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Redon, Odilon, 1840-1916

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picasso  his graphic art

the museum of modern art

redon  drawings and lithographs
picasso his graphic art

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PREFACE

This exhibition offers the first comprehensive survey of Picasso's prints to be held in America. The selection has been made exclusively from the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room of the Museum of Modern Art. The Print Room, open daily from two to five Monday through Friday, contains over 4000 modern prints. The Picasso collection alone consists of 350 etchings, woodcuts, lithographs and illustrated books, the largest body of his graphic work in existence.

Mr. Alfred H. Barr, Jr. has been a counselor and guide in arranging both the Picasso and Redon exhibitions. I wish also to thank Miss Dorothy L. Lytle, Custodian of the Print Room, who has been an invaluable collaborator.

WILLIAM S. LIEBERMAN
Picasso: his graphic art

In half a century Picasso has made over 500 intaglio plates—etchings, aquatints, drypoints and engravings—and has drawn about 250 lithographs. Although his significance as a painter necessarily adds to his stature as a printmaker, his graphic oeuvre alone would insure his importance in the history of contemporary art.

In Barcelona before 1900 he had learned the rudiments of etching from his friend Ricardo Canals. This instruction was brief—Picasso is quick to seize the possibilities of any medium—and with his second and still most popular print, The Frugal Repast of 1904, he was already an accomplished etcher. A few plates of the next year, mostly intimate glimpses of a wandering family of saltimbanques, recall the sentiment and style of many paintings of 1905. At the Circus and Salomé, however, are less mannered, broader, more vigorous.

Of the thirty etchings and drypoints which reflect the development of cubism, the most important are a large Still Life with Bottle of 1912 and illustrations for two plays by Max Jacob. Together with several prints by Georges Braque, Picasso's companion in the cubist adventure, these editions were published by Daniel Henry Kahnweiler, the chief sponsor of the new movement.

Picasso had been an etcher for twenty years before he attempted lithography in 1919. The researches of cubism were by no means abandoned, but the lithographs and etchings of the '20s reflect a renewed interest in a classic, often idealized rendition of the human figure.

As the circle of his literary friends increased Picasso contributed frontispieces and incidental illustrations to their books. Through his intimate, Max Jacob, he met Raymond Radiguet, Pierre Reverdy, Paul Valéry and André Breton. Their portraits in prints are notable additions to the gallery of realistic pencil likenesses begun in 1915.

Picasso’s graphic work is usually the mirror of his successive styles as a painter, but he often turns to printmaking to explore some specific problem. In 1922 he concentrated briefly but intensely on the relaxation of the angular planes of cubism into looser, more curvilinear shapes. This experiment may best be studied in twenty small etchings, mostly nudes. Picasso worked quickly and the flowing calligraphy encloses but does not analyse the forms.

From 1927 through 1931 Picasso spent a major part of his time on illustrations for three books, none of them by contemporary authors. The first, a dozen etchings for Balzac's Le Chef-d'oeuvre Inconnu, was commissioned by Ambroise Vollard, the great French publisher of fine prints and books. Picasso developed several themes, notably the artist in his studio, the subject of several other prints of 1927. Although the illustrations are by no means literal, the etching Painter with a Model Knitting might well portray Balzac's painter hero at work on his un-intelligible “masterpiece.” Reproductions of sixteen pages from a sketchbook of 1926 serve as introduction to the story. These hieroglyphics of dots and lines furnish a handsome, unexpected addition to the book.

In 1929 Picasso etched and engraved six plates for Pepe Hillo’s La Tauromaquia written in 1800, a year before the celebrated bullfighter’s death. Henry de Montherlant contributed a preface but the edition was never realized and the illustrations are little known. The etchings seem somewhat ineptly drawn, but this tauromachy focuses upon the theme that was to obsess Picasso during the next decade: the conflict between bull, horse and matador.

For his first publishing venture the young Swiss editor Albert Skira invited Picasso to illustrate Ovid’s Metamorphoses. Braque, at the same time, was at work on another classic, an edition of Hesiod's
Still Life with Bottle. (1912.) Drypoint, 10 1/2 x 12”. Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest

Theogony for Vollard. The Picasso-Skira Ovid was more ambitious, demanding the full courage of the publisher and the sustained patience of the artist. Often as a project nears completion Picasso suddenly loses interest. But under the guidance of Skira one of the most distinguished books of the century was produced. Only thirty of some fifty etchings were used in the final selection for the illustrations. Faithful to the text, they harmonize beautifully with the printed page. Each of the large compositions fills a vertical frame. Smaller decorations run horizontally across the chapter headings. Spontaneous and yet restrained, the rapid fluid outlines offer painless distortions of the human figure. Picasso was extremely exacting. A scene of Jupiter and Semele, for instance, was reworked on six different plates before he was finally satisfied.

A year after the publication of his Ovid in 1931, Picasso purchased the château at Boisgeloup near Gisors. The spacious stables of the residence were converted into a sculpture studio and Picasso started work on projects that had interested him for several years. Away from this studio for a two months stay in Paris during the spring of 1933, he idealized the problems of the sculptor in a suite of etchings. The first show a sculptor at work on large heads such as those Picasso had just completed. A bearded sculptor models or contemplates a statue decorated with strings of ivy. Visitors admire the work and later the nude sculptor and his model are at rest. Nothing disturbs the enchanted quiet of the idyll. They gaze serenely at statues of horsemen, centaurs, acrobats and nudes. Occasionally the statuary is semi-abstract, but it is usually rendered in the same realistic manner as the etchings themselves. These forty plates (as many as three and four were done in a single day) represent the lyric culmination of Picasso’s neo-classic style.

In 1933 Skira and Tériade launched the magazine Minotaure. In an age which largely ignores traditional legend, the mythological monster of its title seized the imagination of many artists, in particular Picasso. He designed a cover for the first issue of the new review and contributed, as frontispiece, four etchings of a heraldic minotaur holding a dagger. The figure had previously appeared in his art but this is the first sustained treatment of it. A dozen etchings show the minotaur reveling, sleeping, dying. This is not yet the terrible monster of Crete but a sympathetic, whimsical, often pampered beast who expires, nevertheless, on the sands of the arena.

In November 1933 and again in the summer and fall of 1934 Picasso drew many scenes of bullfights. In both years he had returned to Spain and perhaps these visits had renewed his interest in the bull ring. He had depicted the spectacle before but in 1934 he invests the drama with a personal symbolism of his own. The climactic moment of the conflict interests him most. The matador, a woman oblivious to the tumult which surrounds her lies prostrate. The horse, disemboweled, rears its anguished head. The bull, if not always triumphant, dominates the trio—his strength and passion have created the chaotic nightmare. These bullfights invite comparison with those of Goya, but no real analogy can be drawn.

After he had etched the two largest tauromachies,
Picasso returned to the theme of the minotaur. The monster is no longer the happy beast of the previous year but a blind, noble creature guided by a child. Thirty years before Picasso had drawn a blind man led by a flower girl; now the little girl clutches a dove and added to the scene are two sailors in a boat while at one side sits a silent spectator.

By the end of 1934 the themes of minotaur and bull ring had become inextricably woven in Picasso's mind. Both are present in his most ambitious print the great Minotaumachy of 1935. The minotaur, a powerful and ominous creature, tries to extinguish the light of a candle held by a little flower girl. The monster advances upon the unconscious female matador. She holds a sword but it is the minotaur who seems to direct its thrust. The small, terrified horse is disemboweled. It staggers under the weight of its prostrate rider. At one side a bearded man climbs a ladder, and from a window, two seated women with a brace of doves are silent witnesses to the scene. Although the meaning of this allegory remains obscure, Minotaumachy is Picasso's most important print, a disquieting and unforgettable image. It contains as well many elements repeated in the large Guernica mural of 1937.

Since 1933 Picasso's etchings and engravings had been printed in the Montmartre workshop of Roger Lacourière. A master technician with a craftsman's knowledge of three generations, Lacourière has had the imagination to tempt Picasso's inventiveness with all possible variety of intaglio media. In May 1936 he demonstrated the sugar process or "lift ground" method of aquatint. With this technique it is possible to draw directly in black rather than to build up from light to dark. The process allows the artist much freedom and, what particularly appealed to the painter, the aquatint may be directly laid in brush strokes. The method, well known to printers, had previously been little exploited by contemporary artists.

The introduction to the unfamiliar process came at a propitious time. Picasso's interest in painting had temporarily lagged. He had tried his hand as a photographer and as an author. The sugar aquatint furnished another new method of expression. His first experiment was a plate of four illustrations to a poem by Paul Eluard. These were successful and he drew marginal decorations for additional poems. Ambroise Vollard, who sat for a series of portraits, was enthusiastic about the new medium. He urged Picasso to illustrate selections from Buffon's Histoire Naturelle.

Begun in 1936 the Buffon was not published until 1942 after Vollard's death. It is the last collaboration of the foremost artist and the greatest publisher of illustrated books of our time. Picasso's zoo consists of thirty-one aquatints. They display a naturalism always more frequent in his graphic work than in his painting. In the best of the series he seizes the essential character or action of each animal—the giddy race of the ostrich, the lone wolf slinking from the light, the intricate lacework of the crayfish, the scaley armor of the lizard. The technique varies; some plates were bitten only once, others several times. Picasso used pen, brush, even his thumbprint. To avoid plate marks about the illustrations the size of the plate was larger than the sheet on which it was printed. When Picasso had finished—at the rate of one a day—passages from Buffon were edited to fit the animals the artist had chosen to portray.
The Spanish Civil War moved Picasso to voice an eloquent protest with the mural Guernica. But already in January of 1937 he had condemned the insurgents in an etched comic strip the Dream and Lie of Franco. Each of the two plates for the Dream and Lie is ruled off into nine sections. Fourteen frames reading from right to left are devoted to the exposé of Franco. The dictator resembles some dreadful growth uprooted from the ground. He postures as a military hero, as the spirit of Spain, but even his prayers are insincere. Instead of the horse which he had wounded, he finds himself astride a pig. He destroys the horse but is himself annihilated by the bull.

The remaining four scenes of the Dream and Lie of Franco were etched in June as Picasso was completing Guernica. These additions, screaming women and grief-stricken mothers are the victims of the terrible air raid out of which grew a series of drawings postscript to the mural. The Dream and Lie of Franco, printed as a broadside in a large edition, was sold for the benefit of the Spanish Republic. This was the first time that Picasso had taken a public stand on world events.

Among the Guernica postscripts is a large etching of a weeping woman. She holds a handkerchief to her eyes and tears like nail heads cut furrows in her cheek. The violence of the mural, somewhat muted in the enigmatic Combat of October 1937, appears again in the large etching and aquatint Dancer of the next year.

During the decade 1927 to 1937, the period of Picasso's greatest activity as etcher and engraver, he had made almost 250 prints, half of his entire lifetime's achievement in intaglio. Toward the end of the '30s he tried color aquatint but was dissatisfied with his experiments. Also unpublished are several engraved marginal decorations to his own writings.

During the '40s Picasso has been a generous contributor to books by his friends, among them Georges Hugnet, Paul Eluard, Robert Desnos, Iliazd, Pierre Reverdy and Yvan Goll. Many of these "illustrations" were merely plates which Picasso happened to have at hand, although he did engrave eight lively scenes for a posthumous edition of a pair of stories by Ramon Reventos. Of all these books only one, an edition of the Spanish poet Gongora, is sufficiently important to rank with the Ovid or the Buffon. Picasso's own transcript of Gongora's sonnets was photomechanically reproduced. Each page of manuscript was then embellished with drypoint decorations. To a large portrait of the poet, he added nineteen full pages of women's heads. Among these aquatints and drypoints is a portrait of his daughter Concepción. The Gongora, begun in December 1946, was completed in the fall of 1948.

In November 1945 the French master lithographer Fernand Mourlot approached Picasso about the possibility of reproducing by lithography some of his paintings. Picasso consented and became so intrigued with the medium that he took up lithography himself. In the '20s he had made several drawings which had been transferred to stone, but now at the age of sixty-four he worked for the first time directly on the stone himself. By the end of the year he had completed thirty lithographs. The metamorphosis of a composition may often be traced in as many as twelve or eighteen different states. At first Picasso experimented with the medium; he used crayon, pen, wash, transfer paper and paper
cut-outs. The treatment is often witty, the subject matter usually familiar to a student of his art.

After a few months Picasso began to work more creatively within the medium itself, thinking in terms of lithography rather than of drawing. As the lithographs became larger in scale and bolder in composition, he exploited the possibilities of black more and more. Scenes of fauns and centaurs repeat the frolicsome pastorals of Antibes, also the subject of several etchings. He develops specific themes—portraits of his companion Françoise, women in armchairs, austere semi-abstract heads, striking still-life compositions. The humor so characteristic of much of his work of the last decade appears in a series of variations on Cranach's David and Bathsheba, parodies which recall four etchings of 1934 in which Picasso had played upon the theme of a Rembrandt self portrait. Under the expert guidance of Mourlot, Picasso also took up color lithography. After a few tentative experiments he quickly mastered the mechanics of printing from several different stones.

By April 1949 Picasso had in five years completed 180 lithographs. He tried to stop but could not. His most recent portray knights in armor departing for some courtly adventure. Picasso's advocacy of the medium has done much to stimulate the renaissance in lithography that has taken place in France since the war. Together with his ceramic pottery and sculpture, these lithographs represent a major part of Picasso's activities during the period 1945 to 1950.

Picasso's woodcuts number less than a dozen done between 1905 and 1915. With the exception of two heads of Fernande Olivier (whom he had met while working on the etching The Frugal Repast) they are relatively unimportant to the body of his graphic work. In intaglio and in lithography, however, Picasso has been one of the most prolific artists of the century. At a time when painters and sculptors devote much of their energies to the creation of original prints, Picasso is of them all the master printmaker.

W. S. L.
Tauronachy, June 20, 1934. Etching, 11 13/32 x 9 15/32". Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Purchase Fund

Tauronachy, September 8, 1934. Etching, 19 7/32 x 27 5/32". Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest
Minotauro mach. (1935.) Etching, 19\(\frac{1}{2}\) x 27\(\frac{3}{4}\) " Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund

The Blind Minotaur I. September 22, 1934. Etching, 9\(\frac{5}{8}\) x 13\(\frac{3}{4}\) " Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase Fund

Faun. (1948.) From Reventos' *Deux Contes*. Drypoint, 12 x 5½". Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Victor S. Riesenfeld

Pastorale. (1946.) Etching, 10½" x 13½". Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest
Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller,
Jr. Purchase Fund

Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the
Lillie P. Bliss Bequest
David and Bathsheba. March 30, 1947. Lithograph, fourth state, 25\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{4}''\). Museum of Modern Art, New York, acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest

Still Life. March 10, 1947. Color lithograph, 17\frac{3}{8} \times 29\frac{3}{8}''\). Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Victor S. Riesenfeld

PICASSO: HIS GRAPHIC ART

EXHIBITION DATES: FEBRUARY 14 TO APRIL 20, 1952
The Museum of Modern Art's collection of prints and illustrated books by Picasso has been acquired through the following bequests, gifts and purchase funds:

Lillie P. Bliss Collection, nos. 4, 9. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest, nos. 14, 58, 60, 71, 75-76, 80-81, 83, 87-89, 90-92, 111-112; James Thrall Soby, no. 106
A Conger Goodyear Fund, no. 66; Purchase Fund, nos. 17, 29, 72-73, 101, 109-110; Extended loan from the artist, no. 106

CHECK LIST
Items marked with an asterisk are illustrated. Dates given appear on the prints themselves unless enclosed in parentheses.

DEFINITIVE CATALOGS
G: Geiser, Bernard. Picasso, peintre graveur. Bern, 1933
J: Johnson, Una E. Ambroise Vollard editrice. New York, Wittenborn, 1944

01 *The Frugal Repast. (1904.) Etching (G.2; J.108:1)
02 The Wanderers. (1905.) Etching (G.4; J.108:3)
03 Head of a Woman. (January, 1905.) Etching (G.8; J.108:2)
04 Head of a Woman. (1905.) Drypoint (G.7)
05 The Saltimbanques. (1905.) Drypoint (G.8; J.108:7)
06 Seated Saltimbanque. (1905.) Drypoint (G.12; J.108:10)
07 The Watering Place. (1905.) Drypoint (G.16; J.108:8)
08 At the Circus. (1905.) Drypoint (G.16; J.108:9)
09 Salamé. (1905.) Drypoint (G.17; J.108:13)
10 Head of a Woman (Fernande Olivier). (1906.) Woodcut (G.21)
11 Woman and Child. (1909.) Drypoint (G.21)
12 Fruit Dish. (1909.) Drypoint (G.22)
13 Head of a Man. (1912.) Etching (G.32)
14 *Still Life with Bottle. (1912.) Drypoint (G.33)
15 Raymond Radiguet. December 17, 1920. Facsimile lithograph (G.223; M.III)
16 The Horseman. March 7, 1921. Lithograph (G.228; M.VIII)
17 Pierre Reverdy. (1922.) Etching (G.63)
18 Woman. (1922-23.) Etching (G.99)
19 André Breton. (1923.) Drypoint (G.110)
20 Reading. (1926.) Lithograph (G.242; M.XII)
21 Three Nudes. (1927.) Etching (G.117)
22 Painter and Model. (1927.) Etching (G.119)
23 The Studio. (1927.) Etching (G.121; J.113)
24 Face. (1928.) Lithograph (G.243; M.XXIII)
25 Figure. (1929.) Lithograph (G.246; M.XXVI)
26 Table of contents to Balzac's Le Chef-d'oeuvre Inconnu. (July 4, 1931.) Etching (G.135)
27 Seated Nude. (July 9, 1931.) Etching (G.206)
28 Le Viol. (July 9, 1931.) Etching (G.209)
29 Bathers and Diver. (1932?) Etching with collage
30 Sculptor at Work. (March 1933.) Etching
31 Two Women and a Sculptured Head. March 21, 1933. Etching
32 Sculptor and Model with Mask. March 27, 1933. Etching
33-36 Sculptor's Repose. March 30, 1933. Etchings
37-40 Sculptor's Repose. March 31, 1933. Etchings
41 Sculptor's Repose. April 3, 1933. Etching
42 Sculptor and Model. April 8, 1933. Etching
43 Sculptor at Work. April 11, 1933. Etching
44 Minotaur and Woman. May 17, 1933. Etching
45-46 The Minotaur's Revels. May 18, 1933. Etchings
47 *Minotaur Asleep. May 18, 1933. Etching
48 The Dying Minotaur. May 29, 1933. Etching
49 The Dying Minotaur. May 30, 1933. Etching
50 Minotaur and Woman. June 8, 1933. Drypoint
51 Bullfight. November 7, 1933. Etching
52 Bull-headed Sphinx. (1934.) Etching
53 Two Men. (1934.) Etching
54 Tambourine Player and Nude. January 30, 1934. Etching
55 Two Models with Self Portrait of Rembrandt. January 31, 1934. Etching
56 Lyssistrata Takes the Oath of the Women. (1934.) Copper plate
57 Lyssistrata Takes the Oath of the Women. (1934.) Etching, one of six for Aristophanes' Lyssistrata
58 Tauronachy. June 12, 1934. Etching
59 Tauronachy. June 20, 1934. Etching
60 Tauronachy. September 8, 1934. Etching
61 The Blind Minotaur I. September 22, 1934. Engraving
62 The Blind Minotaur II. October 23, 1934. Etching
63 The Blind Minotaur III. (1934.) Engraving
64 The Blind Minotaur IV. (1934.) Etching and aquatint
65 Minotauromachy. (1935.) Etching
66 Grand Air. June 4, 1936. Etching, marginal illustrations for the poem by Paul Eluard
67 Vigil. (1936.) Etching
68 A Mythological Scene. (1936.) Aquatint and etching
69 Satyr and Sleeping Woman. June 12, 1936. Aquatint and etching.
70 Four scenes. (June 1936.) Aquatint, illustrations for Paul Eluard's *Le Barre d'Appui*

71 *Ambroise Vollard.* (1936.) Aquatint

72 Dream and Lie of Franco I. January 8, 1937. Etching and aquatint

73 Dream and Lie of Franco II. January 8 and 9; June 7, 1937. Etching and aquatint

74 *Weeping Woman.* July 2, 1937. Etching and aquatint

75 *Combatt.* October 10, 1937. Engraving and etching

76 *Dance and Tambourine.* (1938.) Etching and aquatint

77 *Reclining Couple.* June 16, 1938. Etching, one of three illustrations for Iliazd's *Afat,* 1940

78 *Woman's Head.* (1941.) Etching, printed in blue

79 *Seated Woman.* December 23, 1943. Etching, frontispiece to Robert Desnos' *Contraire,* 1944

80 *Young Boy.* November 7, 1945. Lithograph (M.8)

81 *The Bull.* January 17, 1946. Lithograph, eleventh state (M.17)

82 *Pages of Sketches.* December 4, 1945. Lithograph (M.18)

83 *The Circus.* December 23, 1945. Lithograph (M.24)

84 *Eight Nudes.* January 13, 1946. Lithograph (M.29)

85 *Françoise with a Bow.* June 14, 1946. Lithograph (M.41)

86 *Françoise as the Sun.* June 15, 1946. Lithograph (M.48)

87 *Pastorale.* (1946.) Etching, printed in green

88 *Owl.* January 20, 1947. Two color lithograph (M.55)

89 *Fauns and Centaurs.* January 26, 1947. Lithograph (M.59)

90 *Young Pigeon.* March 11, 1947. Lithograph in three colors (M.74)

91 *Still Life.* March 16, 1947. Lithograph in three colors (M.74)

92 *Young Girl.* June 24, 1947. Lithograph (M.105)

93 *David and Bathsheba.* March 30, 1947. Lithograph, second state (M.109)

94 *David and Bathsheba.* March 30, 1947. Lithograph, fourth state (M.109)

95 *Faun Musicien.* March 10, 1948. Lithograph (M.116)

96 *Poster for a Fair at Vullaries.* June 5, 1948. Lithograph in two colors (M.118)

97 *Black Head.* November 20, 1948. Lithograph (M.126)

98 *Bullfrog.* January 15, 1949. Lithograph (M.144)

99 *Young Girl.* March 26-27, 1949. Lithograph (M.176 bis)

100 *The Striped Blouse.* April 3, 1949. Lithograph in six colors (M.179)

101 *The Artist's Children: Paloma and Claude.* (April 16, 1950.) Lithograph

102 *Departure.* May 20, 1951. Lithograph in three colors

**ILLUSTRATED BOOKS**

103 Max Jacob. *Saint Matorel.* Paris, Henry Kahnweiler, 1911

4 etchings, 1910 (G.23-26)


3 etchings and drypoints, 1913-14 (G.35-37)


13 etchings, 1927 (G.123-135; J.119) and 67 wood engravings by Aubert, after drawings by Picasso

106 Ovid. *Les Métamorphoses.* Lausanne, Albert Skira, 1931

30 etchings (G.143-172)


6 etchings, 1934, and reproductions of 29 drawings

108 Comte de Buffon (Georges Louis Le Clerc). *Histoire Naturelle.* Paris, Martin Fabiani, 1942

31 aquatints, 1936 (J.120)


4 wood engravings, 1942


6 etchings on offset plates, 1943

111 Ramon Reventos. *Dos Contes.* Paris and Barcelona, Albor, 1947

4 engravings, 1947

112 *Ramon Reventos. Deux Contes.* Paris and Barcelona, Albor, 1947

4 drypoints, actually 1948

113 Tristan Tzara. *De Memoire d'Homme.* Paris, Bordas, 1950

9 lithographs, 1950


41 aquatints and drypoints (1946-48.)
redon drawings and lithographs

the museum of modern art
PREFACE

The famous Armory Show of 1913 introduced the art of Odilon Redon to the American public. His friend the painter Walter Pach helped organize the exhibition and Redon himself served as an honorary vice president. Represented by over 70 pastels, paintings and prints—more entries than any other contributor—his work won quick recognition and was purchased in larger quantity than that of any other artist included in the exhibition.

Four years after Redon's death in 1916, the Art Institute of Chicago acquired from his widow a unique and complete collection of his graphic art, in all 329 impressions of some 200 etchings and lithographs. Thirty years later in 1950 this important collection was augmented by a constellation of 19 charcoal drawings.

The present exhibition has been organized with the interest and cooperation of Mr. Carl O. Schniewind, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute of Chicago.  

WILLIAM S. LIEBERMAN
Odilon Redon was born in Bordeaux in 1840. As a youth his interest in science was encouraged by the botanist Armand Clavaud, who also introduced him to the work of such avant-garde authors as Poe, Baudelaire and Flaubert.

Deeply impressed by the intricate fantasy of Rodolphe Bresdin whom he had met in 1862, Redon throughout his life regarded the older draughtsman as his master. Some dozen small etchings of the 1860's—mostly mountain landscapes and medieval horsemen, detailed in composition and conventional in style—reveal this debt. They suggest little, however, of Redon's own haunting vision of the next decades.

While a soldier in the Franco-Prussian war Redon found “a moment where my vision was increased tenfold ... It put an end to restless search. I realized my natural gifts. The slightest drawings or scrawls which I had left in my portfolios assumed meaning. My resolve dates from this moment.”

At the end of hostilities in 1871 Redon took up permanent residence in Paris. He had discovered himself, but not a satisfactory means of expression. Etching, even at times pencil drawing, constrained his conception—the temptation to elaborate detail was too great. But “around 1875 everything became clear. I discovered charcoal crayon, that powder which is volatile, impalpable and fugitive. It expressed me best and I kept to it. This ordinary medium, which in itself has no beauty, aided my research into the chiaroscuro of the invisible.” If the “austerity of black” stimulated his imagination, it also gave a freedom and richness to his drawing. He thought increasingly in pictorial terms of light and dark; he was gradually less absorbed by a somewhat dry delineation of form.

To increase the distribution of his work Redon, on the advice of Fantin-Latour, turned to lithography. His first album, significantly entitled, *Dans le Rêve* appeared in 1879. For the next twenty years he devoted his major energies to lithographs and drawings in black and white.

In literature the mysticism and mystery of the Symbolist movement was at its height. Many of the poets and their supporters were among Redon's closest friends. They saw in his graphic work a visual complement to their own writings, and he contributed illustrations to their poems and plays. It is not surprising that many of his independent drawings and albums, such as *Dans le Rêve, Hommage à Goya, La Nuit and Songes*, are also devoted to the obscure world of dream and night. The titles of these portfolios Redon regarded as "opening keys." Thus the album *A Edgar Poe* does not illustrate Poe but is rather a tribute to the American who so strongly influenced the Symbolist movement.

The natural sciences interested Redon not because they had to do with phenomena but because they offer a passport to “the invisible world moving and palpitating around us, folding us within under pressures still obscure and unexplained.” “My originality consists,” he said, “in putting the logic of the visible to the service of the invisible.” He observed nature minutely but always through the inspiration of his own mind’s eye. “I create imaginary beings in terms of material logic.” An exact rendition of a tree is no less wondrous than a plant with a human head as its flower. His microscope reveals a microcosm of organic life as well as a sea of floating heads and orbitless eyes. *Les Origines* explores a netherworld of pre-history, a fantastic genesis that Redon thought fitting to send to Pasteur on its issuance.

After the publication of *Les Origines* the Symbolist critic and translator of Poe, Emile Hennequin, suggested that Redon read Flaubert’s *La Tentation de*
Saint-Antoine. "You will find new monsters" and indeed in this image-studded drama he discovered his greatest literary inspiration. Three series of lithographs, his most ambitious graphic work, follow Flaubert's text. The apparitions emerge, however, from the shadows of Redon's own vision.

Except for a few realistic portraits of friends, Redon after 1900 abandoned lithography. He had printed over 160 black-and-whites but "as one grows old, it is exhausting work because there is less nourishment." Twice he had tried color lithography, then at its heyday in France, but felt that color "cheapened" the essential black-and-white character of his prints. In his youth Redon had copied Delacroix; now at the age of sixty he returned to the vivid intensity and brilliance of color. Although many of the pastels and paintings rework earlier themes, there is enchantment rather than torment in his reverie. To the already familiar iconography—dream heads, mystic apparitions, demigods and beasts—is added the series of flower compositions. It is especially in the pastels that the resplendent revelation of his last sixteen years unfolds.

After Gauguin's escape to Tahiti many younger painters such as Bonnard, Vuillard, Maurice Denis and Paul Sérauier considered Redon as a mentor. His affinities were rather with their literary counterparts, but he accepted their tribute and encouraged their work. Redon himself continued in the quiet isolation of his own meditation. He had remained aloof from the visual revolution of the impressionists; he was not to be influenced by their successors. Of the younger generation it was perhaps Matisse who most appreciated the lesson of Redon's color.
The art of Redon exploits mental imagery rather than visual experience—"my drawings inspire and do not define." The literary nourishment of his contemplation is important for its understanding. Although the titles of many drawings have been lost, the lithographs bear exact and often elaborate captions usually printed on the same sheet as the design. As with latter day precursors of surrealism, such as de Chirico and Klee, these titles are an integral part of the artist's fantasy. Well might his friend the poet Mallarmé be envious. When Songes appeared in 1891 he wrote: "In our silences you ruffle the plumage of reverie and night. Everything in this album fascinates me. What is personal in you issues from your dreams. Demonic lithographer, your invention is as profound as certain of your blacks! And you must know, Redon, I am jealous of your titles."

W. S. L.

REDON: ON HIS ART

I have developed a personal art. This I have done with my eyes open to the wonders of the visible world and, whatever the criticisms, with the thought of obedience to the laws of nature and of life constantly in my mind. I have done so also with love for those masters who initiated me into the cult of beauty. Art is the supreme exaltation, lofty, beneficial and sacred; it gives birth; to the dilettante it brings only rare delight, but for the artist it brings forth, in torment, new seed for a new harvest. I believe that I have yielded docilely to the secret laws that have led me to create, sometimes well, sometimes badly, but always to the best of my ability and following my own ideals, those works into which I have put my entire self. If this art runs counter to the art of others (which I do not believe to be the case), nevertheless it has made for me a public which time has maintained, and even some friendships of such quality and benefit that they are precious recompense to me.

REDON: ON LITHOGRAPHY

Scrutinizing my blacks, I find that it is especially in lithography that they have their integral and unadulterated force ... Black is the most essential color. Its exalted life comes—shall I confess—from the discrete and profound source of health: good living and rest. Or, better, let us say that on the fullness of physical energy depends the heavy and vital ardor of charcoal ... It conveys the very vitality of a being, his energy, his mind, something of his soul, the reflection of his sensitivity ...

One must respect black. Nothing prostitutes it. It does not please the eye and it awakens no sensuality. It is the agent of the mind far more than the most beautiful color of the palette or prism ...

The gravity of art reacts on those whose attention and disposition are reflective. Even the creative artist realizes very well that of all his works, the one which reflects and reveals him best has been done in solitude. All genesis preserves a little shadow and mystery. It is in solitude that the artist feels himself alive with energy, in secret profundity where nothing from the mundane world disturbs or obliges him to disguise himself. It is there that he feels and discovers himself; he sees, finds, desires, loves and becomes naturally saturated in the primary sources of instinct. It is there, more than anywhere else, that he is given the power to exalt and illuminate with his mind the subjects which he opens and reveals ...
A formless world where eyes floated like mollusks. (1896) Lithograph, 12¼ x 8¾". Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

O P P O S I T E  P A G E:

A B O V E  L E F T: Gnome. (c.1880.) Charcoal, 18¼ x 14½". The Art Institute of Chicago, David Adler Collection

A B O V E  R I G H T: Gnome. (1879.) Lithograph, 10½ x 8¾". The Art Institute of Chicago, Stickney Collection

B E L O W  L E F T: The eye like a strange balloon mounts toward infinity. (1882.) Lithograph, 10¼ x 7¾". The Art Institute of Chicago, Stickney Collection

B E L O W  R I G H T: The death mask sounds the funeral knell. (1882.) Lithograph, 6½ x 8¾". The Art Institute of Chicago, Stickney Collection
Tree. (1892.) Lithograph, 18\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 12\(\frac{1}{2}\)". Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

The Day. (1891.) Lithograph, 8\(\frac{1}{4}\) x 6\(\frac{1}{2}\)". Museum of Modern Art, New York, Lillie P. Bliss Collection

Anchorite. (1870-5.) Pencil, 8 x 8". Private collection, New York
LEFT: Marsh Flower. (c.1885.) Charcoal, 16 3/4 x 14". Collection Mr. and Mrs. H. Lawrence Herring, New York

BELOW LEFT: ... the marsh flower, a sad and human face. (1885.) Lithograph, 11 x 8 1/4". The Art Institute of Chicago, Stickney Collection

BELOW RIGHT: The Flower. (c.1885.) Charcoal, 15 7/8 x 13". The Art Institute of Chicago, David Adler Collection
And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him with a thousand years. (1889.) Lithograph, 11 3/4 x 8 1/4", from The Apocalypse According to St. John. The Brooklyn Museum, New York

Armor. (c. 1885.) Charcoal, 19 3/4 x 15". The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Dick Fund

Reader of the Ramayama. (c. 1885.) Charcoal, 19 3/4 x 14 3/8". The Art Institute of Chicago, David Adler Collection
DEATH: Mine irony surpasseth all others. (1889.) Lithograph, 10 1/2 x 8". The Art Institute of Chicago, Stickney Collection.
REDON: DRAWINGS AND LITHOGRAPHS

EXHIBITION DATES: FEBRUARY 14 TO APRIL 20, 1952

The drawings and lithographs of Redon have been selected from the following collections:

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
- The David Adler Collection, drawings, nos. 4-5, 7, 9-13, 15-19
- The Stickney Collection, lithographs, nos. 21-34, 36-37, 40-45, 50-52, 58, 63-64, 68-69, 71-73, 79, 82-84, 96-100, 102-104, 106, 114, 116-117, 120, 123, 125, 127-130

THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM
- Lithographs, nos. 86-90, 92-95, 101, 105

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK
- Drawing, no. 14
- Lithographs, nos. 83, 118, 126

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK
- Lillie P. Bliss Collection
  - Lithographs, nos. 55, 91, 107, 109, 112
- Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.
- Given anonymously
  - Lithographs, nos. 54-55

MR. AND MRS. ALEXANDER M. BING, NEW YORK
- Drawings, nos. 8, 21

MR. AND MRS. H. LAWRENCE HERRING, NEW YORK
- Drawing no. 6

MRS. BERTHA SLATTERY LIEBERMAN, NEW YORK
- Lithographs, nos. 49, 113

WALTER PACI, NEW YORK
- Drawing, no. 22

JOHN REWALD, NEW YORK
- Drawing, no. 2

JACQUES SELIGMANN & CO., NEW YORK
- Drawing, no. 20

PRIVATE COLLECTOR, NEW YORK
- Drawings, nos. 1, 3

CHECK LIST

Items marked with an asterisk are illustrated

DEFinitive catalogs

J: Johnson, Una E. Ambroise Vollard éditeur, New York, Wittenborn, 1944
M: Mellerio, André Odilon Redon, Paris, Société pour L'Étude de la Gravure Française, 1913
DRAWINGS

1 Anchorite. (1870-5). Pencil, 8 x 8"
2 Apparition. (1870-5). Pencil, 7\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 7\(\frac{1}{2}\)"
3 Lazarus. (c.1880). Charcoal, 10\(\frac{1}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{1}{2}\"
4 The Cauldron. (c.1880). Charcoal, 15\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{1}{2}\"
5 Gnome. (c.1880). Charcoal, 18\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14"
6 Marsh Flower. (c.1885). Charcoal, 16\(\frac{1}{4}\) x 14"
7 The Flower. (c.1885). Charcoal, 15\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
8 Cavalier. (c.1885). Charcoal, 20 x 14\(\frac{1}{4}\"
9 Druidess. (c.1885). Charcoal, 20\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14"
10 The Window. (c.1885). Charcoal, 20\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{1}{4}\"
11 Saint Anthony. (c.1885). Charcoal, 20\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14"
12 The Dweller in the Tree, (c.1885). Charcoal, 18\(\frac{1}{2}\) x 13\(\frac{3}{4}\"
13 Reader of the Ramayana. (c.1885). Charcoal, 18\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
14 Armor. (c.1885). Charcoal, 19\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 15"
15 Idol. (c.1885). Charcoal, 20\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
16 Phantom. (c.1885). Charcoal, 20\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
17 Profile. (c.1890). Charcoal, 18\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 13\(\frac{3}{4}\"
18 Head of a Girl. (c.1890). Charcoal, 20\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
19 Head of a Child. (c.1890). Charcoal, 19\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
20 Young Girl. (c.1890). Charcoal, 19\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 14\(\frac{3}{4}\"
21 Woman at a Window. (c.1890). Charcoal, 20 x 14\(\frac{1}{4}\"
22 Edouard Vuillard. (1900?). Pen and ink, 10\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 9". Compare no. 45. To old age (1886)

ALBUMS OF LITHOGRAPHS

In the Dream (Dans le Reve), a portfolio of 10 lithographs and a frontispiece, 1879
23 Eclosion (M.27)
24 Germination (M.28)
25 The Gambler (M.31)
26 Gnome (M.32)
27 Felinity (M.33)
28 Vision (M.34)
29 Sad Ascent (M.35)
30 The eye like a strange balloon mounts toward infinity (M.38)
31 The death mask sounds the funeral knell (M.40)
32 The breath that governs beings is also in the spheres (M.42)
33 Frontispiece (M.44)
34 At the substrata of matter life awoke (M.45)
35 Cyclops (M.47)
36 Siren (M.48)
37 Satyr (M.49)
38 Man (M.52)

Homage to Goya, a portfolio of 6 lithographs dedicated to Goya, 1885
39 In my dream I saw a face of mystery in the sky (M.54)
40 . . . the marsh flower, a sad and human face (M.55)
41 . . . a madman in a dismal landscape (M.56)
42 . . . there were also embryonic creatures (M.57)
43 . . . a strange juggler (M.58)
44 I awoke to see the goddess of intelligibility, a profile austere and obdurate (M.59)

The Night (La Nuit), a portfolio of 6 lithographs, 1896
45 To old age (M.62)
46 The man was alone in the night landscape (M.63)
47 The chimera looked at everything with fright (M.65)
48 The priestesses were waiting (M.66)
49 And the seeker sought the infinite (M.67)

The Temptation of St. Anthony, Three series of illustrations for Flaubert's drama: the first, Tentation de Saint-Antoine, 10 lithographs and a frontispiece (M.83-93), 1888; the second, A Gustave Flaubert, 6 lithographs and a frontispiece (M.94-100), 1889; the third, Tentation de Saint-Antoine, 24 lithographs (M.134-157, J.135:1-24), 1896. Selections from all three portfolios are shown together. The characters are listed in order of appearance. Then follow stage directions or, more exactly, descriptions of other visions of St. Anthony.
50 St. Anthony: Help me! O my God! (M.135)
51 The Devil, bearing beneath his wings the Seven Deadly Sins (M.85)
52 The Queen of Sheba: There is sweetness in my kisses (M.137)
53 The Gymnosophist: I have buried myself in solitude. I dwelt in the tree behind (M.142)
54 The Buddha: I was led unto the schools. I knew more than the teachers (M.139)
55 The Buddha: Intelligence became mine! I became the Buddha (M.145)
56 A Monster, a skull, crowned with roses, dominating the torso of a woman nacreously white (M.89)
57 Oannes, a singular being with the head of a man upon the body of a fish (M.88)
58 Oannes: I, the first consciousness of Chaos, arose from the abyss (M.147)
59 Isis: I am always the great Isis! None have yet lifted my veil! My fruit is the sun! (M.149)
60 Death: It is I who make thee awful! Let us embrace. (M.153)
61 The Sciapods: Fettered to the earth by our hair . . . the head as low as possible. That is the secret of happiness. (M.100)
62 The Beasts of the Sea, round as wineskins, flat as blades (M.155)
63 Frontispiece for A Gustave Flaubert, first state without letters (M.94)
The Apocalypse According to St. John, a portfolio of twelve lithographs and a frontispiece (J.137:1-13), 1899
86 Frontispiece (M.179)
87 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword (M.174)
88 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side sealed with seven seals (M.175)
89 And his name that sat on him was Death . . . (M.176)
90 And the angel took the censer . . . (M.177)
91 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven . . . a woman clothed with the sun . . . (M.179)
92 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand (M.181)
93 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him with a thousand years (M.182)
94 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven (M.184)
95 And I John saw these things and heard them (M.185)

INDIVIDUAL LITHOGRAPHS
96 The Egg (M.60). 1885
97 Profile of Light (M.61). 1886
98 Young Girl (M.70). 1887
99 Christ (M.71). 1887
100 The Spider (M.72). 1887
101 Pegasus Captive (M.102). 1889
102 El Moghreb al Aksa (M.103). 1889
103 The Damnation of the Artist (M.104). 1889
104 The Black Flames (M.106). 1890
105 Closed Eyes (M.107). 1890
106 The Hanged Snake (M.108). 1890
107 The Saint and the Thistle (M.109). 1890
108 Pansyful (M.116). 1892
109 Druidess (M.117). 1892
110 The Reader (M.119). 1892
111 Tree (M.120). 1892
112 The Wing (M.122). 1893
113 Light (M.123). 1893
114 The Artist's Son (M.125). 1893
115 The Cell of Hearing (M.126). 1894
116 The Possessed, first state (M.128). 1894
117 The Possessed, second state (M.128). 1894
118 Brillantside (M.130). 1894
119 Celestial Art (M.131). 1894
120 The Centaur (M.133). 1895
121 Old Knight (M.135). 1896
122 Beatrice (M.168). (J.176). 1897
123 Child with Flowers (M.169). 1897
124 The Artist's Son (M.170). 1898
125 Woman with Flowers (M.185). 1900
126 Edward Vuillard (M.190). 1900
127 Pierre Bonnard (M.191). 1902
128 Paul Sérusier (M.192). 1903
129 Juliette Dodu (M.195). 1904
130 Roger Marx (M.198). 1904

The Wing. (1893.) Lithograph, 12½ x 9½". Museum of Modern Art, New York, Lillie P. Bliss Collection

The Haunted House (La Maison Hantée), 6 lithographs and a frontispiece to accompany a French translation of Edward Bulwer Lytton's The Haunted and the Haunters, 1896
82 On the chair . . . a misty outline of a human figure (M.161)
83 A pale light . . . shapeless and unsubstantial (M.162)
84 A woman's hand . . . seemingly as much of flesh and blood as my own (M.164)
85 Larose . . . the swarming life . . . in a drop of water (M.165)
redon  drawings and lithographs

the museum of modern art

picasso  his graphic art