

ROSS BLECKNER

A NEW RELEASE FROM PAULSON PRESS

Paulson Press in Berkeley, California is pleased to announce the release of a new group of intaglio editions by New York painter Ross Bleckner. These print editions will be available for release in June 1999.

Ross Bleckner traveled to the Paulson Press studio this spring to make his first etching editions. During the project, he completed 10 color prints that explore his notions of artmaking through the intaglio process. Known for his poetic abstractions and imagistic light effects, Bleckner brought to the creation of these prints, his widely acknowledged and highly individual approach to the technical side of art making.

Bleckner has long experimented and improvised with materials that allow him to transform surface appearance, routinely using ground pigments rather than prepared paints, and developing methods that make paint appear as physical layers of skin. In his current body of work, he has used a mesmerizing new technique that involves quick bursts from an airbrush that deflect still-wet surfaces by spreading the paint. He applied this same approach to the etchings, developing a similar technique that uses an airbrush to blow away the dry aquatint powder or to apply an acid-resist directly to the copper plates.

A series of four prints -- Arrangement, Arrangement(s), Recognition and Recognition(s) -- best show this approach. These prints feature horizontal stripes that resulted from Bleckner using the airbrush in grand sweeping gestures across the plates. These prints reference his "stripe" paintings in which the repeated horizontal lines metamorphose into cages or gates. Light pulsates behind the stripes, as if they are actually trapping the light from escaping. The electric combination of brilliant blue and yellow colors in the print series is further accentuated by Bleckner's use of spitbite, where he applied acid directly to the plates to create watery, wash-like effects.

Bleckner's ongoing obsession with light, both formal and symbolic, has remained a constant in his painterly vocabulary. In Bonds and Proteins, which features a similar color palette to the Arrangement and Recognition prints, glowing orbs of light seem to have broken free from the atmospheric background of blurred stripes to float above the charged field of color.

Throughout the prints, Bleckner cultivates light as an ambiguous yet symbolic source. In Dome, off-white circular lights are reflected in the sepia-toned interior of an architectural dome or basilica. The repeated, concentric rows of dots cascade down from the top of the page, suggesting a divine source of illumination. In Sky the pale yellow dots denote patterns of stars in the dark, night sky, perhaps as constellations that illuminate a void. The dynamic interplay of space and perspective in these prints remains secondary to the strength of the transcendental light source.

The print Antibody Diversity with its flickering dots of bright vermilion red against a deep maroon background, has a unique sense of space that oscillates between interior and exterior. It is unclear whether Bleckner is referencing the human body or describing in rich color yet another celestial body. The reference to biology is more obvious in Selection, where hand-drawn circular lines define individual cells made up of layers of sepia and warm tones of brown. This close-up view of a natural process is further accentuated by dots of red. Multiple spheres populate the print Rearrangement whose varying densities of ultramarine create an overall amorphous effect. As in Selection, the multiple layers of color are printed over a collaged sheet of Japanese Gampi paper that provides a subtle surface texture.

Bleckner has also had an ongoing interest in the scientific study of natural phenomena. This notion became important in bodies of work that memorialized those lost to the AIDS epidemic, and with which he has investigated the political and cultural ramifications of the failure of science to manage the disease. His references to science, through the use of repeated cell-shapes and clustered molecules, are brought into a lush and organic unity with the

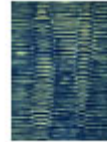
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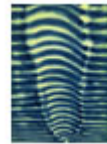
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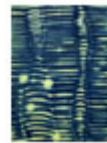
Arrangement, 1999
Spit bite aquatint etching
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



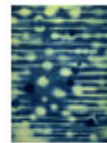
Arrangement(s), 1999
Spit bite aquatint etching
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



Recognition, 1999
Spit bite aquatint etching
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



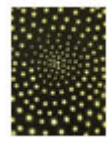
Recognition(s), 1999
Spit bite aquatint etching
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



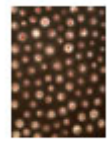
Bonds and Proteins, 1999
Spit bite aquatint etching
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



Dome, 1999
Color aquatint etching with scrape
and burnish
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



Sky, 1999
Color aquatint etching with scrape
and burnish
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



Antibody Diversity, 1999
Spitbite aquatint etching
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50

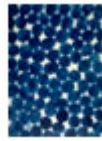
notion that these cells are the most fundamental units of life, and the most relevant metaphor to describe our humanity.

Ross Bleckner was born in New York in 1949 and grew up on Long Island. After attending the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in Valencia, CA, he returned to New York and became one of the first artists to join the Mary Boone Gallery, where he continues to exhibit today. Since that time, his work has been exhibited in major group and solo exhibitions at museums throughout the world, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Berkeley Art Museum. In 1995, a mid-career retrospective was held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

For more information about these prints, please contact Paulson Press at (510) 559-2088. Prices and availability subject to change without notice.



Selection, 1999
Spitbite aquatint etching with
softground and chine collé
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50



Rearrangement, 1999
Spitbite aquatint etching with
softground and chine collé
Somerset soft white paper
Image size 30" x 22"
Paper size 40" x 31"
Edition of 50