

Art: Multiplied Originals

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People in eight U.S. cities, from Columbia, S.C., to Minneapolis, are currently seeing eight identical art exhibitions—and it is all done without any gimmickry, such as the use of reproductions or copies. That is one of the nice things about prints: each one, whether it be an etching, woodcut, lithograph or serigraph, is just as much an "original" as the first. The works shown on the next two pages are, necessarily, reproductions; tiny dots of color simulate a photograph of the original. But the prints that collectors buy and that museumgoers see come right from the hand of the artist in editions limited usually to around 40 or fewer, and each print is just as valuable as the first.

Better Taste. Americans whose improved taste has taught them that putting up a reproduction of a Van Gogh or a Degas is pretty unsophisticated are rapidly discovering that prints are not only honest art but also economical. An artist who usually gets \$1,000 for a painting may well sell prints, which involve just as much care and imagination, for as little as \$20 or \$30. In Philadelphia, the Print Club is a flourishing clearing house where printmakers, both famous and little-known, can show their wares and sell them in an increasingly appreciative market. It is the missionary goal of the energetic Print Council of America, sponsor of the current touring shows, to sell the whole U.S. on the idea.

Some of the best-known artists in the U.S. are represented by the 55 prints in the show: Josef Albers, Jasper Johns. Fritz Glarner, Al Blaustein and Ben Shahn are among the 42 printmakers. Many of them started in other mediums, only to find new planes of expression through the tools and inks of printmaking. Leonard Baskin, 42, turned to it around 1949: "I was trying to do in sculpture what was essentially graphic, things too complex in terms of their ideas. I started with wood cuts, then turned to etching and discovered new areas of possibility." He sports a "living etching" on his right forearm—a work executed by a Halifax tattooist from a Baskin design of intertwined snakes. Baskin used a 17th century technique for E.P.: It Is Pitiabla—a single hand-inked plate provided a two-color etching.

Adolf Dehn, 67, got into lithography because of an inhibition

about the use of color. He found working on stone the most spontaneous, most direct medium for his ideas. "You can draw on stone with the same ease as paper, but you can also manipulate the surface for texture. I made India Night in Paris about a year ago, using three stones, since it is a three-color lithograph. As I worked on the stones with the color washes, I did many things—getting shaded effects with brushes, rags, lifting some of it off with pieces of Kleenex, scraping it, getting all the textures and special effects I wanted. I'm still learning new things myself, and I've been at it since 1920."