

1970

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

George W. Neubert

*Director The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery*

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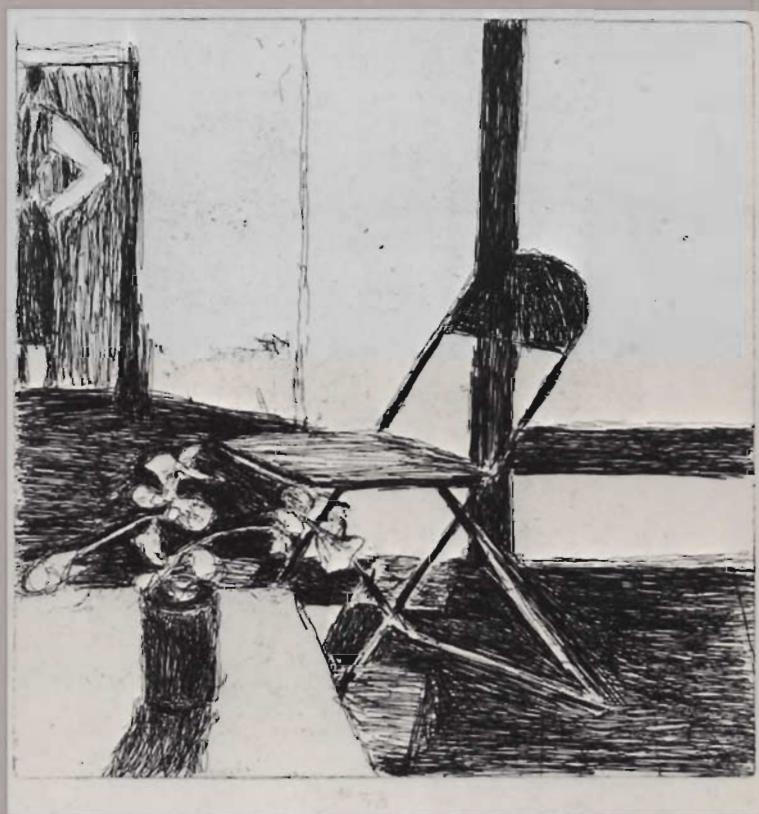
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# RICHARD DIEBENKORN

THE "41 ETCHINGS DRYPOINTS" PORTFOLIO



AN EXHIBITION CO-ORGANIZED BY THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS AND  
THE SHELDON MEMORIAL ART GALLERY, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN.

# 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 Diebenkorn'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.

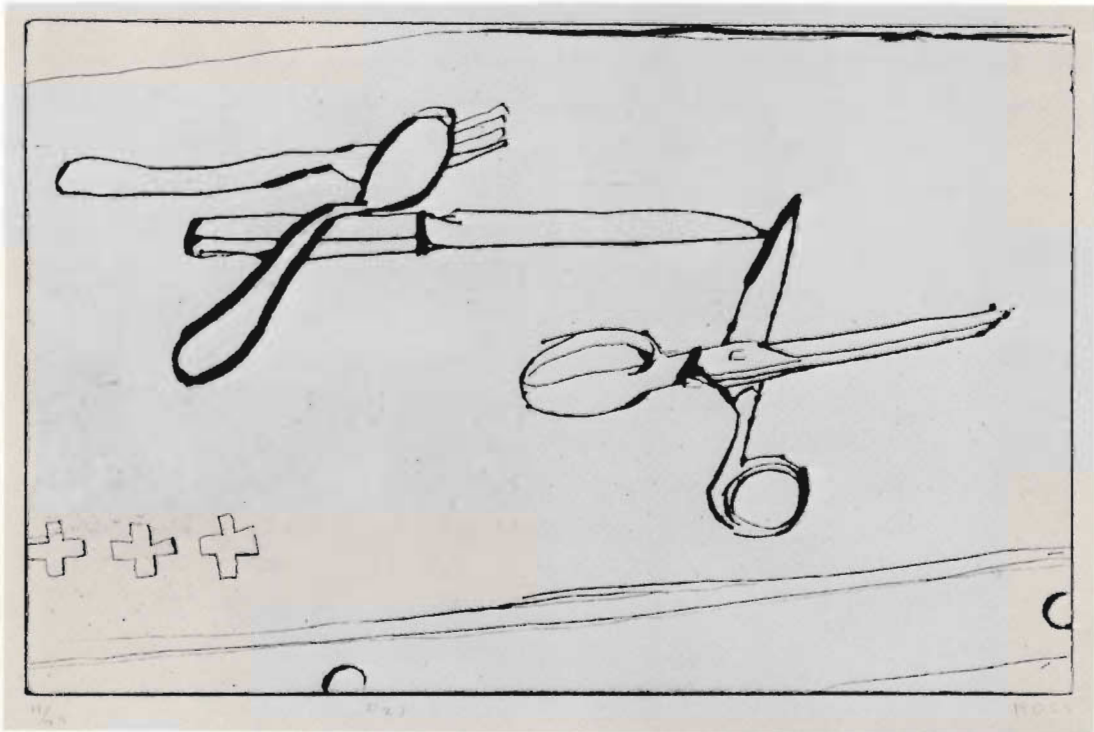
Richard Diebenkorn enjoys an international reputation as one of America's most respected painters. The character of his art, its mastery and authenticity, is brought to full force in this first serious effort of printmaking by this American master.

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.



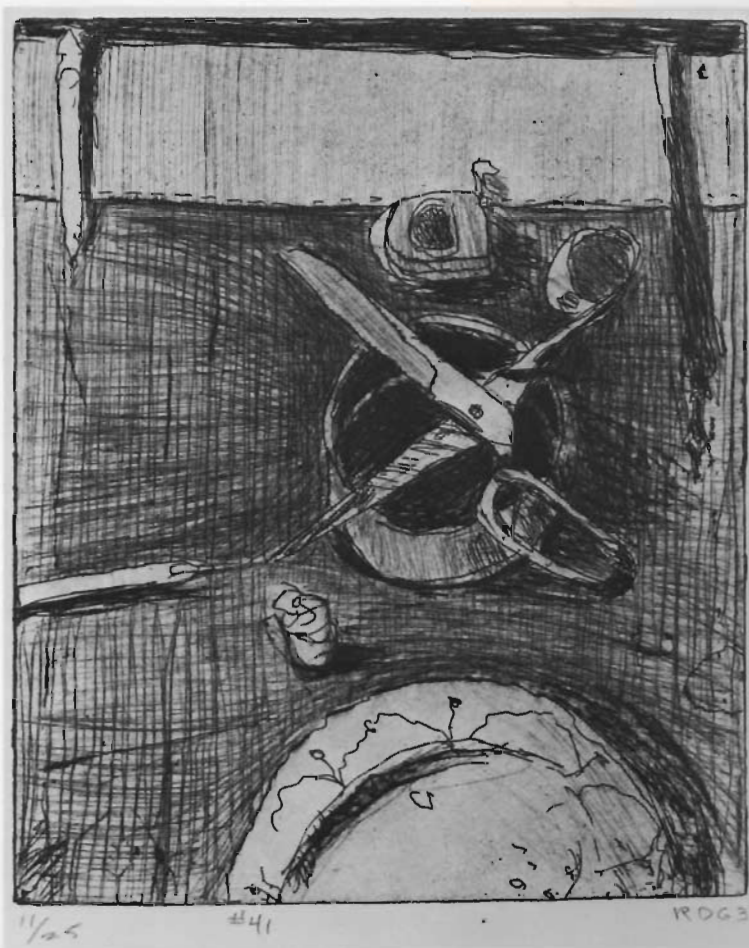
#27



#33



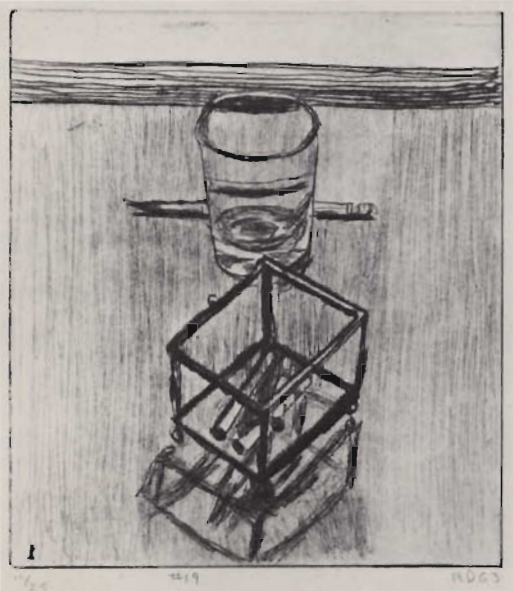
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#41



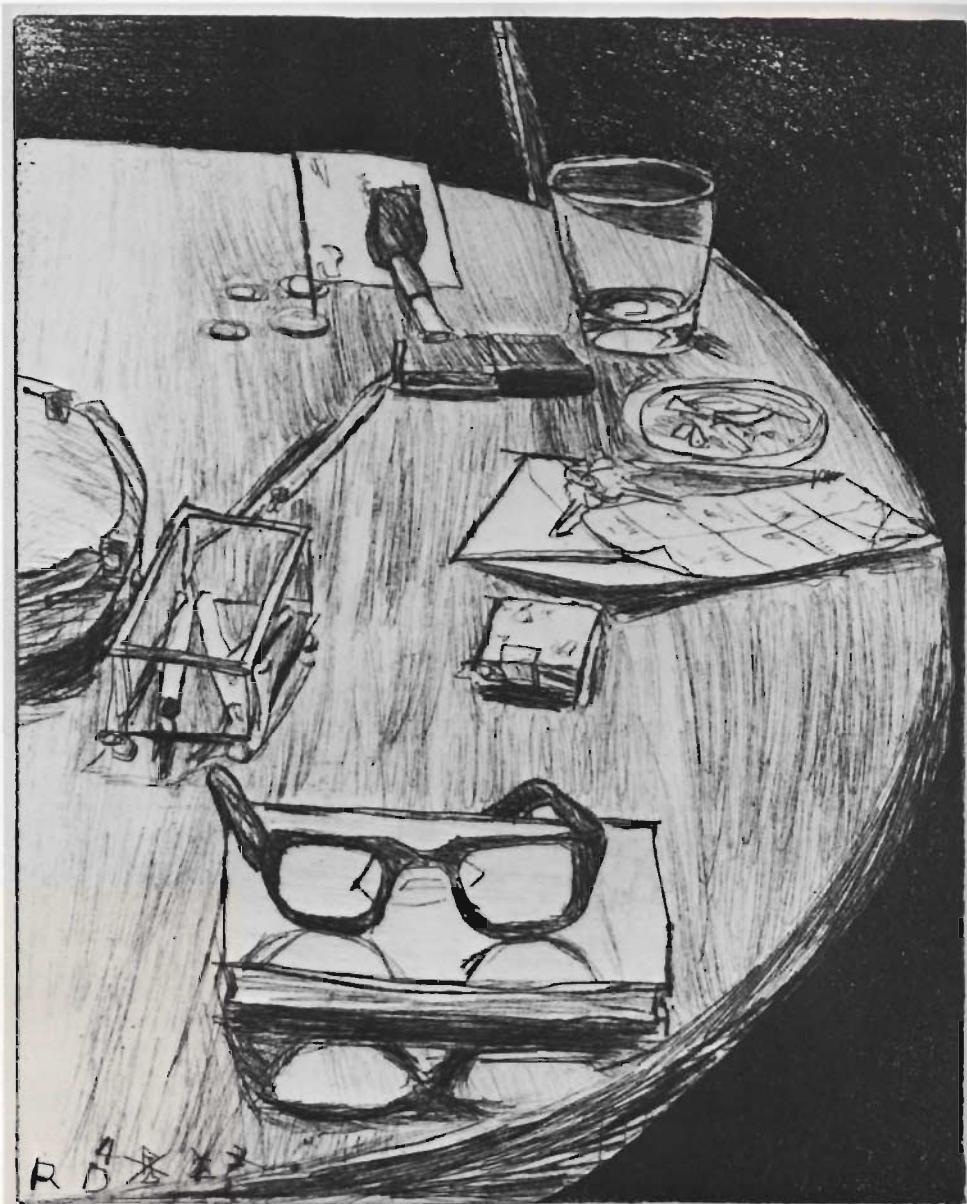
#10



#19



#31



#26



# CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

#1 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
drypoint  
5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#2 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
hardground etching  
8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#3 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
softground etching  
9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

#4 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
softground etching  
8 x 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#5 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
aquatint, hardground etching  
9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#6 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
drypoint  
7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#7 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
softground etching  
8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#8 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
aquatint, softground etching  
5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#9 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
hardground etching  
6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 7 in.

#10 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint  
10<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#11 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
aquatint, hardground etching  
9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8 in.

#12 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint  
11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#13 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint  
11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.

#14 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching, drypoint  
11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#15 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching  
11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#16 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
drypoint  
13<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 10 in.

#17 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
aquatint, drypoint, hardground  
etching  
12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 8<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#18 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint  
8 x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.

#19 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1963  
drypoint  
7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

#20 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching  
4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#21 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
softground etching  
8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6 in.

#22 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching  
8 x 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#23 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching  
8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

#24 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
softground etching  
12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 10 in.

#25 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching  
8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#26 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
aquatint, drypoint, hardground  
etching  
10<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.

#27 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1963  
drypoint  
7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

#28 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
drypoint  
12<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

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."

#29 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint, hardground etching, scraping  
9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#30 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
softground etching, drypoint  
6<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 15<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#31 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
aquatint, hardground etching  
10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#32 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint  
7<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

#33 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
aquatint, hardground etching, drypoint  
11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#34 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
hardground etching  
6<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#35 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
drypoint  
8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 11 in.

#36 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1964  
hardground etching  
8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.

#37 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint, hardground etching  
10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 10 in.

#38 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
hardground etching  
8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8 in.

#39 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1963  
drypoint  
12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 9<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

#40 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1965  
drypoint  
5 x 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> in.

#41 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*, 1963  
drypoint, hardground etching  
7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

Cover:  
#38 from *41 Etchings Drypoints*