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this new process. "Artists were looking for an opportunity to work more spontaneously than they could in intaglio," said Semivar. "The fluidity of materials and the ability to work larger in size influenced their choice. Color was a big draw. It was much easier to print color in lithography than in intaglio so you can get larger editions." Lithography had then as it does now the ability to become a public image.

Hardships caused by the Napoleonic Wars and Senefelder's secrecy about the process made fine art lithography scarce before 1815. The revival of peace and publication of detailed technicals in 1818, permitted artists such as Daumier, Degas, Manet, Delacroix, and Toulouse-Lautrec to work in lithography. Fortunately, one of the strengths of the DAs collection are the 19th century French prints given to the museum in the 1970s by Bernard F. Walker, a former Detroitier now living in Florida. The gift allows almost an entire wall to be devoted to Theodore Gericault.

"Lithography had its ups and downs in the 19th century," said Sojka. "In the early part of the 1800s, French artists made the greatest strides in creativeness. America and Germany were more commercial. Gericault was a terribly important artist, a part of this pioneering group."

Throughout the last 200 years, lithography has documented history. In 1818, Gericault's "Return from Russia (Return from Russia)" illustrated the tremendous national pride after the Napoleonic army was defeated. One of the most prolific lithographers of all time, Daumier during the period between the 1830s and 1850s, roared the legislative body and the royal family's children in lithographs for newspapers and a satirical weekly. Edouard Manet captured the execution of Maximilian and the street fighting in Paris in 1871.

"One of the most important aspects of lithography in the 19th century was development of color," said Sojka. "For Return from Russia one stone with black ink was used; gold ink was brushed on a separate stone to add color."

Toulouse-Lautrec in the 1890s made the greatest advances in color. His first commission for a color lithograph was from the Moulin Rouge. By 1898 he was using a splattering technique in "Woman at the Tub."

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who produced more than 350 lithographs between 1891 and 1901, created "Woman at the Tub" and a series of related images after living for many weeks in different brothels. Red, yellow and gray printed from separate stones are highly complex prints. He uses brush, crayon and splattering technique. In 1899, "The Jockey" from the Toledo Museum of Art, was commissioned for a never completed portfolio.

"Toulouse-Lautrec created some of the best prints ever made."

Artists did not print their own lithographs but worked closely with a professional printer especially when multiple stones, employed in color prints, had to be aligned to register accurately.

"Just like an artist had a style, a printer had a style," said Sojka. "In 1821, Gericault went to England to work with Charles Hullmandel because French prints were silvery."

Toulouse-Lautrec and Pierre Bonnard, who was also important to color lithography along with Edouard Vuillard, worked with Auguste Clot, "a sort of printer to the stars."

"Edward Munch went to Paris in the 1890s to make his first print with Auguste Clot," said Sojka. "The 'Lovers' is a very provocative image of two lovers caught in the waves."

As artists experimented with lithography, new techniques were being discovered like the splattering employed by Toulouse-Lautrec. Eugene Delacroix created his "Wild Horse" lithograph in 1828 using a tool to scrape the stone and create negative space or white areas. German artist Adolph von Menzel, employing brush and scraping techniques, uses a tint stone in "The Bear Pit at the Zoological Garden."

"Lithography is interesting because there are so many ways you can draw a lithograph," said Sojka. "Delacroix's lithograph is an example of early scraping and what it adds to imagery."

Borrowed from the Toledo Museum of Art, Francisco Goya's "Bulls of Bordeaux" series (1825) was done in France after he was exiled from Spain.

"It is astounding technically and creatively. It's only 10 years since peace is established. The prints set a standard and a hallmark, way ahead of their time. These artists were giants in their time. In the 1830s and '40s, Delacroix was the greatest romantic artist so when you have someone of that stature doing lithography it's more readily accepted by other artists and the public."

Several of the lithographs relate to literature and theater, not separate entities in their day. Delacroix's series on Hamlet includes "Hamlet and Horatio and the Grave Diggers" illustrating the classic verse "Alas, poor Yorick." A new translation of Shakespeare by Francois-Pierre Guizot in 1821 stimulated interest in the plays which were a smash hit on Parisian stages in late 1820s.

"Delacroix had lots of sources for imagery of Hamlet," said Sojka. "The imagery wasn't only extracted from literature. He was going to plays. The show mirrors the 19th century in so many ways. It's not just artists but musicians and writers who get to be friends."

Fine art lithography continued hand-in-hand with literature and theater through the century. Manet produced a series of lithographs for a translation of Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven." Odilon Redon's series of 10 lithographs was created after Gustave Flaubert's writings on the Temptation of St. Anthony. Interested in marketing his charcoal drawings, Redon in the late 1880s turned to lithography to draw a surreal, symbolic imagery in this series.

Commercialism of the medium, a renewed interest in etching and the invention of photography in 1839 didn't discourage Manet, Latour and Whistler from creating fine art lithographs in 1880s and 70s although the appropriateness of lithographs for original high quality prints was greatly debated from the late 1840s to 1870s.

A booming economy in the 1890s created a monied leisure class who became both the subject of and the audience for lithographs.

"The 1890s very much parallels our own age with the broadest opportunities available to artists to make prints," said Sojka.

The second exhibition, "20th century Expansion and Exploration," opens with lithographs by George Bellows, Jim Dine, James Rosenquist, and Picasso May 7.

Conversations from page C1

It's likely that the funds would be treated more as an unexpected gift than an essential part of any arts organization's operating budget.

A deep thought

Bouchard is a savvy politician and an earnest art supporter. He's well aware that any talk of public subsidies for the arts is heresy, especially in Oakland County.

As one of the few local supporters of the proposed tri-county cultural tax, Bouchard must walk a fine line.

The controversial cultural tax would create a 1/2 mill property assessment to generate part of the operating revenue for 14 of the metro area's major cultural institutions.

While other metro areas such as Denver and Chicago have adopted similar regional tax initiatives, metro Detroit has been wallowing in a parochial debate about which county will have the most influence in appropriating the funds.

For the last two years, legislation has been opposed that would allow the proposal to be placed on the ballot in Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties.

In the next several months, Bouchard expects to reintroduce the "enabling legislation" so voters — not legislators — can finally decide for themselves.

Maybe if all those who oppose public funding to the arts could be placed in a car. Be driven around the metro area. And encouraged to imagine what a thriving cultural scene would mean to the local economy.

Maybe they'd be struck by a deep thought: what kind of culture would create a license for art?

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Fine Arts from page C1

art reflects a confluence of influences.

Through the Kidd Gallery, a meeting with Rivers was arranged.

Some have claimed that as he's grown older, Rivers' rebellious outrageousness has mellowed.

Torne isn't so sure. "You never know what to expect," she said.

During its history, the fine art competition has attracted an impressive list of national artists as jurors, including Romare Bearden, Alice Aycock, Alvin Loving and Jane Hammond.

This year marks the first time a public dinner and awards ceremony will be held instead of a private affair.

And unlike past years, the ceremony will feature an artist/juror who is also an accomplished jazz musician. Rivers supported himself playing jazz while he studied art.

Following the awards presentation, Rivers and the Climax Jazz will perform at Big Rock Chop and Brew House in Birmingham.


In the early 1980s, the Michigan Fine Arts Competition was held at the Detroit Institute of Arts. And the prize money was provided through state funding.

In the past several years, however, prize money has been supplied by corporate sponsors.

This year's sponsors include the National Bank of Detroit, Bayer Corp., Michelin Automotive, GE Automotive, Meritor, Schier, Deneweth & Parfitt Law Offices, Sekurit Saint Gobain and Toyota Technical Center, USA.


Jazz man: Larry Rivers is at home as both musician and painter





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