

PRESS RELEASE

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Frank Stella Prints opens at the Addison Gallery April 22

Andover, Massachusetts (March 30, 2017) — This spring, the Addison Gallery of American Art, located on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, will present *Frank Stella Prints: From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation*. Throughout his prolific and influential career, Frank Stella, a Phillips Academy alumnus (Class of 1954), has been a major figure in the art world, internationally hailed as one of America's most significant artists. In his paintings, metal reliefs, sculptures, and prints, he has explored abstraction, which emerged during the early twentieth century in the innovations of artists such as Vassily Kandinsky, Kazimir Malevich, Piet Mondrian, and Pablo Picasso. A pioneer of minimalism in the 1960s, Stella continues to experiment and innovate, creating some of the most daring work to be seen today. *Frank Stella Prints*, organized by the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art in Wisconsin and curated by Richard H. Axsom, will be on view at the Addison through July 30, 2017, accompanied by *The Gifts of Frank Stella*, an exhibition highlighting works generously donated by the artist to the Addison.

In celebration of the opening of the exhibition, the Addison will host a public reception on Friday, April 21 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., and a panel discussion on Saturday, April 22 at 4:00 p.m. with Mr. Stella, print collector Jordan Schnitzer, exhibition curator Richard H. Axsom, and master printmaker Kenneth Tyler, moderated by museum director Judith F. Dolkart. Both events are free and open to the public.

"The Addison is thrilled to present the work Frank Stella, whose ambitious, virtuoso career has helped to define American art in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mr. Stella's engagement with printmaking—just one aspect of his rich and prolific oeuvre—demonstrates his creative reinvention of the medium. We are particularly excited to welcome Frank Stella

back to the Addison and to Phillips Academy, where he spent his high school days and where he has so generously shared his experiences and collections with the Phillipians who have followed in his footsteps,” stated Judith F. Dolkart, The Mary Stripp and R. Crosby Kemper Director of the Addison Gallery.

Stella’s first major print retrospective since 1982, the exhibition includes more than 100 editioned prints, drawn from the collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation, which demonstrate the artist’s remarkable career as a printmaker. Challenging traditional print media, Stella engaged in a series of stylistic reinventions from the geometric abstraction of minimalism in the early 1960s to the baroque exuberance of his later gestural work.

BACKGROUND

Frank Stella was recognized in the early 1960s as one of the most important proponents of the new geometric abstraction. In a career spanning more than five decades, his style has evolved from minimalist form toward greater complexity and exuberance of color, creating a body of work that established Stella as one of the most prominent abstract artists of our time.

Early on, Stella’s paintings directly informed his printmaking. Primarily lithographs, these early prints rephrased the paintings in variations of color and scale. In the 1980s, the prints, although still linked to the painting series, became independent in their imagery and began to incorporate materials and methods from the paintings into their production.

New directions in Stella’s printmaking also led to an increasingly varied use of print media, combining lithography, screenprinting, intaglio, and woodcut on color-stained handmade paper. Discarded color trial proofs from previous series and new, often computerized, proofs were cut-up and stapled down for collages that were adapted to printing elements. Scrap metal from the relief paintings and from previous print series became the primary printing elements that were collaged together to create assembled plates. In physicality and imagery, the reciprocities among Stella’s later paintings, reliefs, sculpture, and prints are complex, with the prints playing a central role. Stella has tellingly said “the prints are in all of my work.”

Stella made the majority of his prints in collaboration with master printer Kenneth Tyler. Perhaps the most technically innovative of all twentieth-century printers, Tyler was a perfect match for Stella's own restless imagination—creating what the critic Robert Hughes characterized in 1984 as “one of the great partnerships in modern American art.” So intimate and successful was the Stella/Tyler relationship that when Tyler Graphics Ltd. closed its workshop in 2001, Stella stopped making prints.

Many of Stella's most important print series are represented in the exhibition, including: *Black Series I* (1967), *Exotic Birds* (1977), *Polar Co-ordinates for Ronnie Peterson* (1980), *Circuits* (1982–83), *Swan Engravings* (1982–85), *Moby Dick Engravings* (1991), *Imaginary Places* (1994–99), *Near East Monoprints* (1999–2001), and his final series, the *Schwarze Weisheit Series* (2000). Stella's titles are richly allusive and range in meanings from the historical, geographical, and political to the personal and literary, the latter reflecting the artist's emerging interest in “abstract narration” in the 1980s. Referring to nineteenth-century American clipper ships, Civil War battles, endangered and extinct birds, Formula 1 racetracks, Italian folktales, and Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, the titles add another symbolic dimension to Stella's richly layered art.

The dedication and imagination of Frank Stella have shaped an artistic endeavor of singular achievement and perpetual invention. His abstraction has ranged from precise geometry to free and ebullient gesture, from stark black and gray to luminous color. He has created a body of work of remarkable dimension that encompasses solemnity and antic humor, the elegiac and the ecstatic. His reinvigoration of the expressive potential and power of abstraction remains his most profound legacy. Stella's prints recapitulate and expand upon the remarkable scope of his work in other media, standing as an authentic index to the genius of his art.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In addition to the opening reception and panel discussion, the Addison will present the following programs in conjunction with the exhibition:

Evening Gallery Tour

Join Addison Director Judith F. Dolkart on the final late Wednesday of the season for a walk-through and discussion of *Frank Stella Prints*. This program has been organized with Andover's Memorial Hall Library. The event is free, but space is limited; please register online at mhl.org/events or call 978.623.8430.

Wednesday, May 31, 7:00 pm

Youth Printmaking Classes

Experiment with colors, techniques, and materials inspired by the work of Frank Stella through art classes offered in collaboration with the Essex Art Center. Classes will meet at the Essex Art Center and will include a visit to the Addison Gallery. For more information and to register, visit essexartcenter.org. Space is limited.

7-week workshop for ages 8–11: Thursdays, April 27– June 8, 4:00–5:45 pm (\$115)

1-day workshop for ages 6–11: Thursday, July 11, 9:00 am–3:00 pm (\$55)

1-day workshop for ages 11–16: Thursday, July 11, 9:00 am–3:00 pm (\$55)

CATALOGUE

This retrospective is also the occasion for the publication of *Frank Stella Prints*, a revised and expanded second edition of *The Prints of Frank Stella: A Catalogue Raisonné, 1967–1982* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1983), which was produced by exhibition curator Richard Axsom and published by the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation in association with the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Support for *Frank Stella Prints: From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation* has been made possible by a grant from the [Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation](#).

The Addison's presentation of the exhibition has been generously supported by the Arthur and Vivian Schulte Exhibitions Fund. Additionally, the Addison is grateful to its media sponsor, *Boston Magazine*.

ABOUT THE ADDISON GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART

Devoted exclusively to American art, the Addison Gallery acquires, preserves, interprets, and exhibits works of art for the education and enjoyment of all. Opened in 1931, the Addison has one of the most important collections of American art in the country that includes more than 17,500 works by prominent artists such as George Bellows, John Singleton Copley, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jackson Pollock, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker, as well as photographers Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Eadweard Muybridge, Cindy Sherman, and many more. The Addison Gallery, located in a stand-alone building on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover, offers a continually rotating series of exhibitions and programs, all of which are free and open to the public. Phillips Academy welcomes visitors to its beautiful, walkable campus year-round.

The Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Wednesday 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. through May 31, 2017), and Sunday 1:00–5:00 p.m. The museum is closed on Mondays, national holidays, December 24, and the month of August. Admission to all exhibitions is free. The Addison Gallery also offers free education programs for teachers and groups. For more information, call 978-749-4015, or visit the website at www.addisongallery.org.