75
ANNIVERSARY

AMERICAN ABSTRACT ARTISTS

PRINT PORTFOLIO

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Catalogue published on the occasion of the November 2013 Exhibition, *AAA 75th Anniversary Portfolio*, at the UT Downtown Gallery, Knoxville, TN.
All reproductions are from prints 9 3/4 x 12 3/4 inches.

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THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE

75 ANNIVERSARY

AMERICAN ABSTRACT ARTISTS PRINT PORTFOLIO

Brattleboro Museum
Brattleboro, VT
June 29 - October 20, 2013

UT Downtown Gallery
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
November 4 - 26, 2013

Sarah Moody Gallery
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
December 5 - January 17, 2014

Martin Art Gallery
Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA
August 27 - September 27, 2014

University of Mary Washington
Fredericksburg, VA
October 10 - December 10, 2014

Vanderbilt University
Nashville, TN
January 15 - February 27, 2015

Marywood University
Scranton, PA
September 8 - October 18, 2015

Auburn University
Auburn, AL
February 1 - March 4, 2016

United States Embassy
Beijing Embassy Annex, Beijing, China
(permanent view)

Wrather West Kentucky Museum
Murray, KY
January 17 - February 24, 2017

University of Houston-Clear Lake Art Gallery
Houston, TX
August 31 - October 20, 2017

Transmitter Gallery
Brooklyn, NY
January 3 - February 6, 2020

The Gallery at The Visual and Performing Arts Center
Western Connecticut State University, Danbury, CT
October 21 - December 5, 2021

Herron School of Art + Design
Indianapolis, IN
January 26 - March 6, 2022

PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION

"The days of our years are three score years and ten" says the 90th Psalm. So at three score and fifteen you might conclude that American Abstract Artists is a society of the old in contradiction with abstraction's historical role as a primary force for the new. However, art isn't like that, and artists don't think like that either. In fact, a number of our members have reached an even greater age. But as is true for all, young as well as old, their real concern is with the absolute immediacy of visual experience for which abstraction has been the vessel since its invention roughly one hundred years ago.

American Abstract Artists was founded in 1936 when the war clouds were gathering world-wide, when enlightened culture was under direct assault everywhere—in Soviet Russia as well as in Nazi Germany it was already threatened with total extinction—and when the advances of innovative art in this country were stalemated by conservative forms of figuration that often, but not always, reflected conservative politics. AAA survived into the 1940s and 1950s when non-objective modes of expression were more broadly tolerated, but formally strict, non-expressionist variants were commonly but erroneously thought to lack urgency and feeling and thus required a rallying point. AAA provided it. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the rise of Hard Edge and Minimal art, but the need for dialogue among artists not aligned with those styles remained. AAA filled it. During the long drawn out pluralist era that has followed, tendencies competing for brief dominance have come and gone, but steady, slow-moving currents that crisscross and occasionally blend with "the mainstream" still seek places to pool and grow. For many artists who have been affiliated with it, including those whose work appears in this portfolio, AAA has been and remains such a basin.

Throughout its history, AAA has served its members by fostering dialogue among artists sharing common ground, by opening that dialogue to the general public through panels and catalogs, and by providing exhibition opportunities for members to show their work to diverse audiences in galleries and institutions both large and small across the entire country. Thus, despite being based in New York City, the American component of "American Abstract Artists" has a substantial geographic meaning, although never a chauvinistic one. The Dutch refugee Piet Mondrian was among its earliest champions, and immigrants from Germany, Russia, and around the globe have filled its ranks. Indeed, as is characteristic of America as a whole, this polymorphous aesthetic confederation is predicated on a healthy tolerance for variety rather than on rigid doctrines or criteria. Never has the AAA published a manifesto, laid down the law, identified an enemy, nor expelled anyone for breaching its orthodoxies in the manner of so many modernist movements. Because AAA is not a movement, there is no such thing as "AAAism."

Rather than avant-garde rhetoric, what binds past and present members of AAA together is a deep respect for the value of visual experience unencumbered by programs and pretensions, for what one might call the poetry of the plain, although in the hands of some AAA adherents, essential plainness achieves extreme states of intricacy or encompasses such exquisite refinement or subtlety that the average viewer might briefly be tempted to mistake it for its opposite.

As this portfolio demonstrates, nothing is inherently alien to rigorous abstraction except depiction. Yet even in this regard, it has never been an AAA priority to impose a ban on illusion or resemblance so severe that the evocation of volume or of corporeally coherent spaces was enforced at the cost of dynamic pictorial invention. In that respect, members as severe as Mondrian or the still more austere Ad Reinhardt or the forthrightly materialist Robert Ryman found themselves in a coalition in which others have claimed considerable license and latitude in areas once off-limits to absolute purists. Manifest form matters more to AAA than the Formalist ideology, and the passage of time has proven that the anathemas of one generation may become the inspiration for the next without any basic loss in the underlying discipline abstraction requires in order to thrive.

"Presentness is grace," Michael Fried once wrote. According to Harold Rosenberg, the indispensable component of quality in modern and contemporary art is freshness. While these two critics agreed on little else, they would seem to be in approximate accord to this extent. We don't agree on everything with either of them nor amongst ourselves, but for the now long run of AAA's existence, consensus has leaned toward these two basic propositions. As AAA begins to round out its first century chasing abstraction into the future, "presentness" and "freshness" will remain the morning stars by which we navigate. Long may AAA endure in a perpetually regenerative now!

ROBERT STORR
Dean, Yale School of Art









Siri BERG ***It's all about Color II***

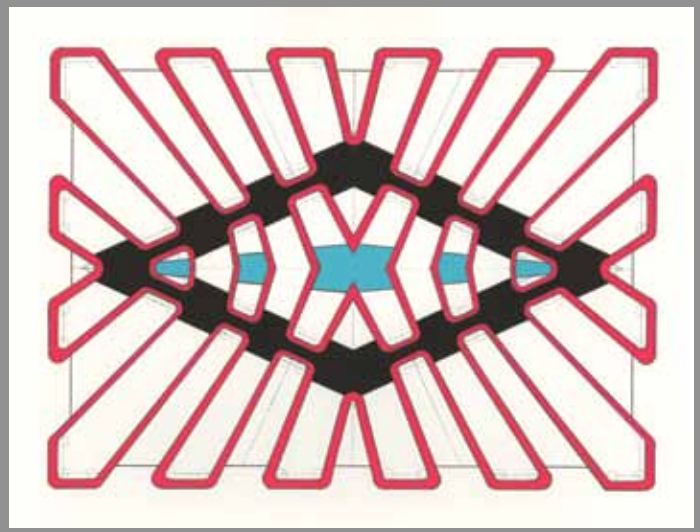
Emily BERGER **untitled**

Susan BONFILS **untitled**

Alice ADAMS ***Beaded Circle***

All captions are listed left to right, top to bottom.









Power BOOTHE **untitled**

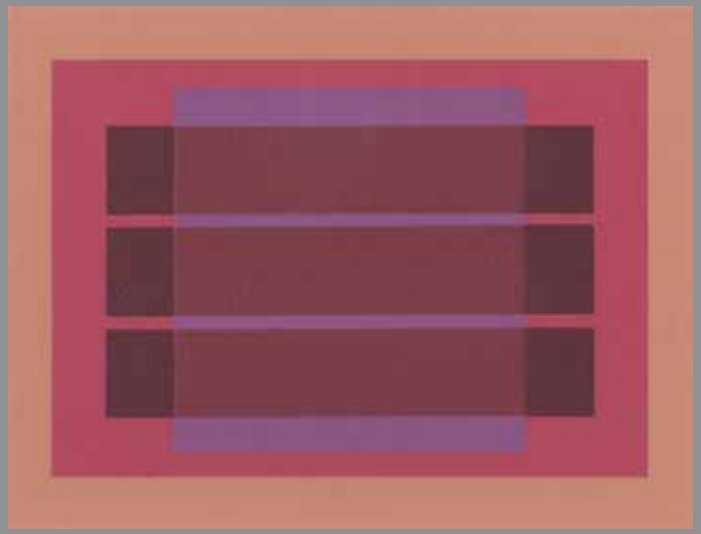
Kenneth BUSHNELL ***EDC: AAA***

Henry BROWN ***Limitless***

James O. CLARK **untitled**









Gail GREGG ***Delicious***

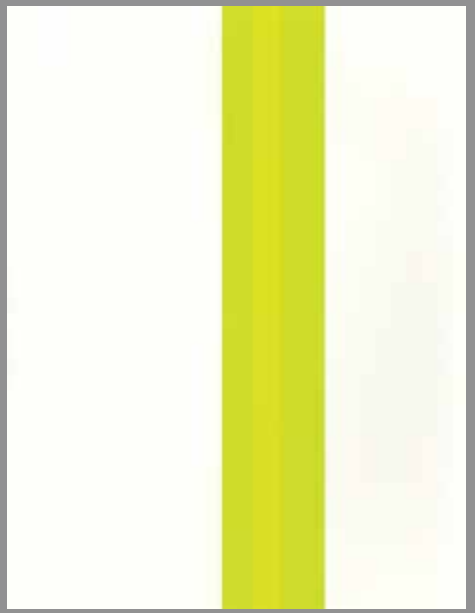
James JUSZCZYK ***Heaven's Veil***

Mara HELD ***Bize II***

Steve KARLIK ***Flyer***









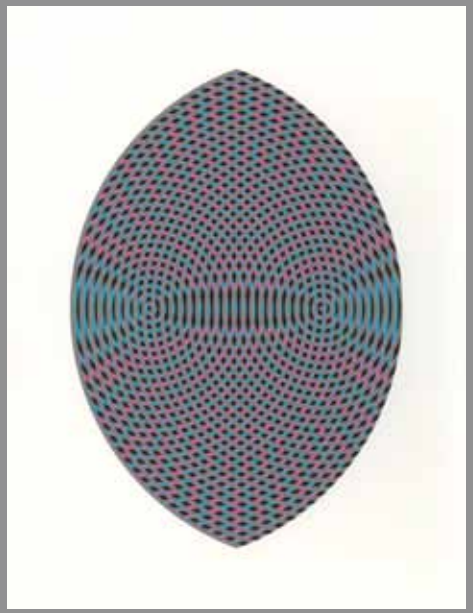
Gabriele EVERTZ **untitled**

James GROSS ***Chapel***

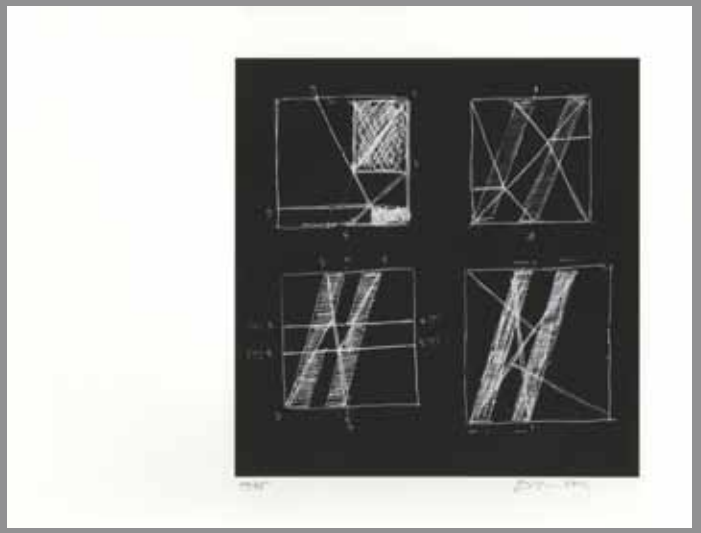
Lynne HARLOW ***Golondrinas***

John GOODYEAR ***Abstract-Impressionism — After Seurat***









Daniel G. HILL **untitled**

Gilbert HSIAO ***Disco 3000***

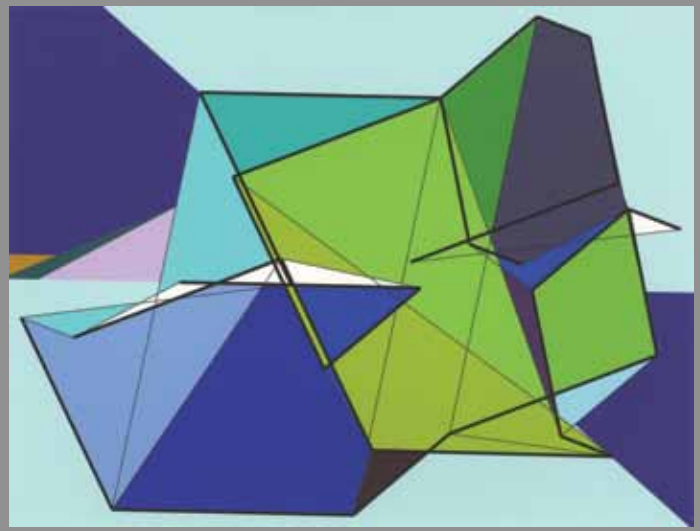
Phillis IDEAL ***Shadow Works #1***

David MACKENZIE **untitled**







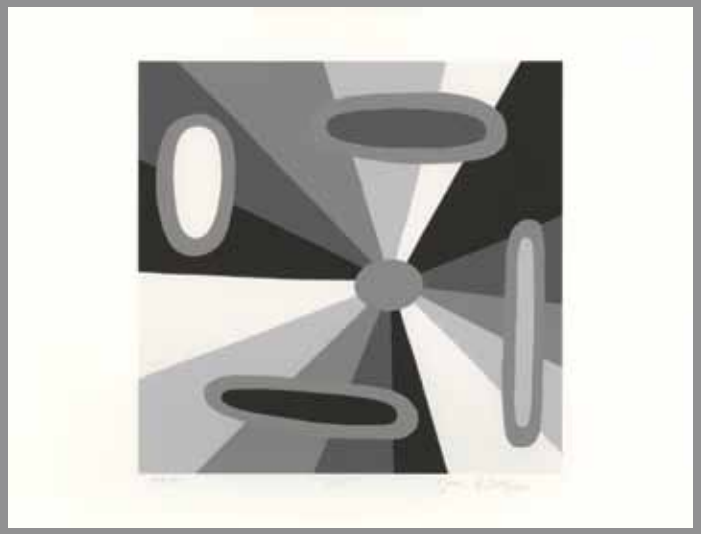


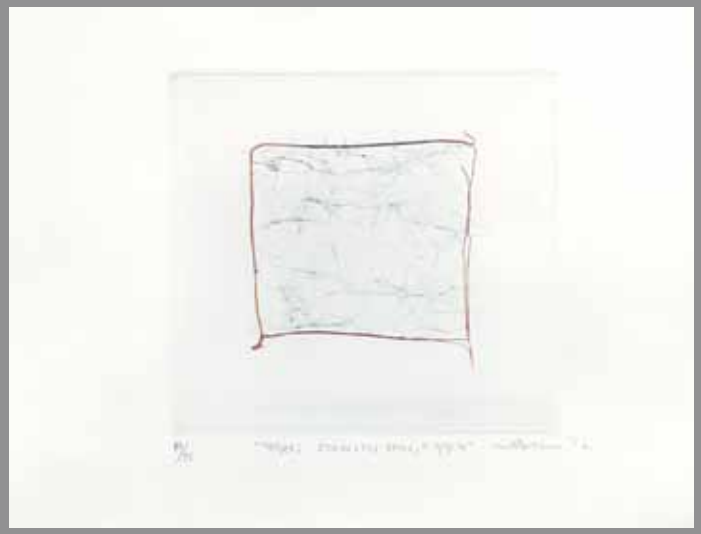
Stephen MAINE **untitled**

Creighton MICHAEL ***Tapestry 3610***

Nancy MANTER ***Every Night***

Manfred MOHR **untitled**









John PHILLIPS ***Jill***

Ce ROSER ***Boxed Lightning***

Leo RABKIN ***Wire: Stainless Steel, Copper***

David ROW ***Quanta***









Julian JACKSON ***April Study 7***

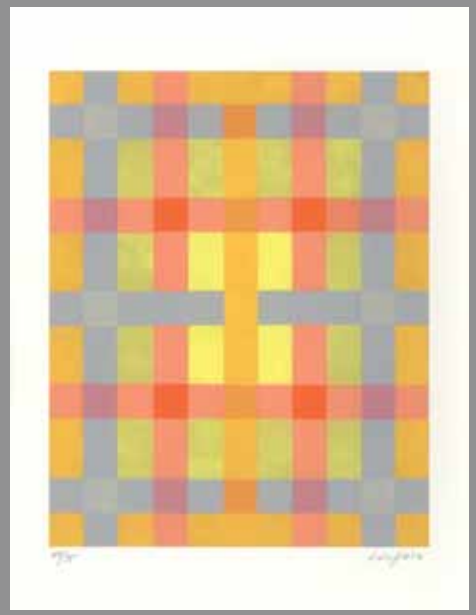
Cecily KAHN **untitled**

Marthe KELLER ***Lou! Lou!***

Hiroshi MURATA ***Red Sankaku***







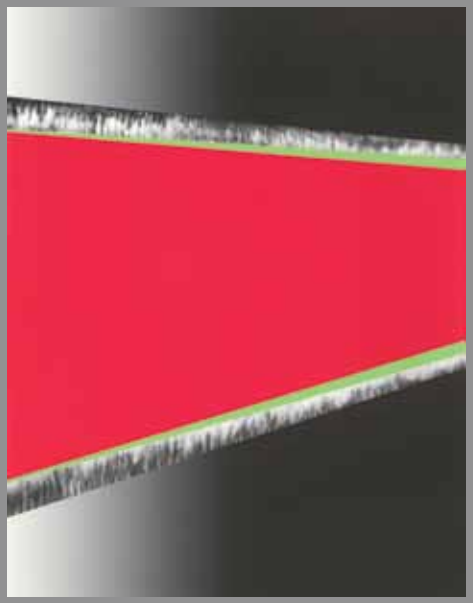


Irene LAWRENCE ***Settings for 3 Seas***

Jane LOGEMANN ***Famine-Korean Candle-Hebrew***

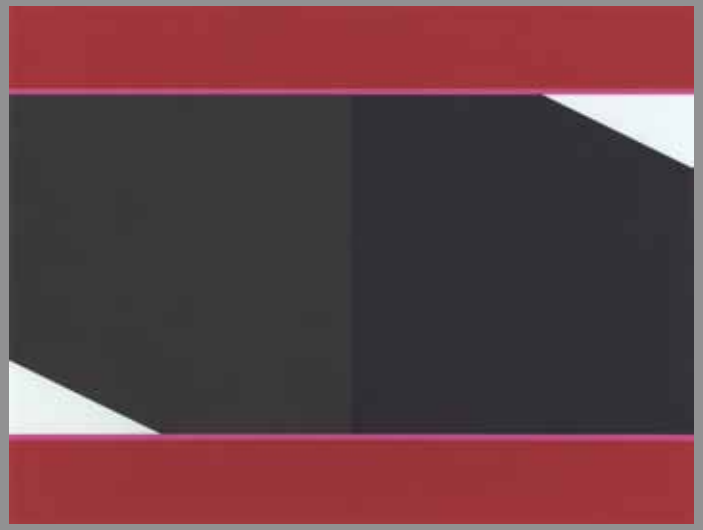
Vincent LONGO **untitled**

Edward SHALALA **untitled**









Katinka MANN **untitled**

Lucio POZZI ***Summer Noon***

Robert STORR **untitled**

Don VOISINE ***Over Under***









Robert SWAIN **untitled**

Clover VAIL **untitled**

Vera VASEK ***January 10, 2012***

Stephen WESTFALL ***Rose Mirror***









Mark WILLIAMS **untitled**

Thornton WILLIS **untitled**

Nola ZIRIN **untitled**

Jeanne WILKINSON ***An Ab 2–Composite***

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AAA Catalogue, Exhibitions Coordinator
AAA Catalogue, Museum Preparator

FROM THE EWING GALLERY, THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

The Ewing Gallery is pleased to present American Abstract Artists' 75th Anniversary Print Portfolio, a traveling exhibition consisting of 48 archival digital prints. In 1937 AAA held its first exhibition of abstract paintings and sculpture at the Squibb Gallery in New York City. In lieu of an exhibiton catalogue, the group published a portfolio of 30 original zinc plate lithographs. In addition to that first portfolio and this 75th anniversary portfolio, only two others have been published—one commemorating the organization's 50th anniversary, and one for the 60th.

The School of Art at the University of Tennessee takes great pride in the excellence of its printmaking program. The Ewing Gallery is pleased to host this portfolio, which breaks new ground with its technical production. Printed digitally instead of using a more time-honored method of printmaking, the 75th Anniversary Portfolio seeks to move not only its members, but also printmaking and contemporary art forward into this era of rapid technological change.

I would like to thank UT alumnus and AAA member Creighton Michael for bringing this portfolio to my attention. I am grateful to him and to Daniel G. Hill, president of the AAA, for their assistance in organizing the portfolio for national tour. I would also like to acknowledge the Ewing Gallery staff, Sarah McFalls and T. Michael Martin for their work on this catalogue and preparing this exhibition for travel.

SAM YATES
Director, Curator

NOTES FROM THE PROJECT DIRECTOR OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY PRINT PORTFOLIO

This is the first digitally produced portfolio published by American Abstract Artists. All past portfolios—1937, 1987, 1997—were produced using various forms of lithography and means of transferring image to plate. Unlike traditional printmaking, the digital inkjet process does not involve a physical matrix from which ink is transferred to paper. This marks both a technical and a conceptual shift in printmaking. Our choice of the medium situates this portfolio squarely in the current century and is an indication of the group's forward momentum.

The artists were asked to provide a digital file meeting predetermined specifications, yet no restrictions were placed on how the file could be created. The digital process enabled a wide variety of approaches that include abstract and documentary photography, scanning of flat-work made expressly for the project, digital compositing and image manipulation, as well as the use of vector-based software and hand-coded algorithms. The results are as varied as the artists' individual sensibilities and embody the group's inclusiveness described in Robert Storr's introduction.

On behalf of the artists, I would like to thank Don Voisine for his guidance and support through all phases of the project; Clover Vail for her financial management of the project; Gail Gregg, James Juszczyk and Steve Karlik for guiding many of the artists through the initial phases; Linda and James Clark, Creighton Michael, Katinka Mann, Julian Jackson, Emily Berger, Phillis Ideal, Gail Gregg and Don Voisine for their tireless work collating the prints; Aron Louis Cohen, my studio assistant, for his technical research and preparation of support materials provided to the artists; and Brendan Carney and Elizabeth Haberkorn at Supreme Digital for their expertise, good judgement, and tireless dedication to the project.

The project was funded by the participating artists. Additional funding was provided by The Golden Rule Foundation and The Faculty Research Fund of the Office of the Provost, The New School.

DANIEL G. HILL
Assistant Professor of Fine Arts, Parsons The New School for Design



Frontispiece from the 1937 portfolio

ABOUT THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY PORTFOLIO

This edition consists of 75 numbered copies and one printer's proof. Each print has been individually signed and numbered by the artist. Ten additional copies designated AP (Artist's Proof) have been reserved for each artist. All prints are dated 2012. Print size is 9 3/4 x 12 3/4 inches.

This edition was printed at Supreme Digital in Brooklyn, New York by Brendan Carney and Elizabeth Haberkorn on Epson Hot Press Natural and Epson Cold Press Natural papers on an Epson Stylus Pro 11880 printer using UltraChrome K3 inks with Vivid Magenta and interleaved with Photo-tex tissue.

The case was made by Portfoliobox, Inc. in Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

Published by American Abstract Artists, 2012, in celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of AAA. All participating artists were active members at the time of publication.