithograph, Sonoma State University Art Collection.

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