Frank Stella Prints:
From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation

also on view through July 30, 2017:
The Gifts of Frank Stella | Eye on the Collection | Respect Existence or Expect Resistance: Civil Rights Era Photographs from the Collection

Frank Stella (Phillips Academy Class of 1954) is one of the most important living American artists. In the late 1950s he was at the forefront of the new post-painterly abstraction that began to supplant the authority of Abstract Expressionism. Since then, in a career that has spanned more than fifty years, he has created a significant body of abstract art comprised of paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints. *Frank Stella Prints: From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation* details the artist’s remarkable career as a printmaker, presenting over eighty prints that make apparent how Stella challenged the traditional tools and aesthetics of printmaking to advance his notions of an assertive and viewer-engaged abstraction. This exhibition also reveals Stella’s unique stylistic evolution—a sequence of formal elaborations from the precise geometries of the 1960s to the baroque exuberance and luminous color of the later work.

In the beginning, Stella’s paintings directly informed his printmaking in composition and seriality. In the 1980s, however, the prints became increasingly independent in their imagery. At the same time, they also evidenced a distinctive reciprocity with the materials used in his metal-relief paintings. Scrap metal from the paintings, for example, might be used to create etched printing plates. Other innovative directions in Stella’s printmaking led to the incorporation of hand painting into his compositions, and to unorthodox blends of intaglio, relief, lithography, and screenprinting: inked combinations that were often deposited on color-stained handmade paper. To this extent, Stella began to blur boundaries between media—an artistic evolution that anticipated developments in contemporary artmaking.

Frank Stella’s reinvigoration of the expressive potential and power of abstraction remains his most profound legacy. His prints, in their compelling complexity and beauty, recapitulate and expand upon the remarkable scope of his work in other media. They stand as an authentic index to the genius of his art and a landmark in the history of the modern print.
Juam (pronounced zh-wam) is a fictional island in Herman Melville’s novel *Mardi* (1849), an adventure detailing the arduous odyssey of a young American sailor in the South Pacific. A large island encircled by other, wooded islands, Juam was notoriously difficult to access, its only point of entry being through a single breach in the surrounding reef. Melville’s describes the island as a dark, green stack of six-hundred-foot cliffs surrounded by churning waters. Stella’s referential abstraction visually expresses the emotional feel of this tropical landscape.

Technically and expressively, *Juam* is one of Stella’s most ambitious prints. It proceeded from a working collage that the artist revised and developed over a two-year period. It was produced by individually pre-inking 40 aluminum plates and 102 assembled metal elements of aluminum, brass, and poured bronze, and then pressing the plates into place on a woodblock base plate. Both *Juam* and its companion *Juam, State I* were printed on two handmade and acrylic-dyed paper sheets that had also received runs of lithography and screenprinting. These base sheets slightly overlap to produce the desired large scale that was impossible to achieve with a single sheet of paper, which would have been too big for the printing press.

A number of Stella’s prints carry illusionistic references to forms and shapes of the world and to literary content. Some are richly phonetic and allusive, referencing historical, geographical, political, personal, and literary themes, including: Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick*, Italian folktales, Endangered and extinct birds, and Formula One racetracks.

**Curriculum Connections Can Include**

- setting and place
- storytelling and the imagination
- descriptive writing
- experimentation in art
- contrasts
- geometry and shapes
- color theory
- transformation and symmetry
The Schwarze Weisheit Series was effectively Stella’s last print project. It is the only print series with no counterpart in the paintings, reliefs, or sculptures. Its origins lie in discarded proofs of computerized smoke rings the artist had saved and then later developed into works combining aquatint and lithography. The German title of the series, translated as “Black Wisdom,” refers to a premium German cigar made of Brazilian tobacco. Stella has always been a fancier of good cigars, including Schwarze Weisheit. In his choice of white on black, Stella wittily nods to the traditional tin box for these cigars, whose typography is emblazoned in white on a black ground. The cigar boxes also have red and yellow accents, colors that appear in the print Schwarze Weisheit for D.J. Dedicated to the American sculptor Donald Judd, this print is the only work from the series that was pulled from an assembled plate of irregularly shaped and inked copper plates, rather than a single aluminum or copper plate.

Questions for Observation, Reflection, and Discussion

- Some viewers think that Stella’s prints exude a mood of optimism and confidence. What do you notice that might imply or stimulate this feeling?
- Titles have always been important for Stella. Reflecting his personal interests in history, politics, literature, and music, among other topics, they add a richly associative dimension to his abstract art. How do the titles of the artwork affect your responses to the images?
- What might serve as the source of inspiration in an artwork that you create?
- How does repetition of color, line, and shape help to create movement and visual interest in Stella’s prints?
- In your opinion, where does the art and authorship in printmaking lie? How does collaboration with the printmaker change the role and capabilities of the artist?
Star of Persia I and Star of Persia II are among the first printed editions that Frank Stella produced in at Gemini G.E.L., a celebrated publishing workshop that opened its doors in Los Angeles in 1966. The great majority of Stella's well over 300 printed editions were made there in collaboration with master printer Kenneth Tyler (1967–1974) and at Tyler Graphics, Ltd., north of New York City (1975–2001). Tyler was a perfect match for Stella's own restless technical and stylistic imagination—creating what the critic Robert Hughes characterized in as “one of the great partnerships in modern American art.”


Teacher Resources

- Exhibition website for Frank Stella: A Retrospective at Whitney Museum of Art: http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/FrankStella
- Teacher Guide for Frank Stella: A Retrospective http://whitney.org/Education/ForTeachers/TeacherGuides/FrankStella
- Introduction to printmaking: https://www.moma.org/explore/multimedia/interactives/57/featured
- Frank Stella on his Moby-Dick series: https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2001/apr/05/artsfeatures1
From 1985 to 1997 Stella produced a major series of works in various media that are linked to Herman Melville's monumental novel *Moby-Dick* (1851). It is the artist's most extensive project and an epic achievement in the history of twentieth-century art. Stella made one or more works for each of the novel's 135 chapters and three collateral sections. The completed series consists of 266 works, including metal reliefs, sculptures, collages, and thirty-eight large-scale mixed-media prints. The primary motifs of the Moby Dick series are wave-and whale shapes, circular and rectangular Chinese lattices, and architectural gutter shapes—visual elements that weave their way through all of the works. The printed component of the Moby Dick project consists of three stand-alone prints and four series: The Waves, Moby Dick Engravings, Moby Dick Domes, and Moby Dick Deckle Edges.


**Related Events at the Addison**

- **Panel Discussion** | Saturday, April 22, 4:00 pm
  Artist Frank Stella, collector Jordan D. Schnitzer, exhibition curator Richard H. Axsom, and master printmaker Kenneth Tyler will share their unique viewpoints on the art and exhibition. Addison Director Judith F. Dolkart will moderate the discussion. The event will take place in Kemper Auditorium adjacent to the Addison. Space is limited; please register online [http://bit.ly/StellaRSVP](http://bit.ly/StellaRSVP) or call 978.749.4216 to reserve your seat.

- **Evening Gallery Tour of Frank Stella Prints** | Wednesday, May 31, 7:00 pm
  Join Addison Director Judith F. Dolkart for a walk-through and discussion of Frank Stella Prints. This program has been organized with Andover’s Memorial Hall Library. The event is free, but space is limited; please register online [http://bit.ly/StellaTour](http://bit.ly/StellaTour) or call 978.623.8430.

- **Youth Printmaking Classes**
  Experiment with colors, techniques, and materials inspired by the work of Frank Stella through art classes offered in collaboration with the Essex Art Center. Classes will meet at the Essex Art Center and will include a visit to the Addison Gallery. For more information and to register, visit [essexartcenter.org](http://essexartcenter.org). Space is limited, so sign up early!
  - 7-week workshop for ages 8–11: Thursdays, April 27–June 8, 4:00–5:45 pm ($115)
  - 1-day workshop for ages 6–11: Thursday, July 11, 9:00 am–3:00 pm ($55)
  - 1-day workshop for ages 11–16: Thursday, July 11, 9:00 am–3:00 pm ($55)
Gifts from Frank Stella

To celebrate the retrospective of prints by Frank Stella, this installation honors the artist’s innovative, rich career and his long-standing generosity both as a donor and visiting artist to the Addison Gallery of American Art and Phillips Academy, from which he graduated in 1954. While a student, Stella began to seriously pursue art, studying under the guidance of teachers Patrick Morgan and Gordon (Diz) Bensley. As he recalled, “At Andover I was already interested in art, but the opportunities there seemed to thrust themselves at me.”

As he took art classes in the basement of the museum and learned from the collections in its galleries, Stella found great inspiration in the Addison’s environment. Reminiscing about his experiences, he has said, “If a young person walks through a gallery of American painting in 1950 and confronts the work of Copley, Inness, Sargent, Eakins, Remington, Homer, Dove, Hartley, Hofmann, Pollock, and Kline he will want to paint like Hofmann, Pollock, and Kline, admiring Hartley and Dove for the proximity to the former, and acknowledging the rest for their accomplishment and effort in facing the task of art. Looking at what happened and is happening, one has to want to do what is happening. Immediate sources count for a lot.”

In 1991, keen to expand the Addison’s offering of “immediate sources,” Stella teamed up with then director Jock Reynolds to organize an Addison Art Drive, aimed at strengthening the holdings of contemporary art. Kicking off an ambitious campaign to add one hundred significant works to the collection, Stella invited Reynolds to select works from his personal collection. The masterworks assembled here—by artists such as Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Ellsworth Kelly, and Stella himself—reflect that magnanimous and transformative gift.

Generous support for The Gifts of Frank Stella has been provided by the Mollie Bennett Lupe and Garland M. Lasater Exhibitions Fund.
Class Visits to the Addison

Admission is always free. Two classes (or up to 50 students) at a time can be scheduled between Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Guided visits generally run between 1 - 1.5 hours depending on student age and class size and can also include time for student writing or sketching in the galleries.

- The Addison supports a co-teaching philosophy where our education staff’s knowledge of the artworks combine with the teacher’s objectives and expectations for the visit, as well as incorporating students’ knowledge and experiences.

- We will work with you to plan and co-facilitate a visit that will be inquiry-based and engages students in close looking and discussion. Teachers are welcome to stop by our office, call, or email to learn more about our exhibitions and artworks and the ways in which they connect to your course topics.

- The Addison education staff collaborates with educators to create and support long-term projects inspired by exhibitions, collection themes, museum practice, or particular artists. Addison staff works with teachers to develop creative, cross-disciplinary projects that meet multiple social and academic objectives.

Connections to Curriculum Standards

Due to the customized nature of each group visit and the activities surrounding each class, the standards addressed will vary. Class visits to the museum will always include actively viewing and discussing art and can also focus on reinforcing skills from subject areas such as reading, science, writing, social studies, or math.

For more standards corresponding to specific projects, lessons, artworks, or exhibitions across disciplines, please contact Christine Jee (cjee@andover.edu or 978-749-4198) for more details.

Free Public Museum Hours
Tuesday – Saturday: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm
* * New extended hours on Wednesday 10:00 am to 9:00 pm, ongoing through May 31, 2017 * *
Sunday: 1:00 pm–5:00 pm

Free Group Visit Hours by Appointment
between Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Teacher Resources, Workshops, & Exhibition Information
www.addisongallery.org/education

Join the Addison’s Teacher Email List
http://bit.ly/AddisonEmail

Don’t forget: The Addison Gallery’s Online Database accessaddison.andover.edu features nearly all of the 17,000 works in the Addison collection and offers downloadable JPEGs for class presentations and projects.