

# Print Council of Australia Archive

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Pictures Collection H2012.250/1-340

Acquired 2011-15

In 1967, a year after its foundation, the Print Council of Australia established the Annual Print Commission, which was designed to raise funds for the council and promote the work of Australian printmakers. Each year, the council calls for submissions from Australian artists. A guest curator, drawn from an arts institution, then selects from six to ten artworks for the year's edition of prints. Subscribers can then choose from the suite and enter a ballot for their choice. Prints are also available for purchase from the council.<sup>1</sup>

With great foresight, the council instituted the practice of archiving two copies of each work commissioned.<sup>2</sup> In 2007 it decided to split its holdings and find a permanent home for one set in a public collection. In making the announcement that State Library Victoria was the successful bidder for this undertaking, the council president, Akky van Ogtrop, said:

The Archive Collection will be preserved in its totality within a secure, institutionally responsible environment where it will be accessible not only to future generations of researchers but also to the public.<sup>3</sup>

The Print Council Archive was acquired in instalments from 2011 to 2015, with substantial funds from the State Library Foundation and the Tristan Buesst Bequest. Comprising more than 300 prints by key practitioners of Australian printmaking during the second half of the 20th century, it includes examples from artists primarily known as printmakers, such as GW Bot, Graeme Peebles and Deborah Klein, to artists who have worked across a range of media, such as Bea Maddock, Fred Williams and Les Kossatz. The work of Indigenous artists has been a strong theme in contemporary printmaking, so the archive includes works by artists such as Treahna Hamm and Judy Watson. One of the most important features of the archive is the inclusion of new and emerging print methods: for example, the use of photographic processes, and the emerging field of digital imagery in the work of Diane Mantzaris and Lesley Duxbury.

The State Library has collected prints since its inception. The acquisition of this archive supports its commitment to collecting and documenting the history and development of printmaking and book arts in Australia.

The Library is often forced to be selective in acquiring material because of budgetary constraints. The acquisition of an archive such as this one, which has been curated by professionals in the field, gives an exceptional coverage of contemporary printmaking in Australia.



Above left: Barbara Brash, *Windmill*, screenprint, 1972. H2012.250/52

Above right: Noel Counihan, *Mexican Girl*, linocut, 1970. H2012.250/93