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The Changing Face of Art and Politics

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The Changing Face of Art and Politics
Foreword and Acknowledgments

The Lowe Art Museum is proud to present The Changing Face of Art and Politics, the second exhibition in the ArtLab @ The Lowe series, on view in the Richard and Shelley Bermont Focus Gallery through April 24, 2011. The Lowe’s innovative ArtLab program provides University of Miami faculty and students the opportunity to organize an annual exhibition drawn from the Lowe’s permanent collection of more than 17,750 works of art. For the Spring 2010 semester, Dr. Joel Hollander, Lecturer in the Department of Art and Art History, and his museum studies students have explored the influence of politics and political systems on artistic production over a span of five hundred years. I would like to extend my deepest thanks to Dr. Hollander and his students for curating this ArtLab exhibition, and to my staff in the Collections and Exhibition Services department, who coordinated all the myriad details that are required in realizing the final product. The Changing Face of Art and Politics is made possible through the generosity of Stella M. Holmes, whose ongoing support of the ArtLab program has allowed the Lowe to create the perfect teaching laboratory in which to fulfill our primary goal of supporting, extending, and enriching the mission of the University of Miami for students, faculty, scholars, residents, and visitors to South Florida.

Brian A. Dursum
Director and Chief Curator

The Changing Face of Art and Politics represents the work of eleven undergraduate and two graduate students who enrolled in Museum Studies II (ARH 508) during the Spring 2010 semester. This course is the second installment of a collaborative program, ArtLab @ The Lowe, which, operated jointly by the Department of Art and Art History and the Lowe Art Museum at the University of Miami, provides students with opportunities to work directly with objects from the museum’s collection, produce research, and curate a thematic exhibition that will be on display for a full calendar year.

Our exhibition aims to examine imagery not only through style and technique, but also by concentrating on motifs and narratives that share an affinity over time. We also interpret meaning by setting into context the policies of despots, emperors, dictators, and/or democratically elected officials represented or alluded to in the work of art. As a group, we went through a deliberate process that lasted several weeks of selecting objects from the museum’s permanent collection and were instructed by museum staff on methods of handling objects. In preparation for the selection process, the students and I spent the first several weeks of the semester becoming familiar with recent scholarship addressing the “new” museology. In particular, we sought to balance the exhibition with imagery produced by artists familiar to the museum-going public, along with work by lesser-recognized artists whose contributions, we feel, deserve renewed attention. In other words, part of our motivation became to expand the canon. Our group also sought to integrate new (digital) technology along with the display of the works of art, so as to broaden the cultural context.

We wish to thank Lowe Art Museum Director Brian Dursum and his staff for their invaluable assistance. In particular, we would like to emphasize the contributions of Kara Schneiderman, Assistant Director for Collections and Exhibition Services, whose guidance, experience, and discipline helped our group stay focused and meet deadlines. I also wish to thank the College of Arts and Sciences who awarded me a grant during Summer 2009 to develop the intellectual framework for the course and its accompanying exhibition.

Joel Hollander, Ph.D.
Lecturer of Art History
University of Miami
Introduction

The intersection between art and politics has served a long and traditional role in visual history. The prints, photographs, and paintings exhibited here provide a chronological selection of artists whose imagery and range of topics include personal, national, and global identity. From old master Italian Renaissance printmakers to artists who came of age during the turbulent 1960s, a consistent repertoire of themes, forms, and iconography has become apparent over time, even as styles, techniques, and historical contexts change.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the two prints displayed in the introductory section. Hieronymus Hopfer's etching after Domenico Campagnola's Combat Between the Cavalry and Infantry (ca. 1525) and Arthur Segal's Untitled (1915) woodcut share the motif of a rearing horse centered within a mass of battling soldiers. Yet their aesthetic and intended message bears witness to the almost 400 years that separate their production.

Within the wide variety of work and media presented in the exhibition, politically-charged themes such as colonization, war, religion, equality, repression, revolution, and protest run throughout. Economic and social equality are examined in both Auguste Lepère's print The Call of the Street Sweepers (1890) and Andy Warhol's Birmingham Race Riot (1964.) Jacques Callot's matter-of-fact documentation of the Thirty Years' War in his print series The Miseries and Misfortunes of War (1633) provides thought-provoking comparison with Reginald Pollack's painting Peace March (1967). And pop culture is certainly not exempt from the artistic/political dialogue, as evidenced by Philippe Halsman's photomontage Marilyn/Mao (1952) or Elliott Erwitt's photograph Coke Machine & Missiles, Alabama, U.S.A. (1974). The thirty-one works of art in this exhibition present only a small sample of the political-themed art in the Lowe's collection, but it is a grouping that demonstrates the productive discourse between artists and the political systems in which they live and work.

Checklist of the Exhibition

HIERONYMUS HOPFER
Germany, active ca. 1520-1530
after Domenico Campagnola, Italy, 1500-1564

Combat Between the Cavalry and Infantry, ca. 1525
etching, 9 ⅝ x 8 ⅛ "
Gift of Benedict Rucker, 2001.57.32

Domenico Campagnola is associated with the Venetian Renaissance workshop of Titian, many of whose drawings are now attributed to his pupil. According to Maria Farquhar's Biographical Catalogue of the Principal Italian Painters (1855), Campagnola was a "good imitator" but "excited his [Titian's] jealousy," leading to a falling out between the two artists. Campagnola's original engraving, Combat Between the Cavalry and Infantry; or, Battle of the Naked Men (1517), may have also found its aesthetic source through printmaking developments introduced by Albrecht Dürer, who, during a second journey to Italy, spent most of his time from the autumn of 1505 until the winter of 1507 in Venice admiring the work of Giovanni Bellini, one of Titian's instructors. This etching was printed in about 1525 by the German artist Hieronymus Hopfer. The dense depiction of figures within a landscape setting that logically recedes into space offers stylistic innovations from Antonio Pollaiuolo's influential early Italian Renaissance large scale engraving, Battle of the Naked Men (1465), whose subject has never been completely explained. Scholars differ as to whether Pollaiuolo's theme, identical to the one represented in Hopfer's reproduction, was meant to illustrate a mythological episode or to demonstrate a range of poses and viewpoints for the benefit of other artists.

—Joel Hollander
Leonard Schenk
The Netherlands, 1696-1767
after Gerret van Schagen, The Netherlands, 1642-1677
and after Jacques Callot, France, ca. 1592-1635

The Hanging, Plate 11, The Plundering of a Large Farmhouse, Plate 5, and The Wheel, Plate 14, from De Droeve Ellendigheden Van Den Oorlogh [The Miseries and Misfortunes of War], ca. 1730
etchings, 3 7/8 x 7 1/2" (each of three)
Gift of Dr. David Klein, 74.005.611, 74.006.916 and 74.006.924

Jacques Callot published The Miseries and Misfortunes of War in 1633 as a response to the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648), which began as a religious conflict between Protestants and Catholics but developed into a more general dispute involving Bourbon-Habsburg rivalry for European political preeminence. Callot’s series of eighteen etchings are a personal response to the political unrest, economic failure, and epidemic disease that beset the environs near Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, where the artist was born and died. The first three plates in the series portray the enlistment of soldiers and a battle scene. The next five depict rogue soldiers ransacking the countryside, attacking travelers, and pillaging a village inn, convent, and private house – scenes of harm to people typically exempt from violence. In the next plates, soldiers are captured, then graphically executed. The remaining images represent soldiers’ misfortune after the war and, finally, the distribution of awards to law-abiding soldiers by the King. Callot’s series established precedent for subsequent visual artists to use imagery as a vehicle for protest, influencing works such as Goya’s Disasters of War (1810-1820). The Lowe’s prints are later Dutch copies of Callot’s originals, a testament to the international popularity of the subject matter almost one hundred years after the prints were first created.

—Angelica Bradley

John Webber
England, 1750-1793

An Exact Representation of the Death of Captn. James Cook, F.R.S. at Karakakooa Bay, in Owhyhee, on Febry. 14, 1779, 1785

Portrait of a Man of the Sandwich Islands in a Mask and Representation of a Man of the Sandwich Islands Dancing, ca. 1799
engravings, 9 ¾ x 14 ½" (each of two)
Gift of Drs. Ann and Robert Walzer, 2004.50.9.1 and .3

John Webber, who owes much of his fame as a watercolorist and draftsman to his connection with Captain Cook’s third and last voyage in the South Pacific, manipulated the narrative in An Exact Representation of the Death of Captn. James Cook so that a more dramatic tone supplanted the actual events. Webber (who may have not actually witnessed the event) depicts what an audience in the “civilized” world would have wanted to see, not necessarily what occurred. The artist chose not to represent Cook engaged in battle. Instead, in an effort to immortalize Cook by presenting him as a humanitarian, Cook extends his arm and gestures with his hand to stop his men from firing their guns. Webber ignores the fact that Cook, while attempting to disperse the crowd of indigenous people, killed and injured Hawaiian natives just before his own death. In contrast to the depiction of Cook’s death, the rendering of two Sandwich Island natives establishes an anthropological tone and documents cultural practices such as the wearing of masks. Here, Webber depicts a male figure wearing a mask constructed from a large gourd with fern pinacles protruding from the top and tree bark cloth, or tapa, hanging below. While the ritual use of these types of masks was not documented, they were worn by the native Hawaiian men who rowed out to meet Cook’s part upon their initial arrival at the island. The adjacent image is one of the few records from this period depicting a native Hawaiian dance.

—Josef Katz
The proto-Romantic artist and poet William Blake, a member of the British abolitionist movement, condemns racial oppression in *Flagellation of a Female Samboe Slave*. Precedent for the specific topic of Surinamese slavery appeared as early as 1759 in Voltaire’s *Candide*. Blake’s image is one of sixteen engravings he contributed to John Gabriel Stedman’s manuscript *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796) that illustrated plantation society and Dutch colonial life. Stedman, a soldier of the Scots Brigade who relocated to Suriname in 1773, developed a close friendship and correspondence with the artist. Blake’s brutal image portrays a young ‘Samboe’ – a colonial-era term designating the cultural progeny of African slaves and indigenous South Amerindian natives – flanked on either side by ill-proportioned slave drivers, whose diminutive stature recalls Jonathan Swift’s literary device to indicate Lilliputians in *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). Blake, who represents the female slave’s face in agony and twists her ample body, simultaneously desexualizes her and incorporates a degree of modesty by draping torn fabric around her hips. In *Flagellation*, Blake succeeds by inspiring “horror and resentment” within the viewer, which provides a haunting pictorial equivalent to Stedman’s graphic narrative.

—Nicole Bennett

The Spanish master Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes came of age during the Enlightenment, an intellectual movement in which a new set of values questioned traditional institutions, customs, and morals. Proponents of Enlightenment thought also advocated freedom, democracy, and religious tolerance – along with the questioning of religious orthodoxy – as the basis for the organization of states into self-governing republics. In *Volaverunt*, Goya delivers a biting commentary on the depravity of institutional power, specifically attacking the Roman Catholic Church and the immorality of the Spanish monarchy. Adopting a compositional arrangement for an Assumption scene, which depicts the Virgin Mary upon her death being lifted into heaven by a host of heavenly angels, the facial features and physiognomy of the subsidiary characters, who are members of the clergy, are variously grotesque. At the opposite end of the aesthetic spectrum, Goya’s portrayal of the Virgin’s slender arms, narrow waist, and elegant attire suggests an affinity to the aristocracy. For a contemporary Spanish audience, the female figure could be understood as a visual double entendre referring to Queen María Luisa. The Spanish monarch’s reputation had been sullied by an adulterous affair with Manuel de Godoy, whom she arranged to be appointed Prime Minister in 1792. Her sorrowful expression corresponds to Godoy’s removal in 1797 from his post due to their ongoing romantic entanglement as well as to conflict with the French Republic, which declared war on Spain when Godoy protested the execution of the French monarch Louis XVI.

—Joel Hollander
JAMES GILLRAY
England, 1757–1815

Uncorking Old Sherry, 1805
gilding, 8 ¾ x 6 ½"
Gift of Dr. David Klein, 74.006.840

In Uncorking Old Sherry, James Gillray, a leading caricaturist in England during the turn of the nineteenth century, depicts the British Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger, in the House of Commons facing the Whig opposition. Pitt, who became Great Britain's youngest Prime Minister in 1783 at the age of twenty-four, led the conservative Tory party during the reign of George III. Ruling consecutively until 1801 and again from 1804 until his death in 1806, Pitt's tenure was dominated by major events in Europe, including the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Gillray's political cartoon not only derides the unpopular Whig administration of Henry Addington (r. 1801–1804), shown spilled on the floor behind Pitt, for his attempt to persuade Napoleon Bonaparte to sign an armistice, but it also takes aim at the "invectives, stolen jests, lame puns, dramatic ravings, fibs" of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, a member of Parliament who attacked Pitt's notion to change the recruiting policy for the army. The source for Gillray's motif of the corked bottle comes from Pitt's parliamentary response to Sheridan, whose name serves as a double entendre for the title, comparing the Whig’s rambling speech and rhetoric against the Defense Bill to "a bottle just uncorked which bursts out all at once into an explosion of froth and air...."

—Laura Fardanesh

ANNE-LOUIS GIRODET DE ROUCY-TRIOSON
France, 1767–1824

Oscar, Fingal and Enchullin, 1820
lithograph, 14 x 19 ½"
Gift of Dr. David James, 62.047.015

Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson, who came of age during the French Revolution, was mentored by the French Neo-Classical master Jacques-Louis David. By selecting narratives culled from Greek myths, intellectual heroes, and battle scenes, David's early canvases complemented the political aim to depose the French monarchy and replace it with a representative form of government. Like many of David's other students, Girodet asserted his creative independence by veering away from the severity of the Neo-Classical style. After Napoleon's demise, Girodet increasingly explored a wider range of subjects that looked beyond the Greco-Roman tradition. He executed a series of pictures representing the myths of Ossian, which the Scottish poet James Macpherson claimed to have translated from ancient Gaelic sources. In Oscar, Fingal and Enchullin, the profiled features, exotic armature and weaponry, as well as atmospheric setting combine to heighten the heroic qualities of the barbaric "other" – a strategy that can trace its precedent to the Hellenistic Greeks, who memorialized the bravery of their Gallic adversaries. Girodet's lithograph was produced by the French draughtsman Lecomte Hyacinthe Louis Victor Jean Baptiste Aubry (1787–1858). Popularly known as the "prince of lithographers," Aubry-Lecomte rapidly mastered this new technique and became one of its foremost practitioners. Hired to create prints for leading French artists, he was decorated with several medals, including the Legion d'honneur in 1849.

—Joel Hollander
George Cruikshank, whose father, Isaac Cruikshank, was one of the leading English caricaturists of the late 1790s, started his early career as an apprentice and assistant to his father. *Ah! Sure Such a Pair Was Never Seen*, completed at the height of the younger Cruikshank's career, shows his eagerness to expand his role in English political affairs and ridicule the morality of high society. Satirizing the unhappy union between England's most notorious adulterer, King George IV, and his wife, Queen Caroline, the couple is indicated as a pear-shaped pair of green bags, a motif that alludes to the common practice of carrying legal and official papers. The subject for the cartoon was inspired in June 1820, when, as a result of George IV sending evidence to Parliament questioning Caroline's moral conduct, the Queen's counsel responded by saying, "If the King had a green bag, the Queen might have one too." King George's bag, girded by a garter belt that hangs down in a manner resembling a limp phallus, is much larger than Caroline's. This implies that if the Queen, whose smug countenance contrasts with the frightened face of the King, is guilty of immoral conduct, George IV is just as much, if not more, at fault. As a coda to this political cartoon's publication, George IV's fear of adverse publicity while the Queen was tried for adultery in the House of Lords presumably accounts for his outright bribe to silence Cruikshank, paying the artist one hundred pounds in June 1820 as consideration for the promise not to portray His Majesty in any immoral situation.

—Laura Fardanesh

Honoré Daumier was a French printmaker, painter, and sculptor best known for his caricatures of political figures and satire about the social behaviors of his Parisian contemporaries. In this mid-career piece, *Les Parisiens ayant trouvé moyen de circuler, en temps de pluie, sur les Boulevards macadamisés* [Parisians having found a way to move around the asphalted boulevards on rainy days], Plate 156 from *Actualités Series*, June 29, 1850, lithograph, 9 7/8 x 14 ½" Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Sharkey, 98.0043.36

Honoré Daumier was a French printmaker, painter, and sculptor best known for his caricatures of political figures and satires about the social behaviors of his Parisian contemporaries. In this mid-career piece, *Parisians having found a way to move around the asphalted boulevards on rainy day*, Daumier depicts the Parisian upper class traversing the asphalted streets on stilts, attempting to avoid infected cesspools that formed and flooded the cramped streets of Paris with organic matter and human waste when it rained. Here, Daumier sheds light on the miserable state of the Parisian streets in bad weather, while simultaneously poking fun at the bourgeoisie, who he shows going to ridiculous feats to avoid the problem rather than address it. This political cartoon may have helped sway public opinion to support changes that occurred throughout the metropolis soon after, when Baron Haussmann planned and executed a massive public works project under the auspices of Napoleon III to widen the streets and rebuild the older and more crowded sections of Paris.

—Remy Bordas
HONORÉ DAUMIER
France, 1808–1879

Une mauvaise cuisine [Too Many Cooks Spoil the Broth], Plate 129 from Actualités Series, June 6, 1850
lithograph, 10 x 14 5⁄8”
Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Sharkey, 99.0031.32

The scarcity of attention paid to Honoré Daumier during his lifetime by his contemporaries corresponds to the political sensitivity of the subjects he addressed during a volatile period in French history, when the aftermath of Napoleon’s failed empire and the advent of the Industrial Revolution precipitated a realignment of commerce, wealth, and power. Too Many Cooks Spoil the Broth employs a witty title that responds to an electoral law enacted one week earlier by the French legislature to restrict universal suffrage. The result of this change removed de facto the voting rights of many workers, reversing one of the fundamental gains for the laboring class when the Second Republic was proclaimed in 1848. Daumier appropriates the Shakespearean motif of the Three Witches from the tragedy Macbeth to allude to the deceptive political ploy. Louis-Adolphe Thiers, a conservative politician opposed to the rise of Socialism, who is caricatured as a rat, fans the malicious intent of the conservative legislature below, while the witches — who carry standards labeled “Constitution,” “National Assembly,” and “Country” that mock the Second Republic’s official motto “Liberty, Equality, Brotherhood” — toss ballots into the fiery cauldron. Through a vigorous, efficient use of line, Daumier’s combination of visual tropes and horrific physiognomies recall the witches’ lines in Macbeth’s first act: “Fair is foul, and foul is fair: Hover through the fog and filthy air.”

—Joel Hollander

AUGUSTE LOUIS LEPÈRE
France, 1849–1918

L’appel des balayeurs de la nuit [The Call of the Street Sweepers at Night], 1890
etching, 7 x 12”
Gift of M. Knoedler and Co., 53.001.000

August Lepère, a specialist in etching and wood engraving, became known for his realistic representations of daily life among the French laboring class. In The Call of the Street Sweepers, Lepère depicts the practice of employing former paupers so that they can support themselves by cleaning thoroughfares of horse manure, dust, and clinging mud. This class of workers not only lacked many of the rights and powers of skilled guild members, but also possessed less mastery over the time and hours of their work. In the visual arts, precedent for this subject can be traced to Nicolas Charlet’s School for Street-Sweepers (1822), which derisively casts the motley crew with unflattering facial features and hunched postures. By contrast, Lepère dynamically formulates the centralized figure striding laterally in one direction, while his instrument rests diagonally over his shoulder in the opposing direction. Shrouding the scene in chiaroscuro lighting effects, the visual result corresponds to unskilled laborers’ increasing sense of power that accompanied the advent of anarchism, a political philosophy that advocated for the eight-hour workday and sought to “replace the privilege and authority of the State” with “the free and spontaneous organization of labor.”

—Joel Hollander
The avant garde artist Arthur Segal studied painting in Berlin, Munich, Paris, and Italy, initially adopting a style predicated on Pointellism. Segal matured to an expressionist aesthetic from 1910-1914, helping to co-found the Neue Sezession in Berlin (1910), a group of artists that included Emil Nolde and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. When the First World War broke out in 1914, Segal's life and art became more radical. To avoid conscription, he moved with his family to Switzerland, which proved to be a refuge for many artists at the time, and remained there until 1920. While in Switzerland, Segal not only exhibited with Jean Arp and the Zurich Dadaists at the Cabaret Voltaire, but also contributed to publications such as Dada (No.3) in 1918 and Merz as late as 1923. This untitled woodcut is one of a series of anti-war themes produced in 1915 that dramatizes the violence of hand-to-hand combat through an expressionistic style. Utilizing an aggressive line and the stark contrast of black against white, a horse rears as its rider fires a pistol into a crowd of onrushing infantry. His enemies attack without emotion, their bayonets becoming extensions of their dynamically arranged bodies. As if to signify the debilitating effect of war on humanity’s conscience, each form and figure loses its sense of volume. In 1920, Segal subsequently moved back to Berlin where he became a director of the Novembergruppe. Due to rising anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany, Segal was banned from exhibiting his art because of his Jewish background. He moved to Mallorca, Spain in 1933, and, three years later, emigrated to London where he successfully opened another painting school.

—Joel Hollander
The stereograph was used in a similar fashion to today’s postcard or souvenir and was considered second only to the motion picture in its ability to capture and recreate a moment in history. Stereographs were created by simultaneously exposing two glass plates to an identical image from only slightly different perspectives, which, when looked at through a stereograph viewer, combined to form a single, three-dimensional image. These three stereographic images are part of a larger series that archive various locations in France destroyed during the First World War. The devastation depicts not only the physical landscape and its scarification, but also the impact of the war on technology, commerce, and humankind. The motifs and arrangements in these stereographs find precedent in earlier photographs taken during the American Civil War, and the panoramic vantage point employed was a preferred vista of American photographers commissioned by the US government during World War I to document destruction and impact, especially in northern France. The use of stereographs continued until World War II, when Allied Forces analyzed images of enemy territory taken by airplane-mounted cameras. While for an early twentieth-century audience there may have existed a contrast between the novelty of the stereographic object/view-finder with the gravity of the subject matter, for an American observer at the turn-of-the twenty-first century these images serve as visual proof and reminder of the atrocities of chemical and trench warfare.

—Amanda Chapin

KÄTHE KOLLWITZ
Germany, 1867–1945

Helft Russland [Help Russia], 1921
lithograph, 19 ¼ x 24 3⁄8”
Gift of Richard and Rosemary Furman, 80.0150
© 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

The subject matter of the lithograph Helft Russland refers to the famine of 1921 that devastated the Volga-Ural (Povolžye) region of Russia, when an estimated five million people died from the combined effects of drought and disruption of agricultural production during Vladimir Lenin's Bolshevik administration. Kollwitz, who in 1919 became the first woman to be admitted to the German Academy of Art in Berlin, was not officially in either of the German Expressionists movements led by Wassily Kandinsky, Ludwig Kirchner, or Max Beckman. Yet her vigorous use of line, strong contrasts between black and white, and extreme states of emotion evoke a powerful response within the viewer. In Helft Russland, Kollwitz represents a man starving as he is surrounded by several hands reaching toward him. Commissioned by the International Worker’s Relief (IAH), of which Kollwitz was a member, the poster aims to rally public sentiment toward the need for government assistance to the poor and to illustrate the societal benefits of communism.

—Alison Reilly
George Grosz, whose savage caricatures and expressionistic use of line earned him early distinction among the Dadaists, came of age during a turbulent era of European history. Volunteering for military service in 1914, he, like many other artists, believed the First World War would be “the war to end all wars.” Upon his discharge from the German army in 1917, Grosz became politically active: arrested during a general strike in January 1919, he joined the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) the same year. His attitude changed in 1922, when, ironically, after spending five months in Russia where he met Lenin and Trotsky, he grew antagonistic toward the idea of dictatorship. Grosz was strongly opposed to Hitler, whose first attempt to seize political power failed in November 1923 with the Beer Hall Putsch at Munich. Who Said Peace?, whose sarcastic title communicates the artist’s disbelief that German society was capable of transitioning toward a period of stasis, captures the pandemonium and mania inherent during civil unrest. The narrative is set in an ambiguous space of overlapping figures. Yet as one’s vision drifts toward the grouping of figures at upper left, Grosz establishes a slight sense of visual normalcy by arranging the figures smaller in scale. Reserving his spite for no class or gender, Grosz signifies a variety of stations of life and occupations through specific references to sartorial effects. In 1932, Grosz accepted an invitation to teach at the Art Students League of New York, returning to Germany later that year. In 1933 he emigrated to America, eventually becoming a naturalized citizen. Approximately fifteen years after the conclusion of WWII, Grosz returned to Berlin where he died.

—Joel Hollander

Manuel Alvarez Bravo, considered one of the most renowned photographers of Latin America, created compositions that recall the work of American ex-patriots Tina Modotti and Edward Weston, who had eloped to Mexico; however, his imagery is often associated stylistically with Henri Cartier-Bresson’s ability to capture the “decisive moment.” In Obrero en huelga, asesinado, whose title has a distinctly political nuance, Alvarez Bravo had only two frames to create this photograph once he heard the firing of gunshots during a strike at a sugar-mill in Tehuantepec. Depicting the corpse of a union leader surrounded by a pool of blood, Alvarez Bravo isolates one person at a specific moment in time. This visual strategy serves as a synecdoche for the prolonged struggles of the Mexican Revolution and ongoing economic distress during the early twentieth century. Andre Breton, the principal founder of Surrealism, considered Alvarez Bravo’s piece to have arrived at the “eternal style” by combining the physical beauty of the living with the horror of death.

—Chelsea Matiash
**PHILIPPE HALSMAN**  
United States, 1906-1979

*Marilyn-Mao* from *The Marilyn Portfolio*, 1952  
(printed 1981)  
gelatin silver print, 12 ¾ x 9 ¾"  
Gift of Marjorie Neikrug, 89.0029.10  
© Philippe Halsman / Magnum Photos

*Marilyn Mao*, created by the Latvian-born American portrait photographer Philippe Halsman, utilizes the “combination printing” technique in which an artist fuses two gelatin silver prints. This process is derived from photomontage, an art form developed during the first quarter of the twentieth century by Dadaists such as John Hartfield and George Grosz to protest the atrocities of World War I. The photomontage process cuts and joins a number of other photographs, often times re-photographing the manipulated by-product, creating a final image that is converted back into a seamless print similar to effects now achieved through digital image-editing. Halsman, who was commissioned by *Life* magazine to create over one hundred portrait covers, including Albert Einstein, Milton Berle, and Richard Nixon, unites the dually iconic images of Marilyn Monroe with Mao Zedong. By representing the epitome of the Hollywood starlet with the face of the communist leader of the People’s Republic of China, Halsman’s adoption of photomontage emphasizes not only the absurdity of the composition but also its irony. Halsman, who was under suspicion but never placed on the extended blacklist by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), inspired other artists such as Salvador Dali, with whom he collaborated multiple times in the following years, to create their own versions of Monroe/Mao.

—Eric Lichtenstein

**WILLIAM GROPPER**  
United States, 1897-1977

*Politics* from *The Capriccios*, 1953-1957  
lithograph, 16 ¼ x 12 ¾"  
Gift of Sophie Gropper, 66.132.030  
© William Gropper

The radical drawings of William Gropper, an American political cartoonist who frequently worked for left wing publications such as *The Liberator*, *Revolutionary Age*, and *The New Masses*, caught the attention of Senator Eugene McCarthy’s House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in 1953. Gropper’s subsequent blacklisting influenced him to make a series of lithographs entitled *The Capriccios*, whose title explicitly invoked Goya’s 1799 series of the same name, *Los Caprichos*, that sought to expose humankind’s folly. Gropper appropriated the Spanish master’s caricature style, using animal traits, such as phallic and upturned pig noses, to represent human visages. In *Politics*, men are depicted alternatively with gaunt, bat-like facial features and rotund, toad-like torsos. Gropper’s aesthetic is also rooted in the early twentieth-century German Expressionism of artists such as George Grosz and Otto Dix. With its expressive, angular use of line, Gropper emphasizes strong diagonals and backgrounds that leave the viewer with a feeling of unease. The skeletal faces and wailing figure at the center of the composition suggest less the idea of anger and rebellion than pity for the antagonistic politicians dominating the legislative landscape during the McCarthy era.

—Rachel Schreibman
Andy Warhol is remembered as the progenitor of Pop Art, whose themes addressed, on the one hand, Western society's reliance on mass-produced consumer products now being marketed through the advent of television and, on the other, iconic celebrities whose careers were "packaged" through media conglomerates. In truth, Pop Art also tackled narratives that confronted current political events and issues, including Roy Lichtenstein's *Blam* (1962) and James Rosenquist's *F-111* (1964–1965), both of which depict the motif of an American fighter jet, as well as Warhol's *Electric Chair* (1964), which addressed the simmering debate in the United States over capital punishment. In *Birmingham Race Riot*, Warhol adapts a photograph taken by journalist Charles Moore that appeared in *Life* magazine, the most popular weekly serial of this era in the United States. Its subject represents the violent uprising in Birmingham, Alabama during May 1963 when white policemen used attack dogs and high-powered water hoses against Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s cadre of peaceful black demonstrators who were advocating for the right to desegregate eating establishments. Warhol's aesthetic not only crops Moore's photograph in order to concentrate and heighten the narrative, but also exaggerates the chiaroscuro lighting effects. As a result, the photojournalistic medium, whose placement in a middlebrow publication corresponds to the Dadaist notion of an everyday, kitsch object, has been transformed into a vehicle for artistic expression.

—Joel Hollander

Reginald Murray Pollack, who studied at New York City's High School of Music and Art before serving in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, was described by his twin brother in a June 1977 *Esquire* article as "a fine artist, humanist, poetically inclined anti-Vietnam war peace marcher, participant, with other artists, in an antiwar coalition, occasional user of pot and sympathizer with hippies and yippies and most youthful rebels." Accordingly, *Peace March* captures the Dionysian tone of 1967's Summer of Love. Directly calling on James Ensor's Symbolist-era masterpiece, *Christ's Entry into Brussels* (1889), which was painted at the peak of the class struggle that followed the formation of the socialist party in Belgium, Pollack adapts Ensor's allegorical illustration of the popular revolt to the anti-Vietnam War sentiment that had gained widespread support throughout America by the late 1960s. During the same year *Peace March* was completed, Reginald Pollack's career was highlighted in the *Star Trek* episode "Requiem for Methuselah." In it, the fictional character Mr. Flint, an immortal human from Earth who lived under several aliases over a span of six thousand years, acquires a painting by Pollack that is prominently displayed in his castle on Holberg 917G. In a key scene at Flint's residence, during which Spock explains to a host of dignitaries the significance of Western art since the Italian Renaissance, the Starfleet first officer likens Pollack's career to that of Leonardo DaVinci. Pollack's work is now represented in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Stanford University, and the New Orleans Museum of Art.

—Alexis Gray
Juan Genovés worked for the first fifteen years of his career when Spain was embroiled in nationalistic turmoil during the fascist dictatorship of General Francisco Franco (r. 1936-1975). Deeply involved in activism against Franco even before his artistic career began, Genovés produced this untitled print from the series *El Lugar y El Tiempo* in 1971. At this historical moment in Spain, it was difficult to see an end to the suppressive dictatorship, while at the same time much of Western Europe was emerging from the 1960s into a period of political liberalization. Genovés’ postmodern aesthetic fractures the form of a silhouetted figure as a means to impart the truth behind appearances. The silhouettes’ lack of mass and external details strips down the forms to nothing other than their shape by employing a visual strategy that finds precedent at least as far back as Henri Toulous-Lautrec’s lithographic posters produced during the early 1890s. By omitting detail, Genovés’ piece transfers the subject’s struggle to the viewer, while simultaneously distracting from the raw pain and terror.

—Jordan Hale

Emigrating to the United States in 1939 at the age of ten, Elliott Erwitt has made a career as a freelance, advertising, and documentary photographer. Known for his black and white candid shots of ironic and absurd situations within everyday settings, Erwitt’s career received a boost when he met the famous photographers Edward Steichen, Roy Stryker, and Robert Capa, who in 1953 invited the emerging talent to join Magnum Photos, a photographic cooperative that, according to co-founder Henri Cartier-Bresson, is “a community of thought, a shared human quality, a curiosity about what is going on in the world, a respect for what is going on, and a desire to transcribe it visually.” In *Coke Machine & Missiles, Alabama, U.S.A.*, Erwitt conjoins the historical theme of the Cold War nuclear arms race with a Pop Art concern for motifs that heighten the viewer’s awareness about mass consumerism in Western society. The juxtaposition here creates a narrative tone that not only shares an affinity with Stanley Kubrick’s satirical *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964), but also recalls Dadaist photomontage. Erwitt’s aesthetic, however, is differentiated from photomontage through its depiction of absurdities that can be witnessed in real time.

—Joel Hollander
Throughout the 1970s, Tom Phillips’ work was exhibited widely and by the middle of the decade he not only received his first European retrospective, but also gained the patronage of Marvin and Ruth Sackner, who founded an archive in Miami to house most of his work. By the late 1990s, Phillips had become an establishment figure and was appointed a trustee of the British Museum, among other institutions and societies. The crudely drawn faces that become the organizing motif for each sheet of Phillips’ series of etchings in *1236 Heads… I Had Not Known Death Had Undone So Many*, whose latter segment of the title exchanges the word “thought” with “known” from line 63 in T.S. Eliot’s epic poem *The Wasteland* (1922), share a stylistic affinity with African art, an aesthetic that the Western avant garde has explored at least since Pablo Picasso’s Cubist experiments at the turn of the twentieth century. Phillips, who first traveled to Africa in 1973, posits in the First Part of his summary treatise, *The Nature of Ornament* (2002), that ornament is “a universal language” which, at its essence, is a “visual grammar” whose “relatively small generative syntax” is comprised of elements that “are all paraphrases of nature; stripe, hatching, dot, and the whole treasury of primal signs.” According to Phillips, by divorcing these ornamental elements from nature, they become abstractions. By arranging the compositions into repetitive grids that contain one hundred faces, Phillips invokes Andy Warhol’s Pop Art practice – and then negates the motif – with an aim to dispel preconceived Western notions of the “other.”

—Joel Hollander

Death of Hektor, one of nine engravings by Stanley William Hayter inserted at the end of a limited edition printing of a poem of the same title by Brian Coffey (1905–1995), was published when the civil unrest known as the “Troubles” in Northern Ireland – characterized by clashes between Irish nationalists and Unionist loyalists, the latter of whose aim was to remain part of the British Empire – had fully erupted. The collaboration between Hayter, an English citizen, and Coffey, an inhabitant of Northern Ireland, creates a parallel in both narrative and style between the contemporary violent turmoil with that of the ancient Greeks and city of Troy. Hayter’s formal training as a scientist influenced his aesthetic through the use of geometric and curvilinear forms. In *Death of Hektor*, the artist depicts the pivotal moment in the story of the Trojan hero, Hektor, as he falls to Achilles’ attack. Both Hektor’s life and the hopes of the Trojan army are lost, which is communicated in the last image of the series by the use of a chaotic mass of lines. At the end of Coffey’s poem, the author mourns the loss of life through the experiences of Hektor’s wife as she loses husband, house, and land. These images, both poetic and visual, serve as reminders of the morose Greek past and then-present state of Ireland.

—Tiffany Saulter