

IRWIN HOLLANDER



ART SPIRIT PASSING

KIPNZ



Published by KIPNZ Press
150 Delaware Street, Walton, NY. 13856
www.kipnz.com

In collaboration with Neil & Susan Rochmis

Printed on the occasion of the exhibition
IRWIN HOLLANDER: Art Spirit Passing
at KIPNZ Gallery, 2023.

Printed in the United States.

All images
© 2023 Irwin Hollander Workshop

Editors and designers:
Natalie Zayne and Kenneth Pietrobono

Editor's Note:

Irwin Hollander did not leave titles for his works and therefore they are listed as "Untitled" with our descriptor, if any, given in parentheses. In cases where he used text in the paintings, those words serve as descriptors.

As Hollander did not date his works, and without the benefit of his input, the works in this exhibition are approximate within a range: from 1984, the year the artist moved to Wells Bridge, and 2002, when he had largely stopped making work due to a stroke.

Media used in each work are based on deductions from physical review, information from Irwin's family and friends and from a 1997 catalogue of an Irwin Hollander exhibition at Salander-O'Reilly Gallery in New York City, which also served as a signpost for dating in some cases. Hollander was known to use watercolor, gouache, acrylic and tusche, among other materials, and was also known for using multiple techniques and media in one painting, making each difficult to parse; therefore, "mixed media" is often the most truthful, if not the most specific, description.

Finally, though it is documented that Hollander worked with paper stock from his own lithography workshop, including handmade paper, we have chosen to leave these distinctions for future research.

COVER: Untitled (*Army Vet*), c. 1984-1990.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 30 x 22
½ inches.

FLYLEAF: Untitled, c. 1990-1995. Spray paint
(technique), mixed media on board, 8 ½ x 11 inches.

BACK COVER: Untitled (*Faust*), c. 1990-2002.
Graphite or lithographic crayon, mixed media on
paper, 20 ½ x 16 inches.

IRWIN HOLLANDER

ART SPIRIT PASSING

Selections From the Wells Bridge Works

KIPNZ Press, Walton, NY.
in collaboration with
Neil & Susan Rochmis

IRWIN HOLLANDER: THE ARTIST

Irwin Hollander was born in 1927 in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, NY, to Henry and Ida (Burak) Hollander, and spent his childhood in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. His mother worked in the garment industry; his father was a taxi driver. Henry died when Irwin was six, and Ida later married Nat Stern, who was also in the needle trades, and active in the garment workers' union.

Hollander quit his studies at both Hebrew school and public school in the eighth grade and spent two years in Hartford on his own, beyond the jurisdiction of truant officers. Upon his return, he attended The School of Industrial Art (now the High School of Art and Design) and Washington Irving High School in Manhattan, where he studied fashion illustration, life drawing and photography in night classes.

Following a job taking photographs for advertising at Macy's, Hollander joined the Army in 1946, which took him to Guam with a photography unit. It was there that he started to read, and discovered painting by way of meeting a Danish artist making watercolors of the tropical beach setting. He bought a set of paints and began his lifelong travels as a painter.

After his army service he returned to New York and used the G.I. Bill to attend Brooklyn Museum Art School for a year. In 1951 he studied at Esmeralda, National School of Painting, Sculpture and Printmaking in Mexico; in 1952, at the Art Students League, New York City.

In an effort to make a living Hollander became a journeyman commercial printer. He married Nina Serfer in 1955, and the couple moved to San Diego after the birth of their first son, Mark. Hollander continued to practice commercial lithography as a trade there and fell in with the art scene. He was subsequently invited to learn and practice at Tamarind Lithography Workshop in Los Angeles by its founder, June Wayne. In 1961 he received a Ford Foundation Grant to develop the program. Within a year he was the first master printer trained at Tamarind, and would oversee the technical achievements that helped to bring fine art

lithography back to the forefront of the art world after its long dormancy from an early popularity in Europe.

In 1964, the Hollanders returned to New York to open Hollander Fine Art Lithography Workshop, at 90 E. 10th St in Manhattan. At that time it was the sole fine arts lithography workshop in New York City. He also began teaching at Pratt Graphics Center in 1965. In 1969 Hollander moved the shop to 195 Chrystie Street, and entered partnership with Fred Genis, a Dutch master printer. During the time of the Hollander Workshop, he worked with the most visionary artists of the era, such as Willem de Kooning, Roy Lichtenstein, Sam Francis, Ellsworth Kelly, Louise Nevelson, Robert Motherwell and John Cage. Original prints from the Hollander Workshop now form the bases of important museum and private collections, and are the subject of technical and art history textbooks. The name Irwin Hollander is almost synonymous with that of the renaissance of limited fine art editions of lithography in the US since the 1960s.

After closing the Hollander Workshop in 1972, Hollander taught at various institutions including the Pratt Graduate Center of Fine Arts in New York and Cranbrook Art Academy and Wayne State University in Detroit.

Hollander moved permanently to Wells Bridge, New York in 1984 with his partner, Deanna, and spent the better part of the rest of his life producing his own artwork. He joined the thriving artistic community there and participated in many exhibitions in the region. He died in 2018 in Brooklyn.



Untitled (*Bear in red interior*), c. 1984-2002.
Pencil crayon, mixed media (possibly tusche) on paper, 30 x 22 1/4 inches.

THE UNKNOWN IRWIN

In October 2019, I got a call from another antique dealer about buying the work of Irwin Hollander, a local artist who had died in 2018.

I remembered Irwin as an old man I would see at local auctions from time to time. My last memory of him was at an auction. He was in a wheelchair after he had suffered a stroke. It took two days for four of us to move the thousands of drawings and lithographs that were piled everywhere in Irwin's ramshackle house in Wells Bridge. We took everything to my barn where we divided it up piece by piece. There were hundreds of large gouaches on artist pads and many on homemade papers. There were thousands of smaller works on paper and on thin wood panels. We sorted them according to size and quality, grading it one, two or three. This took several weeks. Because there was so much of it, we were treating the work as a commodity, not as Art.

Much of Irwin's work is whimsical and eye-catching. People and animals are cavorting on planes of form and color. There are portraits, landscapes and autobiographical musings on life and art. The most common motif is a teddy bear, posed in hundreds of different situations and contexts. There are so many teddies that I have come to believe that the Bear is Irwin. If only I could ask him! There are also many portfolios, large murals on canvas and hundreds of notebooks, filled with drawings and ruminations. Some of the work is obscure and hard to categorize but I have grown to love it. Over the last three years, I have spent countless hours, mostly alone, going through the work and absorbing it. This has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. I have stumbled, accidentally, onto a fantastic voyage through the mind of one very prolific artist. The work just grows and grows, pulling me, and others, into Irwin Hollander's unique vision of the world.

- Neil Rochmis



Untitled, c. 1984 - 2002.
Lithographic crayon/graphite, mixed media on paper, 17 ¾ x 23 ½ inches.

INSIDER OUTSIDER

For many people, Irwin Hollander is known for his collaborations with other artists. In his lithography studio, he worked with the likes of Willem de Kooning, Roy Lichtenstein, Sam Francis, Ellsworth Kelly, Louise Nevelson and Robert Motherwell. Hollander became a lithographer in part because he wanted to work closely with artists. In his work as a printmaker he got as close to the artist's thoughts, feelings and process as possible, in order to produce work that would best reflect the artist's intention. References to this period of his life, working as a vehicle for the work of others, appear throughout his handwritten journals and sketchbooks. Irwin passed away in 2018 and we, presenters of this exhibition of his own artwork, are only connecting to him now, several years and layers later. In this position we feel very much that the tables have turned: it is we who are looking in, studying Hollander-as-artist, trying to imagine his thoughts and motivations as he made his own artwork in Wells Bridge, a life after New York City and his printmaking career.

As we make our forays into Hollander's world we see that he was both an insider and outsider artist. Though he lived at various times in metropolitan cities—most defined by his time in New York City—his 1984 move 200 miles north to Wells Bridge seems to have cleaved the two halves of his life; one in which he produced the artwork of others (and taught the trade) and the other in which he made his own.

In terms of his position as an insider to the art world, he had art training, and subsequently headed two seminal lithography studios serving the best artists of the time (whose works, printed by Hollander, reside in many major collections). Beginning in 1965 he began teaching lithography at Pratt Institute in New York, and later Cranbrook Art Academy and Wayne State University in Detroit. In his own artwork, he draws from art history and its icons, frequently including 'art jokes' with tongue-in-cheek references of the "fine artist"—bears drawing the Leaning Tower of Pisa, for instance.

On the other hand, Hollander's work most parallels the approach of an outsider artist. While he often used high-quality paper—presumably stock from

his master printer days—he was also known to paint and draw on whatever was available, such as the slate tiles from his own roof when it was replaced. As for paint media, his longtime friend Elizabeth Nields laughs that "Whatever he reached for he would try—and wouldn't necessarily follow the rules." In addition to gouaches and traditional paints, he used lithography techniques, and borrowed her potter's glazes; used spray paint, and sealing wax.

Moreover his work cannot be handily defined as belonging to this or that movement or art-historical period; it seems to exist in its own world. It is highly personal, often diaristic, noting places and names from the past; tropical memories of his time in the Pacific; icons of his Jewish heritage and Brooklyn upbringing. There is a sense, moreover, of travels between his own inner and outer reality: a mix of surreal and almost metaphysical characters and dimensions, together with images of his environment: the bridge, his home, the river, the railroad. The repeated use of the term INCORPOREALITY in his work seems to underscore this feeling of free-floating—from and between place, time, and history.

Hollander's paintings often depict the joining of two parts: himself and Deanna, his longtime girlfriend and muse (*id*, the combined initials of their first names, and a clever double-entendre to boot, is the subtle seal of identity given many works); the bear and the doll, and human pairs, in close lock. *Insider* and *outsider*, in Hollander's case, should also not be seen as discrete parts but mutually generative, one always coloring the other.

It is in this space we have hopefully connected with Hollander and his time in Wells Bridge. It is a way in, but the journey will be, as his wild, poetic, funny, and singular paintings suggest, full of curves. As one painting/poem puts it, "The story unfolds like noodles...Kid."

- Natalie Zayne and Kenneth Pietrobono



Untitled (*The Story Unfolds like Noodles*), c. 1984-2002.
Pencil/lithographic crayon, mixed media on board, 15 x 20 inches.

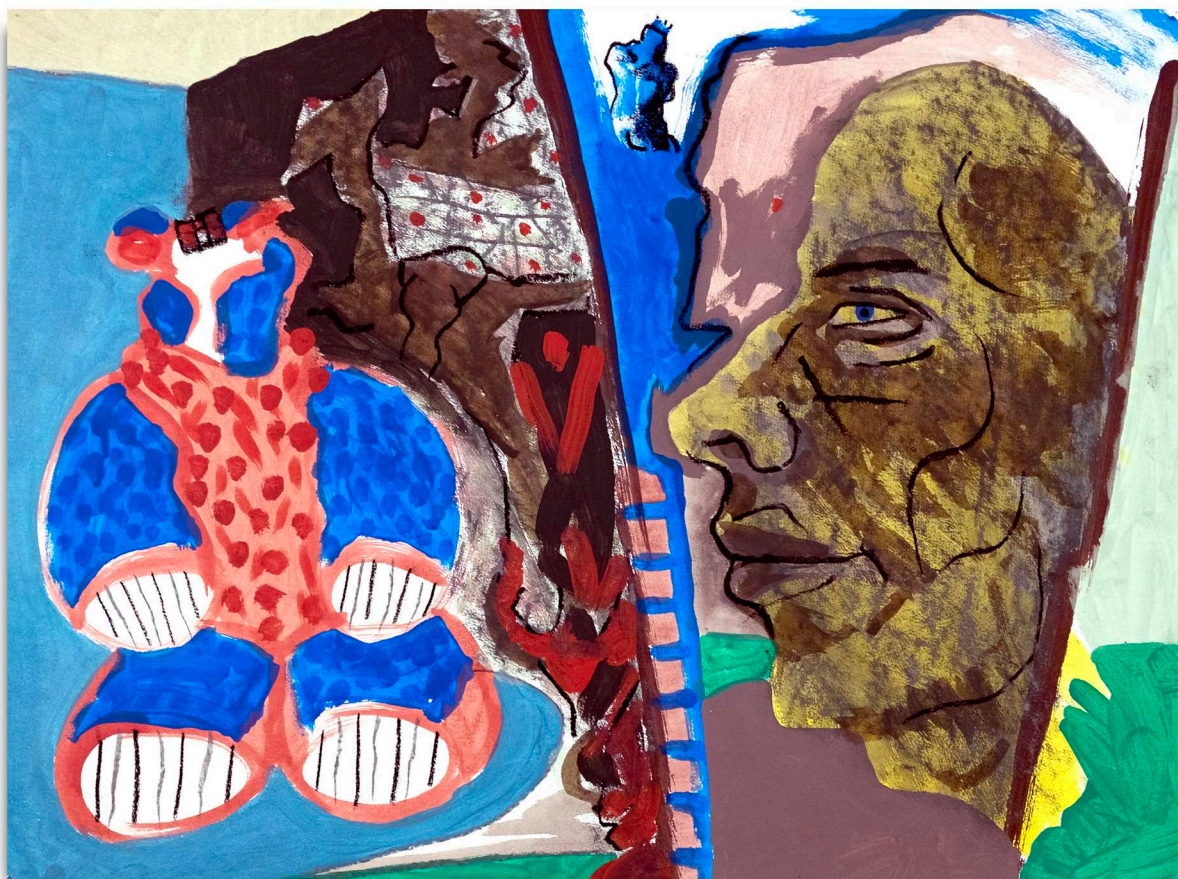
PLATES



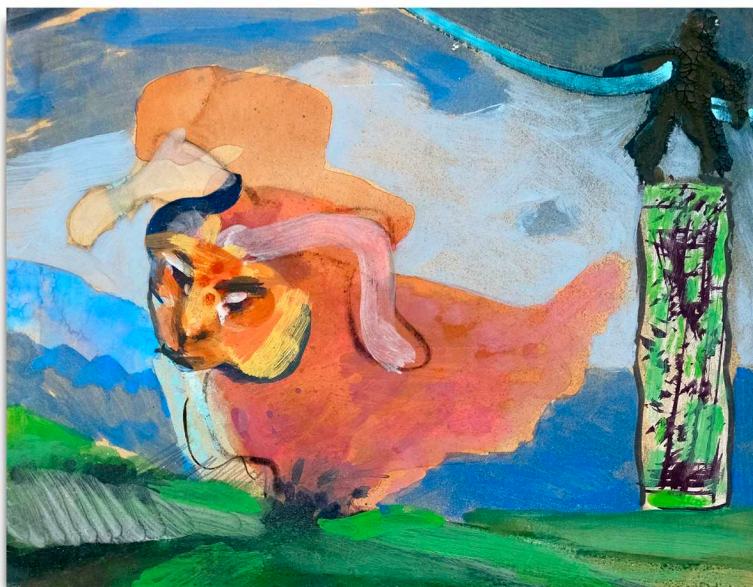
Untitled (*Girl with skull on her lap*), c. 1984-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 30 x 22 ¼ inches.



Untitled (*Two teddy bears*), c. 1984-2002.
Mixed media on paper, 30 x 22 ¼ inches.



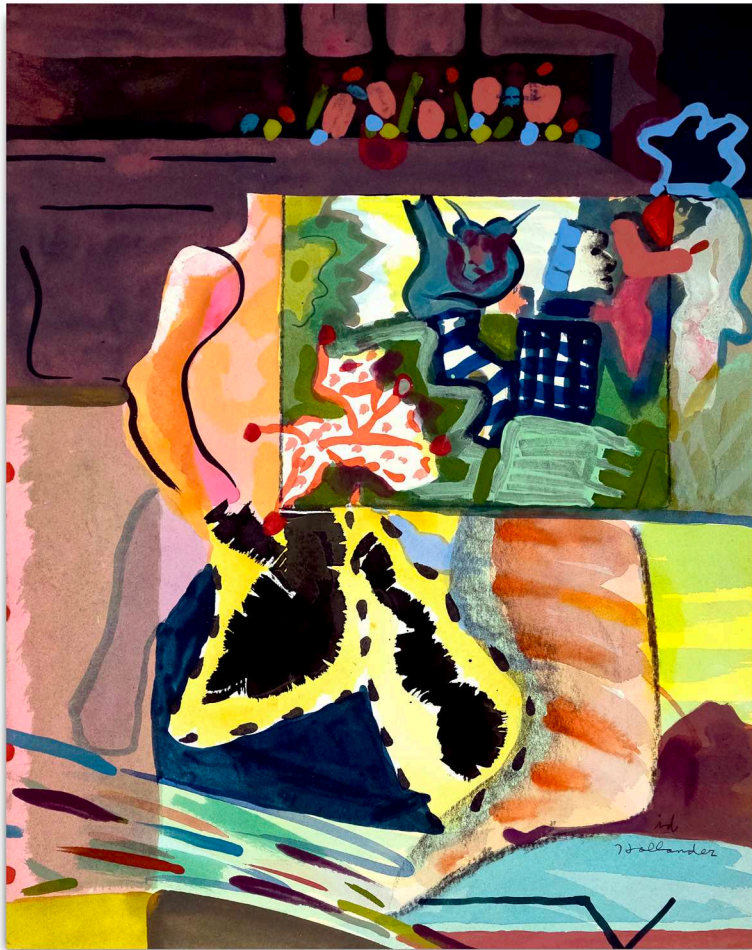
Untitled (*Teddy bear and profile*), c. 1984-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 30 x 22 ¼ inches.



Untitled, c. 1984-2022.
Mixed media on board, 8 ½ x 11 inches.



Untitled (*Art Spirit Passing*), c. 1984-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 30 x 22 ¼ inches.



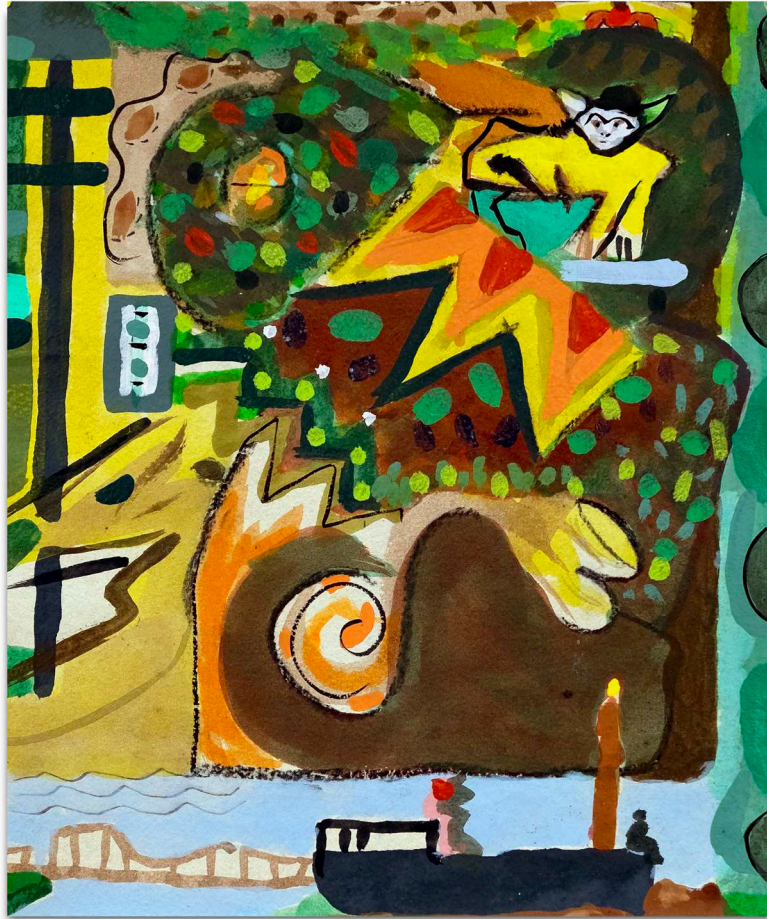
Untitled (*Composition*), c. 1990–2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 20 ½ x 16 ¼ inches.



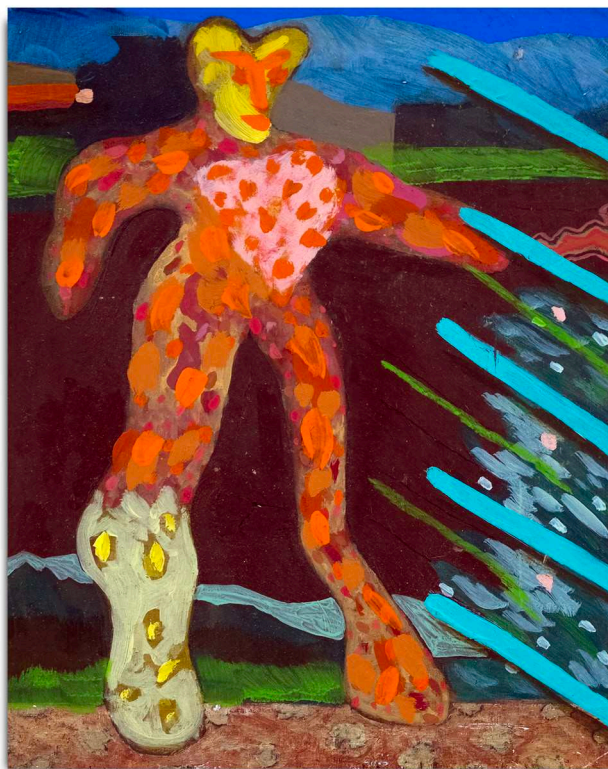
Untitled (*House in Cityscape*), c. 1990-2002.
Pencil/lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 20 ½ x 16 inches.



Untitled (*Landscape: Incorporeal*), c. 1985-1990.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 15 ½ x 12 ½ inches.



Untitled (*Yellow gargoyle and boat*), c. 1985-1990.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 15 x 12 ½ inches.



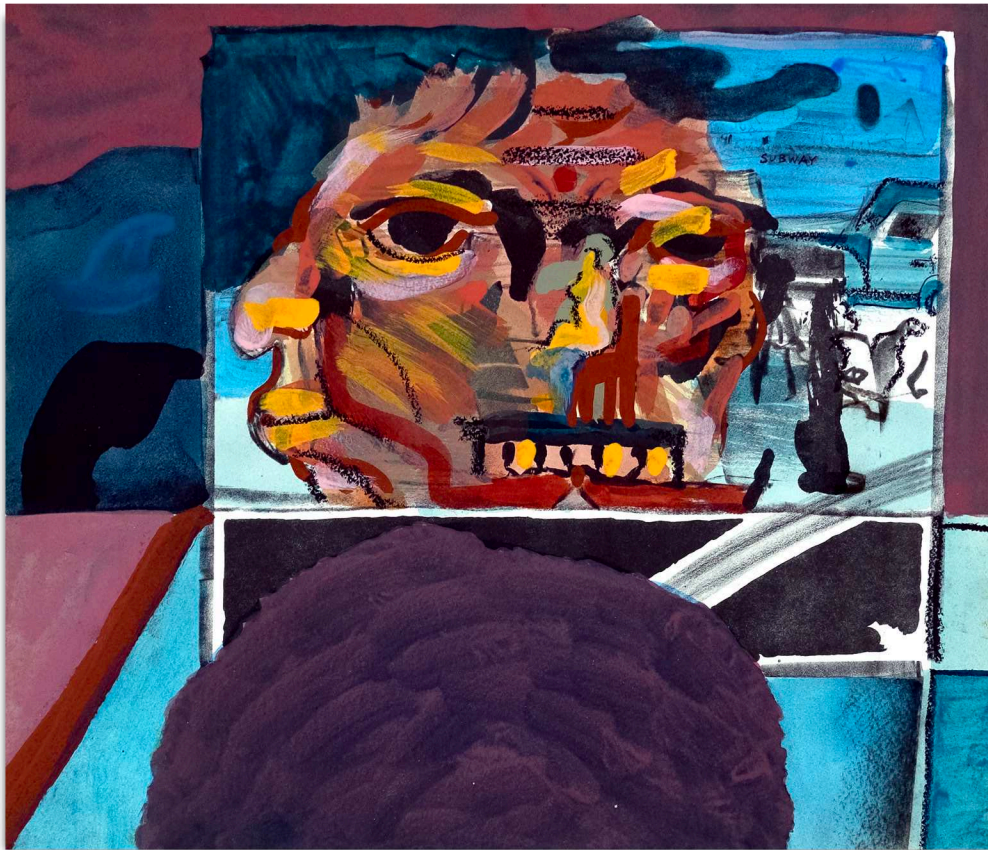
Untitled, c. 1995-2002.
Mixed media on wood, 12 x 9 ½ inches.



Untitled, c. 1995-2002.
Mixed media on board, 10 ½ x 13 inches.



Untitled (*Sparring figures, tent and canoe*), c. 1995-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 19 ¾ x 13 ¾ inches.



Untitled (*Two faces*), c. 1995-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 13 ¾ x 16 inches.



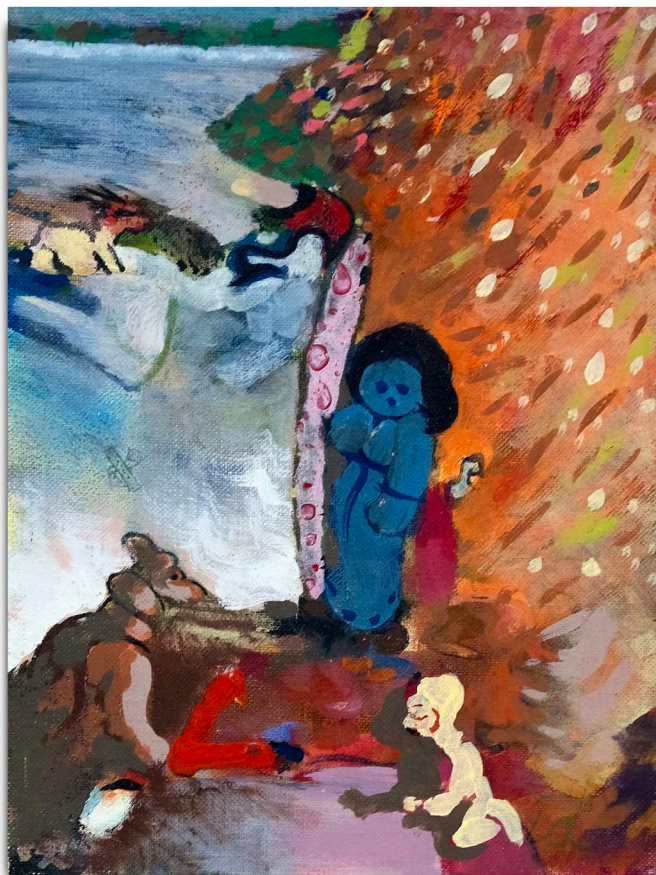
Untitled (*Twins/lovers in townscape*), c. 1990-2002.
Pen, mixed media on paper, 16 ¾ x 20 inches.



Untitled (*Mom*), c. 1985-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on paper, 18 x 24 inches.



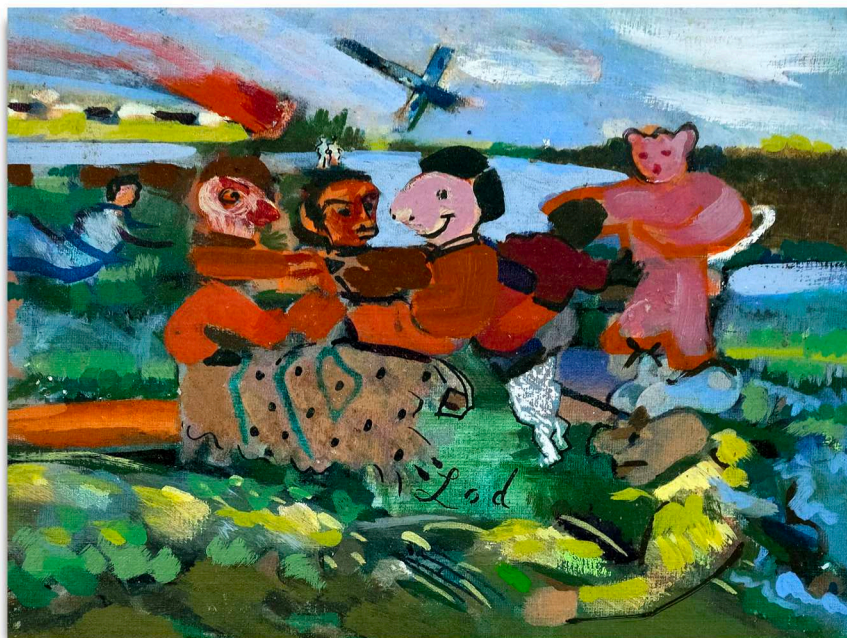
Untitled (*Landscape in fuchsia*), c. 1995-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on board, 14 x 11 inches.



Untitled (*Blue girl-bear*), c. 1995-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on board, 12 x 9 inches.



Untitled (*Landscape with black and orange bear*), c. 1995-2002.
Mixed media on board, 11 x 14 inches.

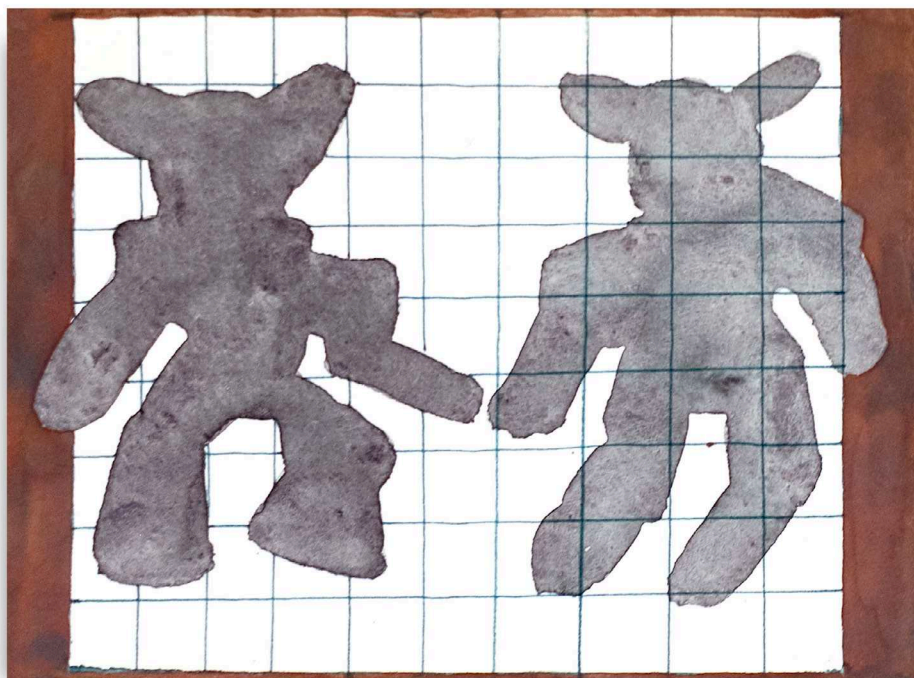


Untitled (*Red figures in landscape: Lod*), c. 1995-2002.
Lithographic crayon, mixed media on board, 9 x 12 inches.

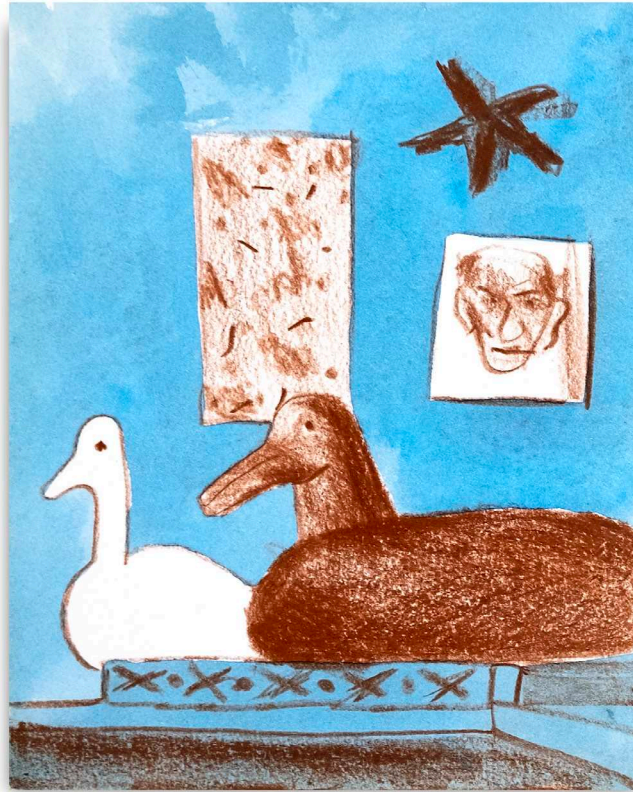
SELECTED SMALL WORKS



Untitled (*Pisa bear*), c. 1984-1995.
Lithographic crayon rubbing, pencil crayon, watercolor on paper, 10 ½ x 7 ½ inches.



Untitled (*Grid bears*), c. 1984-1995.
Pen, watercolor on paper, 4 ¼ x 5 ¾ inches.



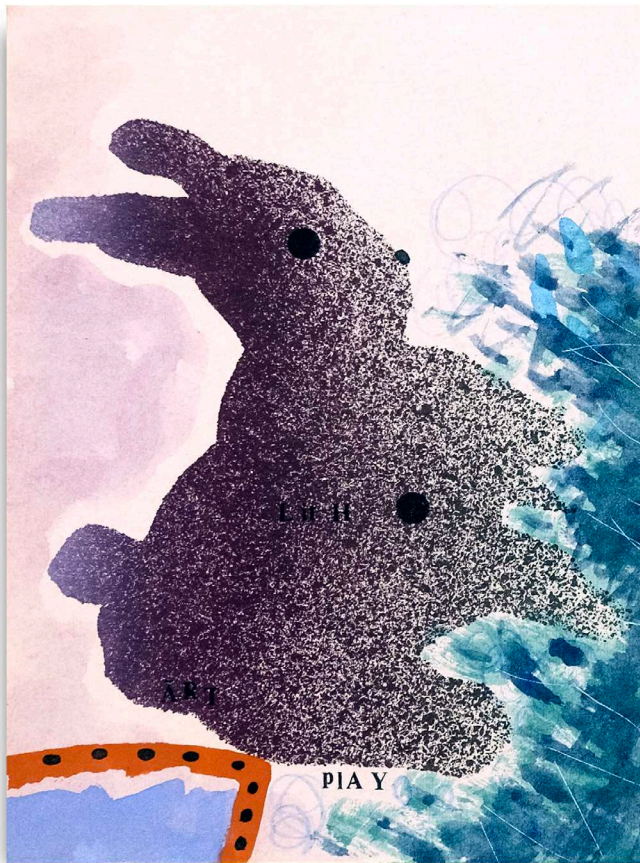
Untitled (*Blue and Brown Ducks*), c. 1984-1995.
Watercolor and pencil crayon on paper, 6 ½ x 5 inches.



Untitled (*Compass/ours*), c. 1984-2002.
Ink and watercolor on paper, 6 x 6 inches.



Untitled (*Join*), c. 1985-2002.
Ink and mixed media on paper, 9 ½ x 6 inches.



Untitled (*Play*), c. 1984–1990.
Watercolor, stencil (possibly lithographic technique), Letraset on paper, 6 ¼ x 4 ¾ inches.



Untitled (*St/certified/Hollander*), c. 1990-1995.
Pen, pastel, stencil and mixed media on paper, 7 ½ x 9 ¾ inches.



Untitled (*mind/Hollander/id*), c.1990-2022.
Ink and watercolor, 5 x 4 inches.

EXHIBITIONS, PUBLICATIONS and COLLECTIONS

Selected Solo exhibitions

- 1975 Cranbrook School of Art and Design,
Michigan, Alice Simsar Gallery, Ann Arbor,
Michigan
- 1977 Wayne State University, Michigan
- 1987 Upper Catskill Community Council of Arts,
Oneonta, NY
- 1988 Roxbury Arts Group, NY
- 1992 The West Kortright Center, East Meredith,
NY
- 1994 Autumn Cafe, Oneonta, NY
- 1995 Museo Emilia Ortiz, Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico
- 1997 Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, Manhattan, NY
- 2022 *Irwin Hollander: Heading for Home*,
Foreman Gallery, Hartwick College, SUNY
Oneonta, NY

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 1987 *Beautiful Objects*, Gallery 53 Artworks,
Cooperstown, NY
- 1988 *53rd Annual Art Exhibition*, 3rd prize,
Cooperstown Art Association, NY
- 1989 *Grand Slam*, Gallery 53 Artworks,
Cooperstown, NY
- 1990 *Art on the Wind*, Bremer Farm, Otego, NY
Railroad Show, UCCCA, Oneonta, NY
Le bel art des vaches, Chenango County
Council of the Arts, Norwich, NY
Animal, Vegetable, Mineral, Cooperstown
Art Association, Cooperstown, NY
Top of the Ninth; Environmental Impact;
NY; New Toys, Gallery 53 Artworks,
Cooperstown, NY
- 1991 *in-house*, UCCCA, Oneonta, NY
Waterways, Bremer Farm, Otego, NY
Extra Innings, Gallery 53 Artworks,
Cooperstown, NY
- 1992 *57th Annual Art Exhibition* (Rotary Club
Award Winner), Cooperstown Art
Association
*Play Ball!!!; Artists' Cake Show; Artists' Toy
Show II*, Gallery 53 Artworks, Cooperstown,
NY
- 1993 *Local Landscape*, Delaware County
Historical Association, Delhi, NY
*2nd Annual Juried Regional Exhibition
Essential Art*, Cooperstown, NY
*12th Annual Baseball Show; Make a Joyful
Noise: Artists' Toys and Noisemakers*,
Gallery 53 Artworks, Cooperstown, NY

- 1994 *The Art of the Game - 13th Annual; Artists' Toys IV*, Gallery 53 Artworks, Cooperstown, NY
Make Yourself At Home, Delaware County Historical Association, Delhi, and Roxbury Arts Group, NY
Art on Fire, Bremer Farm, Otego, NY
- 1995 *Word and Image*, Bright Hill Farm, Treadwell, NY
Flora and Fauna, The Smithy-Pioneer Gallery, Cooperstown, NY
- 1996 The Fine Arts Gallery at the College at Oneonta, Oneonta, NY
- 2021 *Winter Wall*, Art Garage, Cooperstown, NY

Publications

Portfolio 9. Artists: Willem de Kooning, Sam Francis, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Lindner, Louise Nevelson, Robert Motherwell, Henry Pearson, Saul Steinberg

24 Lithographs. Willem de Kooning.
Mushroom Book. John Cage, Lois Long, Dr.
Alexander Smith.

Painter's Notebook. Guy Williams.

Elephant Temple. Elizabeth Nields.

(Published lithographed editions with Japan's National Treasure, Shiko Munakata 1965-1975. Visited Japan 1975 for final signings, before artist's death. Additional editions pulled on workshop presses with over 100 artists, including: Jim Dine, Salvador Dali, Claes Oldenburg, Jacques Lipchitz, Robert Morris, Robert Motherwell, Pierre Alechinsky, Raphael Syoer, Walasse Ting.)

Collections

Irwin Hollander's lithographs can be found in the collections of the National Gallery of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art, and The Lilley Museum of Art.



We are grateful to Elizabeth Nields and Mark Hollander for sharing their knowledge of Irwin Hollander for this project. We would like to thank Neil and Susan Rochmis for helping make this exhibition and catalogue possible, and above all Irwin Hollander, for leaving us this rich world of his art.

Untitled (*Self portrait as teddy bear*), c. 1995-2002.
Mixed media on paper, 25 ¾ x 20 inches.



KIPNZ
PRESS