Under Pressure
Contemporary Prints from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation

Opens October 6 at Joslyn Art Museum

(Omaha, NE) – Joslyn Art Museum presents Under Pressure: Contemporary Prints from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation, comprising work by thirty-nine artists spanning the last five decades. Tracing major currents in the art world, as well as developments specific to printmaking, the exhibition addresses how the print rose to prominence in postwar American art.


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Bringing together artists from different time periods who work in an array of media and styles, the exhibition illustrates the print’s infinite versatility and the ways in which it has impacted many artists’ broader practices. The exhibition at Joslyn opens on October 6 and continues through January 6.

**Exhibition Overview & Highlights**

Until the 1940s, most American artists viewed prints as an inferior medium, practiced by those who were concerned solely with the technical aspect of making art rather than with the importance of creative expression. Yet over the next two decades, bolstered by the adventurous spirit of experimentation championed by artists such as Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Helen Frankenthaler, printmaking became one of the most dynamic fields in contemporary art. During the 1950s and 1960s independent print workshops, such as ULAE (United Limited Art Editions) on Long Island and Gemini G.E.L. (Graphic Editions Limited) in Los Angeles, started opening their doors. Staffed with highly-skilled technicians, these studios supplied artists with the equipment, space, and expertise they needed to push the limits of printmaking. Welcoming the opportunity to expand their practices, artists transformed print workshops into laboratories where media and techniques intertwined and a new visual language emerged.

Reflecting on the process of printmaking, Jasper Johns once commented: “[it] allows you to do things that make your mind work in a different way than, say, painting with a brush does...things which are necessary to printmaking become interesting in themselves and can be used in painting where they’re not necessary but become like ideas.” Recognizing that prints are a natural extension of their existing practices, many of the artists featured in Under Pressure who are still making work today have followed Johns’ lead in moving fluidly among media.

Jordan Schnitzer’s expansive collection includes prints from the 1960s to the twenty-first century. Exhibition highlights include:

- Prints by Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, among the earliest artists to integrate printmaking into their practices. Through printmaking, Rauschenberg united the idea of his “combines” (large, three-dimensional collages suggesting unexpected connections) with
appropriated images from popular culture, the world of politics, and his travels abroad. Jasper Johns' lithograph *Between the Clock and the Bed* (1989) belongs to a series of paintings and prints Johns made during the 1980s that explores a single theme through subtle variations in color, graphic elements, and texture.

- In Roger Shimomura's lithographic series *Mistaken Identities*, clean, pronounced lines and flattened imagery clearly recall his cartoon-inspired paintings. Sarah Morris' screenprints adhere to her signature dependence on the line as a key compositional element and speak to her ongoing fascination with architectural spaces.

- Former political activist Enrique Chagoya finds inspiration in printmaking's use for propaganda, information dissemination, and grassroots social movements. Barbara Kruger's practice calls attention to cultural stereotypes and social inequities through the lens of imagery gathered from mass media. The series *We Will No Longer Be Seen And Not Heard* (1985) combines images from advertisements with the words of the title phrase.

- Starting in the 1960s, artists who were engaged in performance and action-based art found printmaking provided expanded options for translating ephemeral events into concrete work. John Baldessari's diverse practice has included printmaking since the 1970s. *Throwing Three Balls in the Air to Get a Straight Line (Best of Thirty-Six Attempts)* (1973) comprises twelve offset lithographs, begun as a group of photographs, documenting the artist’s execution of the title activity. In each image, three red balls float above the tops of palm trees, suspended in a vibrant blue California sky.

- Print suites feature gradual changes in composition or variations on a pictorial theme and are considered incomplete if any individual piece is missing from the group. Roy Lichtenstein's *Bull Profile Series* (1973) presents a logical breakdown of the first image in the sequence. Donald Judd's untitled print suite from 1988 is ten woodcuts divided into groups of two, with each print functioning as the inverse of its pair. Sol LeWitt's *Color Bands* series (2000) depict closed systems that explore every possible variation within a set of rules based on simple formal elements such as line, shape, and color.

- Ellen Gallagher's mixed-media portfolio *deLuxe* (2004–5), her most extensive project to date, features 60 works executed using a combination of print processes and non-print techniques. By modifying, but never totally obliterating, her source material, the artist cleverly intervenes into the glossy world of print media in order to cast a critical eye on prevalent racial and gender biases.

The earliest works featured in the *Under Pressure* exhibition at Joslyn are mid-1960s prints by Omaha-born Edward Ruscha (pronounced rue-Shay); the latest, a 2009 print by Hung Liu. The youngest artist is Radcliffe Bailey, a 44-year-old, Atlanta-based printmaker, and eleven of the 39 featured artists are women. All but five of the artists in the exhibition are still living and working.
About Jordan D. Schnitzer

The selection of work on view in *Under Pressure* represents a small portion of Jordan Schnitzer's rich and diverse collection of prints from the 1960s through the present — the largest private print collection in the United States. Schnitzer has collected many of the artists featured in the exhibition in-depth, including John Baldessari, Ed Ruscha, and Kiki Smith, reflecting his commitment to tracing their ongoing impact in the realm of contemporary prints.

Schnitzer is president of Oregon-based Harsch Investment Properties, a family business founded by his father, Harold J. Schnitzer, who passed away in 2011. His mother, Arlene, founded one of Portland's first serious commercial galleries, the Fountain Gallery, and is the Portland Art Museum's most important benefactor of the past two decades. With his mother's encouragement, Schnitzer purchased the first of many thousands of prints in his collection at the age of fourteen. An active and generous philanthropist, Schnitzer has served prominently on many organization boards. In 2005, the University of Oregon renamed its art museum the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art in recognition of his years of leadership there.

Exhibition Events & Programs

Members Preview

On Friday, October 5, Joslyn members will enjoy a preview of the exhibition, featuring a 6 pm conversation with Jordan Schnitzer, special guest for the evening. Invitations will be mailed. To become a Joslyn member, visit www.joslyn.org or call (402) 661-3858.

Mobile Tour

Visitors may use their own mobile device (cell phone, SmartPhone, or iPod Touch) to enhance their experience of *Under Pressure*. There is no extra Joslyn charge (regular phone rates apply) to access the *Under Pressure* mobile tour (available in both English and Spanish). A limited number of iPods with earphones will be available through the Scott EdTech Gallery for visitors without a mobile device (no extra charge; first come, first served; must leave a driver's license to borrow iPod). Tour may be downloaded in advance at joslyn.org/mobiletour or guests may add the local dial-in number, (402) 881-3601, to their phone's contacts. ¿Habla Español? Añade este numero de teléfono local (402) 972-4031 a tus contactos telefónicos. The tour may be listened to like a phone call, but earphones will make the experience more enjoyable (speaker mode is not allowed in the galleries). Visitors may bring their own or buy disposable sets for $2 in Joslyn's Hitchcock Museum Shop. Special thanks to 91.5 KIOS FM: Omaha Public Radio.
**Public events:**

- A free Family Fun Day on Sunday, October 14, from 1 to 4 pm, celebrates printmaking.

- Two gallery talks by Karin Campbell, Joslyn’s Phil Willson Curator of Contemporary Art, on Thursdays, October 18 and January 3, at 6:30 pm (cash bar at 5 pm). Free with regular Museum admission (discounted to $5 for all ages on Thursdays from 4–8 pm).

- The Art of Dance: *Momentum* and *Under Pressure.* Ballet Nebraska presents this mixed repertory performance that includes an exploration of contemporary art through choreography on Friday, October 19, at 8 pm and Sunday, October 21, at 2 pm. Tickets: ticketomaha.com or (402) 345-0606.

- An exhibition-inspired gallery presentation — “Framing the Flame: Art That Ignites” — on Thursday, December 13, at 6:30 pm (cash bar at 5 pm). Brigitte McQueen, founder of The Union for Contemporary Art, and Adrian Duran and Wanda Ewing of the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) will each speak for ten minutes about a work in the exhibition that “lights their fire.” Representing three very different perspectives on contemporary printmaking, they will shed light on how art inspires, engages, and delights them and impacts their own work. Free with regular Museum admission (discounted to $5 for all ages on Thursdays from 4–8 pm).

Our Mission — Joslyn Art Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the visual arts of the highest quality, fostering appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience.

Our Vision — To be cherished and respected as a premier art museum.

The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum’s original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster, Baron Foster of Thames Bank, as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, sculpture garden, café, and shop.