

Given Highlights: A Selection of Gifts from the Permanent Collection is an exhibition that celebrates gifts generously donated to the University's Permanent Collection over the past 30 years. Begun in 1962 and primarily comprised of works of art on paper, the University Collection boasts a healthy range of styles and subject matter representative of some of the more important American artists of the second-half of the 20th century. The current exhibition features a selection of drawings, prints, photographs, and sculptural work given by various individuals and organizations that have contributed to the strength of the collection's focus.

The 28 works included in Given Highlights exemplify the breadth of the collection over a period of approximately 45 years. The earliest dated work within the exhibition is an etching from 1880 by James Joseph Jacques Tissot titled Promenade dans la Neige. Atypical of the collection in terms of its time period and French-salon style, it serves as an important historical reference for the collection's modern and contemporary works. In this exhibition, Tissot's print is situated between JU#3, 1978, a velvety wax drawing by the neon artist Stephen Antonakos, and Brice Marden's elegant etching Ten Days, 1971, both of which reinforce and complement the subtle sensuality of Tissot's charming figure.

The juxtaposition of Joseph Cornell's Hotel, a construction of unknown date, and Donald Judd's untitled aquatint from 1977, invites formal and conceptual comparisons. Cornell, a master of assemblage who raised the shadow box to a major art form in the 20th century, amassed materials that held strong personal associations for him-- photographs, clay pipes, magazine clippings, etc.--and arranged them according to an equally subjective system. In Hotel, Cornell is able to achieve his narrative with minimal means: The relationships among the craquelure of the paint and the spider-web break in the glass pane, the collaged pages from a French book, and the hand-painted word "Hotel" in the interior's upper left corner blend together encouraging viewers to create their own scenario. Hotel's verticality and hand-made irregularity contrasts with the precise horizontal emphasis of Judd's print. The artist has gradually eliminated various kinds of illusion from his work in order to emphasize formal qualities that contribute an air of "objectivity." In the exhibited print, however, the alternating bands of white paper and bespeckled black impressions produce an optical distance between foreground and background. It is almost as if Judd has fashioned a window of his own that looks into deep space.

Characterized by a certain liveliness, the arrangement of drawings on the longest wall of the gallery's center bay all involve the occupation of space by forms. Mass/Aftermath, 1982, a large-scale drawing by George Trakas, combines organic and geometric shapes within a constantly moving panoramic perspective. The equally animated drawings to the left of the Trakas--an ink on steel by Robert Murray, a



pencil on paper still life by Robert DeNiro (the father of the well-known actor), and a gouache by Theodoros Stamos--bear uncanny formal relationships to one another as representational and abstract forms appear to dance from one work to the next.

Through its intentional casualness, Given Highlights mixes works of different styles, subject matter, and even time periods in order to refresh the eye and to encourage delight in the act of looking. The University Gallery extends its sincere appreciation to the artists as well as to those who, either through donations of works of art or financial gifts specifically designated for art acquisitions, have participated in making the University's Permanent Collection an important resource for our area's academic and general communities.