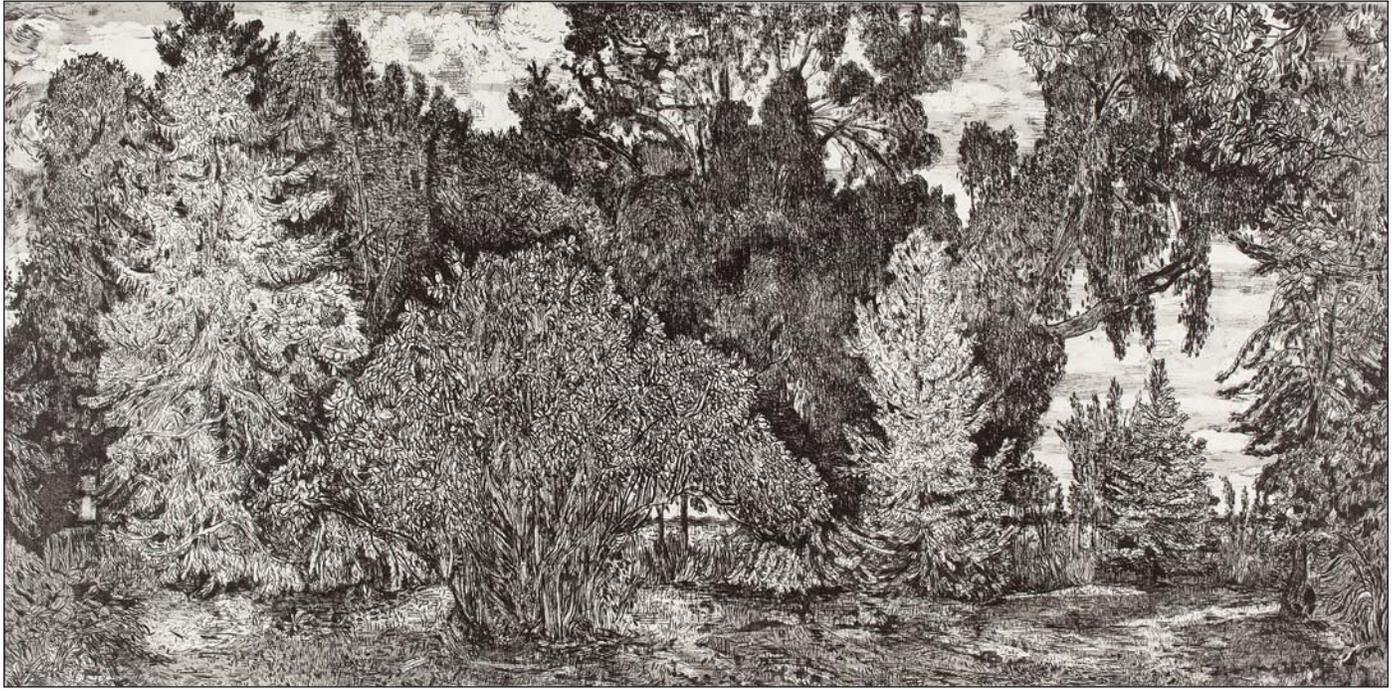


Social Register Directory & Observer



SUMMER 2017



Above: Nancy Friese, *Still Grove*, 2016, soft ground etching with aquatint, drypoint and roulette, 24" x 48"

Opposite above: Serena Perrone, *Due North*, 2014, etching with aquatint, spit bite and hand coloring, 15" x 18"

Opposite below: Allison Bianco, *Leave Your Troubles Behind*, 2015, intaglio, screen print: diptych, 18" x 32"

Previous page: Daniel Heyman, *It Was Such a Joy: Portrait of Leigh Jeanotte*, 2015-16, reduction woodcut, letterpress by Lucy Ganje, 54" x 35"

Where to Start?

I recommend looking at as many prints as possible by visiting local museums and art galleries that specialize in prints. Most major museums have an entire department dedicated to prints. Additionally, some institutions, such as prestigious libraries, also have print collections and may offer public viewing hours. For example, the New York Public Library and the Boston Athenaeum have viewing rooms where one can schedule an appointment. However, it's important to know that you do need to determine what you want to look at in advance. Online research, and getting a good idea of what you are seeking, is recommended, in advance of a request to view prints by one or two artists whose work you are interested in seeing.

Museums have rotating exhibitions of prints. The Metropolitan Museum of Art has a wonderful collection and exhibition series, as do many smaller museums and universities. Additionally, many art dealers specialize in prints and works on paper. You might start by looking at the work of artists represented by member

dealers of the International Fine Print Dealers Association (IFPDA). Founded over 25 years ago, its website lists 160 dealers in 14 countries. These art dealers are vetted and experts in their fields, which range from Old Masters to Contemporary. I recommend that you seek out a few dealers in your area and visit them in their galleries. Admission to a gallery is always free, and owners are there to show you artists' work and share their exhibitions with you. Ask to be added to email and mailing lists and frequent exhibitions as you learn more about the artists and the work represented by particular dealers, whose focus may vary. Some contemporary art dealers, for example may have works by well-known artists, and others by emerging talent, or they might have a combination of both.

Additionally, I recommend subscribing to a free online website based in London, England, called *Printed Editions: Dedicated to the Fine Print*, run by Michael Lieberman. Founded in 2010, it sends subscribers emails featuring many works by various artists represented by a large group of international dealers, print publishers and print workshops. One can browse through what is on offer by dealer's name as well as by artist's name, organized according to categories of Old Master, Early Modern, Post-War and Contemporary. Generally speaking, participating dealers list prices along with all the details so you can get a good idea of the range. Michael does a fine job of grouping prints by category and it's fun to see what he selects in his online curation.

Price Range and Availability

Prints are generally produced in an "edition," which means there exists more than one example of each. The nature of prints is



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Above: Allison Bianco, *Guv'nor Carr at the Yacht Club*, 2016, screen print, 11"x 17"

that there are multiple impressions of the work. Edition sizes may vary but, generally speaking, fine art prints are released in small batches, maybe 10 to 40 in each edition. It should be signed and numbered if it is a contemporary print. Originally, artists used prints as a way to share their work in a wider and more affordable manner. To a certain extent this is still true. Contemporary prints are usually less expensive than paintings; however, depending on the point in each artist's career it represents, a print by a well-recognized artist such as Jasper Johns or Andy Warhol can sell for hundreds of thousands of dollars. But if you are looking into the field of "emerging talent," you can find wonderful works which are much more affordable.

Additionally, there is a trend in printmaking that is very exciting. Younger artists are focusing on printmaking as the main medium that makes up their overall *oeuvre*. No longer are painters making prints on the side as a secondary work to a painting. Printmaking is a focus of many of the next generation of artists who embrace the medium as the core of their work. Artists who employ printmaking need a rather high degree of skill and knowledge as they are exquisitely trained in a number of different techniques, including etching, woodcut, lithography,

and screen printing, to name a few. Many contemporary artists have a Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking degree, offered by a multitude of fine art schools and universities such as the Rhode Island School of Design and Yale University.

Support Artists of Your Own Time

Artists are driven by a desire to create and be creative. Printmaking allows them freedom of expression and also affords an opportunity for the collector to buy art that is affordable when it is newly released. Read and learn about the artist and talk to contemporary art dealers who specialize in fine art prints. Many great collectors have assembled beautiful print collections and just as many collectors have learned to appreciate the great joy of collecting contemporary prints. With help and guidance from experts in the field, you may be able to collect tomorrow's Picassos at affordable prices. 



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