

*Modern and Contemporary Galleries (PDP Dec - Jun)*, December 21, 2015-June 16, 2016

## CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Larry Rivers

American, 1923-2002

*Berdie Seated*, 1953

Crayon, pastel, and graphite on paper

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Barnet Fain 1986.145

For Larry Rivers, drawing has always served as the most important component of painting, to which everything else is subservient and dependent. This drawing depicts a woman resting in an armchair, her left hand caressing her face as she solemnly returns the viewer's gaze. The woman is Rivers's mother-in-law, Bertha "Berdie" Burger, whom his family lived with for a period of time.



Rivers made this work as a sketch for a painting that is also in the RISD Museum's collection; it echoes the drawing's juxtaposition of expressive passages of blended color and the precise outlines delineating Berdie's figure.

Roy DeCarava

American, 1919-2009

*Shirley Looking Down Stairwell*, 1952

Gelatin silver print

Georgianna Sayles Aldrich Fund 2002.4

This photograph conveys the anxiety of a waiting woman. Made the year Roy DeCarava won a prestigious fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, it is part of a larger project in which DeCarava intimately captured daily life in Harlem. His deeply compassionate images of his community so impressed Langston Hughes that the poet wrote a text to accompany them for what became a hugely successful book, *The Sweet Flypaper of Life*.



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Raymond Pettibon

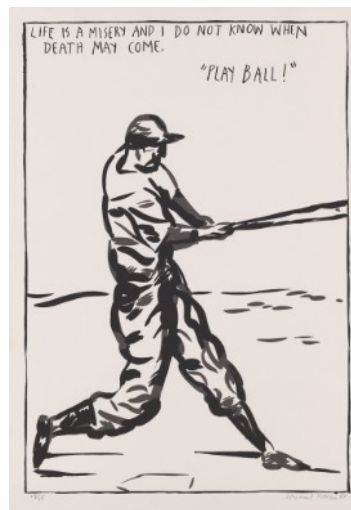
American, b. 1957

*Life Is A Misery and I Do Not Know When Death May Come. Play Ball!*, 1989

Screenprint on paper

Mary B. Jackson Fund 2012.76

Rendered in bold line and washes, a baseball player prepares to swing a bat, his arms outstretched and his face obscured by shadow. Over this figure hangs a cynical line of text that alludes to themes of death and mortality, loading the traditionally lighthearted directive "Play ball!" with a sense of resigned foreboding. This sentiment is in line with much of Raymond Pettibon's oeuvre, which engages a wide spectrum of cultural themes, from art history to literature, sports, religion, politics, and sexuality.



John Baldessari

American, b. 1931

Multiples, Inc., publisher

*Three Colors (with Horse Ascending), Hegel's Cellar*, 1986

Photogravure with spitbite aquatint, soft ground, and sanding on

Rives BFK paper

Gift of Miani Johnson 2013.114.1.2

Much of John Baldessari's varied oeuvre displays a fascination with readymade color and imagery, as does this print with its inclusion of stock imagery. The colors of the horizontal bands at the top of the print appear again below, where Baldessari has embellished an appropriated photograph of a rearing horse. The shape of the animal also reappears above in the form of a nearly abstract, hand-drawn outline. The print thus stages a tension between the reproduced photograph and the elements applied by hand, pitting natural against artificial in a way that may read as playful irreverence.



Wynn Bullock

American, 1902-1975

*Lynne, Point Lobos*, 1956

Gelatin silver print

Mary B. Jackson Fund 2014.92

Standing alone on a rocky shore with her back to the sea, her hair swept over her face, Wynn Bullock's daughter Lynne appears simultaneously dwarfed and sheltered by the imposing boulder behind her. Bullock made this photograph of Lynne along an area of the California coast renowned for its sublime beauty. By isolating the child against the powerful sea, the image speaks to our fragile relationships with the wild, natural world. In this way, it shares



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several themes with Jesse Burke's contemporary photographs of his daughter Clover, on display in the adjacent Tsiaras Photography Gallery.

Danny Lyon  
American, b. 1942  
*Taylor Washington Arrested, Atlanta, Georgia, 1964*  
Gelatin silver print  
Mary B. Jackson Fund 2015.88

This photograph depicts Taylor Washington, a high school student and activist for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), struggling to free himself from the grip of a policeman during a protest. Washington is surrounded by the blurred faces of onlookers, his mouth agape and his fist clenched, charging the image with a sense of conflict and urgency.

As the staff photographer for SNCC, Danny Lyon traveled to the South in the early 1960s to document the ongoing struggle for racial equality. This image is exemplary of the personal and immersive form of documentary photojournalism he has cultivated throughout his career.



Jacob Lawrence  
American, 1917-2000  
*There is an Average of Four Bars to Every Block*, from the *Harlem Series*, 1943  
Gouache, ink, and pencil on paper  
Mary B. Jackson Fund 43.565

This drawing is from a series of 30 works in which Jacob Lawrence depicted his neighborhood, Harlem. In this bar scene, men and women of different races and attitudes crowd the noisy space, which is activated by flat, asymmetrical patterns of bold color. This technique recalls the rhythms and breaks of the jazz music so prominent during the Harlem Renaissance, the era in which Lawrence created this piece. The title may suggest that Lawrence did not entirely approve of barroom culture.



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Paul Gauguin  
French, 1848-1903  
*Breton Bathers*, from the *Volpini Suite*, 1889  
Zincograph on yellow wove paper  
Museum purchase: anonymous gift 51.006

This print shows a nude boy and woman in the waters of a beach in Brittany, on the northwest coast of France. Gauguin traveled there during the 1880s to form an artists' colony in the rural town of Pont-Aven, which he favored for its ostensibly religious lifestyle. He reprised many of his Breton paintings as prints while organizing a small independent exhibition of his work at Volpini's Café des Artes, on the grounds of the 1889 Universal Exposition in Paris. Published on bright yellow paper and housed in a portfolio, these prints were intended to bring public attention to Gauguin's work.



Lothar Schreyer  
German, 1886-1966  
Bauhaus, printer  
German  
Frederik Muller & Cie., publisher  
*Color Form 2 from Stage Production: Death of a Child (Farbform 2 aus Bühnenwerk: Kindsterben)*, from the portfolio *Bauhaus Prints: New European Graphics I: First Issue: Master of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar (Bauhaus Cruke: Neue Europäische Graphik I: Erste Mappe: Meister des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar)*, 1921  
Lithograph with colored ink and opaque watercolor on tracing paper  
Museum purchase: anonymous gift 53.304.14

This lithograph presents a costume design for use in Schreyer's theatrical performance *Death of a Child* (*Kindsterben*). In the 1910s and 1920s, German Expressionists often made anti-realist artworks as a reaction to industrial modernity. Exemplifying their embrace of abstraction and bold color, Schreyer's geometric "color form" translates these ideas to the real space of the theater stage, where he imagines his own play as a non-representational performance based in pure color and sonic tones.



Edward Hopper  
American, 1882-1967  
*Bow of Beam Trawler*, 1924  
Watercolor and graphite on paper  
The Estate of Malcolm G. Chace and Elizabeth Z.Chace TL163.2014.1

This studiously constructed watercolor shows the bow of a beam trawler—a type of fishing boat common in the years following World War I—against a horizon of rooflines in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

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We can imagine that Hopper was drawn to the play of light and shadow upon the weathered, almost abstract forms of the ship. The contemplative image conveys both a feeling of solitude and the sense of its New England setting.