

Line Form Color

In 1944 Wittenborn Publishers produced a limited edition (25 copies,) portfolio of five Schanker wood block prints. Named *Line Form Color*, it had an introduction by noted Philadelphia Museum of Art curator Carl Zigrosser. The prints were hand pulled by the artist.

[WITTENBORN ART BOOKS](#) was founded in 1941 by George Wittenborn (1905-1974). The company was renowned as a publisher of important art books, notably *The Documents of Modern Art*, originally directed by Robert Motherwell, and as the preeminent art book store in America. ([Alan Wofsy Fine Art](#))

The introduction was written by [Carl Zigrosser](#). He published *Six Centuries of Prints* in 1937 as a primer on graphics collecting to educate novices in the field. The book was a monumental success and raised Zigrosser's reputation as a print authority. In 1941 he was appointed curator of prints, drawings and rare books at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, a position which he held until 1963. Zigrosser's was one of a number of early American curators who raised the public's awareness for graphics as a serious art form. The book went through numerous editions during Zigrosser's lifetime under a variety of titles: *The Book of Fine Prints: an Anthology of Printed Pictures and Introduction to the Study of Graphic Art in the West and the East* (1956) and *Prints and their Creators: a World History: an Anthology of Printed Pictures [etc.]* (1974).

In the introduction Zigrosser speaks of Schanker:

He is not an intellectual but rather an instinctive artist, a man of deep feeling expressing himself in form-shaping line and patterns of subtle or exciting color.....The qualities of his art cannot be grasped didactically. Its appreciation is immediate and absolute, as with a cadence of music or the flash of movement in a dance.

The Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth Texas has a copy of the portfolio with excellent examples of the five wood block prints.

LINE · FORM · COLOR

FIVE WOODBLOCK COLOR PRINTS BY

LOUIS SCHANKER

FOREWORD BY CARL ZIGROSSER



WITTENBORN AND COMPANY

NEW YORK · 1944

*Here shall you trace in flowing operation,
In every state of practical, busy movement, the rills of civilization,
Materials here under your eye shall change their shape as if by magic.*
WALT WHITMAN'S Song of the Exposition

THE IMPULSE toward abstraction in art is not a new phenomenon. It is as old as humanity and can be seen in the caves of the stone age. Perhaps it is a deep-seated and primitive desire for order in a chaos of visual impressions, a symbol of permanence in the ever-varied experiencing of reality. Yet it is only in modern times that this urge has attained a conscious fulfillment. The advent of the camera, emphasizing as it does the mirror reflection of nature, brought about a deliberate revolt, as it were, against the literal, a new instrument for expressing feelings and relations impossible to suggest within the conventions of naturalistic art, and for recording in visual terms various experiences ranging from the intellectual precision of mathematics to the inarticulate stirring of emotions just over the threshold of consciousness.

Louis Schanker makes use of this idiom in his color woodcuts. He is not an intellectual but rather an instinctive artist, a man of deep feeling expressing himself in form-shaping line and patterns of subtle or exciting color. Thus in his work we see a gesture or a rhythm filtered through the memory, the telescoping of numerous separate visual impressions, the quest for the essential or universal. The qualities of his art cannot be grasped didactically. Its appreciation is immediate and absolute, as with a cadence of music or the flash of movement in a dance.

Carl Zigrosser

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1938

I. CAFE NO. 1

9 by 5½ inches. Printed from eight blocks in ten colors.

The key block, printed in black, is cut in linoleum.

II. THREE MEN ON HORSEBACK

10¼ by 12⅝ inches. Printed from eight blocks in eight colors.

1939

III. BROWN AND BLACK

7⅞ by 9⅞ inches. Printed from two blocks in two colors.

IV. NON-OBJECTIVE

9 by 14½ inches. Printed from seven blocks in seven colors.

1940

V. THREE FIGURES NO. 2

6⅛ by 7⅛ inches. Printed from six blocks in six colors.

NOTE: Signature of the artist appears either as "Schanker" or "Louis Schanker,"
sometimes together with the artist's monogram (S within a circle)
cut directly in the block.

Limited edition of twenty-five copies
Printed in the Baskerville types by
The Composing Room, Inc., N. Y., on
Chateau Vellum paper. The prints, on
Chinese rice paper, are hand-pulled
by the artist. New York, March, 1944

This is copy No. *9*
Lucy Schanber



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Image	Accession Number	Creator	Title
	1990.22.1	Schanker, Louis	Cafe No. 1
	1990.22.2	Schanker, Louis	Three Men on Horseback
	1990.22.3	Schanker, Louis	Brown and Black
	1990.22.4	Schanker, Louis	Non-Objective
	1990.22.5	Schanker, Louis	Three Figures No. 2

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1990.22.1 - Schanker, Louis - Cafe No. 1 - 1938



Cafe No. 1

Accession Number	1990.22.1		
Collection	Prints		
Object Type	Relief prints		
Title	Cafe No. 1		
Parent Title	[from the portfolio "Line, Form, Color"]		
Creator	Artist	Schanker, Louis	
	Published by	Wittenborn & Co.	
Date Details	Type	Date Created	
	Date of Object	1938	
Medium	Color woodcut		
Measurement Details	Type	Value	Unit
	Image Height	9	inches
	Image Width	5 1/2	inches
	Sheet Height	11 1/2	inches
	Sheet Width	7	inches
Current Location	Storage		
Credit Line	Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas		
Copyright	©1944 Lou Siegel		

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1990.22.2 - Schanker, Louis - Three Men on Horseback - 1938



Three Men on Horseback

Accession Number	1990.22.2		
Collection	Prints		
Object Type	Relief prints		
Title	Three Men on Horseback		
Parent Title	[from the portfolio "Line, Form, Color"]		
Creator	Artist	Schanker, Louis	
	Published by	Wittenborn & Co.	
Date Details	Type	Date Created	
	Date of Object	1938	
Medium	Color woodcut		
Measurement Details	Type	Value	Unit
	Image Height	10 1/16	inches
	Image Width	12 5/8	inches
	Sheet Height	11 1/4	inches
	Sheet Width	13 1/2	inches
Current Location	Storage		
Credit Line	Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas		
Copyright	©1944 Lou Siegel		

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1990.22.3 - Schanker, Louis - Brown and Black - 1939



Brown and Black

Accession Number	1990.22.3		
Collection	Prints		
Object Type	Relief prints		
Title	Brown and Black		
Parent Title	[from the portfolio "Line, Form, Color"]		
Creator	Artist	Schanker, Louis	
	Printed by	Wittenborn & Co.	
Date Details	Type	Date Created	
	Date of Object	1939	
Medium	Color woodcut		
Measurement Details	Type	Value	Unit
	Image Height	8 7/8	inches
	Image Width	9 7/8	inches
	Sheet Height	10 1/2	inches
	Sheet Width	11 3/8	inches
Current Location	Storage		
Credit Line	Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas		
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Silva 18 - 12/10/22



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1990.22.4 - Schanker, Louis - Non-Objective - 1939



Non-Objective

Accession Number	1990.22.4		
Collection	Prints		
Object Type	Relief prints		
Title	Non-Objective		
Parent Title	[from the portfolio "Line, Form, Color"]		
Creator	Artist	Schanker, Louis	
	Published by	Wittenborn & Co.	
Date Details	Type	Date Created	
	Date of Object	1939	
Medium	Woodcut		
Measurement Details	Type	Value	Unit
	Image Height	9 1/16	inches
	Image Width	14 1/2	inches
	Sheet Height	11 5/8	inches
	Sheet Width	16 1/2	inches
Current Location	Storage		
Credit Line	Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas		
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1990.22.5 - Schanker, Louis - Three Figures No. 2 - 1940



Three Figures No. 2

Accession Number	1990.22.5		
Collection	Prints		
Object Type	Relief prints		
Title	Three Figures No. 2		
Parent Title	[from the portfolio "Line, Form, Color"]		
Creator	Artist	Schanker, Louis	
	Published by	Wittenborn & Co.	
Date Details	Type	Date Created	
	Date of Object	1940	
Medium	Color woodcut		
Measurement Details	Type	Value	Unit
	Image Height	6 1/16	inches
	Image Width	7 1/8	inches
	Sheet Height	8 1/2	inches
	Sheet Width	8 1/2	inches
Current Location	Storage		
Credit Line	Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas		
Copyright	©1944 Lou Siegel		

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