



Will Barnet  
*Waiting*  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## **WILL BARNET**

American, 1911-2012

Born in the old whaling town of Beverly, Massachusetts, Will Barnet began to paint at a young age, inspired by carvings on tombstones and the installation of John Singer Sargent's murals (1890 - 1919) at the Boston Public Library. From 1927 to 1930 he studied at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School. In 1931 he moved to New York where his portfolio had already been received favorably by the Arts Student League. Affected by the suffering of the Depression, he made expressionist figurative art in a social realist style and joined the League where he was appointed the official printmaker. Painting and printmaking occupied the rest of his career. He was a teacher too, first at the League, later at Yale University, Cornell University, and other institutions. His Social Realism became more intimate and family-based, then, during the 1940s and 1950s he pioneered the style known as Indian Space: abstractions rooted in the colors and icons of Native American culture. "All nature is space," he wrote in 1950, "both what we see as solids and what we see as air. Without this most basic concept of space, all painting falls into a world of illusion and chaos." In the 1960s he began to paint figures again but the early Expressionism had evolved into flat areas of color, gracefully balanced and strongly geometric. His warm colors turned cooler after a vacation in Maine. "My palette changed when I came to Maine and began to devote my energies and ideas to it," he told *Maine Home + Design* in 2009. He bought a house by the Maine coastline. The sight of his shawled wife on the porch against the grey air one evening gave him a new idea. "I made a sketch of the scene and began a series of paintings of women and the sea." The history of his childhood town was peopled with women who waited for their loved ones to return from whaling. It was an opportunity to study the effects of ambient light. But other styles were not abandoned forever and his last paintings were frequently abstract. Barnet's work is represented in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the the Guggenheim Museum, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and many others.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

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Colleen Browning  
*Union Mixer*, 1975  
Lithograph

## COLLEEN BROWNING

American, 1918-2003

Born in England, Colleen Browning received a classical art education at the Slade School of Fine Art, London, graduating in 1938. Over the next decade she drew wartime maps for the RAF and worked in set decoration with the Arthur Rank Film Corporation, holding her first one-woman show in 1948 and then migrating to New York City in 1949 to marry the writer Geoffrey Wagner, subject of one of her early American works, *Head*. Browning adapted her realistic figurative style almost immediately to the new city. Her paintings of street scenes, telephone booths, children, and fire escapes, were praised, exhibited, and reproduced in *TIME* Magazine. She appeared at the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Cleveland Museum, and the Pennsylvania Gallery of the Fine Arts. By 1953 she was holding solo shows again. "She comes to the States and quickly recognizes the beauty of the iron grid of New York's tenement landscape," said Philip Eliasoph, author of *Colleen Browning: The Enchantment of Realism*, talking to the *New York Times* in February 2013 when several Browning retrospectives were running in different parts of the country. "Think of her prescience." Browning herself described her work as a form of evocative realism, true to life but uncanny. "I have tried to evoke the magical from reality by an accurate visual reconstruction of the facts, so that the viewer can share my aesthetic shock in unexpected revelations." In 1950 she became an American citizen. In 1966 she was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She taught at Pratt Institute, the City College of New York, and the National Gallery of Design, where her work was included in numerous shows. Her subject matter changed from year to year as she looked for new angles on her surroundings. In 1977 she painted a series of graffitied subway trains.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

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Alexander Calder  
Flying Colors  
1976  
Lithograph on paper

## ALEXANDER CALDER

American, 1898- 1976

Alexander Calder was born in Lawnton, Pennsylvania. His mother was a painter, his father was a sculptor, and the family traveled around the country working on commissions. As a child he was interested in gadgets and handicraft; his parents received two small sculptures from him for Christmas in 1909. In 1919 he graduated with an engineering degree from Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey. Four years later, after a series of engineering and manual labor jobs, he decided to become an artist and enrolled himself with the Arts Student League in New York. Commissioned to produce illustrations for the National Police Gazette in 1925 he spent two weeks sketching at the circuses that soon became one of his perennial subjects. In Paris the following year he started to produce circus-themed sculptures out of wood, wire, and other media. The sculptures could be manipulated. "Every piece was small enough to be packed into a large trunk, enabling the artist to carry it with him and hold performances anywhere," reports his website. Wire became his new favorite medium. He met Piet Mondrian. "My entrance into the field of abstract art came about as the result of a visit to the studio of Piet Mondrian in Paris in 1930," he wrote in 1951. "I was particularly impressed by some rectangles of color he had tacked on his wall in a pattern after his nature. I told him I would like to make them oscillate." By the end of 1931 he was introducing moving parts into his abstract sculptures, first with motors, then by suspending shapes in the air and letting them stir in the wind -- he called them "mobiles." Still works were the "stabiles." Returning to the United States in 1933, he held his first New York show at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in 1935. For the rest of his life he worked on an increasingly large scale, producing outdoor and indoor commissions for UNESCO and the Mexico City Olympics. "The underlying sense of form in my work has been the system of the Universe," he wrote, "the idea of detached bodies floating in space, of different sizes and densities [...] and some at rest, while others move in peculiar manners, seems to me the ideal source of form."

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

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Alexander Calder, What Abstract Art Means to Me, Museum of Modern Art Bulletin



Marisol Escobar  
Women's Equality  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## MARISOL ESCOBAR

French, Born 1930

Marisol Escobar was born in Paris to Venezuelan parents. World War II drove the family out of Europe to California in 1941. In 1949 she returned to Paris to attend the École des Beaux-Arts but by 1950 she was studying painting in New York, first at the Art Students League, then the Hans Hofmann School. Exposure to Pre-Colombian artifacts and folk art shifted her interest from painting to sculpture and she taught herself to work on a small scale in terracotta and wood. In 1955 she began to operate at a more formidable size, dressing her figures in adult clothes and incorporating plaster, rubber, televisions, necklaces, and other found objects. Her assemblages are autobiographical, critical, and satirical, sometimes commenting on social pressures and constraints from the point of view of isolated participants (The Party, 1955-1966, with her own face in rubber appearing on every figure), sometimes making broader points about politics (LBJ, 1967) or oppression. Escobar held her first one-woman show at the Leo Castelli Gallery, NY, in 1958. Her friendships with Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, coupled with the irreverent social engagement of her mixed-media work, have meant that she is often categorized as a Pop Artist, although the incorporation of folk art fetishes and motifs sets her apart from the more purely contemporary iconography of her peers. The size of her objects diminished during the 1970s, and two-dimensional work returned more prominently to her oeuvre. In the 1980s her interest in portraiture and the human figure culminated in large sculptures. Her work is held by the Museum of Modern Art, NY, the Whitney Museum, and the Art Museum of the Americas.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

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Anonymous, Marisol: Baby Girl, 1963, Albright-Knox Museum

Anonymous, The Party, Toledo Museum of Art



Marisol Escobar  
Women's Equality  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## THE HISTORY BEHIND THE WORK

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton** (1815 - 1902) and **Lucretia Coffin Mott** (1793 - 1880) were abolitionists, social reformers, and pioneers of the American women's rights movement. Stanton became interested in social justice under the influence of her cousin, the reformer Gerrit Smith, whereas Mott, a Quaker, became interested in women's rights after she began teaching and discovered that the male teachers were paid three times more than any of the women. They met in 1840 at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where they were not allowed to participate due to their sex even though they were elected delegates of the American anti-slavery movement. Should there be a convention to discuss the rights of women? They planned one eight years later when they met again in New York state. Together with a group of other women they drew up the Declaration of Sentiments, a document whose wording was rooted in the Declaration of Independence. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal ..." The editor of the New York Herald derisively reprinted the Declaration in his paper. "Just what I wanted," said Stanton. She went on to campaign further against slavery. In 1868 she co-founded the militant paper *Revolution* with Susan B. Anthony. In 1969 they formed the National Woman Suffrage Association. Mott also campaigned against slavery, raising funds and making her home available to escaped slaves. Neither of them lived long enough to be able to vote.

The complete text of the Declaration: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp>



Audrey Flack  
*Fourth of July Still Life*  
1975  
Serigraph with die cut foil  
laminates

## AUDREY FLACK

American, Born 1931

Born in New York, Audrey Flack studied art at Cooper Union from 1948 to 1951 and painted in an Abstract Expressionist style until a further period of study at Yale and conversations with her peers in New York City introduced her to a combination of competing influences -- her lecturer, Josef Albers, the painter Philip Pearlstein -- that cemented her determination to pursue realism over abstraction. She graduated from Yale with a BFA in 1952. Eleven years later in the wake of the Kennedy assassination she began to paint the late president from a photograph (Kennedy Motorcade, 1964 -- the painting was completed the following year). "I never worked from life again," she said in an interview with Robert C. Morgan. "That did it ... After that, straight photorealism." For the Farb Family Portrait of 1969 she came up with the idea of projecting the image onto her canvas through a slide. The broad brushwork of her Abstract Expressionist days was becoming finer and more detailed. The Kennedy work was painted with areas of dry mild color but later paintings acquired a deep gloss and gleam, like classical stiff lives, and the subjects began to mimic still lifes too, arrangements of objects on tables and cloths. "I was interested in texture," she said, "and light being absorbed and bouncing off of something." In 1966 she was the first Photorealist to have work acquired for the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Her subject matter set her apart from the other Photorealists, the men; she painted commentaries on Marilyn Monroe, and her *Jolie Madame* (1973) was an assortment of rings, jewels and decorated vessels standing on a mirror. She had her own way of being a feminist, she said. In the early 1980s she began to work in sculpture.

Deanne Sole, Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

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Robert C. Morgan, Oral history interview with Audrey Flack, 2009 Feb. 16, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Audrey Flack website: <http://www.audreyflack.com>



Joseph Hirsch  
The Boston Tea Party  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## JOSEPH HIRSCH

American, Born 1910-1981

Born in Philadelphia, Joseph Hirsch received a scholarship at seventeen to study at the Pennsylvania Museum School of Industrial Art. Moving to New York City in 1932 he was introduced to Social Realist art by his mentor and tutor, the painter George Luks. That style sustained him for the rest of his life. Employed by the Federal Arts Project, he painted murals for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Building and the Municipal Court in Pennsylvania, then in the early 1940s joined the American military as a war artist, traveling to Italy, Africa, and the South Pacific where he produced such works as *Navy Nurse* and *Blasting Mosquito Infested Swamps* (both 1943, both in the Navy Art Collection). His style changed over the years without abandoning its Social Realist roots, the realism stayed, but the method evolved to include experiments with color planes. During the 1960s and 1970s he made paintings, drawings, and lithographs of working life for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Hirsch taught at the Arts Students League in New York, the Chicago Art Institute, and the American Art School at the University of Utah. The Guggenheim Foundation awarded him fellowships in 1942 and 1943, and he received a Fulbright fellowship in 1949.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum, 2013

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Anonymous, Joseph Hirsch (1910 - 1981), Navy Art Collection

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Joseph Hirsch  
The Boston Tea Party  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## THE HISTORY BEHIND THE WORKS:

### The Boston Tea Party

The British Parliament, finances depleted by the French and Indian War of 1754 - 1763, faced opposition from the Americans when it tried to raise extra funds by increasing taxes on goods imported to the colonies. In 1773 it passed the Tea Act, which was intended to lower the price of legal tea in the colonies to the point where tea smugglers would be undercut by the East India Company, a move that would see the tea purchasers of America paying taxes -- via the Company -- to the British crown -- undermining their opposition. The Americans in New York and Philadelphia protested by turning the tea ships away without letting them dock. In Charleston they allowed the tea ashore but impounded it in a warehouse. When three East India ships docked in Boston there was haggling over the conditions of their departure before two hundred enraged Bostonians crowded onto the ships and threw the cargo into the sea. Some of them were disguised as Indians. One participant, George Hewes, published an account of the event in 1834:

"It was now evening, and I immediately dressed myself in the costume of an Indian, equipped with a small hatchet, which I and my associates denominated the tomahawk, with which, and a club, after having painted my face and hands with coal dust in the shop of a blacksmith, I repaired to Griffin's wharf, where the ships lay that contained the tea. [...] We then were ordered by our commander to open the hatches and take out all the chests of tea and throw them overboard, and we immediately proceeded to execute his orders, first cutting and splitting the chests with our tomahawks, so as thoroughly to expose them to the effects of the water. In about three hours from the time we went on board, we had thus broken and thrown overboard every tea chest to be found in the ship, while those in the other ships were disposing of the tea in the same way, at the same time. We were surrounded by British armed ships, but no attempt was made to resist us."

(from A retrospect of the Boston tea-party, with a memoir of George R. T. Hewes, a survivor of the little band of patriots who drowned the tea in Boston harbour in 1773, by George Hewes, published by S.S.Bliss)





**Robert Indiana**

, 1975

Screenprint

## **ROBERT INDIANA**

American, Born 1928

Robert Indiana was born in Newcastle, Indiana. As an adult he adopted the name of the state for his "nom de brush" -- his original surname was Clark. He served for three years in the Air Force during World War II and went to the Art Institute of Chicago on the G.I. Bill from 1949 to 1953. A traveling fellowship sent him overseas to the University of Edinburgh and the Edinburgh College of Art, where he studied typography among other things. Returning to the United States at the end of 1954 he rented a studio in New York with the help of Ellsworth Kelly. His subsequent work showed the influence of Kelly's hard-edged graphic minimalism. He also worked in assemblage, and his first large-scale success was an inclusion in the Museum of Modern Art's 1961 group show, *The Art of Assemblage*. Signs, he acknowledged, had made an impact on him. His childhood had been "haunted" by a neon '66' sign over the place where his father worked: "the one most fascinating visual object in my entire youth." His mother had been employed at roadside diners, which was an inspiration when the New York World's Fair commissioned him to produce a work for display in 1964 and he made *Eat*. "I have always been impressed how with a little concentration and a little mental exercise, if one concentrates long enough on a word or figure, it's very easy to lose the conscious grasp of what that is, and one can look at a word, and after concentrating on it for a little while, one has almost forgotten what that word is," he told an interviewer in 1963. "And I should like in a way this to be a part of my work, too." Literary quotations appeared in his early pieces, then the words became simple and terse. His 1965 *Love* has been widely reproduced. In 1964 Andy Warhol filmed him consuming a mushroom but he came to feel rejected by the art culture of New York. The commercial dissemination of *Love* affected his reputation as a serious artist without bringing in a commensurate degree of monetary remuneration. Still, the Whitney Museum will open a major retrospective of his work in late 2013.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

### Bibliography:

Richard Baker, Oral history interview with Robert Indiana, 1963 Sept. 12-Nov. 7, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Robert Indiana website: <http://robertindiana.com/#collection>



**Alex Katz**

Washington, 1975

Lithograph

## ALEX KATZ

American, Born 1927

Alex Katz was born in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Cooper Union in 1949 and continued his art studies at the Skowhegan School for Painting and Sculpture in Maine, where he was encouraged for the first time to paint from life rather than drawings. "I painted outdoors directly from landscape. It was a terrific kick" Working from life became crucial to his method. "I realized that if I was painting what was around me, I wouldn't be painting other people's pictures." An exhibition introduced him to the work of Matisse, who left a lasting impression. "Part of it had to do with the technique. There was no effort. I said, That's the way I want a painting to be." Inspired by the French artist's example he started to make collages in 1956. Four years later he stopped because the works seemed too nostalgic, he said, and he wanted to paint the present tense. By 1960 he was constructing freestanding cut-out works. He painted large canvases inspired by film and advertising: often with huge, cropped faces. Lithography and printmaking occupied a growing degree of his time. He worked on portraits with plain undetailed backgrounds. For a year he painted windows. The art critic Éric de Chassy says that his framing "suggests certain cinema shots traditionally associated with establishing actors or providing emblematic plot samples." The detached flatness of his effects gave him something in common with Pop Art, but his concentration on figures and life was unusual at a time of minimalism and abstraction. Public taste caught up with his cool figures during the 1980s. At the end of that decade he painted a series of landscapes at his second home in Maine. The Colby College Museum of Art in Maine dedicated an entire wing to his art. Katz has been the subject of numerous one-man shows and retrospectives.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum, 2013

### Bibliography:

Alex Katz website: <http://www.alexkatz.com>

Paul Cummings, Oral history interview with Alex Katz, 1969 Oct. 20, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Cathleen McGuigan, Alex Katz is Cooler Than Ever, Smithsonian

Adrien Searle, Alex Katz: "I had to figure out painting for myself", Guard



**Alex Katz**  
*Washington*, 1975  
Lithograph

## THE HISTORY BEHIND THE WORKS

**George Washington** (1732 - 1799) was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, the first child of his father's second wife. He spent most of his childhood near the town of Fredericksburg. His father died when he was eleven. At sixteen he traveled with a surveying party into Virginia's west territory, and at seventeen he was appointed the official surveyor of Culpeper County. When he was twenty his older brother died of tuberculosis and when his baby niece also died he inherited the family estate, Mount Vernon, where he died himself many years later. Conflict between the land-owning interests of England and France brought him into the local militia, where he took the rank of major and fought on the British side against the French. Returning to life on his estate, he entered politics. The Townshend Acts of 1767 (a series of several acts, passed by the British parliament in order to extend the right of Britain to tax the American colonies) radicalized him against the British. As a politician he proposed measures to make the American displeasure known. Virginia would boycott British products. A month after British and American forces clashed at the battles of Lexington and Concord in April, 1775, he resumed his military uniform and made a journey to the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia, prepared to engage in war. The Congress elected him its Commander in Chief for several reasons: he had military experience, he was charismatic, he gave useful advice, and they needed the support of the southern colonies. He led the revolutionary army from 1775 until it disbanded in 1783, sometimes suffering defeat, sometimes winning outstanding successes -- the tactical maneuver that began with the crossing of the Delaware River at night on the 25th of December, 1776, was represented afterwards in art, performance, and literature with a legendary glow. At the conclusion of the war he resigned his commission, having always maintained that elected officials, not unelected commanders, should be in charge of the nation's military forces. Independence declared, he chaired the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and served two terms as the country's first president (1789 - 1797). The farewell address he wrote in 1796 outlined his ideas for the continuing management of the United States.

Deanne Sole, Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013



Larry Rivers  
*An Outline of History*  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## LARRY RIVERS

American, 1923 - 2002

Born in the Bronx, Larry Rivers began made his debut in the art world at the age of seventeen as a jazz saxophonist. 'Larry Rivers' was originally a stage name -- his parents called him Yitzroch. Four years later he began to study theory and composition at the Juilliard School of Music. Talking to a bandmate and his wife about visual art he attempted his first serious drawings. His formal art training began in 1947 at the Hans Hofmann School of Painting; his first one-man show took place at the Jane Street Gallery in 1949. In 1951 he graduated from New York University with a BA in art education. Shorthand descriptions of Rivers' career typically refer to him as a bridging artist, pop art's inspiration, admired by Andy Warhol, but Warhol himself gave a more nuanced view in his 1980 memoir *Popism*. "Larry's painting style was unique – it wasn't Abstract Expressionism and it wasn't Pop, it fell into the period in between. But his personality was very Pop." In his own memoir, *What Did I Do?* (1992), Rivers described his early work as a reaction against abstraction. He provoked the Abstract Expressionists in 1953 with a modern figurative historical epic work, *Washington Crossing the Delaware*. "He was obsessed with what the artist sees," wrote his friend Barbara Probst Solomon in 2011. The Museum of Modern Art acquired the *Washington* painting in 1955. A decade later the first large-scale retrospective of his work included another historical epic, *History of the Russian Revolution (From Marx to Mayakovsky)*, thirty-two feet of mixed media collage, sculpture, metal, plexiglass, and paint. The growing prominence of the independent film movement gave him a new field for his experiments. He worked with Jack Kerouac on *Pull My Daisy* (1959) and collaborated on a documentary in Africa during the late 1960s. Later he worked with video and neon. Rivers died at the age of seventy-eight from liver cancer.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum, 2013

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Larry Rivers Foundation, Biography, Larry Rivers Foundation  
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Larry Rivers  
*An Outline of History*  
 1975  
 Lithograph on paper

## THE HISTORY BEHIND THE WORKS

**Congress Voting Independence (1784 - 1801), by Robert Edge Pine and Edward Savage** The figure outlines in Larry Rivers' artwork have been copied from a realistic oil on canvas painting titled *Congress Voting Independence* which depicts Thomas Jefferson and the Committee of Five presenting the Declaration of Independence to the members of the Continental Congress for their consideration. Robert Edge Pine began this painting in 1784 and after his death it was handed on to Edward Savage.

Pine was born in London, England, in 1730. At home he won prizes for his historical epic paintings. His portraits of the actor David Garrick were highly regarded. In 1782 he reached North America along with a traveling exhibition of his scenes from Shakespeare. His plan to execute portraits of the new nation's revolutionary leaders came to a premature end when he died in six years later with *Congress Voting Independence* only partly complete. His widow gave the painting to Edward Savage, inviting him to finish it himself. Savage, born in Massachusetts in 1761, had been working as an engraver and portraitist. He had already painted some of Pine's subjects; his 1890 work *The Washington Family* had been exhibited in Philadelphia two years before the other artist's death. Savage worked on the figures in the painting and began to transfer the image to an engraving plate but the plate went unprinted until 1859. Savage died in 1817.

**The Declaration of Independence** is a document of one thousand one hundred and thirty-seven words, signed by fifty-six representatives of the American people, declaring the separation of the thirteen American colonies from Great Britain and the establishment of a separate self-governing and self-contained nation which would be known as the United Colonies. The document opens with an argument describing the conditions under which systems of government should be changed. This is followed by a statement of grievances against "the present King of Great Britain" who has inflicted "injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States." In a terminating paragraph the signatories, "do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States [...] and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do." The document was officially adopted on July 4th, 1776, nine years after the British parliament had begun to pass the Townshend Acts that were intended to raise revenue from its citizens in North America by increasing the taxes on glass, paint, oil, lead, paper, and tea. The colonists petitioned against the taxes and were ignored. Discontent led to revolt. Representatives of the different colonies came together in Philadelphia to constitute an unofficial government, the Continental Congress. In August 1775, a proclamation by King George III announced that the Americans were "engaged in open and avowed rebellion." On June 7th, 1776, the Virginian representative Richard Henry Lee presented a resolution: "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States." Seven colonies voted in favor of the resolution, five voted against, and New York abstained. Thomas Jefferson of Virginia was "unanimously pressed" -- in his own words -- to compose the document that would make the decision public. Congress reconvened on July 1st and the Lee Resolution was passed by twelve states with New York abstaining again. A Committee of Five -- Jefferson, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, and Benjamin Franklin -- was appointed to debate the wording of Jefferson's draft and recommend modifications. Then the entire Congress considered the document; on the 4th they agreed to it. Two months later, on August 9th, after the document had been copied formally onto parchment, it was signed by the President of the Congress, John Hancock. The other representatives signed in columns underneath him and to the sides. Not all of them were present, and the document was not completely signed until November. Not everyone who had been present on the 4th was a signatory.



Ed Ruscha  
*America, Her Best Product*  
1974  
Lithograph on paper

## ED RUSCHA

American, 1937

Born in 1937 in Omaha, Nebraska and raised in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Edward Ruscha found his prime subject matter when he drove to Los Angeles in 1956 to become a commercial artist. A period of study at the Chouinard Art Institute, along with exposure to work by artists such as Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, convinced him to try noncommercial art instead. An apprenticeship with Plantain Press left him with "a respect for pages." Books and words are two of his abiding interests. "I'm not a great reader, either, but I love books, the physical objects of them," he told the New York Times in 2013. A visit to New York in 1961 introduced him to Pop Art and he began to concentrate seriously on everyday objects in his paintings. A year later his work appeared alongside Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein in the first major overview of Pop Art, *New Paintings of Common Objects*, at the Pasadena Art Museum. From 1963 onwards he produced numerous books of photographs with titles like *Twentysix Gas Stations* and *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*. He painted the Hollywood sign more than once, and worked on a series of word-paintings -- his *Vanishing Cream* of 1976 consisted of the words "vanishing cream" written in petroleum jelly on a black wall. In the 1970s his work was featured in more than one overview of Conceptual art. "Ruscha's early career as a graphic artist continues to strongly influence his aesthetic and thematic approach," suggests his website. His work has appeared at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Musée National Jeu de Paume, Paris, the Kunsthaus Bregenz, Austria, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum 2013

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Ed Ruscha website: <http://www.edruscha.com>

Carol Vogel, Conceptual Inspiration, by the Book, New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/03/arts/design/ed-ruscha-books-and-landscapes-at-gagosian.html>



Fritz Scholder  
Bicentennial Indian  
1975  
Lithograph on paper

## FRITZ SCHOLDER

American, 1937-2005

Fritz Scholder was part-Luiseño -- a Californian Mission tribe. As an adult he was known for his controversial portraits of Native Americans, but, born in Breckenridge, Minnesota, he grew up not knowing that area of his heritage. His first important artistic influence was the Yanktonai Sioux artist Oscar Howe. He met Howe at high school in South Dakota after the family had moved west. "He made a tremendous influence on me," Scholder said. "It wasn't the subject matter. I still didn't identify with Indians. But Howe was painting them in cubistic style." Privately he began to imitate Howe's art. In 1957 the family moved to California where Scholder earned a BA from Sacramento State College. In 1961 he was invited to join the Rockefeller Foundation's Southwest Indian Arts Project at the University of Arizona. In 1964 he graduated from the University with an MFA in painting and ceramics and joined the faculty at the Institute of American Indian Arts in New Mexico where he became an influential teacher. "I found out what Indians think in Santa Fe," he said in 1996. "For the first time I met real Indians, and they have a whole different mind-set." He was not a "genuine" Indian he insisted. "I just never had that background." His work took first prize at the First Biennial Exhibition of American Indian Arts and Crafts at the Center for American Indian Artists in Washington, D.C. The Brooks Memorial Art Gallery in Egypt gave the first retrospective exhibition of his work in 1974; other galleries followed, with two major exhibitions in the 2000s, shortly before his death. Subject of books and documentaries, he died at the age of sixty-seven.

Deanne Sole, UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum, 2013

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