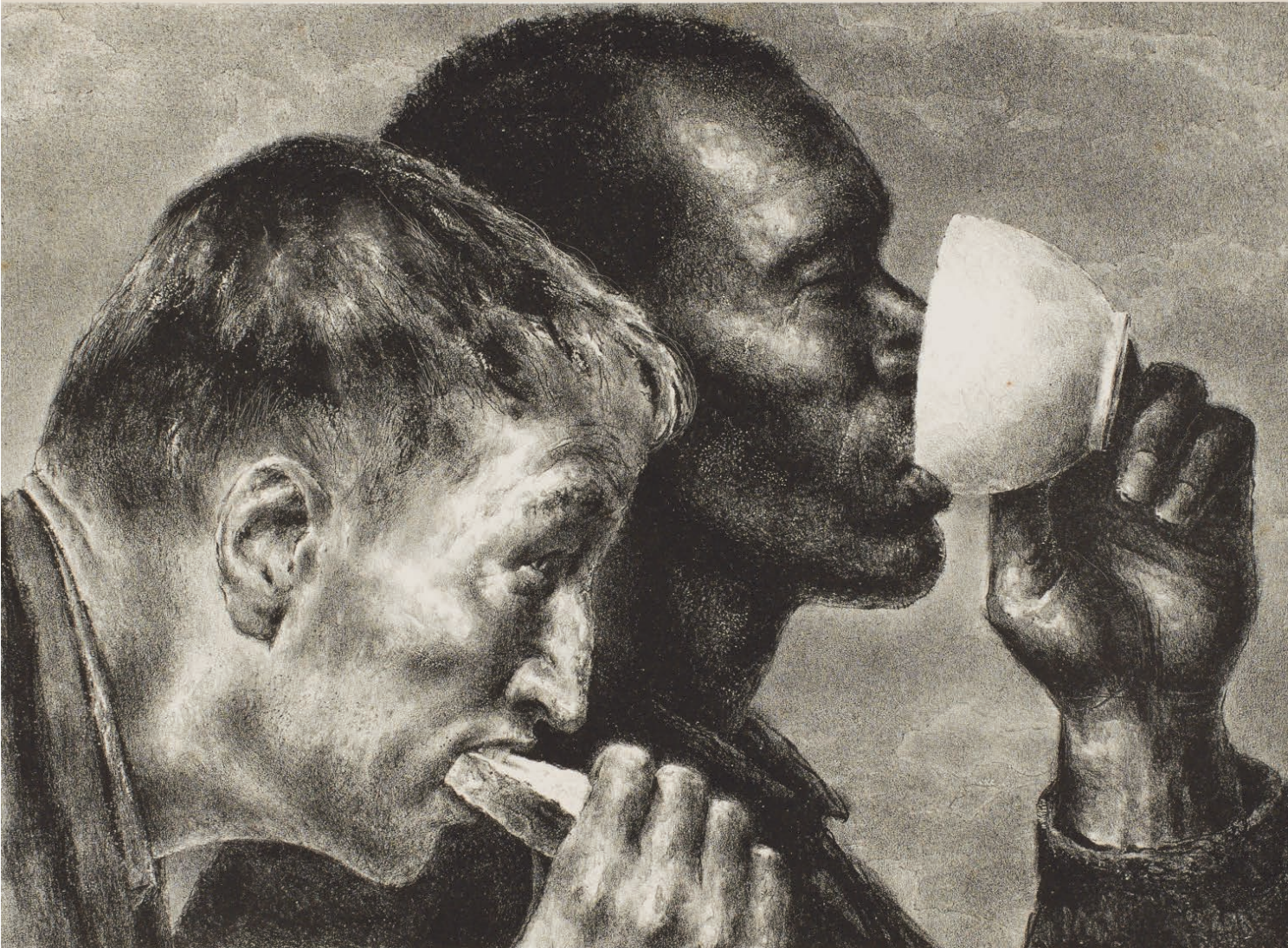# ASSOCIATED AMERICAN ARTISTS
Prints for the People

APRIL 6 – AUGUST 18, 2019

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM, OREGON

ASSOCIATED AMERICAN ARTISTS
Prints for the People

19 **John Steuart Curry,** *Our Good Earth,* 1942

Associated American Artists (AAA), active from 1934 to 2000, revolutionized modern print collecting in the period following the Great Depression. Reeves Lewenthal (1909–1987), a public relations expert turned art dealer, founded AAA with the objective of making affordable, fine works of art available to middle- and upper-class patrons, collectors, and audiences across the country. He devised an innovative plan to mass market prints to the American people and collaborated with artists Thomas Hart Benton, John Steuart Curry, and Grant Wood, among others, fostering the careers of established printmakers, as well as introducing new talent to the art market. This exhibition surveys works primarily from the 1930s and 1940s—the peak of AAA's print publishing.

AAA sold prints at $5 a piece (roughly $88 today) through mail-order campaigns, department store sales, and eventually a traveling-exhibition program. Lewenthal sent out advertisements to newspapers, art magazines, and journals, with information on AAA, the artists it represented, and how prospective patrons could receive additional information. Order forms, print catalogues, and collectors' guides were sent to individuals who responded to such ads. Fine art was thus accessible to an American public unlikely to step inside a gallery, and purchasing prints for one's home was made easier.

Prints, as original multiples, are easily reproducible, allowing for the production of large editions of high-quality art. AAA published print editions of 250. This is one of three primary reasons AAA was a success. Second, Lewenthal had an untapped market: the middle class. Larger dealers in New York, who were dominating the fine art sales, solely focused on wealthy art patrons, leaving Lewenthal no competition for clientele across the broader United States. Third, artists had virtually no risk in joining AAA. Following the Great Depression, the art

58 **Grant Wood,** *Seedtime and Harvest*, 1937

markets were in decline and many artists had little to no financial success. Artists therefore welcomed the chance to be included in an organized print program.

As director and president, Lewenthal controlled which subjects were published; he intended AAA to sell prints that illustrated the American landscape and everyday scenes of life, rather than following the canon of European aesthetics. He focused on the newfound American Scene movement, which developed in the late 1920s and gained distinction in the 1930s. Artists involved in the movement were rediscovering their American identity and depicting subjects directly connected to the wider population: farmlands, idyllic landscapes, social and political conditions, the workplace, and the changing cityscape.

American Regionalism, a large subset of the American Scene movement, is featured prominently in the exhibition. Typically associated with rural life and its conservative values, Regionalism used the Midwest to convey both a nationalistic nostalgia and the complex emotional narrative of the farm. John Steuart Curry's *Our Good Earth* is an example of how Regionalists provided a sense of stability through farmland prints during the tumult of World War II. This image idealizes the farmer and his bountiful crop by depicting him as a proud and heroic figure, capable of defending his land should the need arise. A preliminary image for a war bond poster, this work signifies the security of the U.S. economy with the abundance of the farmer's harvest.

In Thomas Hart Benton's *The Farmer's Daughter*, a young girl pumps water from a well because, as the artist stated, "for the moment there is nothing else to do." Through intense contrast of light and shadows, Benton created a stylistically moody image that intensifies the young girl's isolation on the farm. Grant Wood's *Seedtime and Harvest* additionally represents an average day in the Midwest, as a farmer harvests his corn in

solitude. Prints by Curry, Benton, and Grant, champions of American Regionalism, are accompanied by other works illustrating familiar, comforting scenes of life lived close to the land: images of leisure in the work of John S. De Martelly, the pastoral landscapes of Asa Cheffetz and Ernest Fiene, and the equestrian portraits of George Ford Morris.

Social Realism was another facet of the American Scene movement that centered on social, economic, and political issues involving the workplace. Harry Sternberg's aquatint *Enough (Boundman)* exemplifies this, highlighting the dehumanization of industrial workers by depicting a figure bound at the arms amid a factory setting. Not all images of labor published through AAA were critical however. Joseph Hirsch's *Banquet* and Isabel Bishop's *Noon Hour* reflect on positive advancements in the workplace, such as the inclusion of African Americans and women in the workforce.

In 1946 Lewenthal formed the AAA Department of Latin American Art and published the portfolio *Mexican People*. The daily struggles of Mexicans in both rural and urban settings are portrayed in the portfolio in works by, among others, Raúl
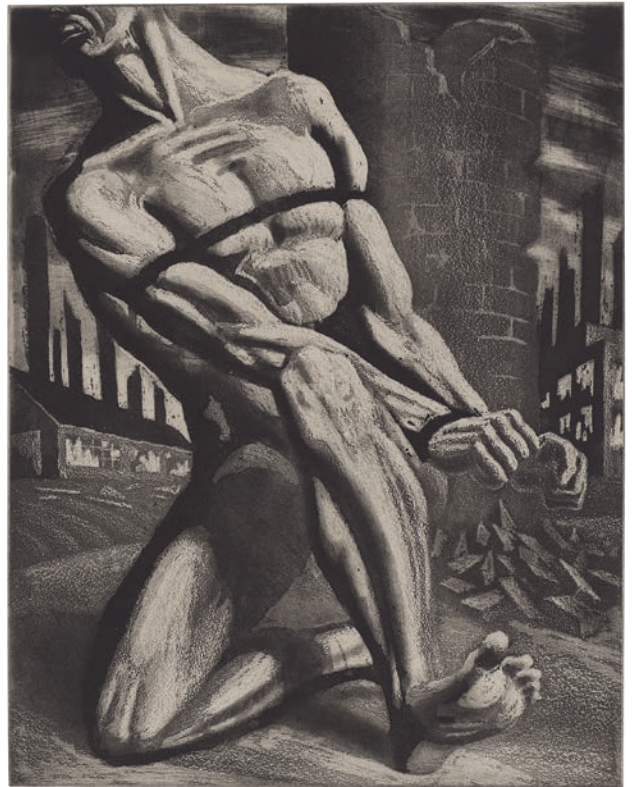
54 **Harry Sternberg,** *Enough (Boundman)*, 1947

3 **Luis Arenal,** *Cabeza de una Mujer Natal* (Head of a Native Woman), 1948

Anguiano, Alberto Beltrán, Francisco Mora, and Fernando Castro Pacheco. AAA also promoted prints that displayed Mexican national pride and fortitude, best exemplified by Luis Arenal's *Cabeza de una Mujer Natal.* Artists from outside Latin America, such as the Frenchman Jean Charlot and the American Irwin Hoffman, traveled throughout the region to illustrate the everyday home and work activities through an alternate lens.

The changing cityscape served as inspiration for many AAA artists. As skyscrapers, an American invention, were erected in urban metropolises, city skylines became a new universal symbol of the United States. Louis Lozowick's lithograph *Angry Skies* depicts the New York skyline through a romantic swirl of dark sweeping clouds. Artists like Adolf Dehn presented industrial advances in another way: his work *Central Park Lake* focuses on the picturesque topography of the city's park, with the ever-present skyline lingering in the background. For other artists, their fascination with the city was in the people. Artists such as Peggy Bacon and Lawrence Beall Smith shifted their attention to observing the small interactions among city dwellers that occurred throughout the day.

Prints illustrating entertainment and spectacle were featured in the work of AAA artists from the start of the 1930s. Boxing scenes by Joseph Webster Golinkin and Diana Thorne reflect the excitement of attending sporting events, while Art Hansen's *The Lobby* indicates a moment of anticipation before show-goers enter a performance. The circus prints of Curry and Yasuo Kuniyoshi introduce the viewer to the dramatics of aerialists and a world of performance happening just above the spectator.

13 **Jean Charlot,** *First Steps,* 1946

CHECKLIST

Dimensions are given in inches; height precedes width precedes depth.

1. Emilio Amero
(Mexican, 1901–1976)
Where?, 1950
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 12 $^3/_8$ × 10 $^1/_4$
sheet: 16 $^1/_2$ × 13 $^1/_4$
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic Arts Collection
83.57.518

2. Raúl Anguiano
(Mexican, 1915–2006)
Homos de Cal, Tula (Lime Kilns, Tula), from the portfolio *Mexican People*, 1946
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 10 $^3/_4$ × 13 $^3/_4$
sheet: 15 × 17 $^5/_8$
Gift of John Henry Rock
83.40.7

3. Luis Arenal
(Mexican, 1908–1985)
Cabeza de una Mujer Natal (Head of a Native Woman), 1948
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 8 $^3/_4$ × 10 $^7/_8$
sheet: 12 $^7/_8$ × 19 $^9/_{16}$
Museum Purchase: Marion McGill Lawrence Fund
92.194.10

4. Peggy Bacon
(American, 1895–1987)
The Untilled Field, 1937
Etching and drypoint on cream wove paper
image: 5 $^7/_8$ × 7 $^7/_{16}$
sheet: 10 $^5/_8$ × 11 $^3/_8$
Museum Purchase
2018.80.1

5. Alberto Beltrán
(Mexican, 1923–2002)
El trapiche de Azucar (Grinding Sugar Cane, Puebla), from the portfolio *Mexican People*, 1947
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 11 $^1/_4$ × 14
sheet: 15 $^1/_4$ × 17 $^3/_4$
Gift of John Henry Rock
83.40.8

6. Thomas Hart Benton
(American, 1889–1975)
The Woodpile, 1939
Lithograph on white wove paper
image: 8 $^{11}/_{16}$ × 10 $^7/_8$
sheet: 12 × 16 $^3/_{16}$
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic Arts Collection
78.52.181

7. Thomas Hart Benton
(American, 1889–1975)
The Farmer's Daughter, 1944
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 9 $^3/_4$ × 13 $^{15}/_{16}$
sheet: 11 $^1/_2$ × 15 $^1/_8$
Gift of Dudley and Phyllis Church
89.26

8. Thomas Hart Benton
(American, 1889–1975)
White Calf, 1945
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 9 $^3/_8$ × 12 $^3/_4$
sheet: 12 × 15 $^{15}/_{16}$
The Carol and Seymour Haber Collection
2008.68.3

9. Isabel Bishop
(American, 1902–1988)
Noon Hour, 1935
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 6 $^7/_8$ × 4 $^7/_8$
sheet: 12 $^{15}/_{16}$ × 11
Gift of Robertson Collins
2001.47.4

10. Alice Standish Buell
(American, 1892–1960)
Vermont Landmark, 1936
Drypoint on cream wove paper
image: 6 $^3/_4$ × 9 $^1/_8$
sheet: 8 $^7/_8$ × 11 $^3/_4$
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic Arts Collection
80.122.303

11. Alice Standish Buell
(American, 1892–1960)
The Last Load, 1939
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 7 $^1/_4$ × 10 $^1/_2$
sheet: 10 $^1/_4$ × 11 $^5/_8$
Gift of Mrs. E. B. MacNaughton
92.218.1

12. Federico Castellón
(Spanish, 1914–1971)
Memories, ca. 1940
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 12 $^3/_4$ × 9 $^3/_8$
sheet: 16 $^7/_8$ × 12 $^1/_2$
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic Arts Collection
80.122.279

13. Jean Charlot
(French, 1898–1979, active Mexico and United States)
First Steps, 1946
Lithograph on beige wove paper
image: 13 $^{15}/_{16}$ × 9 $^{13}/_{16}$
sheet: 17 $^3/_{16}$ × 12 $^5/_8$
Gift of Bruce and Carol Wyatt
2015.18.1

14. Jean Charlot
(French, 1898–1979, active Mexico and United States)
Mexican Kitchen, 1946
Lithograph on beige wove paper
image: 13 $^1/_2$ × 9 $^3/_4$
sheet: 17 $^1/_4$ × 12 $^{13}/_{16}$
Gift of Bruce and Carol Wyatt
2015.18.2

15. Asa Cheffetz
(American, 1896–1965)
In Deep Vermont, ca. 1947
Wood engraving on cream wove paper
image: 5 $^7/_8$ × 8 $^7/_8$
sheet: 10 $^1/_2$ × 13 $^1/_2$
Gift of Mrs. E. B. MacNaughton
92.218.7

16. Asa Cheffetz
(American, 1896–1965)
The Water Tower, ca. 1949
Wood engraving on cream wove paper
image: 4 $^5/_8$ × 8 $^7/_8$
sheet: 10 $^1/_4$ × 14
Gift of Mrs. E. B. MacNaughton
92.218.8

17. John Steuart Curry
(American, 1897–1946)
The Missed Leap, 1934
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 16 $^7/_8$ × 9 $^3/_4$
sheet: 20 $^5/_{16}$ × 13 $^1/_4$
Bequest of Charles Henry Leavitt
59.26.30

18. John Steuart Curry
(American, 1897–1946)
Summer Afternoon, 1939
Lithograph on beige wove paper
image: 9 $^7/_8$ × 14
sheet: 12 $^7/_{16}$ × 16 $^1/_2$
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.4

42 **Louis Lozowick,** *Angry Skies,* 1935

53 Lawrence Beall Smith, *The Skaters,* 1939

19. **John Steuart Curry**
(American 1897–1946)
Our Good Earth, 1942
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 12 3/4 × 10 1/8
sheet: 16 3/4 × 12 5/8
Bequest of Charles Henry Leavitt
59.26.31

20. **John Steuart Curry**
(American, 1897–1946)
Sanctuary, 1944
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 16 × 20
sheet: 13 3/4 × 17 3/4
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Koerner
79.55

21. **John S. De Martelly**
(American, 1903–1979)
Blue Valley Fox Hunt, 1937
Lithograph on white wove paper
image: 12 3/4 × 16 1/2
sheet: 15 1/8 × 19 1/4
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
86.13.44

22. **John S. De Martelly**
(American, 1903–1979)
Old Moon, 1938
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 10 1/16 × 13 3/4
sheet: 12 × 15 7/8
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
2003.22.7

23. **Adolf Dehn**
(American, 1895–1968)
Central Park Lake, 1947
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 8 3/4 × 13 5/16
sheet: 13 × 16 3/8
Gift of Mrs. Adolf Dehn
1999.8.134

24. **Ernest Fiene**
(American, 1894–1965)
Winter Evening, 1936
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 8 1/8 × 12
sheet: 11 3/4 × 15 1/2
Gift of Alfred P. and J. Dolores Maurice
91.57.54

25. **Joseph Webster Golinkin**
(American, 1896–1977)
At Chicago, 1937
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 11 15/16 × 14 9/16
sheet: 15 × 18 1/2
The Charles Henry Leavitt Collection
92.220.32

26. **Marion Greenwood**
(American, 1909–1970)
Eastern Memory, ca. 1950
Lithograph on white wove paper
image: 12 7/8 × 8 1/16
sheet: 16 1/16 × 12
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
82.80.201

27. **William Gropper**
(American, 1897–1977)
Paul Bunyan, 1939
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 13 1/2 × 8 7/8
sheet: 16 1/16 × 12
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.11

28. **William Gropper**
(American, 1897–1977)
Rip Van Winkle, 1945
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 13 3/8 × 8 7/8
sheet: 15 7/8 × 12
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.8

29. **William Gropper**
(American, 1897–1977)
Headless Horseman, 1946
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 13 × 9
sheet: 15 7/8 × 12
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.7

30. **William Gropper**
(American, 1897–1977)
Finn MacCool, 1947
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 13 1/16 × 8 3/4
sheet: 16 × 11 15/16
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.6

31. **Art Hansen**
(American, 1929–2017)
The Lobby, 1971
Mezzotint on paper
image: 8 15/16 × 10
sheet: 10 9/16 × 11 1/2
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
80.122.236

32. **Rudolf Hasler**
(Swiss, 1927–1999)
The El, 1980
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 8 3/4 × 12 7/16
sheet: 13 9/16 × 17 9/16
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard
Collection
91.54.8

33. **William Heaslip**
(American, born Canada, 1898–1970)
Propellers, 1934
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 7 15/16 × 10 3/4
sheet: 9 5/8 × 12 13/16
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard
Collection
84.39.12

34. **Joseph Hirsch**
(American, 1910–1981)
Banquet, 1945
Lithograph on beige wove paper
image: 9 3/4 × 13 3/4
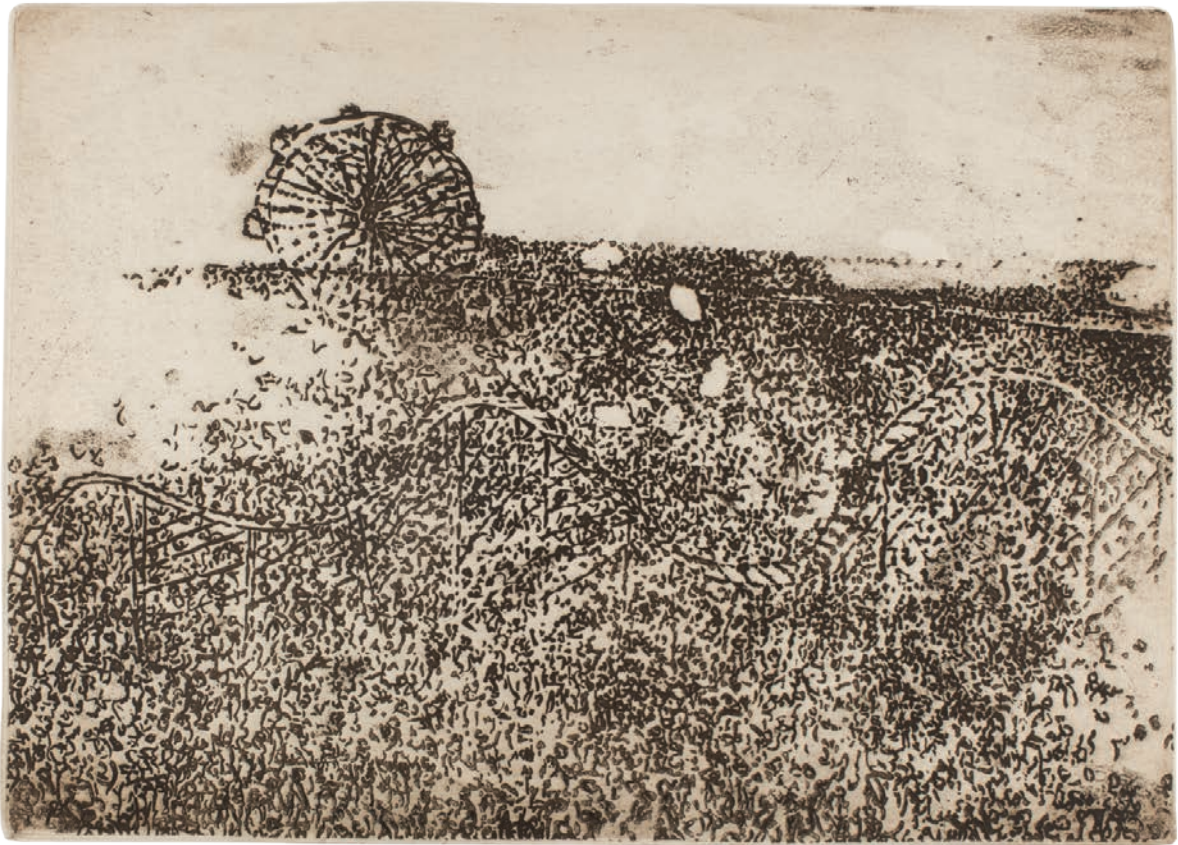sheet: 12 × 15 7/8
Gift of Christopher Russell
2015.21.1

41 Yasuo Kuniyoshi, *Wire Cyclist,* 1939

35. Joseph Hirsch
(American, 1910–1981)
Man and Beast, 1946
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 13 1/2 × 7 1/4
sheet: 16 × 12
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
81.81.125

36. Irwin Hoffman
(American, 1901–1989)
La Cucaracha II, 1935
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 7 3/4 × 10 11/16
sheet: 9 5/8 × 12 15/16
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
80.122.34

37. Alexandre Hogue
(American, 1898–1994)
Desert Glare, 1945
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 6 3/4 × 11 13/16
sheet: 12 1/8 × 16 1/16
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard Collection
84.39.15

38. Joe Jones
(American, 1909–1963)
Windy Day, ca. 1950
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 9 7/8 × 14
sheet: 12 1/4 × 16 1/4
Gift of Bruce and Carol Wyatt
2015.18.13

39. Eduardo Kingman
(Ecuadorian, 1913–1997)
Grinding Corn, 1947
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 12 3/4 × 10
sheet: 16 1/16 × 13 3/8
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
83.57.507

40. Chaim Koppelman
(American, 1920–2009)
Beach Crowd, ca. 1970
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 10 11/16 × 15
sheet: 13 5/16 × 17 5/16
Gift of Alfred P. and J. Dolores Maurice
91.57.73

41. Yasuo Kuniyoshi
(American, 1889–1953)
Wire Cyclist, 1939
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 12 1/2 × 8 3/4
sheet: 15 15/16 × 11 15/16
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.12
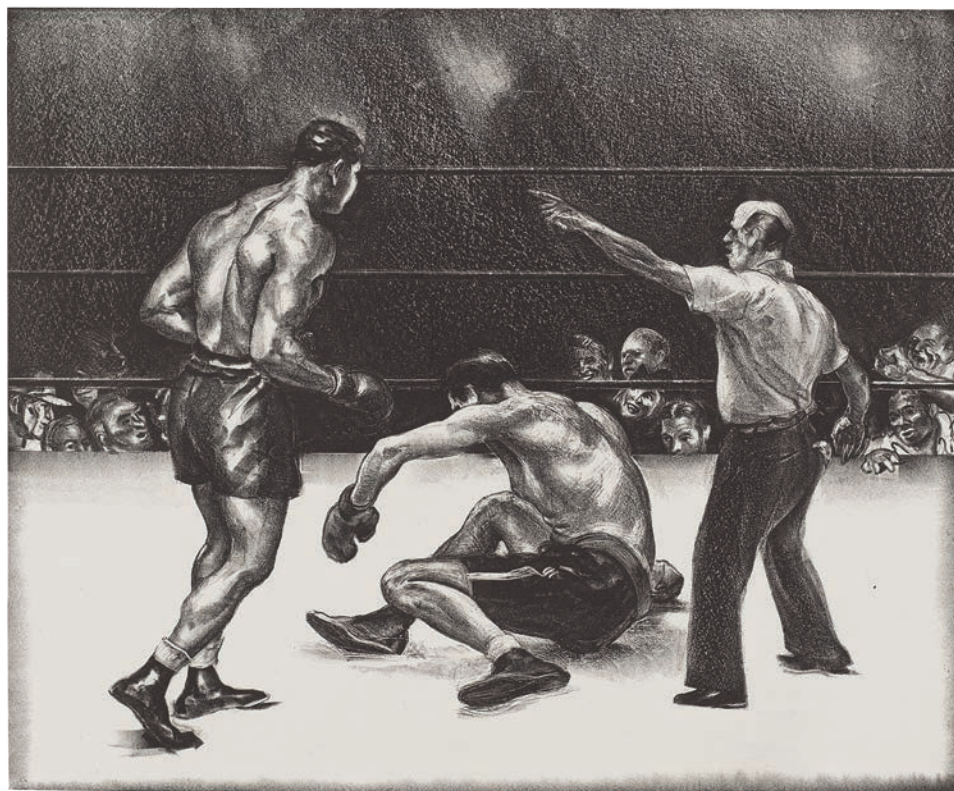
25 **Joseph Webster Golinkin,** *At Chicago,* 1937

42. Louis Lozowick
(American, 1892–1973)
Angry Skies, 1935
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 9 1/2 × 13 1/2
sheet: 12 1/16 × 15 13/16
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.13

43. Luigi Lucioni
(American, born Italy, 1900–1988)
Shadow and Substance, ca. 1940
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 7 5/16 × 9 7/8
sheet: 11 3/16 × 12 7/8
Gift of Mrs. E. B. MacNaughton
92.218.16

44. Samuel L. Margolies
(American, 1897–1974)
R.F.D. #2, 1940
Aquatint on cream wove paper
image: 9 13/16 × 11 7/8
sheet: 12 7/8 × 15 15/16
Gift of Alfred P. and J. Dolores Maurice
91.57.79

45. Joseph Margulies
(American, born Austria, 1896–1984)
At Prayer, ca. 1965
Aquatint and etching on cream wove
paper
image: 11 7/8 × 8 7/16
sheet: 15 15/16 × 13 1/4
Gift of Alfred P. and J. Dolores Maurice
91.57.80

46. Francisco Mora
(Mexican, 1922–2002)
Mine Worker in Pachuca, from the
portfolio *Mexican People*, 1946
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 13 3/4 × 11 1/8
sheet: 17 9/16 × 15 1/8
Gift of John Henry Rock
83.40.13

47. George Ford Morris
(American, 1873–1960)
Dan Patch, 1945
Lithograph on white wove paper
image: 11 7/8 × 8 5/8
sheet: 15 15/16 × 12 1/16
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard
Collection
79.31.21

48. George Ford Morris
(American, 1873–1960)
Greyhound-Champion-Trotter, 1945
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 11 15/16 × 8 13/16
sheet: 15 15/16 × 12 1/8
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard
Collection
82.79.19

49. Fernando Castro Pacheco
(Mexican, 1918–2013)
Working with Ixtle, from the portfolio
Mexican People, 1946
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 11 1/4 × 14
sheet: 15 1/8 × 17 3/4
Gift of John Henry Rock
83.40.11

50. Charles E. Pont
(American, born France, 1898–1971)
Heave-Up!, 1938
Wood engraving on beige wove paper
image: 7 15/16 × 10 1/2
sheet: 12 3/8 × 17 1/4
Gift of Alfred P. and J. Dolores Maurice
91.57.92

40 **Chaim Koppelman,** *Beach Crowd,* ca. 1970

51. **Boardman Robinson**
(Canadian-American, 1876–1952)
Horse Auction, 1939
Lithograph on white wove paper
image: 8 × 11 $1/4$
sheet: 12 $1/8$ × 15 $13/16$
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
79.50.442

52. **Umberto Romano**
(American, born Italy, 1905–1982)
Pagliacci, 1949
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 8 $1/4$ × 12 $7/8$
sheet: 12 × 16
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
84.25.329

53. **Lawrence Beall Smith**
(American, 1909–1995)
The Skaters, 1939
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 11 $1/4$ × 8 $5/8$
sheet: 15 $1/8$ × 12
Museum Purchase
2018.79.1

54. **Harry Sternberg**
(American, 1904–2001)
Enough (Boundman), 1947
Burnished aquatint on cream wove paper
image: 14 $3/4$ × 11 $5/8$
sheet: 17 $13/16$ × 14 $7/8$
Gift of the Collection of Henry Goldman
2017.75.15

55. **Diana Thorne**
(Canadian, 1895–1963)
Boxing, 1934/63
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 9 $3/8$ × 13 $1/2$
sheet: 12 $15/16$ × 16 $15/16$
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard
Collection
86.43.18

56. **Melville T. Wire**
(American, 1877–1966)
The Giant Myrtle, ca. 1945
Etching on cream wove paper
image: 7 $15/16$ × 12
sheet: 10 $3/4$ × 16 $1/8$
The Vivian and Gordon Gilkey Graphic
Arts Collection
81.81.174

57. **Grant Wood**
(American, 1891–1942)
January, 1937
Lithograph
image: 8 $15/16$ × 11 $7/8$
sheet: 11 $7/8$ × 14 $1/4$
Private Collection

58. **Grant Wood**
(American, 1891–1942)
Seedtime and Harvest, 1937
Lithograph on Rives BFK paper
image: 7 $3/8$ × 12 $1/16$
sheet: 11 $9/16$ × 15 $1/2$
Museum Purchase: Funds provided by
the Graphic Arts Council
2014.111.1

59. **Grant Wood**
(American, 1891–1942)
Sultry Night, 1939
Lithograph
image: 9 × 11 $3/4$
sheet: 11 $1/2$ × 15
Private Collection

60. **Zsissly**
(American 1897–1983)
Victoria, 1947
Lithograph on cream wove paper
image: 8 $9/16$ × 12 $15/16$
sheet: 11 $7/16$ × 16 $1/8$
The Herbert and Nancy Bernhard
Collection
87.44.17

COVER

34 **Joseph Hirsch,** *Banquet,* 1945

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