

Heads Up! Recent Gifts to the Collection, July 31, 2015-January 10, 2016

Museum collections are built from the great generosity of donors who either make gifts of artworks or give the funds used to purchase them. This exhibition celebrates an impressive group of contemporary works on paper that were given to the RISD Museum over the past five years by seventeen benefactors. In most cases, the work on view is just a sample of the objects that came with that donation.

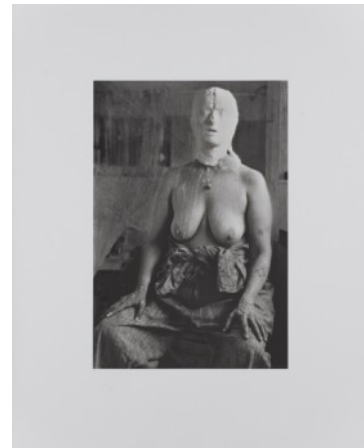
As a theme that could unite a diverse group of gifts, portraiture and more generalized depictions of the face stood out. The human likeness, one of art's oldest subjects, continues to provoke intense investigation. While some of these images record physical and emotional characteristics of an individual, others use the face as a canvas for conveying the human condition.

We are deeply grateful to the donors who have enriched our collection with the works on view here, and to all the donors who since 2010 have given more than 1,700 prints, drawings, and photographs to the collection.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Kiki Smith
American, b. Germany, b. 1954
Untitled (Self Portrait), 1996
Gelatin silver print
Gift of Glenn Gissler 2011.110.43

In this photograph, the artist is seen in the studio with exposed breasts, lower body clad in utilitarian overalls that might be worn during art making, her head obscured by a sculpted plaster cast. The jarring composition forces the viewer to contemplate Smith as both a woman and an artist. By masking her face, the artist invites questions on beauty and personal identity, rendering herself both producer and product.



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Naomi Fisher
American, b. 1976
P.B. X-ed, 2010
Marking pen and ink on paper
Gift of Paula and Leonard Granoff 2011.34

P.B. is a character from Naomi Fisher's video *Myakka* (2010), which depicts a group of women who live communally in the wilderness of the Florida wetlands. During the video's production, the artist used paintings and drawings to conceive and develop the characters and feminist themes of the piece. P.B., staring at the viewer and painted with a bold X, captures Fisher's view of "women's relationship with the world as transformative . . . although sometimes [requiring] a coat of war paint."



Eugene Feldman
American, 1921 - 1975
Girl from Brooklyn ¾ Profile (B. Streisand), 1966
Color offset lithograph
Gift of Ruth Fine in honor of Jan Howard 2011.74.10

The source material for these prints was a photograph the artist snapped of Barbra Streisand during her visit to Philadelphia to tape the television program *Color Me Barbra* (1966). At the time these works were made, offset lithography was primarily a commercial technique employed for copying images, but Eugene Feldman used its color separation and filters for formal experimentation. Here, varying layers of tone and tight cropping reflect the performer's complex personality while also giving her a regal appearance.



The image was published on the cover of Philadelphia's *Sunday Bulletin Magazine* in 1966, with an article about Feldman's series.

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Eugene Feldman
American, 1921 - 1975
Girl from Brooklyn ¾ Profile (B. Streisand), 1966
Color offset lithograph
Gift of Ruth Fine in honor of Jan Howard 2011.74.3

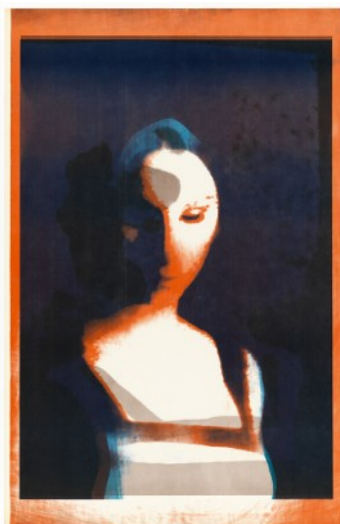
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Eugene Feldman
American, 1921 - 1975
Girl from Brooklyn ¾ Profile (B. Streisand), 1966
Color offset lithograph
Gift of Ruth Fine in honor of Jan Howard 2011.74.9

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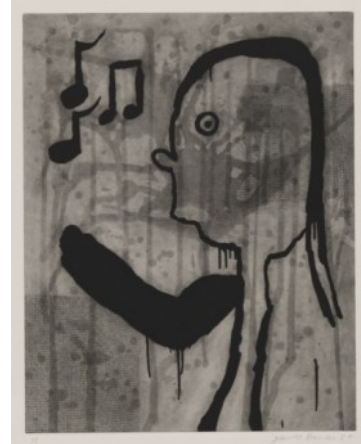
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RISD MUSEUM

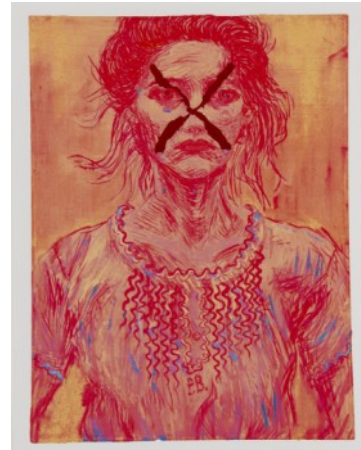
Donald Baechler
American, b. 1956
Donna Schulman, printer
Downstairs Edition, printer
Mark Baron, publisher
Untitled, from the portfolio *Increments*, 1987
Aquatint with spit bite, lift-ground and soft ground on Fabriano
Tiepolo paper
Gift of Mark Baron and Elise Boisanté 2011.98.1.4

In its roughly drawn lines and imperfect anatomy, this figure deliberately references childhood drawings—namely the artist's own youthful practice of doodling on scrap paper. Layered with dripping aquatint, randomly placed musical notes, and a precisely gridded corner design, the image recalls the process of memory itself. The final accumulation creates what Baechler has termed an *illusion of history*.



Naomi Fisher
American, b. 1976
P.B. X-ed, from the portfolio *Bas Fisher Invitational Benefit Portfolio*,
2011
Color inkjet, color screenprint and metallic-foil substrate on paper
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Mann and Mr. and Mrs. Stanley J.
Wachtenheim 2012.118.2

P.B. is a character from Naomi Fisher's video *Myakka* (2010), which depicts a group of women who live communally in the wilderness of the Florida wetlands. During the video's production, the artist used paintings and drawings to conceive and develop the characters and feminist themes of the piece. P.B., staring at the viewer and painted with a bold X, captures Fisher's view of "women's relationship with the world as transformative . . . although sometimes [requiring] a coat of war paint."



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Nicole Eisenman
American, b. France, b. 1965
Untitled, 2012
Monotype
Gift of Merrill Sherman in honor of Judith Tannenbaum 2012.127.1



Nicole Eisenman
American, b. France, b. 1965
Untitled, 2012
Monotype
Gift of Merrill Sherman in honor of Judith Tannenbaum 2012.127.2



Fred Wilson
American, b. 1954
Exit Art, publisher
American, 1982 - 2012
X, from the portfolio *Tantra*, 2005
Digital color chromogenic print on Duratrans©
Gift of Exit Art 2012.133.6.6



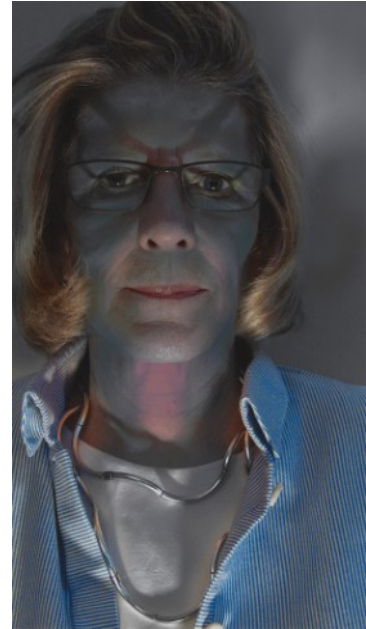
This print juxtaposes a 1964 photograph of civil rights activist Malcolm X with the 1884 painting *Madame X* by John Singer Sargent. The photograph captures *Malcolm X* in a contemplative moment at a press conference for Martin Luther King, Jr. Obscuring the spatial relationship between the two figures, Wilson superimposed Sargent's rendition of Parisian socialite Madame Gatreau so that her hand appears draped over Malcolm X's shoulder.

Characteristic of the artist's better-known installation and curatorial works, this image brings together unlikely subjects to plumb issues of identity, politics, and power.

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Lucas Samaras
American, b. 1936
Pose 0065 Agnes Gund, from the series *Poses*, 2009
Color inkjet print
Gift of Joseph A. Chazan, MD 2012.81.11

This series parodies the glamour of actor headshots, subjecting the artist's friends and colleagues—most of whom are figures in the art world—to unflattering up-lighting and garish Photoshop manipulation. Viewing the human face as his canvas, Samaras invited his sitters to wear glasses which cast startling and uncanny shadows. Samaras, who himself once considered an acting career, originally planned to hire professionals for this project, but later opted for "ordinary" people (in his words, "born actors"), and borrowed from the imagery of horror and science fiction.



Lucas Samaras
American, b. 1936
Pose 0031 Ken Fernandez, from the series *Poses*, 2009
Color inkjet print
Gift of Joseph A. Chazan, MD 2012.81.3

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RISD MUSEUM

Lucas Samaras
American, b. 1936
Pose 0391 Peter Galassi, from the series *Poses*, 2010
Color inkjet print
Gift of Joseph A. Chazan, MD 2012.81.4

This series parodies the glamour of actor headshots, subjecting the artist's friends and colleagues—most of whom are figures in the art world—to unflattering up-lighting and garish Photoshop manipulation. Viewing the human face as his canvas, Samaras invited his sitters to wear glasses which cast startling and uncanny shadows. Samaras, who himself once considered an acting career, originally planned to hire professionals for this project, but later opted for "ordinary" people (in his words, "born actors"), and borrowed from the imagery of horror and science fiction.



Lucas Samaras
American, b. 1936
Pose 0188 Jasper Johns, from the series *Poses*, 2009
Color inkjet print
Gift of Joseph A. Chazan, MD 2012.81.6

This series parodies the glamour of actor headshots, subjecting the artist's friends and colleagues—most of whom are figures in the art world—to unflattering up-lighting and garish Photoshop manipulation. Viewing the human face as his canvas, Samaras invited his sitters to wear glasses which cast startling and uncanny shadows. Samaras, who himself once considered an acting career, originally planned to hire professionals for this project, but later opted for "ordinary" people (in his words, "born actors"), and borrowed from the imagery of horror and science fiction.



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Lucas Samaras
American, b. 1936
Pose 0534 Lisa Phillips, from the series *Poses*, 2010
Color inkjet print
Gift of Joseph A. Chazan, MD 2012.81.7

This series parodies the glamour of actor headshots, subjecting the artist's friends and colleagues—most of whom are figures in the art world—to unflattering up-lighting and garish Photoshop manipulation. Viewing the human face as his canvas, Samaras invited his sitters to wear glasses which cast startling and uncanny shadows. Samaras, who himself once considered an acting career, originally planned to hire professionals for this project, but later opted for "ordinary" people (in his words, "born actors"), and borrowed from the imagery of horror and science fiction.



Susan Rothenberg
American, b. 1945
Aeropress, printer
Multiples, Inc., publisher
Head and Hand, 1980
Woodcut on Rives paper
Gift of Miani Johnson 2013.114.12

One of Rothenberg's earliest editioned woodcuts, this print shows a head inclined upward, supported by hands paired in a plaintive gesture, as if in prayer. The figural elements, surrounded by layers of lines lightly gouged and scratched by the artist into the woodblock, seem to merge with their environment and communicate a sense of meditation. During the 1980s, Rothenberg frequently depicted a head and a hand, a combination chosen for its expressive qualities.



Belkis Ayón
Cuban, 1967-1999
Untitled, 1999
Collograph
Gift of Edward Dwyer 2013.118

Created during the artist's residency at RISD, this print features the visual language Ayón developed for the obscure myths of Abakuá, an all-male Afro-Cuban secret society that forbids figurative representation. The wide, intense eyes and mouthless faces of the figures inhabit a world suffused with symbol and ritual. To accentuate the sense of mystery, Ayón inked only two areas of the sheet, letting the blind embossing of the collograph—a technique that uses collaged elements to make impressions into the surface of the



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paper—carry subtle information.

Dave Heath
American, b. 1931
Kansas City, 1967
Gelatin silver print
Gift of Smith Glasson 2013.56



Naomi Fisher
American, b. 1976
P.B. X-ed, 2010
Acrylic, ink and watercolor on linen
Gift of Paula and Leonard Granoff 2014.104.13



P.B. is a character from Naomi Fisher's video *Myakka* (2010), which depicts a group of women who live communally in the wilderness of the Florida wetlands. During the video's production, the artist used paintings and drawings to conceive and develop the characters and feminist themes of the piece. P.B., staring at the viewer and painted with a bold X, captures Fisher's view of "women's relationship with the world as transformative . . . although sometimes [requiring] a coat of war paint."

Luis González Palma
Guatemalan, b. 1957
Untitled, from the series *The Circus (El Circo)*, 1998
Platinum print
Gift of Paula and Leonard Granoff 2014.104.5



By dressing and posing his friends and family members in vintage circus costumes, González Palma signals that he is creating characters, not portraying likenesses. The woman in profile in the crown of flowers and harlequin outfit seems to vacillate between saintliness and ecstasy. The figure in the tutu exudes detachment, despite standing in the spotlight. The soft, moody quality of the platinum printing process aptly communicates the interior states the artist aims to portray.

González Palma follows in the footsteps of many artists who have used the circus as subject matter and a metaphor for life, as seen in

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the works in the exhibition *Circus*, shown in this gallery last year.

Luis González Palma
Guatemalan, b. 1957
Untitled, from the series *The Circus (El Circo)*, 1998
Platinum print
Gift of Paula and Leonard Granoff 2014.104.8

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Jim Dine
American, b. 1935
Colossos, 2009
Acrylic, charcoal and alcohol-based paint
Gift of the artist 2014.41.1



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Jim Dine
American, b. 1935
Faded Eyes in My Head, 2009
Charcoal and pastel
Gift of the artist 2014.41.2



Fazal Sheikh
American, b. 1965
Rachel and Ochol, Family Section, Sudanese refugee camp, Lokichoggio, Kenya, from the series *A Sense of Common Ground*, 1992-1993
Toned gelatin silver print from a Ploaroid negative
Gift from the Roy and Elizabeth Zimmerman Collection 2014.43.12



These refugees were photographed in a Kenyan camp after they fled the violent civil war in their native Sudan. Avoiding the sensationalism that often characterizes similar images by journalists, Sheikh's photo emphasizes the humanity and dignity of the women, who confidently meet the artist's gaze and are identified by name in the work's title.

Seeing his photography as a means of human-rights activism, Sheikh travels around the world producing images that highlight the physical and emotional toll of the refugee's life. In advance of creating the pictures, he spends days in the camps getting to know the people and their challenges. The slowness of working with a large-format Polaroid camera allows time for the process to become a collaborative one.

Sally Mann
American, b. 1951
Leah and her Father, from the series *At Twelve*, 1983 - 1985
Gelatin silver print
Gift from the Roy and Elizabeth Zimmerman Collection 2014.43.15



This photograph is part of a collective portrait of 12-year-old girls, highlighting this age as one of transition between adolescence and womanhood. Here, a young girl reclines on her father's lap as she knowingly gazes at the photographer—and therefore viewer—with a directness that belies her years. The intimacy of the depiction is colored by Mann's relationship to the sitters, family acquaintances from Rockbridge County, Virginia, where the artist was born and continues to live

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Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie

American, b. 1954

Idelia, from the series *Portraits Against Amnesia*, 1995 (printed 1997)

Color inkjet print

Gift from the Roy and Elizabeth Zimmerman Collection 2014.43.19

The subject of this work was borrowed from a found photograph—in this case, a portrait commissioned by the sitter. During the 19th century, Native Americans sometimes hired photographers to produce postcard-sized portraits in which they carefully selected their clothing and pose, comprising a rare opportunity to control the way they were presented and perceived publicly. A member of the Bear and Raccoon Clan of the Seminole and Muskogee Nation, Tsinhnahjinnie felt a deep resonance with their deliberate attempts to commemorate and preserve their native identity. In the series to which this work belongs, she digitally manipulated vintage portraits to add abstract elements and forms that lend a sense of gravity and universality.



Robert Pruitt

American, b. 1975

Alex Kirillov, printer

Chief Mechanic, 2012

Color offset lithograph on paper

Gift of the Brandywine Workshop and Archives, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 2014.66.29

Playing off the iconography of military enlistment posters, the prints depict a pilot and mechanic dressed in futuristic garb. The posters recruit a wide variety of talent—the technological (“mechanics, electricians, hackers”), the creative (“rappers, artists, dancers”), and the athletic (“shooters, 3 pt specialists”)—suggesting a dynamic collaboration akin to Otabenga Jones & Associates, a collective Pruitt helped found. His imagery often references science fiction, hip-hop, and issues of black identity. By appropriating comic-book conventions to depict black characters, Pruitt unsettles typical portrayals of the genre.



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Robert Pruitt
American, b. 1975
Alex Kirillov, printer
Star Pilot, 2012
Color offset lithograph on paper
Gift of the Brandywine Workshop and Archives, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania 2014.66.30

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Betye Saar
American, b. 1926
Robert Franklin, printer
Mystic Sky with Self-Portrait, 1992
Color offset lithograph and collage
Gift of the Brandywine Workshop and Archives, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania 2014.66.32

In this self-portrait, symbols from palmistry, alchemy, and tarot take center stage while a representation of the artist peers from the lower right corner. Throughout her long career, Saar has incorporated elements of occult ritual into her collages, box assemblages, and installations.

Here, the shadows surrounding the floating elements make it difficult to discern which items were collaged and which were printed. A similar ambiguity plagues Saar's appearance; by decentering her face, she de-emphasizes her own importance, leaving room for other more liberating interpretations. Saar writes, “The stars, the cards, the mystic vigil may hold the answers. By shifting the point of view an inner spirit is released. Free to create.”



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Emma Amos

American, b. 1938

Robert Franklin, printer

Miss Otis, 2002

Color offset lithograph with collaged fabric border

Gift of the Brandywine Workshop and Archives, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania 2014.66.5

This print depicts the ill-fated heroine of Cole Porter's 1934 song "Miss Otis Regrets," who is lynched by an angry mob after being arrested for shooting her former lover. The work's bright colors belie Miss Otis's violent end, foreshadowed by the abstracted jail bars and the coming horde's disembodied eyes and lips. Amos's portrayal of Miss Otis treads the line between propriety and what the artist has termed "sass."

Though presented in Porter's song as a society woman, Miss Otis is not impervious to systemic racial violence. The assertive, resilient expression of Amos's Miss Otis reflects the artist's ongoing attempt to disrupt, in her words, "assumptions about skin color and the privileges of power and of whiteness."



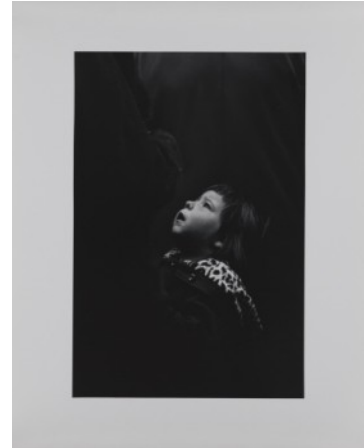
Dave Heath

American, b. 1931

New York City, ca. 1960

Gelatin silver print

Gift of Smith Glasson 2014.73



RISD MUSEUM

Weegee
American, 1899-1968
Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, ca. 1943
Gelatin silver print
Gift of Dr. Richard E. Kremer 2014.79

Freelance street photographer Weegee produced numerous images of New York City's charismatic mayor Fiorella La Guardia (1882–1947), including this print, where the politician is seen surrounded by reporters, cigar in hand. The brightly lit figures and dark background seen here exemplify the artist's signature "Rembrandt lighting," created with a standard press camera and an automatic flash.



Weegee earned his nickname (as in Ouija) for his uncanny ability to appear at New York crime scenes, with the help of a police radio in his car, before officers arrived.

Paul Meleschnig
American, b. 1966
Untitled, from the series *SPAR/CUBA*, 2000, printed 2012
Gelatin silver print
Gift of the artist 2014.98.2

For more than a decade, Paul Meleschnig photographed young Cuban boxers in training. Here, the artist captured a young man after a fight, dripping with sweat as he changes from athletic to street attire. Partially obscured by his hand, his face bears an expression of absolute exhaustion, perhaps both from conflict inside the ring and from the hardships of life outside of it.

