



## DEBORAH OROPALLO

### A NEW RELEASE FROM PAULSON PRESS

Paulson Press in Berkeley, California is pleased to announce a new publication: two color etchings by Bay Area painter Deborah Oropallo. Completed in February of this year, these print editions will be available for release April 1997.

Oropallo's first prints with Paulson Press feature images of common objects that have both personal and universal significance: a mousetrap from her painting studio, children's toy parachutes, and rows of tickets or coupons from fairs or games. Each print chronicles the transformation of ordinary objects into powerful symbols through a mesmerizing repetition of images. She regularly uses silk screens of single images to create multi-layered compositions directly on a surface, in this case, copper etching plates. The brilliant luminosity of both prints shows Oropallo's command of printmaking: she successfully combines many techniques and multiple plates and builds up subtle veils of transparent etching ink.

In VICTOR ethereal white parachutes stream down the paper in groups, while underneath, solemn rows of Victor brand mouse traps march into a mazelike configuration. Oropallo referred to the actual traps in recreating the colors of the unmistakable red "Vs" that punctuate the tawny bases. As the parachutes drift down the page, the background gradually deepens in intensity from a shimmering deep taupe to a rich burnt umber. This atmospheric effect and the overall lucent beauty of the print emphasizes the transformation of the images from common objects to conveyors of charged ideas. The pairing of mouse traps and parachutes resonates with interpretive themes of survival and rescue, entrapment and escape.

In COUPON, Oropallo superimposes rows of yellow tickets one over another into a loosely defined grid. Again, she worked from the existing object to accurately capture color and detailing: on each ticket a thin red line boxes the word "coupon." The continuum of layered tickets forms an abstract pattern of what appear to be randomly placed objects. Some tickets lie face down while others are obscured by watery layers and washes in tones of gray that were made when she dripped acid directly onto the etching plate. She intensifies the spatial depth by using a background that deepens from a warm buff color at the top of the print to a cool dark gray at the bottom. The evocative backdrop and unknown context of these coupons invites defining associations such as winning and losing, admission and rejection, saving and redeeming.

In these prints, as in her work in other media, Oropallo boldly fuses content and technique. With her masterful working processes, she transforms her images into open-ended metaphors. Oropallo pushes past the nostalgia usually associated with these tickets, parachutes and mouse traps, and reclaims their mundane essence. As she said in a 1995 interview with Artweek, "the longer you look at an object, the more of the world you see in it."

Deborah Oropallo regularly shows her work at the Stephen Wirtz Gallery in San Francisco which will exhibit her recent paintings in April 1997. Her work is included in the collections of several institutions such as the Oakland Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Lannan Foundation, the Palm Springs Desert Museum and the Boston Museum of Art. Among the awards and achievements she has received are a Fleishacker Award in 1993 as well as inclusion in the Corcoran Gallery's Biennial Exhibition in 1993 and the Whitney Biennial in 1989. Several of Oropallo's paintings were recently featured in an exhibition entitled "American Kaleidoscope: Themes and Perspectives in Recent Art" at the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.

For more information about these prints, please contact Paulson Press at 510.559. 2088. Prices subject to change.

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Victor, 1997  
Color spitbit, soapground, sugar-lift aquatint etching with scrape and burnish  
Somerset soft white paper  
Image size 26" x 24"  
Paper size 36" x 31"  
Edition of 40



Coupon, 1997  
Color spitbit and waterbite aquatint etching with drypoint  
Somerset soft white paper  
Image size 14" x 11"  
Paper size 23" x 19"  
Edition of 40