

THE ART STUDENTS LEAGUE PRESENTS
***Two Generations of Women Printmakers:
Atelier 17 and the Art Students League***

November 4 – December 5, 2021



Worden Day, *The Great Divide*, 1969, Woodblock print, 23" x 28". Permanent collection of The Art Students League

(New York, NY): The Art Students League of New York is pleased to present *Two Generations of Women Printmakers: Atelier 17 and The Art Students League* on view November 4–December 5, 2021. The exhibition explores the intertwined histories of The League and the renowned avant-garde printmaking studio Atelier 17, which formed in interwar Paris in the late 1920s. Established by Stanley William Hayter (1901-1988), the studio, together with The League, produced some of the most accomplished female printmakers of the twentieth century. Featuring works by twenty-four artists, the exhibition spotlights the rich possibilities that printmaking presented to women across two generations of artists. Augmenting this exhibition, guest curator Dr. Christina Weyl will present a lecture on the exhibition Tuesday, November 9 in the Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery at 6 PM. This live talk will bring to life the stories our exhibition tells, spotlighting the rich possibilities that printmaking presented to women across two generations of artists.

Atelier 17's founder, Stanley William Hayter, took his first printmaking lessons in 1926 from Mary Huntoon (1896-1970), who had spent several years mastering the graphic arts at The Art Students League of New York. Huntoon's instruction carried forward the pedagogy of her own teacher, Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), who had established a rigorous program at The League whereby students executed all aspects of the printmaking process themselves and were encouraged to test new technical approaches. Hayter emphasized this same technical proficiency and experimentation at Atelier 17, upon its founding only a few

years after studying with Huntton. Over a history that spans six decades and several locations in Paris and New York City, Atelier 17 remained closely connected with The League’s instructors and its student body.

The exhibition takes Joseph Pennell’s classroom (1922-1926) as its starting point to illustrate how women traversed offerings at both institutions. The League was often a feeder of artists to Atelier 17, particularly during the studio’s years in New York City between 1940 and 1955.

The high level of accomplishment shown in the exhibited prints demonstrates that the egalitarian conditions within each institution’s printmaking studios enabled women to master the skills necessary to execute all steps in the printmaking process. While some women leveraged their newfound proficiency to become instructors of printmaking or open their own studios, others found printmaking inspired creative pathways that impacted their work as painters or sculptors. Carving lines into a metal plate or woodblock inspired the sculptural ambitions of artists such as Louise Nevelson, Dorothy Dehner, Worden Day, and Louise Bourgeois.



Joseph Pennell at the press in his London studio. Archives of The Art Students League



Dorothy Dehner, *Town and Country*, 1971, lithograph, 36 x 48"
 Permanent collection of The Art Students League

The exhibition also traces the networks of sisterhood that these women built at The League—in classrooms and at social events—and at Atelier 17. These relationships, both personal and professional, helped artists advance their careers in an art world that was frequently less supportive of entrepreneurial women. The final gallery space features prints and sculpture by Louise Nevelson and Dorothy Dehner, who met at Atelier 17. Their lifelong friendship advanced their artistic practices as well as professional opportunities, such as when Nevelson recommended Dehner to make lithographs at the Tamarind Institute.

The featured artists include **Ilse Bischoff, Isabel Bishop, Ruth Miller Blanchard, Louise Bourgeois, Carmen Browne, Catherine van Brunt, Minna Citron, Worden Day, Dorothy Dehner, Marion Freeman, Amy Gutman, Terry Haass, Edith Fletcher Hayter, Fannie Hillsmith, Mary Huntton, Ruth Leaf, Alicia Bell Legg, Margaret Lowengrund, Bessie Brewer Marsh, Louise Nevelson, Harriet Berger Nurkse, Virginia Allen Roberts, Olga Rosenson, and Sybilla Mittell Weber**

Two Generations of Women Printmakers: Atelier 17 and The Art Students League is organized by guest curator Dr. Christina Weyl.



Dr. Christina Weyl is an independent scholar and curator with expertise on twentieth-century American printmaking. She received her BA from Georgetown University (2005) and completed her MA and PhD in art history at Rutgers University (2012, 2015). Her recent book, *The Women of Atelier 17: Modernist Printmaking in Midcentury New York* (Yale University Press, 2019), which grew from her dissertation, highlights the nearly 100 women artists who advanced modernism and feminism at Atelier 17, the avant-garde printmaking studio located in New York City between 1940 and 1955. In addition to the present show, she is currently curating an exhibition for the International Print Center of New York focusing on Margaret Lowengrund and her pioneering effort to establish The Contemporaries as a hybrid printmaking workshop/gallery. She has published in *Art in Print*, *Print Quarterly*, and *Archives of American Art Journal* and contributed to several anthologies and exhibition catalogues. From 2014-2018, she served as Co-President of the Association of Print Scholars, a non-profit professional organization she co-founded in 2014. Prior to her graduate studies, she worked for IFPDA member Gemini G.E.L. at Joni Moisant Weyl, which representing the publications of the Los Angeles-based artists' workshop Gemini G.E.L.

About The Art Students League of New York:

The League was founded in 1875 by students breaking away from the National Academy of Design. That independent spirit remains at The League today, where students pursue their work unconstrained by dogma, politics or burdensome tuition. We educate students in the language and process of making art in an environment where anyone who wishes to pursue arts education can realize his or her full potential. The League fulfills this mission by offering affordable, high-quality education and instruction in painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and assemblage. Artists who have studied at the League include Georgia O'Keeffe, Norman Rockwell, Jackson Pollock, Robert Rauschenberg, Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, James Rosenquist and Ai-Weiwei, among others. theartstudentsleague.org

@asl NYC #asl NYC #atelier17

The Art Students League of New York

Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery, 2nd Floor
215 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

Monday through Friday: 10:00 am through 8:00 pm
Saturday and Sunday: 10 am to 4 pm

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