



*Donald Baechler 94*

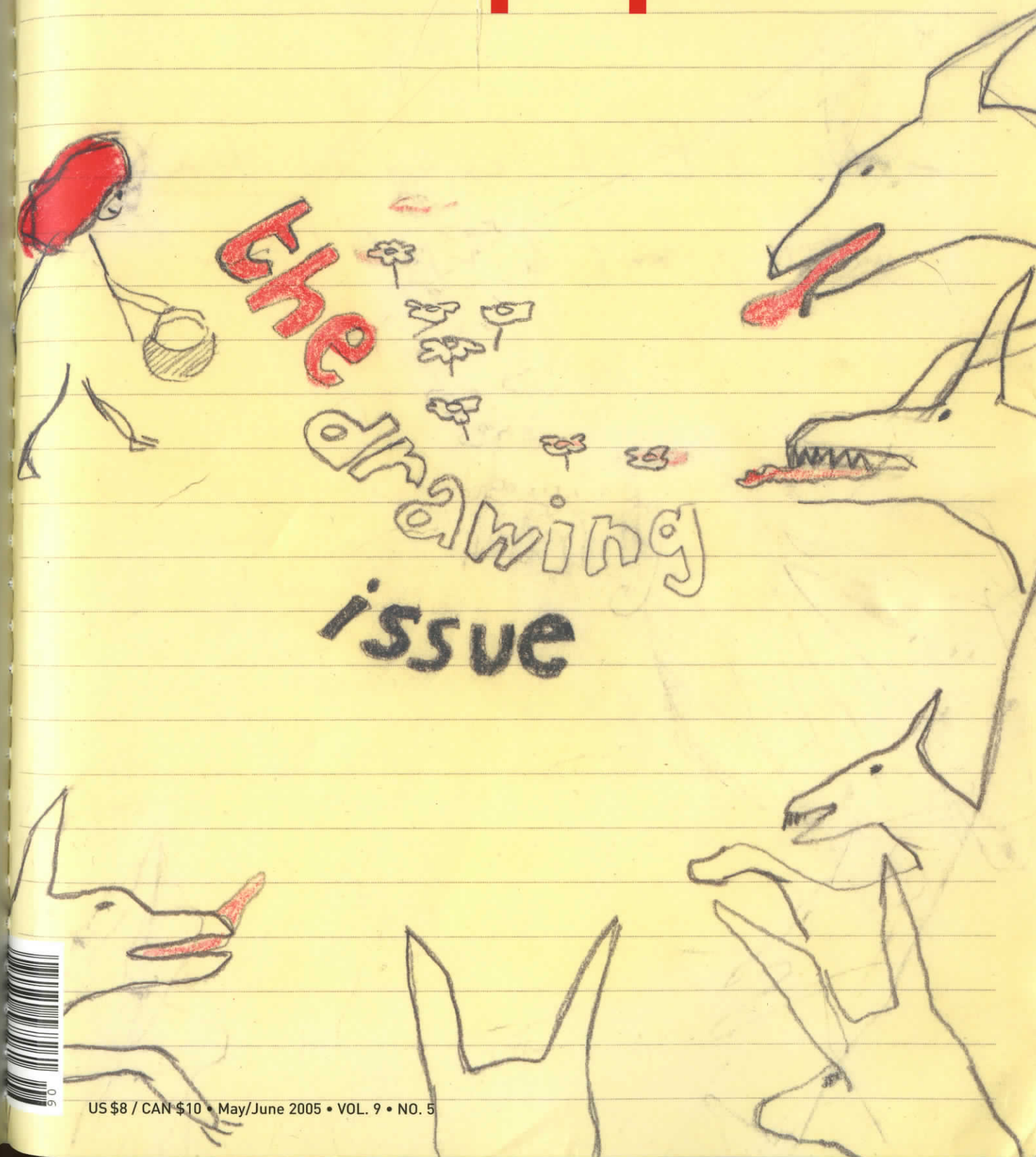
**Donald Baechler** *Red Coral*, 2004, aquatint and open-bite etching,  
edition of 34 plus 5 artist's proofs, 55 x 42 1/2 inches, 139.7 x 107.9 cm

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# P I C A S S O



*Garçon Pensif Veillant Une Dormeuse À La Lumière D'Une Chandelle, 18.11.34, from the Suite Vollard etching and aquatint printed on Montval paper, 9 3/8 x 11 3/4", from the edition of 50, signed, (Bloch #226)*

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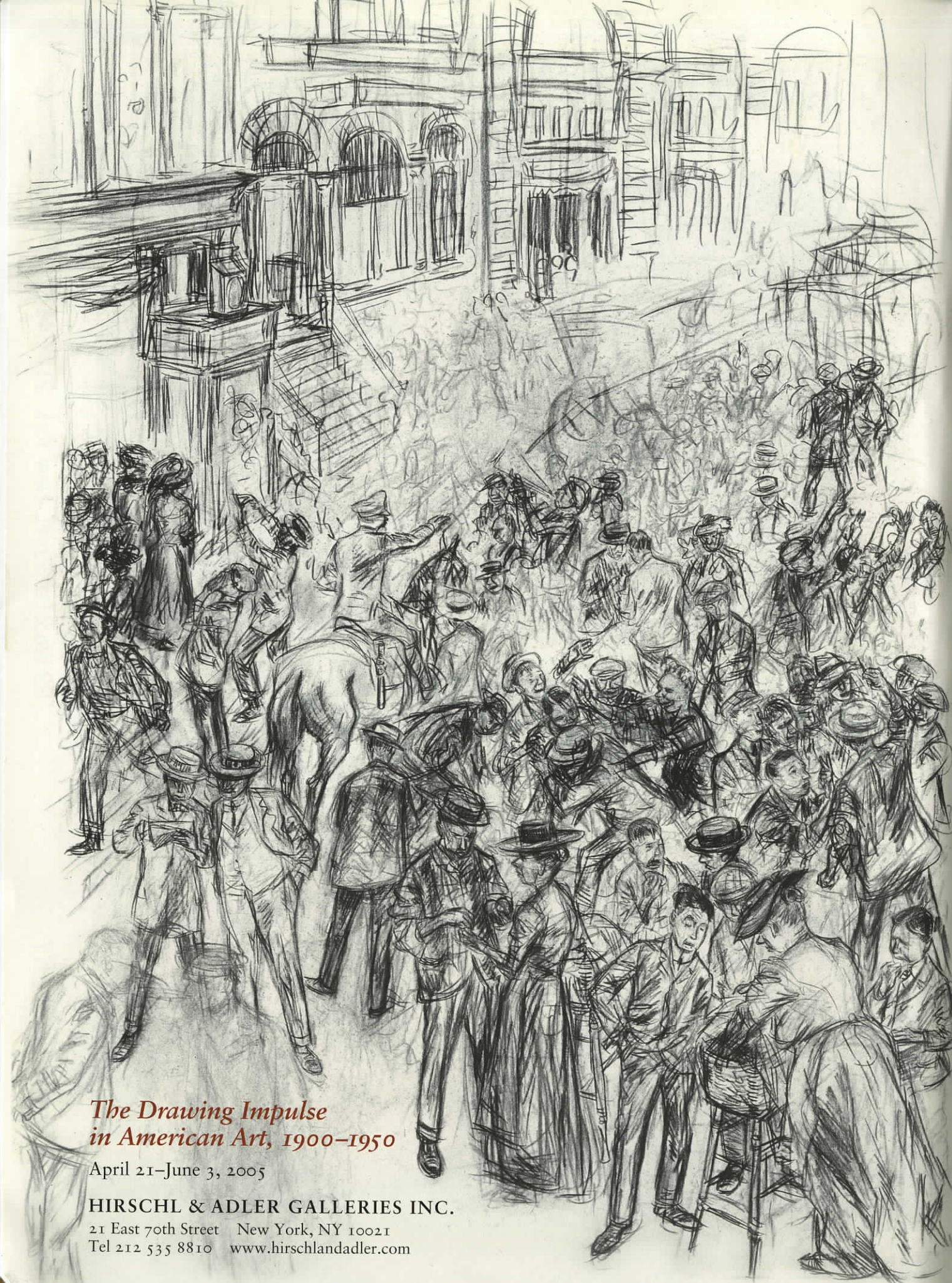
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Image this page:  
Rosana Castrillo Díaz, Untitled,  
graphite on paper (10 x 14 in.),  
2004. Courtesy the artist ©  
Rosana Castrillo Díaz.

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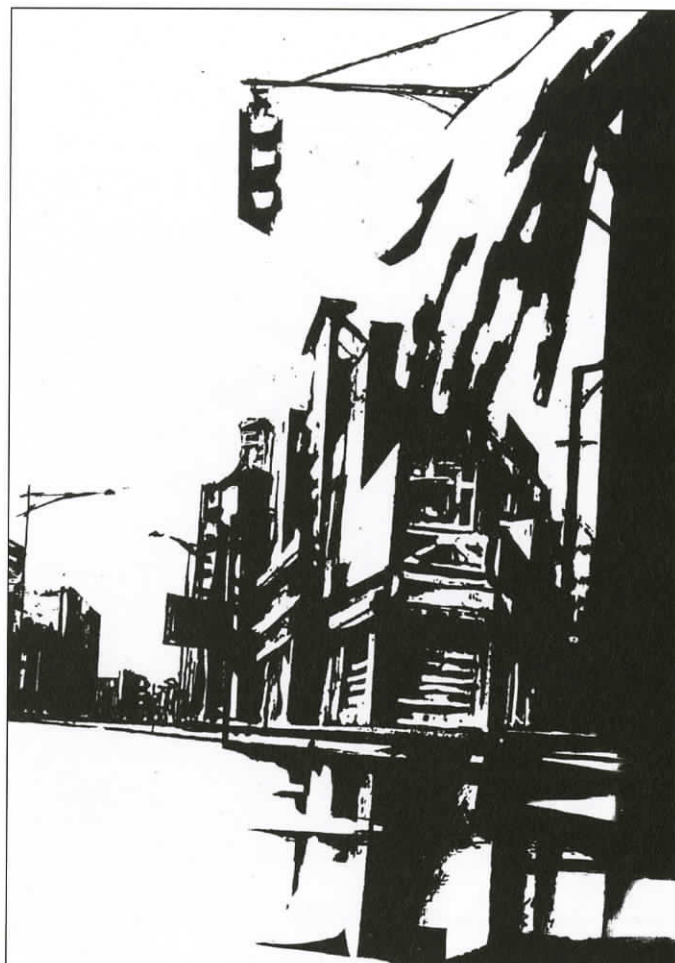
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Danijel Žeželj

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**CHAIRS**

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**Yun-Fei Ji**

*Public Grain*, etching (36 1/4 x 28 1/2 in.),  
edition of 35, 2004 (pictured) and *Card Players*,  
etching (15 x 19 in.), edition of 45, 2004.  
Published by James Cohan Gallery, New York.  
Printed by Harlan and Weaver, New York.

Mao Zedong's disastrous political decisions continue to provide fertile ground for Yun-Fei Ji's acerbic images of life in Communist China. In collaboration with James Cohan Gallery, the Chinese-born, Brooklyn-based painter released his first two prints in January, each of which grapples with past economic blunders in China that had far-reaching social effects. Both prints were created at Harlan & Weaver, the downtown Manhattan print shop, using their specialty etching and aquatint techniques; the prints were then printed on Japanese Gampi paper and finished with a chine collé process. *Card Players*, an edition of forty-five, is an intimately scaled image that unflatteringly portrays several half-dressed elderly men seated around a card table while a woman sprawls lasciviously on the couch behind them. The second print, *Public Grain*, features two boats filled with giant baskets of grain and populated by somber musicians and ghoulish creatures. Inspired by a government propaganda photograph from the late 1950s in which farmers triumphantly hand over boatloads of grain to government officials, Ji's reworking of the scene is truer to the historical fact of widespread starvation during the Great Leap Forward. Both prints subtly convey the devastating impact of government incompetence.

—Merrily Kerr

## Interim Print Report

In advance of our Annual Print Review in November, Art on Paper looks at recent editions by seven artists

**Laura Owens**

Series of five untitled spit-bite aquatints, some incorporating aquatint, soft-ground etching, and/or drypoint, editions of 40, all 2004.  
Pictured: *Untitled*, color spit-bite aquatint with soft-ground etching (39 1/2 x 44 1/2 in.).  
Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco.

Like her quirky paintings, Laura Owens's new suite of five etchings draws from a wide variety of source material, translating traditional animal imagery into idiosyncratic compositions that vibrate with color and energy. The smallest, printed in blue ink, depicts a nineteenth-century whaling scene. Owens's use of soft-ground etching and drypoint captures the carved quality of the scrimshaw original, while moody washes of spit-bite aquatint fill the stormy skies and ocean swells. Early American embroidery inspired two other prints, which feature brightly colored birds and share a similar palette of aqua-blues and peaches against gray backgrounds. In the larger of the two, soft-ground etching is used to delineate the peacock's plumage and the branches, animating the composition with patterns and lines that mimic stitchery.



Separately, a medium-size print, based on a Chinese brocade, shows a chicken sitting on a realistically rendered tree limb. The graphic and chromatic ornamentation of the fowl is so offset by the washed gray-brown background that it appears to hover above it. In the fifth work, a cobalt-blue horse rears up against an undulating gray background. The palette, dynamic composition, and stylized tail render the work whimsical and childlike. Owens brings to her prints the skill, vision, and charm that she incorporates into her paintings, both honoring and defying the art-historical precedents she quotes.

—Laura Richard Janku

### Robert Bechtle

*Texas and 20th Intersection*, color soft-ground etching with aquatint (22 x 30 3/4 in.), edition of 30, 2004. Published by Crown Point Press, San Francisco.

While best known for his hyperrealistic paintings of Bay Area neighborhood streets, Robert Bechtle has been making prints for forty years—he even has a press in his garage. His unerring focus on the Bay Area as a subject and the constant evolution of his



technique are evident in his latest etching at Crown Point Press, *Texas and 20th Intersection*, printed by Catherine Brooks. It is such a masterful work that it was the centerpiece of a mini-print retrospective mounted during Bechtle's full-scale career survey at SFMoMA. The print flawlessly captures a spirit of place—a barren residential street awash in the Mediterranean light that has inspired so many artists in the Bay Area. The image shimmers with layers of color—warm red vibrating beneath the grayish blue that delineates the asphalt. While the scene is set in full daylight, the rendering is lush. Because Bechtle works in a highly detailed manner, his favored printing method is color soft-ground etching,

which allows him to draw fine lines in wax. The scene required six printing plates and three weeks to draw, longer than the usual residency at Crown Point (and for an edition of fewer prints). Bechtle made the wise decision to concentrate on a single, fairly large-scale image, resulting in an immediate classic that sold out briskly.

—Glen Helfand

### Gabriel Fowler and Oli Watt

"Crumpled Paper" series, ten silkscreens in editions of 10, 2004. Pictured: *Untitled #1* (7 1/2 x 10 in.), edition of 10 plus 1 A.P., 2004. Published by the artists.

How many times have you grabbed a piece of paper and crumpled it up into a ball with both hands, eager to pitch it into the nearest waste basket? The complex of intense feelings—anger, embarrassment, spite, fear, frustration—that this gesture may spring from is elegantly addressed in a simple series of prints by Gabriel Fowler and Oli Watt. This sometime collaborative duo have performed the action ten times, then scanned the distressed pages into a computer, extracting detailed images. Although this dismissive or arro-



gant act is more often achieved with the "delete" button these days, these artists have employed the old-fashioned silkscreen. The resulting two-color prints are painstakingly cut out and floated in somber black-box frames, so that their ragged edges are all the more poignantly apparent. Severely, almost mournfully witty, this ten-part series, while evading any expressive excess, hits the mark.

—Kathryn Hixson

### Tim Rollins and K.O.S.

*The Creation*, seven water-based silkscreens with chine collé (each 22 x 15 in.), edition of 25 + 2 A.P., 2004. Pictured: *Representation of Chaos*. Published by Pyramid Atlantic, Maryland.

No one takes printmaking's gift for collaboration to the extreme that Tim Rollins does. His recent portfolio "The Creation" (2004)—based on Franz Josef Haydn's oratorio of that name—was made by a team of more than forty Maryland students and teachers, and members of Kids of Survival, the collaborative group that Rollins founded in the South Bronx in the 1980s.

The participants, working both individually and together, cre-



ated hundreds of expressive silkscreen monoprints in response to Haydn's work. From those, they unanimously selected seven for the edition. Rollins, working with Pepe Coronado (Pyramid Atlantic Art Center's master printer) and studio technicians, digitized each of the seven images and had them printed onto translucent Japanese paper, which was then applied as chine collé onto screenprints of Haydn's score. The artist describes the prints as "a cross between Franz Kline and John Cage." Indeed, one of the essential characteristics of each print is the chance conflation of a willful, intuitive mark-making and the structured language of music composition. Rollins and his team also created handmade paper with subtle watermarks designed by one of the K.O.S. members that serves as interleaving, providing quiet interludes between the ferocious high drama of the prints.

Other artists have explored the biblical story of the Creation as a metaphor for the artistic process, but this project adds an interesting twist. It intelligently challenges romantic notions of artistic genius by creating a work that is seemingly personal but is actually the collaborative result of several dozen minds. Although the seven images selected were the result of individual efforts, the documentation lists everyone involved as co-creators.

—Peter Nesbett

### On Kawara

*I Met*, offset prints on Phoenix Motion Xantur, bound in linen, twelve volumes, 4,790 pages total (each 53 1/4 x 37 5/8 in.), edition of 90 plus 10 A.P., 2004. Published by Editions Micheline Szwajcer and Michèle Dider, Brussels.

On May 10, 1968, Japanese Conceptual artist On Kawara launched a project that would continue until September 17, 1979. Every day, he listed in chronological order the name of everyone with whom he had a conversation. The city where the meeting took place is also noted. This seems to be an eminently straightforward procedure, yet questions arise. What counted as a conversation? If the artist exchanged a few words with a vague acquaintance, was the interchange recorded? One suspects that it was not, yet there is no way of knowing. Nor, of course, do the bare bones of this record give us any idea of what the artist's conversations were about. *I Met* is not a diary or a chronicle of any kind. Like the paintings of On Kawara's "Today" Series—each one of which presents, in a neutral style, only the date when he made it, *I Met* is a work of process art that expresses no feelings, makes no argument, displays no seductive style or attitude. It is simply evidence of the artist's existence over a certain span of time, not unlike the telegrams that he sent to friends and acquaintances that stated simply, "I am still alive." *I Met* is more circumspect, a private record compiled, perhaps, to remind On Kawara himself that he