

Art in the Stacks: Selections from Special Collections

The Special Collections Research Center is known for being the University of Chicago Library's repository for rare books, manuscripts, and the University Archives. However, within those three categories there is a wide range of materials. This exhibition highlights one of the lesser-known segments of our collections—artistic works from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. *Art in the Stacks* includes selections of original paintings, drawings, and sculptures, in addition to artists' books, portfolios and posters. How these materials came to Special Collections are just as varied as their formats: donations, purchases, and transfers from the circulating general collection have all enhanced our holdings in artistic (or art) works.

The art in our collection includes items commonly found in special collections libraries, namely artists' books. These include fine press editions, artists' multiples and handcrafted pieces that celebrate the traditions of bookmaking and letterpress. What may come as a surprise to visitors is the other types of artwork that is in our stacks. Examples of original drawings are found in individual's personal papers, such as the pen-and-ink drawings by Harold Haydon and the working sketches by sculptor Marie Zoe Greene-Mercier. In larger archival collections, Leonard Baskin's illustrations for a translation of Homer's *Iliad* are held in the University of Chicago Press Records, and Ruth Vollmer's *Trenchant Sphere* (1967) is part the Benton Foundation Records.

Some of the items displayed, such as the fine press editions artists' books, are known and used by faculty and students for classes and research. Other works go relatively unnoticed or completely unseen. *Art in the Stacks* provides an opportunity to share this unexpected aspect of our holdings in The Special Collections Research Center.

Edward Ruscha (1937 -)
Every Building on the Sunset Strip
Los Angeles: R. Ruscha, 1966
Rare Book Collection

Edward Ruscha (1937 -)

Then & Now: Ed Ruscha, Hollywood Boulevard 1973-2004

Göttingen: Steidl, 2005

Rare Book Collection, Gift of the Visiting Committee on the Visual Arts

In the 1960s, Ruscha's inexpensive, mass-produced photography books represented a radical departure from the traditional limited edition, finally-crafted *livre d'artiste*, or artist's book. The 25-foot, accordion-folded *Every Building on Sunset Strip* offers two continuous views of a stretch of Sunset Boulevard, one for each side of the thoroughfare. Ruscha followed the same procedure when he photographed Hollywood Boulevard in 1973. Thirty years later, he re-shot the same twelve-mile stretch, juxtaposing the same views on the top and bottom of each page. The result is what Ruscha refers to as "a piece of history...a very democratic, unemotional view of the world."

Stephen Longstreet (1907-2002)

Stephen Longstreet Collection

Longstreet was an American author and artist with a strong interest in music. He published five books on jazz, illustrated with his own drawings and watercolors, including *The Real Jazz Old and New* (1956), *Jazz from A-Z, A Graphic Dictionary* (1989).

Henri Matisse (1869-1954)

Jazz

[Paris]: Tériade, 1947

Rare Book Collection, Gift of Edward H. Weiss

Jazz was published by Efstratios Tériade, with whom Matisse had previously collaborated on other printed projects involving art and text, including covers for *Verve*, the French art magazine. The publisher suggested the title *Jazz*, which appealed to Matisse because it invoked connections between art and musical improvisation. Both the cut-paper collages and the handwritten text are by Matisse.

Kara Walker, David Eisen,

Timothy Silverlake

Freedom: a Fable: a Curious Interpretation of the Wit of a Negress in Troubled Times

Los Angeles: Peter Norton Family, 1997

Rare Book Collection

Kara Walker (b. 1969) is an installation artist and filmmaker who explores issues of gender and violence in her work. The laser-cut, paper silhouettes in this book depict stereotypical images of African Americans from minstrel shows, art and literature. It is designed in the style of a nineteenth-century children's book.

Steven Bernstein (1950-1991)

The Onion as it is Cooked

New York: Flockophobic Press, c1990
Rare Book Collection

A poem imprinted upon a strip of baked saffron semolina, accompanied by a sealed envelope marked "Open after consumption."

Steven Bernstein (1950-1991)
Strip Poker, Appellation Controlee
New York: Flockophobic Press, 1991
Rare Book Collection

Bernstein's poem was printed on one continuous strip of paper and sealed in specially designed and decorated bottle by Alexander S. C. Rower.

Susan kae Grant
Radio-active Substances
Dallas: S. Grant, 1995
Rare Book Collection

Marie Curie's quotes and illustrations are reproduced along with paraphrased passages from Eve Curie's biography of Marie.

Angela Lorenz (1965-)
Bacon's Bit of Broken Knowledge
Bologna: A.S. Lorenz, 2007
Rare Book Collection

Taking the form of imprinted continent-shaped "bacon bits", Lorenz's work references Sir Francis Bacon's (1561-1612) observations regarding the concept of continental drift.

Maureen Cummins
Ghost Diary
[High Falls, N.Y.: M. Cummins, 2003]
Rare Book Collection, Gift of R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co.

A letter written by a former Revolutionary War officer on the anniversary of his wife's death is illustrated with five glass plates dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Suzanne Lacy (1945-)
Rape is
[Los Angeles: Women's Graphic Center], 1976
Rare Book Collection

Suzanne Lacy is a visual artist focusing on “social themes and urban issues,” and founder of the MFA in Public Practice at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. This book, a parody of the popular *Love is...publications* and newspaper cartoons of the 1970s, presents a series of routine incidents that support and justify rape.

Paul McCarthy (1945-)

Paul McCarthy's Lowlife Slowlife, Tidebox Tidebook

San Francisco: CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, 2010

Rare Book Collection

In this unusually designed artist's book which doubles as an exhibition catalog, Paul McCarthy presents selections of re-created materials—from reproductions of paintings to memorabilia—that have influenced his personal artistic development. The book is packaged as a box of Tide detergent from the 1970s, suggesting associations with Warhol's Brillo boxes as well as McCarthy's broader fascination with advertising and popular culture.

Kiki Smith (1954-)

Leslie Scalapino (1944-2010)

*The Animal is in the World Like Water
in Water*

New York City: Granary Books, 2010

Rare Book Collection

The title, *The Animal is in the World Like Water in Water*, is a phrase by George Bataille from *The Theory of Religion*. Poet Leslie Scalapino's text was written in response to a series of forty-three drawings by Kiki Smith. About the drawings, Scalapino writes, “I wrote the poem using the sense of an unalterable past occurrence: One female, apparently the same girl, is repeatedly, and in very similar variations, bitten and clawed by a leopard-like, lion-like animal.”

A Printer's Exquisite Corpse

[Madison, WI]: Published by Silver Buckle Press, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries, 1992

Rare Book Collection, R.R. Donnelley & Co. Fund

34 book artists and letterpress printers designed and printed the cards comprising this Surrealist-inspired game.

S.M.S. No.1

William Copley, editor

[New York]: Letter Edged in Black Press, [c1968]

Rare Book Collection, Gift of John Rewald

S.M.S (Shit Must Stop) was a serialized publication consisting of unique, original artworks commissioned specifically for the magazine. Bypassing the institutions of

galleries and museums, the portfolios were mailed directly to subscribers, resulting in an unmediated line of communication between the artist and the audience. Each volume contained a portfolio of editioned works by both world-famous and emerging artists, for which each artist was paid \$100. Among the many artists represented are Christo, Marcel Duchamp, James Lee Byers, and Meret Oppenheim.

Special Collections holds volumes one and two of six portfolios.

Marie Zoe Greene-Mercier (1911-2001)
Drawings for sculptures, undated
Marie Zoe Greene-Mercier Papers

An American artist born to French immigrant parents, Greene-Mercier studied art at Radcliffe College. A working artist since the 1940s, Greene-Mercier began to produce primarily large, abstract sculptures cast in bronze in the 1950s. She began creating small- and large-scale works in the heavier "Cubic" style in the late 60s, and monumental sculptures in this mode would characterize her work in the 1970s.

Leonard Baskin (1922-2000)
Working illustrations, undated
University of Chicago Press Records

In 1960, the University of Chicago Press commissioned American wood engraver, sculptor, and artist Leonard Baskin to prepare illustrations for an illustrated edition of Richmond Lattimore's translation of Homer's *Iliad*. These illustrations were a radical departure from previous classically-inspired illustrations of Homer's works.

Harold Haydon (1909-1994)
Pen and ink drawings
Harold Haydon Papers

Haydon was an alumnus of the Laboratory School and the University of Chicago. He later served as a professor of art and the Director of Midway Studios at the University, and as art critic for the Chicago Sun-Times from 1963 to 1985. In addition, Haydon was a working multi-media artist, creating murals, paintings, tapestries, mosaic tile-work and stained glass. In 1972, he designed a stained glass window at the University's Rockefeller Chapel.

Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979)
Sonia Delaunay, ses peintures, ses objets, ses tissus simultanés, ses modes
Paris: Librairie des Arts Décoratifs, [1925]
Rare Book Collection

Born in the Ukraine, Delaunay was a French artist, who, with her French husband and artist, Robert Delaunay, developed an artist style referred to as "Orphism." Influenced by cubism and post-impressionism, their work featured a bold use of color within dynamic geometric compositions. Sonia later produced this portfolio documenting her

application of the style to the decorative arts, textile design, fashion design, and set design.

Edouard Benedictus (1878-1930)

Nouvelles variations, soixante-quinze motifs décoratifs en vingt planches

Paris: Aux Éditions Albert Lévy, Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, [1928?]

Rare Book Collection, Gift of Jerome V. Frazel (AB '83) and Nancy H. Wilder- In honor of Joanne K. Frazel and Frank & Margaret "Peg" Hickey

Both scientist and artist, Benedictus is known for producing two influential portfolios of Art Deco decorative floral motifs. He is also known for being the inventor of laminated safety glass.

Dan Grzeca (1968 -)

Vandermark Five VS. Atomic 2004 Tour Poster Set

Chicago: Atavistic Records, 2004

Dan Grzeca Collection

Dan Grzeca, is an American artist, painter, and printmaker who lives in Chicago. Grzeca creates poster advertisements for the Chicago improvised music scene and has made posters for bands such as the Melvins, Vandermark 5, Peter Brotzmann, and the Black Keys. As a personal friend of Ken Vandermark, a highly reputed Chicago-based improvisation and jazz musician, Grzeca is often commissioned to create show posters and compact disc covers for Vandermark's various musical undertakings.

John Heard (1938 -)

Count Basie, undated

John Steiner Collection

An American artist and professional bass player, Heard has played with musicians such as Count Basie and Oscar Peterson.

Ruth Vollmer (1903-1982)

Trenchant Sphere, 1967

Benton Foundation Papers

Ruth Vollmer was a German born, American abstract artist who was known for her sculptures and drawings based on geometric shapes.

Anneliese Sinn (1924-)

Layout boards for children's book, 1948

Anneliese Sinn Collection

Anneliese Sinn is a German-born, American artist. Sinn began writing and illustrating stories as a child and went on to publish many children's books as an adult. In 1971, she received her PhD in History of Art at the University of Chicago.