

Norton Simon Museum For Immediate Release

411 West Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, California 91105 www.nortonsimon.org

External Affairs Department 626.844.6900 media@nortonsimon.org

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Media Contacts:

Leslie Denk | ldenk@nortonsimon.org | (626) 844-6941

Emma Jacobson-Sive | emma@ejs-media.com | (323) 842-2064

Ink, Paper, Stone: Six Women Artists and the Language of Lithography

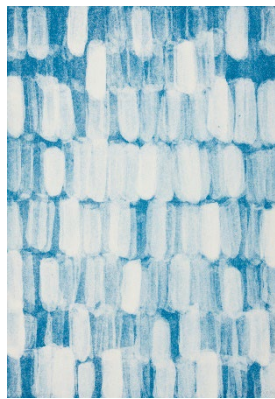
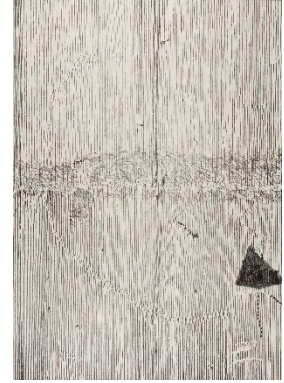
October 14, 2022–February 13, 2023

Pasadena, CA—The Norton Simon Museum presents *Ink, Paper, Stone: Six Women Artists and the Language of Lithography*, an exhibition featuring works on paper by six critically acclaimed artists: Ruth Asawa, Gego, Eleanore Mikus, Louise Nevelson, Irene Siegel and Hedda Sterne. Each of them received a two-month fellowship at the famed Tamarind Lithography Workshop, founded by the visionary printmaker June Wayne in 1960. Although they had established their reputations in other media, including painting, sculpture and installation art, all of the artists in this exhibition found that lithography offered fascinating new possibilities for exploring their aesthetic interests. The more than 90 works on view, all created in the 1960s, are part of the Norton Simon Museum collection, which owns a near complete set of lithographs created at the Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles.



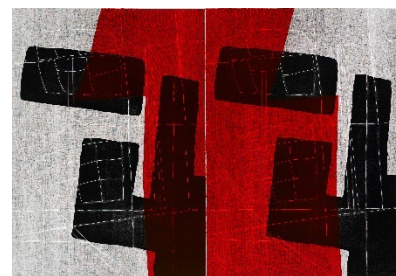
Ruth Asawa (American, 1926–2013) is best known for her hanging sculptures, created in looped and tied wire. At Tamarind in 1965, she eagerly experimented with a variety of lithographic techniques, to the delight of her printers. Inspired by subjects from the natural world, Asawa brought forth images that combined abstraction with representation. Her work on the stone ranged from delicate, precise floral studies to loose applications with greasy ink washes that favored chance patterns in the printing.

Gertrud Goldschmidt (Venezuelan, b. Germany, 1912–1994), the Caracas-based sculptor and printmaker known as **Gego**, arrived at Tamarind in 1966. Trained as an architect and engineer, Gego embedded qualities of volume, motion and transparency in her line-based works on paper and in her admired *Reticuláreas*—weblike, ethereal installations fabricated from wire and metal. At Tamarind, Gego directed her efforts toward eliciting the kinetic sensation that distinguished her other lithographs. She introduced unexpected interruptions, subtle dips and hatchings to her line work on the stone, adding flux as well as a note of whimsy.



Eleanore Mikus's *Tablets*, a hybrid form of painting and relief crafted from wood, fiberglass, glue and gesso, received critical acclaim in New York's art world in the 1960s. Often associated with minimalism because they were reductive and monochromatic, they feature subtly fluctuating surfaces. Their intimations of cast shadows, suggestive of movement, encourage looking and contemplation. Mikus (American, 1927–2017) achieved comparable results with her works on paper by hand-manipulating the material prior to drawing. At Tamarind in 1968, the artist added dimension to her printing papers by folding them and employing a bookbinder's knife to add horizontal and vertical creases prior to printing her designs.

Louise Nevelson (American, 1899–1988) presented a novel vision for sculpture in mid-century America. Adopting unorthodox materials and processes to create monumental, monochromatic constructions made from wood and found objects, Nevelson demonstrated that women artists, too, could successfully produce large-scale sculpture. At Tamarind in 1967, she continued to challenge convention by printing on shaped papers and placing inked cheesecloth over the stone to impose textural impressions that transferred to the prints. She even hinged select prints together, like assemblages, with the goal of creating three-dimensional environments. Nevelson's inventive approaches freed her lithographs from their traditional format, expanding expectations of how they should look and function.





Drawing and intaglio printmaking were **Irene Siegel**'s métier. Trained at the Institute of Design in Chicago, Siegel (American, b. 1932) developed a personal figurative vocabulary informed by experiences from her immediate world—the intersection of life dreams and practical considerations, and the dynamics of the male-female relationship. She adopted a color- and pattern-forward style that she described as “pop-surrealism.” At Tamarind in 1967, the artist found the lithographic process complementary to her architectonic approach to composition. To achieve the crisp edges she desired, Siegel preferred hard-grade lithographic pencils and crayons for their low grease content. She exhausted her implements so quickly that her workshop colleagues nicknamed her the “woodpecker.”



The radically modern character of New York City, where **Hedda Sterne** immigrated in 1941, inspired her abstract painting. A familiar presence in the city's art world, Sterne (American, b. Romania, 1910–2011) participated actively in gallery exhibits, a notable circumstance for a female artist at mid-century. Unlike her Abstract Expressionist contemporaries, with whom she was critically linked, her painting style was disciplined and structured. When she reached Tamarind, at age 56 in 1967, her artistic interests became more focused as she turned to the natural world for inspiration. Though she was still interested in evoking the essential features of her subjects through abstraction, Sterne's lithographs engage with the organic forms of vegetation and the illusory effects of sea and sky.

Describing her folded paper work from this period, Eleanore Mikus advised viewers to pay close attention, for “the more you look, the more you see.” *Ink, Paper, Stone* explores the significance of that observation in the works of art themselves, as well as in the lives of these groundbreaking women artists, who navigated the complex and competing expectations of an art world in which female achievement was measured by a different set of standards.

Ink, Paper, Stone: Six Women Artists and the Language of Lithography is organized by Gloria Williams Sander, Curator at the Norton Simon Museum. It is on view in the Museum's lower-level exhibition wing from October 14, 2022 through February 13, 2023. A series of virtual and in-person public programs will be offered in conjunction with the exhibition. Details will be made available in early fall.

Image credits, top to bottom: Ruth Asawa (American, 1926-2013), *Poppy*, 1965, lithograph, Norton Simon Museum, Anonymous Gift, P.1966.07.135, Artwork © Estate of Ruth Asawa; Gego (Venezuelan, b. Germany, 1912-1994), *Untitled*, 1966, lithograph, Norton Simon Museum, Anonymous Gift, P.1968.27.190, © Fundación Gego; Eleanore Mikus (American, 1927-2017), *Tablet Litho 6*, 1968, lithograph, Norton Simon Museum, Anonymous Gift, P.1969.092.444, © Eleanore Mikus; Louise Nevelson (American, 1899-1988), *Untitled*, 1967, lithograph, Norton Simon Museum, Anonymous Gift, P.1969.092.346-347, © Estate of Louise Nevelson / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; Irene Siegel (American, b. 1932), *Wedgewood (Untitled Suite 1)*, 1967, lithograph, Norton Simon Museum, Anonymous Gift, P.1969.092.321, © Irene Siegel; Hedda Sterne (American, b. Romania, 1910-2011), *Untitled (Metaphores and Metamorphoses I)*, 1967, lithograph, Norton Simon Museum, Anonymous Gift, P.1967.20.272, © 2022 The Hedda Sterne Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

About the Norton Simon Museum

The Norton Simon Museum is known around the world as one of the most remarkable private art collections ever assembled. Over a 30-year period, industrialist Norton Simon (1907–1993) amassed an astonishing collection of European art from the Renaissance to the 20th century, and a stellar collection of South and Southeast Asian art spanning 2,000 years. Modern and Contemporary Art from Europe and the United States, acquired by the former Pasadena Art Museum, also occupies an important place in the Museum’s collections. The Museum houses more than 12,000 objects, roughly 1,000 of which are on view in the galleries and gardens. Two temporary exhibition spaces feature rotating installations of artworks not on permanent display.

Location: The Norton Simon Museum is located at 411 W. Colorado Blvd. at Orange Grove Boulevard in Pasadena, Calif., at the intersection of the Foothill (210) and Ventura (134) freeways. For general Museum information, please call (626) 449-6840 or visit nortonsimon.org. **Temporary Hours:** The Museum is open Thursday through Monday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed on Tuesday and Wednesday. Beginning July 1, 2022, Saturday hours will expand to 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. **Admission:** General admission is \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors. Members, students with I.D., and patrons ages 18 and under are admitted free of charge. The Museum is wheelchair accessible. **Parking:** Parking is free but limited, and no reservations are necessary. **Public Transportation:** Pasadena Transit stops directly in front of the Museum. Please visit <http://pasadenatransit.net> for schedules. The MTA bus line #180/181 stops in front of the Museum. The Memorial Park Station on the MTA Gold Line, the closest Metro Rail station to the Museum, is located at 125 E. Holly St. at Arroyo Parkway. Please visit www.metro.net for schedules. **Covid-19 Protocols and Guidelines:** For up-to-date information on our Covid-19-related protocols, please visit nortonsimon.org/visit.