

PRINTS

by

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A DOCUMENT IN SUPPORT OF A THESIS EXHIBITION

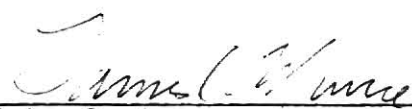
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

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Major Professor

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My background in drawing has been the rendering of the object. This has been principally carried out in my sketchbooks during my undergraduate years. Through drawing of the still life, I developed the use of the object within a specific environment. The understanding of the subordination of the part to the whole allowed me to become more conscious of my action on the page. My drawing is not an attempt to defeat the flat quality of the space but to integrate my marks with the surface of the paper. There are points where the build-up of marks separate from the page but this is accompanied by a regression of marks becoming part of the page. This tension between the marks and paper is my involvement with the two-dimensional space. Breaking up the two-dimensional space develops relationships of shapes, patterns, and edges.

My images have their origins in the physical world; the raw material comes from life, photographs, memory, imagination, and the work of other artists. As the environment is always in transition, so my images always deal with an idea of movement. At some point in its development, the growth of an image diverges from the particulars of its sources, and becomes dictated by its own specific needs.

During my studies, I have been influenced by the pictorial construction and harmony of Paul Cezanne; Erle Loran's book, Cezanne's Composition was a great influence. Other artists that have been especially important for me are Rembrandt, Goya, Hopper, and recently Morandi.

For me, printmaking is basically another drawing medium providing a full range of linear and tonal possibilities. I must emphasize the

use of printmaking technique is determined by the aesthetic needs of the image and not exploited for its own sake. To a great degree the medium controls the appearance of the image. The decision to work a print in intaglio or litho is based on the pictorial needs of the print. In litho, the mark is a broad tonal one. The fact that the entire image is visible while drawing or scraping allows a quicker development than is usually possible with etching. In my etching, the image grows in stages through the proofing process. One advantage of the etched line is that it is a physical fact not prone to any chemical instability as is the case in litho. Etching also has a fine range of gray tones in the platetone and scraped areas; these grays are difficult to create and maintain in litho.

If I feel there are some possibilities of using a particular drawing as a basis for a print, I transfer the composition to a plate or stone. At this point, the evolution of the print follows its own way to a finished state and is not merely a reiteration of the drawing. In many instances, a finished print will be altered by additions and removals to be carried to another state.

Because of the image reversal inherent in the print process, the decision is made at this point as to the specific left-to-right relationship of the print. The first example of a progression of one of my etchings is a small still life finished in 1979. The motif is a chance arrangement of objects on my drawing table. I like to work my studies in pen and ink, as the mark of the pen is similar to the etched line. My interest in the drawing lies in the many strong movements of the objects and their relationship to the page.



The first stage of the print is simply a result of drawing the composition on the plate with the etching needle and time biting for the different gray tones.



The second stage is one of richer tone through additional line work. Calculated foul bite is used in an effort to add some warm edges.





The third stage shows the removal of the ink bottle cap on the right hand side of the print. Some of the unwanted foul bite is also scraped out.



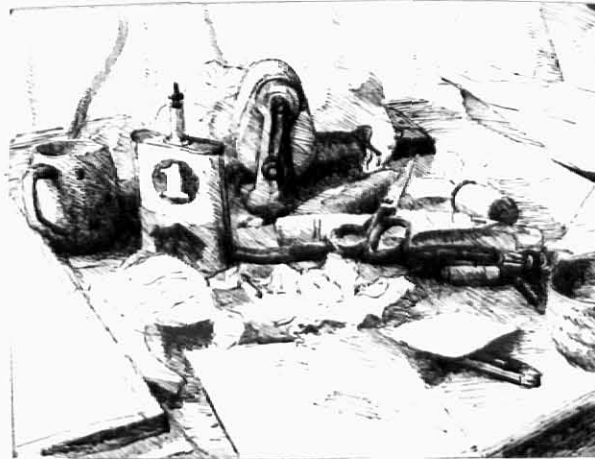
In the fourth stage, the main changes are additional line work and further burnishing to polish the plate.



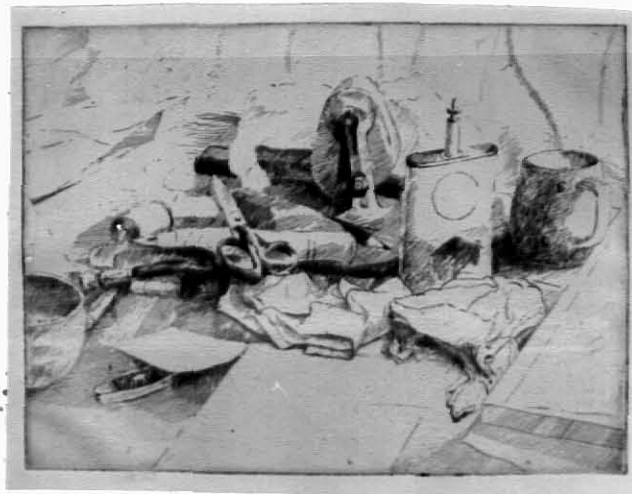
The major movement is strengthened in the fifth stage by the addition of a tone across the top of the print with a #100 roulette. There is also some scraping of the round object in the upper left hand corner to continue the movement of the page.



In the finished print, the edges of the plate and high whites in the image have been polished with a burnisher to give a greater tonal range. An edition of twenty-five prints were pulled and signed of this image.



The next example is another still life drawing. Again, it is a composition of a random collection of objects associated with intaglio printmaking. The drawing medium is pen and ink.



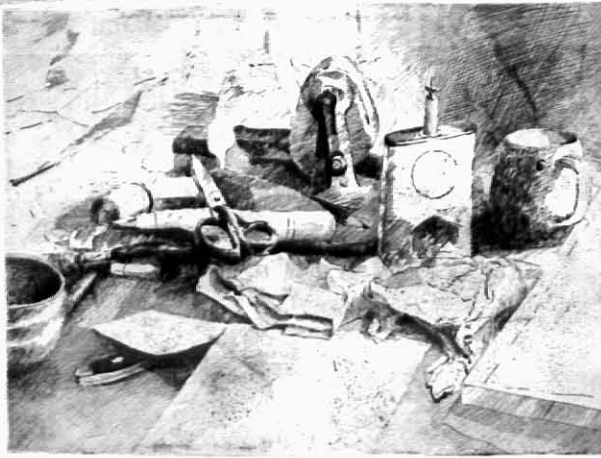
The first stage of the etching is similar to the drawing, the dark right diagonal in the drawing has been omitted.



A major advantage of the proofing process is having the proofs to draw on. This is the case in the next image. Pen and ink have been used to create additional darks to make a major diagonal through the print.



In the second stage, fowl bite and etched line additions have established the darks to create the diagonal composition worked out in the proof study.



The third stage is a step of scraping and burnishing some unwanted foul bite and line work.



The fourth stage has the removal of much of the dark tone in the top right hand corner. Part of the marks are left to make a light gray. The texture that results from the use of the scraper is very attractive and would be impossible to draw. This proof is also a study as charcoal tones have been added.

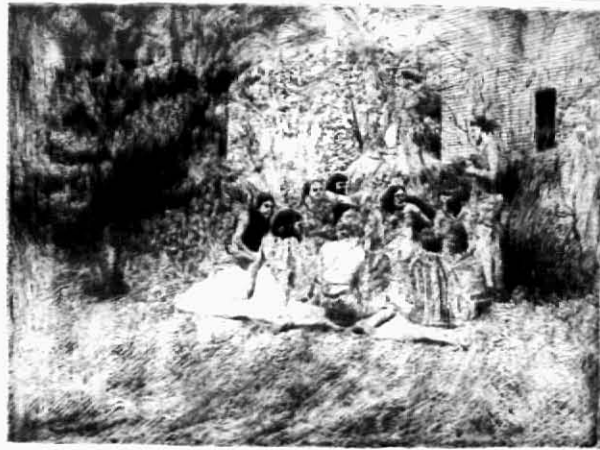


At the same time another study was done on another proof. The charcoal additions created a very strong triangular composition. This solution was not used.

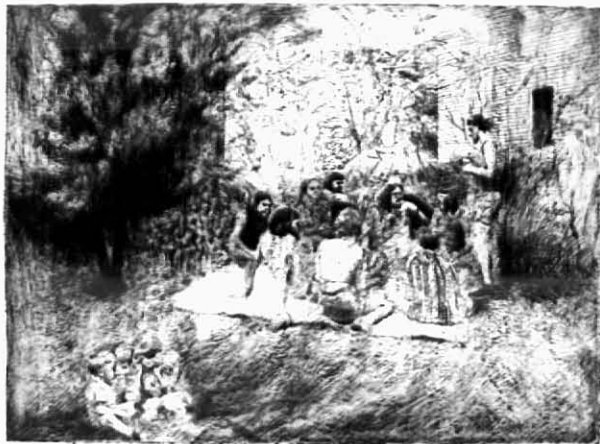


The final stage has additional grays provided by more line work, scraping, and burnishing. The shape of the center fabric object has also been extended to create a stronger directional movement. The whites in the image have been polished to brighten the tonal range.

The picnic print started as an etching and was transferred to a stone to be finished as a litho. This is not a technique I use frequently, but I feel that it worked for this image. It allowed a combination of intaglio textures with the more direct control of litho.



The first stage is the drawn and etched lines on a previously used copper plate.



In the second stage of the etching, the biggest change is the addition of the group of children in the lower left hand corner of the print. Besides adding a dichotomy in content, this change draws the eye from the center group of people and helps to suggest the ground plane.



The third stage is the first proof on the litho stone. Drawn crayon tones and scraping have been added to enrich the tone of the print.



In the final print, the heavy feeling of the tree on the left has been changed through scraping to create a lighter texture which integrates with the rest of the print. More gray tone has been added to the foreground so it is not the same even tone all the way across. The edition was printed on dampened paper, numbered and signed.