

Timothy Taylor



Philip Guston, *East Side*, 1981.

Forthcoming Exhibition *Philip Guston: The Last Lithographs* 14 September — 20 October 2018 Timothy Taylor, New York

Timothy Taylor, New York is proud to present the complete collection of Philip Guston lithographs; 25 works created by the artist and published by Gemini G.E.L. in 1980, the year of his death.

The lithographs represent the apotheosis of Guston's visual language and read as a lexicon of the emblems that characterize his distinct iconography. Prior to the collaboration with Gemini, Guston had made very few prints in his life, generally preferring to draw. Yet in his last years, at ease with his established vocabulary, he decided to revisit the medium, perhaps recognizing a desire and the opportunity for wide dissemination. Guston had suffered a heart attack the previous year, which brought an increasing feeling of fragility and concern with mortality. In light of this existential moment, "the rapidity of the lithographic process enabled him to produce an abundance of new images without the physical effort needed to paint large-scale canvases"¹.

Following the printmaking examples of Goya and Rembrandt, Guston chose to work in black and white, using a bold heavy line to give the portrayed objects an aggressive presence. Guston's now well-known vocabulary of everyday subjects and present objects clocks, shoes, magnets, cars and studio materials references the random detritus of life, telling contemporary stories by turning benign household items into ominous portents, both grotesque and charmed.

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Guston had cemented his iconic visual language in the 1970s, the most prolific period of career. He drew with a desire to present the world as it was and not as portrayed in the elevation of other contemporary movements. To create his images, Guston would capitalize on the naturally hallucinatory state of sleep, going to bed early so as to wake in the middle of the night, when he would rush to the studio in a dreamlike fervor. These bouts of creativity allowed Guston to channel both cognizant and subliminal thoughts, resulting in works imbued with an uncanny power. As the Tate noted upon its acquisition of a group from the series, “These lithographs contain a mixture of reality, fantasy, caricature and naturalistic observation which characterizes all of Guston’s late work and which endows a biomorphic celebration of life with both pathos and humour”².

Technical Notes

Sidney B. Felsen, the co-founder of Gemini G.E.L worked closely with Jasper Johns in the late 1960s and 1970s to generate some of his printed works. After becoming acquaintances, Felsen asked Johns “who do you feel we should be working with that we are not?”, to which Johns replied “Philip Guston”³. This conversation became the genesis of a collaboration which would produce some of Guston’s clearest and most profound images.

Between 1979 and 1980, 39 lithograph proofs were made at Guston’s studio in Woodstock, New York, with 25 then selected as the editions. “There are two clear categories within the series; the prints featuring promos or objects with empty or populated backgrounds, (eg. *Summer*, 1981), and the prints that are based on spaces and interiors (eg. *East Side*, 1980)”⁴. *Painter*, 1980, is the lone anomaly in the group, the only lithograph which contains a portrait apparently of the artist himself.

Each of these works are in editions of 50 except for *Studio Forms*, 1980, which is an edition of a 100. This series was created using a mixture of litho crayon and rubbing ink transferred from decal paper. For printing paper, a mixture of Arches cover and Koller transfer were used. Philip Guston died on June 7 1980, prior to signing the complete editions. All works are embossed with Gemini G.E.L. blind stamp and those without a signature are embossed with ‘Philip Guston’ estate stamp.

Notes to Editors

Timothy Taylor, New York

Over the past 20 years, Timothy Taylor has developed a multi-generational roster of artists, united by lineage that stems from an interest in post-war abstraction. Through this program Kiki Smith, Josephine Meckseper, Richard Patterson, Alex Katz, Gabriel de la Mora, Eduardo Terrazas, Ding Yi, Volker Hüller, Eddie Martinez, Jonathon Lasker, Richard Patterson, Armen Eloyan and Shezad Dawood, among others, are posited as contemporary peers to the estates of Antoni Tapies, Simon Hantai and Diane Arbus.

In July 2016, Timothy Taylor announced its plans to open their first New York gallery space under the identity Timothy Taylor, New York. The gallery occupies the first floor of an impressive Chelsea townhouse. Incorporating curated group and solo exhibitions of historical and contemporary figures, Timothy Taylor, New York draws upon Timothy Taylor’s 23-year history and London program, while introducing a distinct vision that acknowledges its location at the heart of the Chelsea art district.

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Gemini G.E.L.

“Gemini G.E.L. is an artist’s workshop and publisher of limited edition prints and sculptures. The workshop has collaborated with artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Isamu Noguchi, Robert Motherwell, Roy Lichtenstein, Willem de Kooning, Claes Oldenburg, and Ed Ruscha, among many others, to create editioned multiples in media including lithography, etching, screen printing, woodcut and a wide variety of sculptural materials.”

Bibliography

1. Michael Semff, *Philip Guston: Prints, Catalogue Raisonee*, (USA, Sieveking, 2015), p. 10
2. The Tate Gallery *1982-84: Illustrated Catalogue of Acquisitions*, (London, Tate, 1986)
3. *Philip Guston, Inevitable Finality*, (USA: Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University & Gemini G.E.L, 2012) pp. 14-15
4. Michael Semff, *Philip Guston: Prints, Catalogue Raisonee*, (USA: Sieveking, 2015), p. 11

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