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## Richard Diebenkorn: The" 41 Etchings Drypoints" Portfolio

George W. Neubert Director The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

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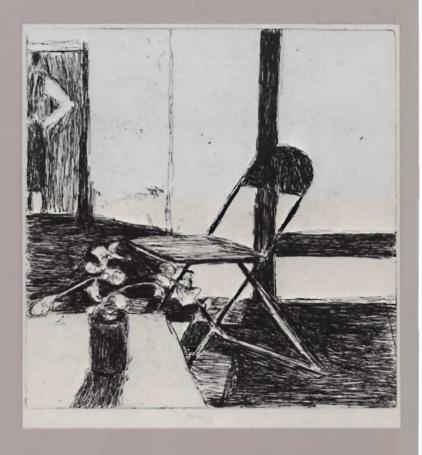
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# RICHARD DIEBENKORN

The "41 Etchings Drypoints" Portfolio



### RICHARD DIEBENKORN

The "41 Etchings Drypoints" Portfolio

Throughout his career, Richard Diebenkorn has employed both abstract and figurative compositional techniques. During the period between the 1963 retrospective exhibition of his figurative paintings at the M. H. de Young Museum in San Francisco and 1965, when he began work on his widely acclaimed and ongoing *Ocean Park* series, he produced a series of over one hundred figurative etchings, among them, domestic interiors, portraits of his wife, table-top still lifes, nudes, and San Francisco Bay Area landscapes. In 1965, forty-one of these prints were selected by the artist and published by Crown Point Press, Berkeley. Entitled 41 Etchings Drypoints, the edition of twenty-five is comprised of thirteen bound books and twelve portfolios. This selection of representational images, typical subjects of Diebenkorn's painting of this period and highly influential in what became known as Bay Area figuration, is presented in Richard Diebenkorn: The "41 Etchings Drypoints" Portfolio. Drawn from the collection of the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, the portfolio was donated to the gallery by Elinor Poindexter.

Printmaking has occupied an important position throughout Diebenkorn's career. A relief from the solitary confinement of the studio, it has provided another rich avenue for his ideas.

A traditional intaglio process (the generic term for recessed printing techniques), drypoint etching lends itself to Diebenkorn's tactile line. In this process an image is cut into the surface of a metal plate with a pointed instrument, such as a fine needle or dental tool. A superb draughtsman, Diebenkorn utilized the physicality of the technique, the varying "weight" of his line reflecting the sensitivity of his touch. Although most of the prints in 41 Etchings Drypoints are simple drypoints or hardground etchings, Diebenkorn also used aquatint, often mixing these techniques to achieve a dramatic linear quality reinforced with rich blacks and controlled tonal areas. The intaglio process allows for revision through the scraping out of incised lines on the printing plate. The trace of these revisions, so essential to Diebenkorns's painting process, is no less important to the final results of his printmaking.

These images have an intimate quality reflecting the moods and feelings of the artist. In the figure studies, the model is usually portrayed in a slightly

awkward position and often lost in thought; his or her character seems to have been the subject of intent study by the artist, reminiscent of the sitters of Edgar Degas and Edward Hopper. Diebenkorn's use of flattened depth, shallow space, and expressive lines echo the fluidity of the graphics of Henri Matisse.

Richard Diebenkorn: The "41 Etchings Drypoints" Portfolio provides an insightful commentary on a lesser-known aspect of the artist's oeuvre. While clearly related to the figurative paintings of this period, these etchings stand on their own as eloquent works of art. In organizing his imagery for these prints, Diebenkorn explores planar and linear relationships, attempting to balance flat space against shallow perspective and playing reference against non-reference. His approach reflects the visual issues that have preoccupied him throughout his career, whether working with representational or abstract images.

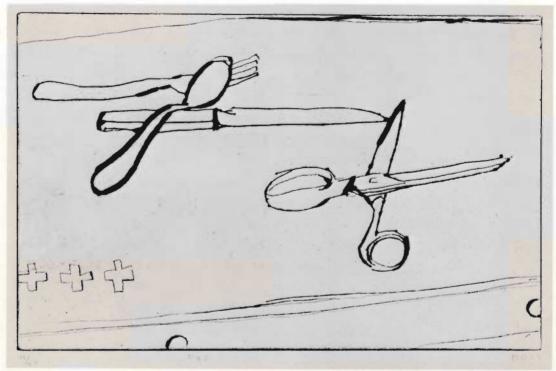
Richard Diebenkorn enjoys an international reputation as one of America's most respected painters. The character of his art, its mastery and authenticity, is brought to full force in this first serious effort of printmaking by this American master.

George W. Neubert

Director

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

Richard Diebenkorn: The "41 Etchings Drypoints" Portfolio is a project of ART Access, a pilot program of the American Federation of Arts with major support from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.



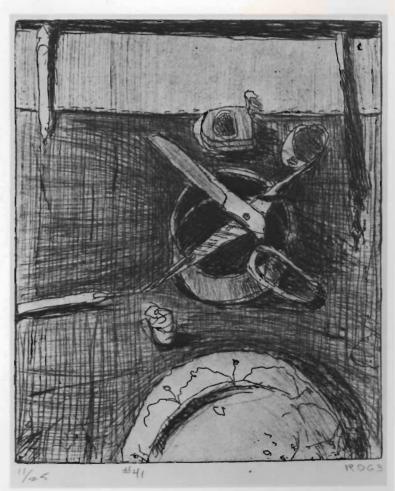
#27



#33



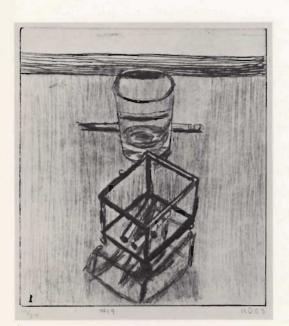
#37



#41

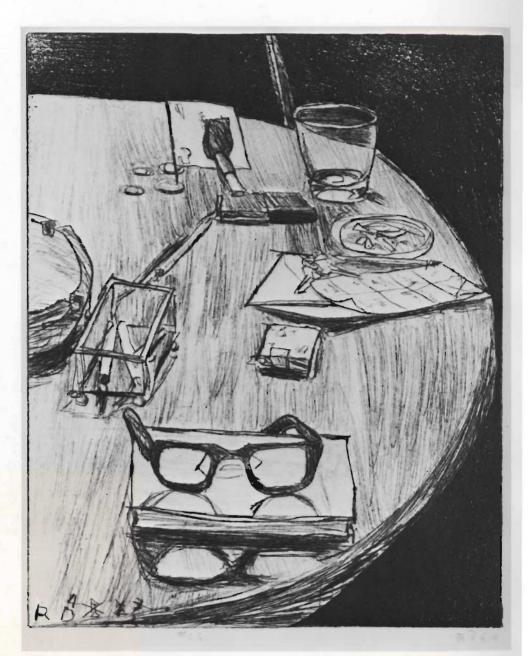


#10





#31



#26

#### CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

In addition to the published books and portfolios, there are ten artist proofs of 41 Etchings Drypoints. Four are in book form, two are portfolios, and four are unbound and uncontained prints. These are printed on a variety of paper types and sizes, are of similar states to the edition, and are designated either "AP" or "Proof."

#1 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 drypoint 515/6 x 95/8 in.

#2 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 hardground etching 81/16 x 915/16 in.

#3 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 softground etching 911/16 x 71/4 in.

#4 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 softground etching 8 x 12 1/16 in.

#5 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 aquatint, hardground etching 91/8 x 67/8 in.

#6 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 drypoint 7% 6 x 5 % in.

#7 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 softground etching 81/8 x 715/16 in.

#8 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 aquatint, softground etching 5¼ x 8⅓ in.

#9 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 hardground etching 6 1/8 x 7 in.

#10 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint 1078 x 678 in.

#11 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 aquatint, hardground etching 93/8 x 8 in.

#12 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint 111/8 x 91/8 in.

#13 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint 111/4 x 7 ½ in.

#14 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching, drypoint 111/4 x 91/8 in. #15 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching 11 1/4 x 9 1/8 in.

#16 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 drypoint 13 1/8 x 10 in.

#17 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 aquatint, drypoint, hardground etching
12½ x 87/8 in.

#18 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint 8 x 9½ in.

#19 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1963 drypoint  $7\frac{1}{2}$  x  $6\frac{1}{2}$  in.

#20 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching 45/8 x 45/8 in.

#21 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 softground etching 8½8 x 6 in.

#22 from 4x Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching 8 x 61/8 in.

#23 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching 8 1/8 x 6 1/4 in.

#24 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 softground etching 121/4 x 10 in.

#25 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching 8½, x 7½ in.

#26 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 aquatint, drypoint, hardground etching 10% x 8½ in.

#27 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1963 drypoint 71/2 x 111/4 in.

#28 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 drypoint 12% x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. #29 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint, hardground etching, scraping 91/4 x 71/8 in.

#30 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 softground etching, drypoint 67/8 x 1515/16 in.

#31 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 aquatint, hardground etching 101/8 x 81/16 in.

#32 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint 7% x 111/4 in.

#33 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 aquatint, hardground etching, drypoint 117/8 x 911/16 in.

#34 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 hardground etching 67/8 x 61/16 in.

#35 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 drypoint 81/4 x 11 in.

#36 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1964 hardground etching 8½ x 11½ in.

#37 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint, hardground etching

#38 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 hardground etching 81/8 x 8 in.

#39 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1963 drypoint 12½, x 9¾ in.

#40 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1965 drypoint 5 x 45/16 in.

#41 from 41 Etchings Drypoints, 1963 drypoint, hardground etching  $7\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$  in.

Cover: #38 from 41 Etchings Drypoints