



The Printed Picture

Richard Benson

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The Printed Picture traces the changing technology of picture-making from the Renaissance to the present, focusing on the vital role of images in multiple copies. The book surveys printing techniques before the invention of photography; the photographic processes that began to appear in the early nineteenth century; the marriage of printing and photography; and the rapidly evolving digital inventions of our time. From woodblocks to chromolithographs, from engravings to bar codes, from daguerreotypes to contemporary color photographs, the book succinctly examines the full range of pictorial processes. Exploring how pictures look by describing how they are made, author Richard Benson reaches fascinating and original conclusions about what pictures can mean.

Although many of the techniques he discusses have been used to create exceptional works of art, Benson concentrates on the typical, everyday pictures that have played and continue to play such a prominent role in our lives. In conjunction with the publication of the book, an educational installation of this material will be presented in the photography galleries at The Museum of Modern Art, New York in the fall of 2008.

Presented as a series of one-page essays opposite the pictures they examine, the book retains the lively, engaging style of the informal lectures through which Benson developed his ideas over the course of 30 years at Yale University. Rooted in hands-on descriptions of practical techniques, *The Printed Picture* offers a rich and imaginative interpretation of the enormous cultural and social influence of multiple images.

Richard Benson is a MacArthur Fellow and the former Dean of the Yale School of Art. A photographer, printer and collector, he has devoted a considerable part of his career to research in photomechanical reproduction. As a printer Benson was instrumental in developing the technologies presently used in the industry to reproduce photographs in ink. He has taught many workshops and given many lectures on photography, printing and their associated technologies. He is the co-author of *Lay This Laurel* (Eakins Press) with Lincoln Kirstein and *A Maritime Album* (The Mariner's Museum of Newport News, Virginia) with John Szarkowski. His photographic work is in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, The Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven and many other institutions and private collections.

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