

years before I had visited there and met Albert Guspi and Lara Castells who ran the only photography gallery in the city, Spectrum. Now there is another photography gallery, fotomania. Joan Fontcuberta, a young Spanish photographer and his girlfriend, Christina Zelic, are major forces in the new gallery, although it is owned and run by a lovely lady named Asuncion Rodes. Interest in photography as an art form would not exist at all in Spain except for a handful of people. In their dedication and fervor, they make a lovely light. Communication with the outside world is just beginning after the long darkness of Franco's regime, and a visitor is graciously besieged with portfolios, asked to offer criticism and answer questions. These people, mostly young, amaze me. Working in a void does not deter them; it seems only to increase their enthusiasm.

Albert and Lara have opened a new center for photography, I am told. I am anxious to see it. I do not know what to expect. On the third day, Albert drives me to the Centre Internacional de Fotografia. It is housed in a four-story building on a narrow street in the middle of what is described to me as the *bordeño* area. The entire facade of the building is painted with portraits of famous photographers by Arranz Bravo and Bartolozzi, two young Spanish painters known for their outdoor murals. The scale and wonderful absurdity and wit of this huge fresco take a while to dawn on me. Way up on top is Daguerre. Half way down Imogen Cunningham towers behind Ansel Adams. I spot Minor White and Bruce Davidson and Jerry Uelsmann. There must be dozens of portraits, and suddenly Albert points out a somewhat familiar face—mine. On the ground level I am clustered with Cornell Capa, Jean-Claude Lemagny, Nathan Lyons, and John Szarkowski. We all start laughing. Is this the Mount Rushmore of photography?



Lee D. Witkin and detail from the mural.

Inside, the center shows the care and planning that went into its opening last fall. On the ground level there is a café with photographic posters all about. A few steps up is a door that leads to a small screening room equipped with plush seats just like a movie theater. A three-passenger elevator takes us up one flight to the darkrooms, which are fully equipped and covered with white tile. The floor above this has a large studio area and a library with every book and magazine the founders could get their hands on. All in all, it is a haven for photography lovers. Even in New York City it would be remarkable, but here in Barcelona, it is miraculous.

Who is funding it? What will its program be? I can get no direct answers. Everyone there hopes American photographers will visit and teach. Why has there been so little publicity? Again, no direct answer, but it will happen soon. Albert and Lara show me a dummy of a large magazine the center will publish regularly. It is most impressive and ambitious. I am truly awed. I hope word gets out to the world and photographers flock to Barcelona. There are some wonderful people and surprises awaiting them.

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EDWARD HOPPER AS PRINTMAKER & ILLUSTRATOR: SOME CORRESPONDENCES by Gail Levin

Edward Hopper's prints were contemporaneous with his early career as an illustrator and can best be understood in this context. His illustrations, which ranged from covers of obscure trade periodicals to those for fiction in such well-known magazines as *Scribner's*, have never before been exhibited. Given his very negative attitude toward having to earn his living by working as an illustrator when he aspired to be a fine artist, it is remarkable that he saved a large group of illustrations, including many originals that his widow bequeathed to the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1969.

In an interview in 1935, Hopper claimed to have been a poor illustrator because he was not interested in the right subjects: "I was always interested in architecture but the editors wanted people waving their arms."¹ Later he reiterated, "I was a rotten illustrator—or mediocre, anyway," and explained that he was not interested in drawing people "grimacing and posturing. Maybe I am not very human. What I wanted to do was to paint sunlight on the side of a house."²

In 1899, after graduating from high school in his hometown of Nyack, New York, Hopper commuted daily to New York City to study illustration at the Correspondence School of Illustrating. Although his parents did not object to his becoming an artist, they encouraged him to study commercial illustration, which offered a more secure income. He continued to study illustration, then painting, at the New York School of Art.

Hopper had had no formal training in printmaking when in 1915 Martin Lewis, a fellow artist and illustrator, provided him with the technical advice necessary to begin etching. Hopper's initial attempts were tentative, but soon he began to master the medium, finding in etching a new means of personal expression. His prints were much more readily accepted by exhibition juries and galleries than his paintings had been, and they sold much more easily at the modest prices he asked.

He was sometimes assigned to illustrate subjects completely alien to him, yet more

sympathetic editors allowed him some creative freedom. Occasionally he secured assignments more in keeping with his artistic vision. Certainly he would not have chosen to illustrate such uncharacteristic themes as the African tribal warriors that appeared in *Everybody's* magazine in 1921 and 1922. This is what he meant in 1955, when he recalled his attitude toward illustration: "Partly through choice, I was never willing to hire out more than three days a week. I kept some time to do my own work. Illustrating was a depressing experience. And I didn't get very good prices because I didn't often do what they wanted."³

Since his career as an illustrator coincides with and encompasses the years he devoted to etching, it is not surprising to find relationships between the two endeavors. There are often common motifs and subjects as well as similar compositional arrangements. Yet while he later denigrated his illustrations (of which over 500 produced between 1906 and 1925 exist today either in the original or published form), he remained proud of his etchings long after he stopped making them in 1923, even including some in his retrospectives in 1950 and 1964. After producing his last two drypoints in 1928, he abandoned prints entirely. Among the subjects that he repeatedly chose for both his etchings and his illustrations were trains, boats, soldiers, figures in interiors, and urban street scenes. He also both etched and illustrated a bullfight and Don Quixote, yet he probably produced these illustrations on speculation, for it appears they were never published.

Compared to his earlier illustration of *Don Quixote* (c. 1906-09), Hopper's etching of the same subject (c. 1915-18) is sketchy, less detailed, and less resolved (Figs. 1 & 2). His illustration includes windmills in the distance and the two figures on horseback dramatically centered in a vertical composition. The etching is the horizontal format that would later characterize all of the artist's work; it also lacks the prominent caption found beneath the image in the illustration. Nonetheless, the similarity of the two conceptions is striking. His rendition of Don Quixote's pro-

(Fig. 1) Edward Hopper, *Don Quixote*, watercolor and ink on illustration board (21-3/4x13-3/4 in.), 1906-07 or 1909. (Fig. 2) *Don Quixote*, etching (4x5 in.), 1915-18. Courtesy Whitney Museum of American Art, Josephine N. Hopper bequest. (Fig. 3) *The Bay Window*, etching (4x5 in.), 1915-18. Courtesy Whitney Museum. (Fig. 4) Illustration for John M. Oskison, "The Estate of J. P. Jones," *Every Week*, July 9, 1917.

file and costume is similar in both, although he added a large hat in the print. The figure of Sancho Panza is also quite similar in both etching and illustration.

In certain of Hopper's commissioned illustrations related compositionally to his etchings, he was able to produce a personal conception of the scene required while still meeting the needs of the editor. Often, because of the uncertain dating of the early prints, it is impossible to say whether the illustration preceded or followed the etching. For example, his etching *The Bay Window* (1915-18) has an architectural focus similar to that in his illustration for John M. Oskison's "The Estate of J. P. Jones" published in *Every Week* of July 9, 1917 (Figs. 3 & 4). In both the domestic setting of the print and the office of the illustration, a bay window defines the space above a floor that tilts forward, indicating we view the scene from above. The old woman sewing in the etching differs little from the female in the illustration, who also casts her gaze downwards, in this case reading. A picture frame hanging on the wall and a light fixture also help define the space in both compositions. Hopper's personality is most apparent, however, in the etching where the feeling is characteristically one of solitude and quiet. Yet, the interaction of the figures in the office is distantly related to scenes he would later develop in paintings such as *Conference at Night* (1949).

Another example of a close relationship between Hopper's illustration and etching is his design of a 1917 brochure for Wells Fargo and Company, "When You Go Over There," and his etching *Street in Paris* (c. 1915-18) (Figs. 5 & 6). Both provided him with an outlet for the nostalgia he felt for his Paris sojourns in 1906-07, 1909, and 1910. He savored these experiences, and although he never again traveled abroad, his interest in French art and culture remained with him for the rest of his life.⁴ Hopper actually titled four of his prints in French (*Les poilus*, *Les deux pigeons*, *La barrière*, and *Aux fortifications*), and six other prints contain subject matter that is clearly French. He had only occasional opportunities to express his love of France in his illustrations, most notably two covers for *La France*, *An American Magazine* in 1919 and 1920. *Street in Paris*, a reminiscence of a busy corner in a working-class neighborhood, is related to the setting he depicted on the Wells Fargo brochure where soldiers pass in front of a bank on a corner as Parisians traverse in front of shop windows in the print. The images in the etching are notably less distinct. This results in part from densely crosshatched lines and also from areas where he allowed more time than usual. In both views, Hopper demonstrated his abilities as a



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

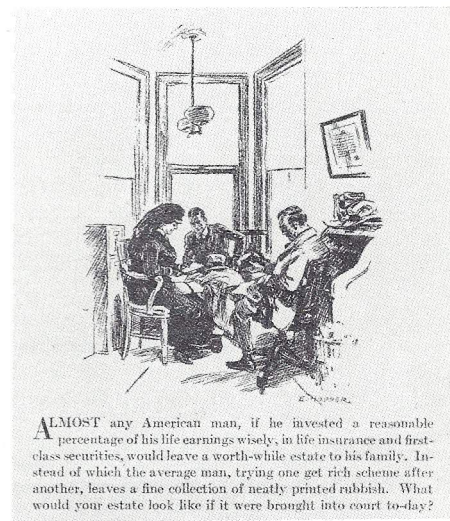


Fig. 4

keen-eyed observer of urban surroundings.

Another of his reminiscences of France, the etching *Somewhere in France* (c. 1915-18), is related in motif to his illustrations, such as one for C. W. Garrison's "Safe, Sure and Speedy Service" that appeared in the *Wells Fargo Messenger* of September 1917 (Figs. 7 & 8). Both depict railway platforms, a train, the trainmen, and the other passengers. He first sold his illustrations to this magazine for company employees just by walking into its editorial offices; he received \$10 each, a price that he was happy to get.⁵ A year later, he had begun to exhibit and sell his etchings for about the same price. Although he exhibited *Somewhere in France* at the MacDowell Club of New York in a group exhibition from April 27-May 12, 1918, no example of this print is known to be extant except for a posthumous print taken from the plate bequeathed to the Whitney Museum by the artist's widow. Although heavily etched lines distinguish this print, the vertical pattern of the lines is similar to those in the related illustration. Both compositions exploit sharp diagonals to create the illusion of space.

From the time Hopper began to commute to New York City to attend classes in the fall of 1899, trains became a familiar aspect of his life. In the years just after he returned from

France in 1910, he continued to commute daily to work either in an advertising agency or in his own studio. He frequently depicted trains in both his etchings and illustrations. Other etchings with railroad motifs include *House Tops*, *The Locomotive*, *Night on the El Train*, *Railroad Crossing*, *The Railroad*, *Train and Bathers*, *American Landscape*, *The El Station*, and *The Conductor*. His illustrations for *Associated Sunday Magazine* featured trains as early as 1913, and he continued to produce illustrations that included trains for such magazines as *Farmer's Wife*, *Wells Fargo Messenger*, *Express Messenger*, and *Everybody's*. His interest in trains, first evident in his childhood drawings, recurred in his oil painting *Railroad Train* (1908) and in several drawings done in France during the period 1906-09; it persisted throughout his mature career in such paintings as *Compartment C*, *Car 293* (1938), *Dawn in Pennsylvania* (1942), and *Chair Car* (1965).

Nautical themes also occurred in both Hopper's prints and illustrations and date back to his childhood. Among his etchings, *Monhegan Boat*, *The Henry Ford*, and *The Cat Boat* reflect his love of sailing as do several of his covers of *The Morse Dry Dock Dial*, published by a shipbuilding company for its employees. His cover of *Hotel Management* for



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

September 1924 features a sailboat similar to that in *The Cat Boat* (1922). He continued this interest in his watercolors and in oil paintings such as *The Lee Shore* (1941) and *The Martha McKean of Wellfleet* (1944).

Despite Hopper's later defensiveness and generally negative attitude toward his early work in illustration, his experiences as an illustrator undoubtedly helped to shape his mature art. His illustrations were often closely related to his prints in either composition or subject matter. Many of the illustrations have a graphic strength and quality not indicated by his negative comments. Rather than detracting from the unique quality of his art, his illustrations reveal one of the vital forces influencing the artist's development during his formative years. While Hopper himself admitted, "After I took up etching, my painting seemed to crystallize," he would not recognize that in his illustrations were glimpses of the direction his art would eventually take.⁶ The Hopper who would become one of America's most outstanding Realist painters is present in the illustrations, even though his heart was not in them.

In his etchings, Hopper found an outlet for his individuality and personal feelings. The prints served as a catalyst for his later painting, and in their directness and simple,



Fig. 8

straightforward means are successful in their own right. They are very expressive works, often charged with a depth of emotion that would have been inappropriate to convey in commercial illustration. The levels of meaning in Hopper's etchings are complex and depend in part on the various interpretations made by the viewer in confrontation with the imagery. This variable is the most important aspect of his prints; it related them to his later paintings and separates them from the less personal illustrations.

Collectors interested in Hopper's prints have noted recent activity in the auction market and soaring prices, particularly for his most famous etchings, *Evening Wind*, *East Side Interior*, and *Night Shadows*. He did his own printing with the notable exception of *Night Shadows*, which was steel-faced and printed by Peter Platt in a large edition, probably exceeding 500, for the *New Republic* in December 1924 as part of a folio of *American Etchings*. His other editions never exceeded 100. Some prints are known only in posthumous examples but may still exist as there is an exhibition history for some of them. (For a catalogue raisonné now in preparation, I would appreciate notification by all owners of Hopper prints, particularly institutions with holdings.)

(Fig. 5) Edward Hopper, illustration for Wells Fargo & Company brochure, 1917. Courtesy Private Collection. (Fig. 6) *Street in Paris*, etching (8x9-1/2 in.), 1915-19. Courtesy Whitney Museum. (Fig. 7) *Somewhere in France*, etching (posthumous print) (7-7/8x9-1/4 in.), 1915-18. Courtesy Whitney Museum. (Fig. 8) Illustration for "Safe, Sure and Speedy Service," *Wells Fargo Messenger*, September 1917.

Most of the originals for Hopper's illustrations have disappeared and were probably destroyed long ago by the publishers. A few of these publications are themselves so rare that there is only one known copy. Others are only known to be available on microfilm. Libraries are currently discarding many old periodicals, sometimes after microfilming. This presents interested collectors with an inexpensive opportunity to purchase discarded old magazines and newspapers containing Hopper illustrations. Unfortunately, some have gone directly to paper recyclers, a deplorable situation because microfilm is a poor substitute for the printed illustrations.

Hopper left no written record of his career as an illustrator, making research all the more difficult. While I hope I have located all extant examples of his published illustrations and original artwork, additional examples may come to light. Collectors, however, should exercise caution because of the increasing number of works by obscure artists that are reaching the marketplace with a signature reading Edward Hopper.

- 1 Archer Winsten, "Wake of the News. Washington Square North Boasts Strangers Worth Talking To," *New York Post*, November 26, 1935.
- 2 Lloyd Goodrich, *Edward Hopper*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1976, p. 31.
- 3 Quoted in Suzanne Burrey, "Edward Hopper: The Emptying Spaces," *Arts Digest*, 1 April 1955, pp. 9 and 33.
- 4 For a discussion of Hopper's interest in French art and culture, see Gail Levin, "Edward Hopper, Francophile," *Arts Magazine*, 53 (June 1979), pp. 114-21.
- 5 Author's interview, July 9, 1976, with Elsie Scott, who worked as an editor in the advertising department at Wells Fargo & Company during World War I.
- 6 Quoted in Burrey, p. 10.

Gail Levin is associate curator, Hopper Collection, at the Whitney Museum of American Art. *Edward Hopper: Prints and Illustrations*, an exhibition she has organized, will be shown at the Whitney September 27-December 9, 1979. The show will then travel to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, February 5-March 16, 1980; Georgia Museum of Arts, Athens, March 30-May 11; Detroit Institute of Arts, June 10-July 20; Milwaukee Art Center, August 7-September 21, and Seattle Art Museum, October 16-November 30. Accompanying the show are two books by Gail Levin, *Edward Hopper as Illustrator* (\$25 cloth, \$12.50 paper) and *Edward Hopper: The Complete Prints* (\$15 cloth, \$7.50 paper), published by W. W. Norton & Company, New York, in association with the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1979. In preparing a four-volume catalogue raisonné of the artist's work in all media, she would appreciate learning of any works by Edward Hopper not currently registered with her and can be reached at the Whitney, 945 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021.