[1] Lee Bontecou (American, b. 1931), Fifth Stone, 1964, Lithograph, 41” x 27.25”
Printer and Publisher: Universal Limited Art Editions, Artist’s Proof, Gift of Bill Goldston, BFA ‘66, 85-0127
Gift of the Spears School of Business, 2012.028.020
[3] W. Wayne Herbst, Jr., Portrait of a Man and His Horse (The Horse Having Bitten the Man), 1997, Lithograph, 9.125” x 13”
Purchase Award, Western Heritage National Invitational, 1993, 98-0031
[4] Roger Shimomura (American, b. 1939), Kansas Samurai, 2004, Lithograph, 38.75” x 25.75” (image)
Gift of the artist, 10-0016

This exhibition is organized by the Oklahoma State University Museum of Art and serves as the culmination of the Museum Exhibition class taught by Dr. Cristina González in Spring 2015. The exhibition is curated by the following students: Teresa Kilmer, Stacey Durham, Kimberly Morton, and Sarah Pons.

©2015 Oklahoma State University Museum of Art
Designed by Colleen Stiles

Exhibitions and programs at the Oklahoma State University Museum of Art are sponsored by OSUMA Founding Patrons, OSU/A&M Board of Regents, OSU Foundation, and the Oklahoma Arts Council. Additional funding for this exhibition is provided by OSU Student Fees and College of Arts and Sciences.
A t the start of the 1960s, the American art scene experienced significant transformations. New media and cultural perspectives rose to prominence, and Pop art took center stage. By the late 1950s, Pop art became associated with mega stars such as Andy Warhol and images that referenced the forms and content of popular culture. Commercial printing processes, especially lithography and screen printing, were favored by Pop artists over the traditional arts of painting and sculpture. Both printing methods allowed for convenient, large-scale reproduction and shared long-standing connections to mass media such as advertisements, which resonated with Pop art ideology.

A printing technique invented at the turn of the nineteenth century, lithography was conceived as a more efficient way to mass produce printed materials. An image was drawn or painted on a smooth block of limestone with oil-based pencils or tusche. Next, applying chemicals permanently set the oil-based image into the stone, the surface was wiped clean and water was sponged across it. Due to the resistance between oil and water, an oil-based ink could be rolled over the stone and would adhere only to the places where the oil-based pencils or tusche had been applied. The image was finally transferred from stone to paper under the pressure of a printing press.

Lithography became a reliable process for printing large quantities of reproductions and eventually became so popular that the practice began to fade in the United States. In 1957, Tatyana Grosman opened the United States Artists Lithography Workshop, Inc. in Los Angeles, California (now the Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Inc.) with a grant from the Ford Foundation. Unlike ULAE, Wayne designed Tamarind with a grant from the Ford Foundation. Unlike ULAE, Wayne designed Tamarind after the traditional workshop structure of two critical lithography workshops at precisely the moment when the practice began to fade in the United States. In 1957, Tatyana Grosman opened a lithography studio named Universal Limited Art Editions (ULAE) in her garage on Long Island, New York. There, carefully selected artists experimented with lithography and collaborated with master printers, taking as long as they needed to fulfill their artistic ambitions. Three years later, artist Jane Wayne realized her vision for Tamarind Lithography Workshop, Inc. in Los Angeles, California (now the Tamarind Institute in Albuquerque) with a grant from the Ford Foundation. Unlike ULAE, Wayne designed Tamarind after the traditional workshop structure where master printers, apprentices, and artists simultaneously teach each other. The artists moved through Tamarind in intense two-month fellowships, but nevertheless executed works that made ULAE in innovation and quality.

However different their structural foundations, ULAE and Tamarind demonstrated a shared mentality regarding the art of lithography. Both workshops stressed the vital role of collaboration between artist and printer in a complex process that demanded coordinated cooperation to form a stone into a completed edition. Tamarind and ULAE both maintained the highest standards in their record keeping and completion of the lithographic process. Because of the extraordinary effort and skill that went into each print, editions were limited to relatively small runs—a feature that separated the products of fine-art press from commercial poster production.

Many of the artists featured in Print beyond Pop spent time at Tamarind or ULAE. Much Kohn was one of the artists awarded a fellowship at Tamarind during its first year of operation. The pieces by Jasper Johns, Larry Rivers, Jim Dine, Lee Bontecou, and Robert Rauschenberg are a small sample of the many lithographs they printed at ULAE. As their careers progressed, Dine, Johns, and Rauschenberg worked with former Tamarind apprentices who established their own workshops across the United States as well.

The works in this exhibition display the diversity of artists and images that belong to the revival of American lithography. Some participants, like Kohn and Abraham Rattner, were active in the medium for decades. Others— including Rauschenberg, Rivers, and Johns—were young artists working primarily in painting and sculpture prior to their involvement at ULAE. These diverse individuals also worked in varying styles. Robert Indiana embedded Pop art with its bold design and cultural allusions, though Pop did not hold an exclusive claim to lithography. Jim Dine shows a preference for everyday objects in his work but incorporates loose, gestural highlights of color. Lee Bontecou is minimalist while simultaneously anthropomorphic in her use of shapes and colors. Rauschenberg combines photographic transfers and solid areas of ink to create a collage-like composition. The lithography revival went far beyond the confines of Pop, in both style and time, leaving its mark in art departments and workshops across the United States. The artists and printers at Tamarind and ULAE relentlessly pushed the process past its creative and technical boundaries. The artworks became larger, more challenging to produce, and more visually complex. Lithography moved from its origin of drawing on stone to offset printing, aluminum plates, and technological adaptations that continue to be made. ULAE, Tamarind, and the artists they engaged modified lithography for the modern world. Employees such as Zigmunds Priede (ULAE) and Wayne Kirkland (Tamarind) made way to university programs, reinvigorating the practice for subsequent generations. Others carried printmaking further by opening Gemini (U.L.E.), Hollander’s Workshop, Inc., and Landfall Press. Contemporary prints by artists and professors Mark Sisson, Roger Shimomura, and Athena Tacha are a testament to the lasting success of the lithography revival.