

ADVENTURES IN PRINT COLLECTING

THE DAVID KABAKOFF COLLECTION

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Colescott's "Picasso at the Zoo" was featured in the Jan/Feb 2019 edition of this Journal, **Journal of the Print World**. I had the privilege of meeting Warrington Colescott in 2010 at the exhibition at the Milwaukee Art Museum, which coincided with the publication of the Catalogue Raisonné of his work. I have acquired over 40 prints by Colescott from many sources with some of the rarer works, including two watercolors, coming from the late Cissie Peltz of the Peltz Gallery in Milwaukee.



Warrington Colescott, "The History of Printmaking: Senefelder Receives the Secrets of Lithography," small plate, 1976. Softground etching and aquatint with vibrograver (Chapin, 241). David Kabakoff Collection

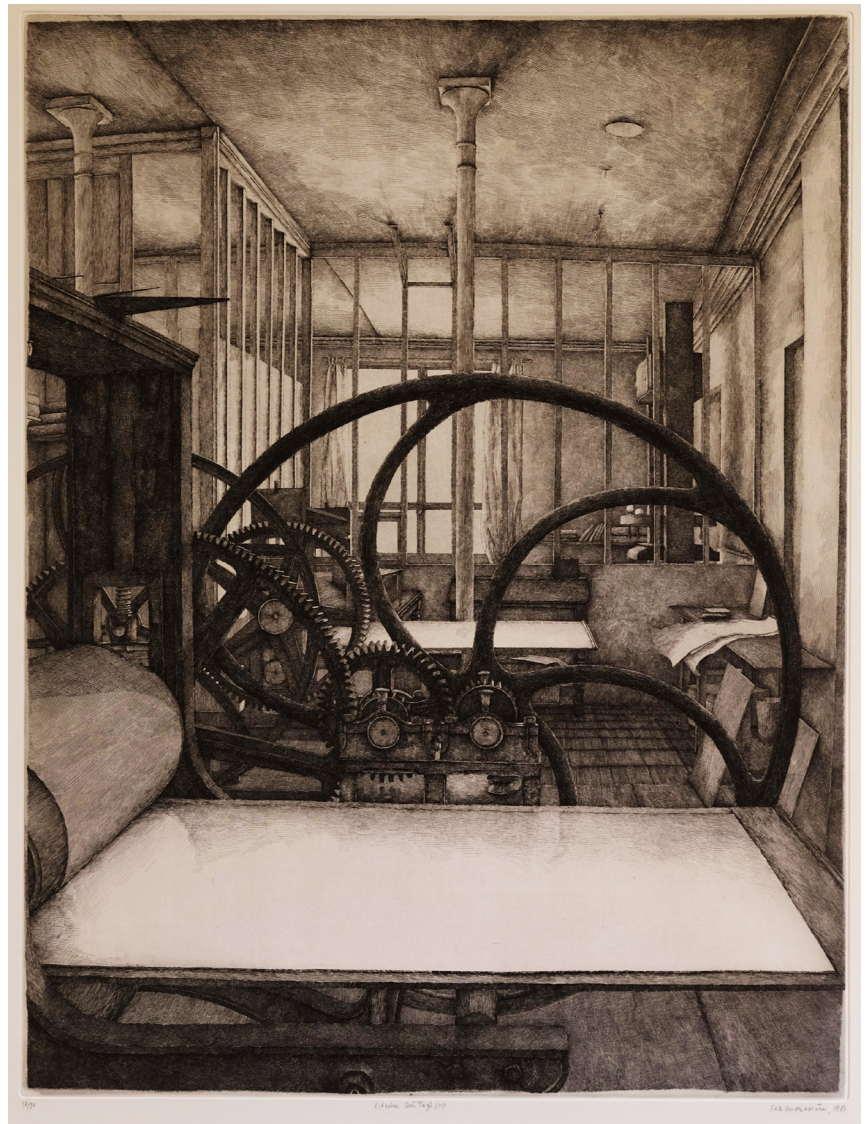
Another dealer from whom I sought and acquired work by Robert Kipniss was Jane Haslem. In addition to showing me works for sale, she was gracious to show me selections from her personal collection through which I first learned of the American printmaker Benton Spruance. I searched for many years to find his "Self Portrait at Stone," a piece that I first saw hanging in her home. I have added other Spruance works over time.



Benton Spruance, "Self Portrait at Stone," 1942. Lithograph (Fine & Looney 204). David Kabakoff Collection

Of course, I am not the only collector with an interest in prints about prints. Some years ago, I came across the book **Prints about Prints** by Diana Ewan Wolfe, published in 1981, which displayed 70 works from the collection of Martin Gordon. To date, I have succeeded in collecting about half of those prints. In 2011, the dealer Harris Schrank offered me a group of prints related to my interests, and I noted that all of them appeared in **Prints about Prints**. I selected seven works to purchase and when I asked Harris about their origin, he told me he had purchased a large group of prints from Gordon's collection. So seven works in my collection are the actual impressions from Gordon's.

I have collected many color etchings, aquatints, and lithographs by French printmakers from the late 19th and early 20th century, including Bottini, Lunois, and Robbe, that depict women admiring prints. Such works were



Erik Desmazières, "L'atelier René Tazé (III)," 1981. David Kabakoff Collection



Abraham Bosse, "The Engraver and the Etcher," 1643. Etching. David Kabakoff Collection

often used as advertising for print dealers like Edmund Sagot. One of the rarer works is the aquatint "La Connoisseuse" by Pierre Gatier created in 1910. A wonderful and rare example showing active printmaking is the color woodblock print created in 1921 by Robert Bonfils titled "Graveur Tirant Une Planche" (Engraver pulling a Proof). (See image on page 18.) Works in this category and others have come to me from Ed Ogul at Paramour Fine Arts, Bernard Derroitte at Armstrong Fine Art, and Georgina Kelman.

While Japanese artists are not well represented in my collection, one notable work is the portrait of the printmaker Koshiro Onchi by Junichio Sekino, a large woodblock print created in 1952. (See image on page 18.)

British printmakers are well represented in my collection. William Strang's detailed etching from 1889 titled "A Sale of Prints at Sotheby's" is a classic

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Robert Bonfils, "Graveur Tirant une Planche," 1921.
Woodblock print. Collection of David Kabakoff.



Emmanuel Schary, "George & Burr Miller," 1978.
Lithograph. David Kabakoff Collection

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as is the drypoint portrait "Bone at the Press" by Francis Dodd, created in 1908. Among my most recent acquisitions is "The Etching Class," created by Julian Trevelyan in 1973.

A final note on a specific sub-theme of interest to me: "prints in prints" or "art in art."

Again, there is a connection to my Kipniss collection. I acquired a lithograph created in 1978 by Emanuel Schary titled "George and Burr Miller" from Lee Stone, a dealer in Saratoga, CA, who knew of my specific collecting interest. The print shows Burr Miller, son of George, inking a stone. Below the stone, the visible fragment of a print immediately looked familiar to me. Indeed that fragment is from a Kipniss work which I also have in the collection. I wrote to Robert Kipniss and inquired about the Schary work. He confirmed that he often encountered Schary in Miller's studio and identified his "print in print." He also guided me to seek out another work embedded in the Schary print. Some years later, I found the print "George Miller, Lithographer" by Ellison Hoover, which was reproduced in reverse by Schary in his print.

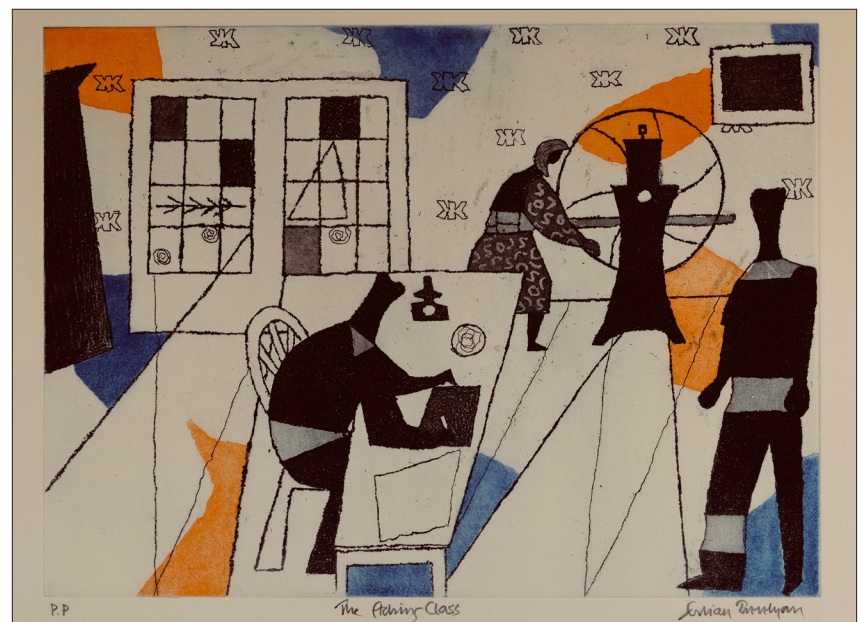


Junichiro Sekino, "Portrait of Koshiro Onchi," 1952.
Woodblock print. David Kabakoff Collection

I hope these vignettes about my print collecting journey provide some insight into the origin and richness of my collection. I would like to thank my many contacts in the print world for sharing their knowledge and passion for printmaking with me along the journey.

A selection of works from the Kabakoff collection is being displayed as part of the exhibition Press/Process: The Art of Prints at the University of San Diego Hoehn Family Galleries from February 21 to May 17, 2019. A more extensive exhibition of works from the Kabakoff collection is planned for the later in 2019 at the Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, CA. It will be a pleasure to share a small part of the collection with print lovers in these communities.

David Kabakoff, a life science venture capital investor, has lived in Rancho Santa Fe, CA with his wife Susan for over 30 years. He may be reached via email at dkabakoff@cox.net



Julian Trevelyan, "The Etching Class," 1973.
Etching and Aquatint. David Kabakoff Collection