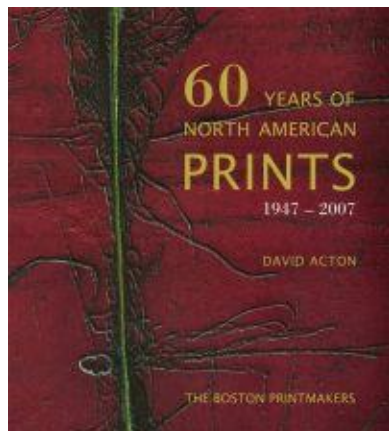


60 Years of North American Prints 1947-2007, by David Acton. The Boston Printmakers, 2009. 204 p. ill. alk. ISBN 9780615312361 (cl.), \$42.50.



The history of the Boston Printmakers, one of the premier American printmaking collectives of the twentieth century, is presented through the lens of sixty prints by artists who exhibited with the group. This publication's split personality is well-served by this method: it is neither a catalog of the sixtieth anniversary exhibition of the same name nor a narrative history of the organization of North American prints. Instead it is a combination of all of these elements.

The Boston Printmakers was founded in 1947 by a small group of students and faculty at the Boston Museum School and the Massachusetts College of Art. Soon, its membership included not just local artists but those from across the country and around the world. The organization flourished

during the postwar period, and today its Print Biennial is one of the longest-running and most influential printmaking exhibitions in existence.

The primary value of the short introductory section "Reporting from the Archives" is to describe the close relationship that developed between the Boston Public Library and the Boston Printmakers. The main chapter opens with an essay on the history of printmaking in North America beginning in the 1940s, contextualizing the rise and influence of the Boston Printmakers up through the current period. Following the essay is the set of sixty numbered catalog entries, presented in chronological order by the date of the chosen work. Here, Acton skillfully combines details of the artist's life, professional activity, and approach to art making with specific reference to the print illustrated in full-color on the opposite page. An illustrated chronology of the organization, from its beginnings in 1947 through to its exchange trip to Vietnam in 2007, is also provided. *60 Years* includes an extensive notes section, an appendix listing all 1947-2007 Boston Printmakers members, a glossary of printmaking terms, and a full index.

This publication makes a logical complement to shelf mates like Donald Smith's *American Printmakers of the Twentieth Century: A Bibliography* and *American Printmaking: A Century of American Printmaking, 1880-1980* by James Watrous. It also provides an excellent pendant to David Tatham's *North American Prints, 1913-1947: An Examination at Century's End*. Recommended for all collections including works on American printmaking and the history of prints.

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