

M.A.M.

**Museo de Arte
Moderno de Buenos
Aires**

*TENDENCIAS RECIENTES
EN TRABAJOS
SOBRE PAPEL*

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*RECENT TRENDS IN WORKS OF ART
ON PAPER*

**Del 2 de agosto al 26 de agosto de 1990
From august 2nd through august 26th 1990**



MUNICIPALIDAD DE LA CIUDAD DE BUENOS AIRES

MUSEO DE ARTE MODERNO

El Museo de Arte Moderno se complace en presentar esta muestra seleccionada por el curador Dr. George Nelson Preston, miembro del departamento de Artes Visuales, the City College, de New York. En ella coinciden maestros contemporáneos y jóvenes creadores que exhiben distintas técnicas y abordan una dilatada diversidad de temas. Estos 46 expositores llegan a través de sus obras para brindarnos su creación; nos queda a nosotros darles la bienvenida y apreciar las actuales tendencias imperantes en EEUU.

Prof. Inés Pérez Suárez
Directora General de Museos
a/c Dirección Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires

RECENT TRENDS IN WORKS OF ART ON PAPER

Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Guest Curator

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Historically, drawing and other works of art on paper have occupied a low rung in the fine arts hierarchy of relative prestige. Through the centuries several aesthetic and sociological factors have eroded the idea of a fine arts hierarchy of artistic importance based exclusively on media. A drawing was generally regarded as a preparation for a more important work such as a sculpture or painting. In the field of architecture, in which the art object is the factor functional, this chasm between drawing as a preparatory means and its more significant end was ostensibly even more telling. In the last few decades a number of factors, not all of them aesthetic, have combined to demand an entirely revised attitude towards the importance of drawing, and by association, other works of art on paper.

The continued surging importance of works of art on paper since the seventies can be explained by several factors, a few of which there is space to discuss here. To begin with, part of the evolution of contemporary easel painting has been the importance of line, if not drawing, as an element of style. Of course, a careful review of the history of Western art as well as certain non-Western traditions demonstrates that the boundaries between drawing and painting have often been artificial or obscured by the selective disattention of art historians and critics.

There are several non-Western traditions, all of which have greatly influenced Western art and for whose traditional artists, the dichotomy between drawing and painting did not exist. Persian and Moghul, African, Mayan and ancient Mediterranean traditions immediately come to mind. It may well be that the notion of a clear distinction between painting and drawing is the child of the over classifying and aestheticizing tendencies in the 18th century. These tendencies were responsible for categories of the intrinsic value of certain media in which for example oil painting with its greater potential for painterliness or plasticity was viewed as a higher art form than water color or drawing.

However, even by the early Renaissance, painting styles were heavily dependent upon advances in the art of drawing. There are thousands of old master drawings which have the same power to move us as paintings. When we look for examples of the blurring of the formal distance between painting and drawing in the modern age certainly Ingres and other Neo-Classicalists immediately come to mind. Thereafter followed, scores of painters for whom line was a critical element including Lautrec, Kandinsky, Picasso, Arshile Gorky and Franz Kline.

The advent of collage, montage and mixed media in the Cubist period definitively broke the artificial barriers between paper works and canvas works. If a painting could be made more effective by adding less "plastic" or "painterly" media, such as photographs, printed matter and graphic arts images, that was tacit proof of the equality of the other media. What was required was the rejection of 18th and 19th century elitist value of the primacy of painterliness and plasticity, which viewed easel paintings in oils as both peculiar to the West and the calling of its most dedicated artists. If artists had held this belief there would have been no new movements after Impressionism.

The influence of the Japanese woodcut on Impressionism contributed greatly to the ongoing historical reevaluation of the importance of the print and drawing.

Another factor to consider is that of size. The sheer physical monumentality of certain drawings or painting styles whose form is dominated by drawing has had a tremendous impact on our assessment of works of art on paper. Newer and larger presses have allowed for prints of considerable size, and large scale drawings have been produced on canvas.

GRIMANESA AMOROS



"REVERSE IMAGE", mixed media on paper 30 x 44", N. York 1990.



Buenos Aires

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