New Prints by Donald Baechler

Donald Baechler made his first visit to Tandem Press last April. He created three new lithographs which incorporate chine appliqué. Born in 1956, critics have stated that Donald Baechler's work "places him in the pointerly tribe of Twombly, Ryman, Rauschenberg and Schwitters." In each print, the foregrounds depict very flat cartoon-like heads of imaginary people and birds. The backgrounds contain simulated coffee spills and circular stains from cups or mugs which have stood in place for some time. The imagery, which seems busy has a calmness, elegance, and beauty brought about by the minimal use of color.

Donald Baechler studied at the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, the Cooper Union, New York and the Staatliche Hochschule fuer bildende Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany. His work is included in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York and Centre Pompidou, Paris, France. He has had numerous exhibitions including the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

(PCMCP)
Tandem Mezzanine

The Tandem Press graphic studio is sporting a new look thanks to a sturdy mezzanine installed last summer. The new facility, which is part of a remodeling package, provides much-needed additional storage space (approximately 750 square feet) along with print storage racks. In addition, the new structure also contains areas for computer equipment used in making prints.

The extra space allows for the relocation of print and supply storage from the main floor, thereby restoring the working studio space to its original size. This also restores space, which can be used for instruction and lectures and for large classes and workshops.

Besides being functionally more efficient, the new installation adds a contemporary architectural idiom to the overall studio space and offers new perspectives for viewing the activities carried on in the studio. Finally, the mezzanine is constructed so that it can be moved in the event of a relocation of the Tandem operation.

Special thanks go to Don Richards, A.I.A., who donated his time to advise Tandem Press on the new design.

The renovation was made possible through a grant from the UW-Madison School of Education along with existing Tandem Press funds.

(AH)
Tandem’s Printers—
A Blending of Vision and Skill

In many ways, a successful printmaking enterprise such as Tandem Press involves a delicately scripted choreography. It is an equation that includes the artist, master printers armed with a wide variety of technical equipment, a skilled support staff, and an innovative marketing strategy.

Since printmaking is characteristic of a collaborative experience, the importance of the master printer in the consistent realization of high quality prints cannot be downplayed. This consideration has been an important component of the Tandem operation from the beginning.

Tandem is fortunate to have two master printers—Andy Rubin and Bruce Crownover—who bring technical and personal skills to their work, helping visiting artists translate their visual ideas into notable prints. Usually only a small circle of people associated with Tandem know the individual identities of the master printers, but the impact of their work and influence is markedly obvious in the quality of the prints that emerge from Tandem each year. Foremost among these skills are a detailed technical knowledge of the full range of printmaking techniques and the ability to work and communicate with the artists and others involved in the printmaking process. Like each print, each artist is distinctive and the function of the printer, as Andy Rubin sees it, “is to help the artists visualize their images.”

Both Andy and Bruce came to their present positions through serendipity, each literally crossing the country as they pursued a combination of art study and working in art-related jobs.

Rubin received his initial art training at the School of Art and Design in Detroit and subsequently his MFA from Arizona State University. After a year as a visiting faculty member at the University of Southern California, he began working as one of four printers at the prestigious Gemini studio in Los Angeles. Recruited in the fall of 1988, Rubin became Tandem’s first full-time master printer.

Crownover earned his MFA at the UW–Madison in 1989 and worked at Tandem as a student assistant. After a stint in Boston carving ukiyo-e woodblocks for the Japanese artist Keiji Shinohara at his Cherrywood Press, he returned to Madison and became Tandem’s second full-time printer in 1994.

Both printers pursue their abiding interest in making their own art when time permits, but they focus primarily on the demanding challenges of serving as graphic acolytes to Tandem’s visiting artists. “It’s a constant learning process and a willingness to always try new things,” says Bruce Crownover. They regularly experiment with new printing techniques that range beyond the traditional intaglio, relief, and lithographic forms. They use their craftsmanship to create collographs and gravures, to add encaustic to prints, as well as using photographic and computer technology in the creation of images.

The ultimate reward for the printer from an aesthetic standpoint comes in seeing a print emerge from the press that best accomplishes what the artist intended, a print demonstrating a successful blend of artistic vision and technological skill. Those are the moments when the printer steps back and takes a high degree of personal satisfaction from the realization that, as Andy Rubin says, “I helped do that!”

Andrei Rubenstein

Andy Rubin and Bruce Crownover pulling a print for visiting artist Robert Stackhouse
Progressive Printmakers Now Available

The University of Wisconsin Press has published and made available an important new book, as described in the previous issue of the Tandem Press newsletter.

Progressive Printmakers: Wisconsin Artists and the Print Renaissance is co-authored by emeritus professor of art Warrington Colescott and Arthur Hove, author of The University of Wisconsin: A Pictorial History.

Print scholars Clare Romano and John Ross describe the book as "a superb chronicle of a unique period in the development of printmaking in the U.S. in the post-World War II years. This is an excellent history of a gifted group of artist-professors who, through their creative and innovative approach to the teaching of printmaking, helped to initiate a renaissance in printmaking that has become a singular addition to twentieth-century American artistic expression."

The book is generously illustrated throughout with full-color reproductions of the work of nine UW–Madison artist/teachers and concludes with a chapter on the development of Tandem Press. Copies may be ordered through Tandem Press or the University of Wisconsin Press, 2537 Daniels St., Madison, WI 53718–6772, (608) 224–3880, www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/.

Front cover art: History of Printmaking: Sennfelder Receives the Secrets of Lithography by Warrington Colescott.

Back cover art (clockwise from top left): The Man from Portage by Raymond Gloeckler; Exotic Dangers by Frances Myers; Icarus, Pre Volumen by Dean Meeker; Plak by Jack Danar.
Guild.com Features Tandem Works

A Madison-based online e-commerce art marketing service has prominently featured Tandem Press prints in the early phases of a national advertising/promotional campaign launched during the past year. The Guild.com ads feature "Echo," a linoleum block print by Gronk and "Feet First," an etching by Judy Pfaff.

The partnership with Guild.com provides a worldwide electronic sales outlet which can provide ready access to those interested in purchasing original prints and other forms of art. As Toni Sikes, founder and president of THE GUILD, notes, "Our ultimate goal is to offer the largest body of work by living artists available, regardless of media. Guild.com will provide a window to the art world, with coverage of international art events and an exhibitions program, and serve as an overall art resource destination."

Tandem Press executive director Paula McCarthy Panczenko notes that the internet posting "gives us exposure to a worldwide audience and significantly expands our marketing potential. We think it represents an exciting moment in the continuing development of new ways to reach those who appreciate and collect art."
In 1987, Bill Weege founded Tandem Press, which is affiliated to the Art Department in the School of Education at the UW-Madison. Like an artistic Pied Piper he convinced nationally known artists to come and print at Tandem Press. The first artist who created prints at Tandem was his lifelong friend Sam Gilliam, whose monoprints are featured here.
Since 1987, 57 artists have visited Tandem where they have created remarkable prints and monoprints. We wanted to give you an overview of the accomplishments of these artists and to thank them for their creative work.
TANDEM PRESS ARTISTS
1987-2000