WHEN DOES A LIFE'S WORK BEGIN? THE HISTORY OF ANCHOR GRAPHICS, A NOT-FOR-PROFIT FINE ART PRINT SHOP

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In 2015 the Anchor Graphics logo was unceremoniously scraped off the glass door of our professional print shop at Columbia College Chicago, signaling the end of a twenty-five year journey.

But let's go back to the beginning of Anchor Graphics. When did the seeds get planted? Who were the people who inspired me to set out in this particular direction? While Anchor Graphics became operational in 1990, there were moments when seeds of the idea were germinated and years of tending that gave the idea focus and growth. How far back does one go to acknowledge the seemingly insignificant events that laid the foundation for one's life?

My high school English teacher, Jacqueline Carr, stepped in to encourage me to write every day. She gave me a way to get in touch with thoughts and feelings that at the time seemed like a sea of swirling confusion. So I poured ideas, plans, fantasies, and desires into pages long since gone. Without the ability to articulate the idea, I wonder if Anchor Graphics would have ever taken form? Or was it Larry Reef, who introduced me to photography, where I discovered the lens as a way to view my world behind the prism of a focused vision?

Were it not for a growing interest in photography, I would not have explored images as a way of perceiving and navigating my immediate surroundings. Without that curiosity, I would not have met Marilyn Propp in San Francisco or enrolled in the Center for Photographic Studies (CPS) in Louisville, Kentucky. The motto at the CPS was "Celebrate Risk-Taking," the significance of which, ultimately, led to the founding of Anchor Graphics. While at the CPS I taught myself photo silkscreen and learned offset lithography, while honing my skills as a photographer. One of the highpoints at the CPS was its guest artist program. Seminal photographers such as Minor White, Bea Nettles, Judy Dater, Jack Welpott, and others would drop in to talk to us about their work while dining with us over potluck dinners; then we would all head over to the J B Speed Museum to attend their slide lectures. These experiences added to my dream of a community-based arts program.

In my adult life I have always thought about creating an environment where people could work, explore, and practice their art, and share that work with like-minded individuals and the wider community. In 1973 -76 the Center for Photographic Studies was the model that seemed to embody my thinking at the time.

In 1976 Marilyn and I moved from Louisville to Kansas City, where I began the BFA program at the Kansas City Art Institute. I moved from photography to painting, drawing, and eventually printmaking. I became aware of shops in the U.S that were being opened as a result of a renewed interest in Fine Art Prints. Some of the print shops gaining attention were Universal Limited Artist Editions (ULAE), Landfall Press, Gemini, Tyler Graphics and others. These shops championed prints and were embracing traditional and innovative print processes revolving around artist/technician collaborations. In the late 1970s I left KCAI, applied and was accepted into the Banff Centre for Arts & Creativity summer workshop program. It was there that I was introduced to stone lithography. I studied with Bob Evermon, a Tamarind trained printer, who invited me to continue my studies with him at the Vancouver School of Art and Design (now the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design). It was Bob who said I "had ink in my veins." My time in Vancouver was cut short because I had no student or work visa.

I returned to Kansas City and reapplied to KCAI to continue in the BFA program. With this new found passion for printmaking, I applied to the Printer Training Program at the Tamarind Institute at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. I was denied twice, but chosen as an alternate each time. This was very frustrating but only strengthened my resolve to learn more about lithography. I attended vocational classes in offset lithography and university printmaking courses all while maintaining a studio practice. In 1985 I attended the Drake Biennial National Print Symposium, where I met Jack Lemon, the founder and Master Printer of Landfall Press, a well known fine art print shop in Chicago. Mr. Lemon was a guest printer and was collaborating on a lithograph with the artist Luis Jimenez. It was there that I asked Jack if I could intern at his shop. After being rebuffed several times, Jack looked at me and said, "Look, I'll work your ass off." I responded that I wasn't afraid of work. And so it was set. I was to travel to Chicago during the summer and work at Landfall Press as an intern. For the two months that I was there, I grained lithographic stones, cleaned the shop and assisted the printers. At the end of the summer Jack offered me the opportunity to take part in his Printer Training Program, which had been patterned after the program at Tamarind Institute. Both Bob Evermon and Jack Lemon were alumni of the Tamarind Institute and championed the virtues of collaborative printmaking, and they knew each other. Part of the arrangement of the printer training was that if I succeeded in the program, I would owe Landfall at least 6 months' work. I received my BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1987, and that summer Marilyn and I packed up a U-Haul truck, loaded up our cats and moved to Chicago.

After 6 months at Landfall, I mentioned to Jack that my stint was up, and he asked, "You want to leave?" Nope, was my reply. "Then get back to work" was his. I worked at Landfall for about two years and during that time I learned about true collaboration was and about running a shop. I thought that I would be a Landfall employee for the rest of my life. I had little idea of what would come next.

About six months prior to being let go, John Wilson, founder of the Lakeside Center for the Arts in Lakeside, Michigan, invited me to clean up and manage the Lakeside Center's print shop, which had been set up by Jack Lemon years earlier. The shop was part of an artist residency program that provided ceramics and printmaking access to artists invited from all over the world, and Marilyn was an Artist in Residence there. I was to function as Master Printer for his International Artists in Residence program as well as maintain the shop. The Inn and the studios had no air conditioning, the mosquitos were relentless, the box springs were bowed and the whole place had a patina of age and wear. The print shop had not been used in a while and had the look of an abandoned workspace, complete with cobwebs and the acrid smell of mildew. I spent weekends cleaning and reorganizing the shop. Supplies were ordered and I readied the shop for the first Artists in Residence. My most memorable experience was a collaboration with Latvian artist Ilmārs Blumbergs. Ilmārs was a tall, gracious yet serious man, who spoke very little English. And I spoke no Latvian. I thought that communication would be impossible, but we made it work. We communicated using hand gestures, and pointed at things like color swatches or paper samples. I prepared lithographic stones for him to draw on, and when they were finished I processed, proofed and ultimately pulled prints from the inked stones. Ilmārs would show me colors and I would mix samples, do drawdowns, and show him proofs of the images he had created on the stones. During the printing process it was my responsibility to make sure everything was done to the artist's expectations. I wanted the artist's experience to be a positive one, that the works created during his residency were expressions of his vision and complemented his creative process.

On one project Ilmārs wanted a particular shade of yellow. We printed the color on a processed stone, but it just didn't work with other colors we had printed previously. The artist was frustrated, and it seemed that the whole project was coming to a halt, or worse, would be chalked up as a failure. I suggested a color change. The artist at first said no but he finally trusted my judgment and agreed. The rollers were cleaned, inks remixed, the stone rolled up and proofs pulled. We would find out if our color choices had worked or not. In printmaking it's not unusual to proof things several times before the right combinations of ink, paper, and printing order all merge. It was at this final proofing that we would know whether our labor was in vain. It was tense, the room was muggy and mosquitos were buzzing about, as the paper was slowly being pulled off the surface of the printed stone, revealing marks of drawn or painted images now transformed to printed layers of ink. As I pulled the impression from the stone, its full image revealed, Ilmārs beamed a huge smile, gave me a big bear hug and exclaimed "You are my Master Printer!" Our collaboration worked. This is key to the story of Anchor Graphics: the intense experience of collaborating with an artist, rather than being a production printer. It was a foretaste of what creating on such a focused level could be.

After that summer, going back to Landfall Press wasn't the same. There was a tension, and I knew Jack could sense that I was pulling away. I started to seriously think about a venue for printmaking. Some months later, I would be fired from Landfall Press.

I had begun to talk with people and articulate this vision of the kind of place I wanted to build and create. My partner, the painter Marilyn Propp, encouraged me with this idea of a community shop and was instrumental in planning and helping me to formulate how this print shop would work.

First came the name. A dear priest friend, Fr. Harry Firth, mentioned the word Anchor, explaining the anchor is used as a symbol of hope. We wanted our shop to be several things. Our priority was to have a professional, community-accessible, fine art print shop, but also a place where artists could work that was conducive to creative risk-taking, a place where their ideas and imagery would be respected and the artists' creativity encouraged and facilitated. Our role would be one of complete collaboration. Unlike a for-profit shop ours would not limit the artist's exploration; we would impose no deadlines for our projects; and education would be the center of all the work we would do.

In order to fulfil our vision of a community shop, an educational facility, and a gallery space, we decided to become a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The IRS approved our application and in 1990 Anchor Graphics was granted its 501(c)(3) status. To become operational, we needed to develop a business plan and begin grant writing. We had to create a viable narrative that would be used to fund raise and promote the organization. Marilyn's assistance would prove invaluable in these areas. We had projected our first year's budget at around $100,000, though in reality the actual income for our first year was about $5,000.

The initial plan for Anchor Graphics was hatched in a tiny attic office in our rented mother-in-law apartment. We had no equipment and no place to set up shop. At a party I struck up a chance conversation with John Roberts, an artist printmaker who lived in Oak Park, west of downtown Chicago. John mentioned that he had a complete lithography print shop in his basement that hadn't been used in a while. "Are you interested in selling it?" I asked. He wasn't. We talked about his shop and its brief history and what my vision was for ours. We exchanged phone numbers and I left. Several weeks later I received a call from Roberts wondering if I would like to visit his shop and talk about possibilities. I jumped at the chance and was soon looking at his press, rollers, stones, and prints he had pulled years earlier. John asked if I was interested in purchasing his shop. We set up a payment plan and I started making monthly payments with no money down. Those first years Marilyn and I invested much of our own money to set up the shop and keep it going.

About that same time, I was told that a local artist, Roy Tijerina, had a space for rent and that it might work nicely for a print shop. Roy showed us the space, which was about 1500 square feet and located in Wicker Park. He would rent the space with several months' free rent providing we build and paint walls and refinish the floors.

After moving the lithography press, stones, rollers, and supplies, and building tables and setting up the shop, we realized quite quickly that we needed an etching press to make our shop more robust. I remembered a friend mentioning there was an artist who had an etching press she wanted to sell. I'd forgotten her name and whether the press was even available, but I remembered the town-- Marilyn and I had honeymooned near there in 1980. I called directory assistance in Eureka Springs, Arkansas and asked the operator if she knew a woman who had a studio with a large etching press in it. "Why yes" she said. "Here's her number." I called and the etching press was still for sale and hadn't been used in a while. We agreed to terms to purchase the press, the large hotplate, and other equipment, to pick it all up and get it to Chicago. It was an American French Tool, one of the finest etching presses made, with a 40" × 70" press bed, and it weighed over 3000 lbs. It was in a third floor walkup studio space. The only way to remove it was by crane. We fundraised by calling friends and borrowing money from relatives. Roy Tijerina (who was used to moving and transporting heavy large sculptures) and I rented a truck and headed to Eureka Springs to pick up the press. Without Roy's help that press would still be in Arkansas. We were able to find a crane operator who could move the press, but we would have to disassemble it for lifting. And, the press needed to come out of a third story studio which was located on the side of a steep hill. Plus we had to get the press out by Sunday, which was Easter, since a parade was scheduled to proceed through town, so we needed to be either off the road or come back the next day. The crane operator said he would help us out, but because it was a holiday it wouldn't be cheap. The next morning we met at the gallery, took out a third story window, the crane pulled up behind our rented U-Haul truck, the crane was extended, we hooked the rollers, press bed and frame to the crane and within a matter of minutes all of the pieces were in the truck tied down and we were ready to hit the road. We just had to pay the operator. I was expecting a cost of of hundreds of dollars, especially in light of him saying, "It's gonna cost ya." He gave us an invoice of $75, I paid him in cash, plus a tip, and we trucked the press back to Chicago. With the equipment placed and tables built, it was time to open our doors. We opened Anchor Graphics at 935 N. Damen in late 1990.

How does one move an organization or an idea forward? I contacted people in the community to let them know about our organization. Everything was done DIY, as we had very little resources in the early years, and there was no social media. Our first pamphlets were crude affairs, hand cut and hand pasted, then Xeroxed, hand addressed and mailed. With contacts in the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council, I was able to call artists who might be interested in working with us. Prior to officially opening the shop I knew I needed to generate operating capital. I'd create a print that could be used as a fundraising premium. I became a member of the Chicago Printmakers Collaborative while we were building out the shop. I reached out to artist Paul Sierra and asked if he would be interested in making a limited edition lithograph. The project parameters would turn out to be the model we would use for the rest of the organization's life. An edition would be created, the artist would receive half of the prints and we would receive half. Our early editions numbered from forty to fifty prints plus proofs. We sold our prints to museums and collectors. This arrangement worked pretty well, but rather quickly it became apparent we

figure 1. Mamoru Abe, *Imprint*, 1995,
Lithograph, 20" × 15"

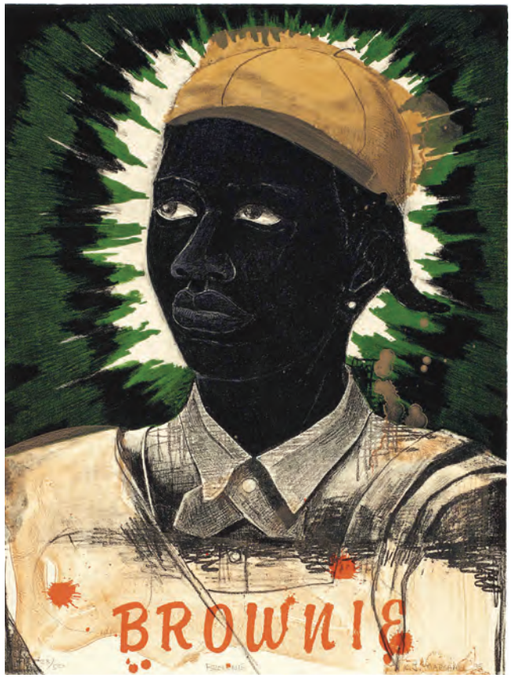

figure 2. Kerry James Marshall, *Brownie*, 1995,
Lithograph, 19¾" × 15"

needed other ways to generate cash flow. We offered classes, taught workshops, opened the facilities for limited community use. We offered collaborative contract printing services, which we used as a vehicle for training interns. We also began to collaborate with other organizations offering free classes and workshops for young people.

Another route for generating funds was through grant writing. Our first successful grant proposal came through an informal letter written to a small family foundation in California, whose parameters were that only California residents could apply. My rationale for the letter was that I was from California (close enough) and was seeking support for our fledgling organization. Several weeks later I received a phone call from Paul Klein, who owned the Chicago gallery Klein Artworks. Paul asked where I got the contact information for the Foundation and I told him from the Donors Forum, where Paul's Foundation was listed as supporting the arts in California. Only at the time I hadn't made the connection. I had never met Paul and was a bit apprehensive as I was heading to a meeting with him. I walked into his office and there was this guy with his feet on the edge of the desk and pushing back slightly in his chair. I told him about our shop (which he hadn't heard of) and my reasoning for the proposal. He smiled and wrote me a check on the spot. Because of that letter we received funding from him for five years. Donations were crucial for our survival in those early years. There was one foundation who told us to start something unique and "then we will consider funding you." Another told us to come back in five years.

Through the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs Visiting Artist program we offered residencies to artists from Yugoslavia, China, Japan, Africa and Pakistan. Some of the artists were very comfortable working in the shop while others needed guidance. Mamoru Abe was one of the artists brought to Chicago under the Sister Cities program. Mr. Abe had never made prints before, but, agreeing to give a collaborative project a try, he made some drawings, and expressed frustration with the process. The next day he came to the shop carrying a piece of hammered metal that he had heated and aggressively pounded on a forge. Its beaten surface was what he wanted to print. Impossible! We inked up the plate and transferred the image onto litho plates, which were then proofed and printed. For several days Mr. Abe would bring in successively thinner hammered and beaten plates which we would ink, transfer and print. Because of our willingness to try different approaches to image making we were able to create some wonderful prints. (figure 1.)

Working with an artist and developing a collaboration was always an unknown. In 1995, when Kerry James Marshall came into the shop, he would make a drawing on the stone, leave for several days and come in and want to rework the image. He was eager to work and rework the image - even running the risk of destroying it, until he got what he wanted. It was my responsibility to make sure the image would be stable on the stone and print consistently. The collaboration was always an important component of the project. If the image succeeded, it was because the image was complete in every way, and everything involved with creating the print supported the artist's vision. The result was Kerry's *Brownie* a quintessential lithograph that displays his explorations in the many different lithographic materials and mark-making capabilities. (figure 2.)We always said that the print was the residue of the experience. Alejandro Romero, Kay Rosen, Luis Jimenez, Karl Wirsum, the late Hollis Sigler, David Russick, Michiko Itatani, Nereida Garcia Ferraz, and John Himmelfarb are a few of the artists who created limited edition prints at our first space on Damen. (figure 3.)

Early programming also included free classes for high school students through a partnership with the Marwen Foundation. Marwen offered free arts programming to Chicago high school students, but had no printmaking facilities. Students would come to our shop for litho and other printmaking classes. After our initial partnership we continued the program on our own, expanding our invitations to any high school or junior high school student in the metropolitan area of Chicago to attend our free Saturday classes. (figure 4.) We began an internship program, and geared all our activities towards providing a rich and varied environment for our interns to learn about a non-profit printshop. Our interns learned about collaboration, project preparation, gallery installation, event

figure 3. Hollis Sigler, *Expect the Unexpected*, 1995, Lithograph, 15 ½" × 20¾"

figure 4. Mike Fletcher observing high school student Regin Igloria rolling up a stone. Anchor Graphics, 935 N. Damen,1992

figure 5. Cedar Nordbe, Artist in Residence, Anchor Graphics, 119 W. Hubbard, Chicago, 2004

planning, plus shop and equipment maintenance. We also instituted an Artist in Residency program. We sent out a call for proposals, open to any experienced printmaker, and those who were awarded were given up to two weeks of unlimited shop access and staff support, and whenever possible an honorarium. Our only requirement of the artists was that they present a lecture and demonstration free to the community, be willing to work with our interns, and donate several prints to our archives.

The Anchor Graphics gallery featured the work of national artists who used print in their practice. We had ten to twelve exhibitions a year. With each exhibit we had an opening reception for the artist, where he or she would either present a talk or conduct some sort of print demonstration to the public. There were no restrictions as to what they could do. Some talked about their working process, or their work, or would demonstrate a particular print process. One artist read poetry he had translated from Japanese text.

The shop was designed to maximize our limited space. Tables were built with wheels so the spatial configuration could be altered depending on the needs. We used the whole space so that it could be used for classes, workshops, meetings and receptions.

We were included in *Printmaking in America: Collaborative Prints and Presses 1960-1990* [1] and in *Second Sight: Printmaking in Chicago 1935-1995*. [2] In an essay, David Mickenberg, former director of the Davis Museum and Cultural Center, and of the Block Museum at Northwestern University, wrote:

> One of the most successful presses to be founded has been Anchor Graphics. Begun in 1990 by David Jones, the press has been successful due to the aggressiveness of its founder and an amalgamation of contract printing, publishing, exhibitions, and educational programs offered in conjunction with regional schools and universities. . .. Anchor is known not only for the quality of its prints but for the diversity of its approaches to educational programming. Working with some of Chicago's younger artists (David Russick and Kerry James Marshall), as well as its more established figures (Karl Wirsum and Michiko Itatani) Jones . . . has established a workshop that provides artists with a flexible, collaborative environment that is at times experimental and expanding in its use of multiple techniques. His efforts at working with the Marwen Foundation, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, regional high schools and community groups has expanded Anchor's reputation for excellence in the educational arena. [3]

While we were attaining recognition within the print and educational community, we pushed ahead to raise more funds for our programs. We began the first of many Silent Auction Benefits. Artists were contacted and asked to donate prints, restaurants donated food, and businesses donated goods and services to be auctioned off. Anyone who donated would get two free tickets to the event--we threw a party not just to raise funds, but for all

those who donated. Eventually the benefit grew to the point where larger venues were needed. For two years Lois Weisberg, the first Chicago Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, donated Preston Bradley Hall in the Chicago Cultural Center for our benefits. We had several hundred attendees, live music, silent and live auctions, a smorgasbord of food, all donated for the event. The challenge for us was that the entire event had to be installed, with walls and lighting setups built, we would be hosts to guests, and at the end of the evening, we packed everything away and took it back to the shop to be put away. It took about about 16-18 hours from setup to finish.

By 1996 it became increasingly clear that we needed more space. While setting up Anchor Graphics I had met Marilyn Sward and Barbara Lazarus Metz, who both encouraged and affirmed our plans for Anchor Graphics. During our search for space I had visited the newly created Center for Book and Paper Arts which had just moved to 218 South Wabash Ave and had become a Center at Columbia College Chicago. This led us to 119 West Hubbard Street, which had a space available. With leases signed, volunteers gathered and equipment rented, we began to plan our move. The new space was raw and needed work, and we were initially given free rent in exchange for building out the space. Walls were torn down and new ones built. The space occupied about 3500 square feet and was on the fifth floor, with several skylights plus north facing light. We installed additional lights, painted the floors aqua, and built a state of the art dedicated gallery space that overlooked the print area. Taking apart presses and getting everything up to our new fifth floor space was difficult-- the freight elevator was not designed to carry heavy loads. Everything had to be taken apart and reassembled in the new space. In 1996, Hubbard Street was quiet, and there wasn't much activity except for local bars and several adult book stores.

Once we had moved in we rebooted all the activities we had started at our Damen St. location plus created new partnerships and programming. We expanded our adult printmaking classes which were taught by local printmakers, offered additional free Saturday classes to high school kids, and offered open studio access to people who had printmaking experience. Our Artist in Residency Program was re-invigorated to provide uninterrupted use of the shop by national and international printmakers for research and the development of new work. (figure 5.) We now had a dedicated exhibition space and increased publication and contract printing activities. With an increase in our funding, we created new programming: Scraping the Surface, a free lecture series open to the public, presented talks by artists, curators, museum specialists, conservators, collectors, poets, and others with an interest in prints. New partnerships were established and older ones continued, with the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Academy for the Arts, the Department of Cultural Affairs Gallery 37 Summer Arts mentoring program and others.

We expanded our outreach programs by offering workshops to groups working with at risk youth and kids of all ages. A portable press was purchased and our Press on Wheels Program or POW was started. Through POW we would take our press into schools and conduct print workshops for up to 20 students at a time. Some of the students would continue to take classes through our free high school printmaking classes. Over the five or so years of conducting POW we introduced hundreds of students to printmaking. School groups of all ages would come to the shop for workshops and lecture/demonstrations. And we began a Teacher Accreditation program.

At 119 W. Hubbard we expanded staff, stabilized programming, increased fundraising activities and were able to better manage the organization. Our Board of Directors was instrumental in guiding our growth and instituting policies that would ensure transparency and accountability. Chicago-based foundations took notice of our activities at the shop and in the community and began to increase funding for our outreach, exhibition, artist in residency, speakers' series, internship programs and more. We published prints with the late Ed Paschke, Karl Wirsum, Brian Sikes, Ellen Lanyon, Luis Jiminez, Nicholas Sistler (whose photopolymer etching process was later refined by Chris Flynn at our Columbia shop), Richard Hull, Eleanor Spiess-Ferris, and others. (figure 6.)

We had made an appointment with staff at the MacArthur Foundation. We had prepared our elevator pitch, figuring we had about 5-10 minutes to talk about our organization and its programming and impact in the community. Our meeting lasted about 2 hours and during the conversation, we were told, "We need to fund you." We were given a grant from the MacArthur Foundation for $10,000 and additional funding of $25,000 was given for three consecutive years. With major foundations acknowledging our work, others noticed what we were doing and funding increased. From 1995 to 2005 we received funding from the Alphawood Foundation, the Polk Foundation, the Driehaus Foundation, the Terra Foundation, the Sara Lee Foundation, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation, and others. Through the generosity of those contributions we were able to hire an assistant director, hire a staff printer and pay for health insurance for the staff. We also received additional funding from the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois and the NEA.

Our diverse income stream proved to be a formula for success. There was always a flux in our income-- some months would bring in more income through one source and other months there were other sources of revenue. It was hard to pinpoint what our income would be, which meant it was necessary to keep all of our programs going.

When we moved to 119 Hubbard in 1996 we had a sense that everything was moving in the right direction. Our records showed an increase in programming, attendance, and revenue. It became apparent that we needed additional help. Our interns, volunteers and Board of Directors could only do so much. The co-founder of Anchor Graphics, Marilyn Propp, was our volunteer grant writer, marketing, and organizational manager, and she also served as the President of the Board of Directors on and off since the founding of the organization. We hired an assistant director to help with day to day activities, from grant writing to marketing. Stephanie Waddell with her abilities, organizational expertise and positive enthusiasm helped propel the organization forward.

All of our programming expanded. We had designed the shop to accommodate classes, workshops, artist in residencies, exhibitions, plus print publishing and contract printing. There was more competition for spots in our internship, residency and exhibition programs, so we had to formalize what was once very informal activity to application protocols and a review process. We were receiving inquiries from potential interns and artists in residents from all over the world. Through our grant writing activities, we were able to offer our residents honorariums and in some cases housing. Much of our programming followed the same criteria as at our first location. We continued our Open Studio, which gave area printmakers access to the shop two nights per week.

Some volunteers were very passionate about their involvement at Anchor. Autumn Rooney put in countless hours assisting with installing exhibitions, working with AIRs and working at the press when we were publishing prints or doing contract work, in exchange for studio access. Another individual who worked with us was James Iannaccone. Initially James volunteered to work several days a week. He assisted in the print shop, the gallery, with PR and administrative work. His participation became so valuable that he was offered a part time position and when Anchor Graphics moved to Columbia College in 2006 his position turned into a full time one. Most volunteers donated time in exchange for access; most volunteers logged more studio credit than they ever used. Volunteers had complete access to the shop and were encouraged to use the facilities. Our interns tended to linger on after their internships were over. (figure 7.)

Anchor Graphics experienced explosive growth after its move to 119 W. Hubbard St. It was the fulfillment of the vision we had for a community/professional space. From 1996 to 2006, we hosted over 100 exhibitions, from group shows to solos. The gallery was used as a way to bring more exposure to national artists working in print to the community, not to showcase artists who had worked at Anchor. It served as a learning environment rather than a sales room. A half-wall separated gallery from print area, and when visitors came in to view a show they were encouraged to linger a bit and observe what was going on in the shop. It was an ideal way to introduce people to printmaking and prints. Our exhibits consistently brought in visitors who always seemed surprised that we had a gallery, and that a print shop such as ours even existed in downtown Chicago. While we encouraged sales

figure 6. Brian Sikes, *Debit Balance (Minor)*, 2002, Lithograph, 20" × 15"

we did not have a sales staff. The artists were not charged exhibition fees, as the gallery was supported entirely through grants and donations. As with our previous location, the artists were required to make a presentation free to the public at their openings. We were also able to offer the exhibiting artists a modest honorarium. If artwork sold, we charged a 20% commission with all funds received going back into the organizational coffers.

Our outreach programs expanded. During both the Toulouse-Lautrec and Rembrandt exhibitions at the Art Institute of Chicago we set up a small printshop within the museum, with a litho and etching press. Volunteer Julian Cox, previous interns Chris Flynn,Tom Lucas, and I demonstrated print processes used by both Toulouse-Lautrec and Rembrandt. We had hundreds of visitors per day for the run of each exhibit. The museum provided display cases that held our tools, stones, plates, and other implements that would have been used by the artists. From 1997-2003 we participated in the City of Chicago Summer Jobs program, Gallery 37, where we ran the printmaking tent. (figure 8.) In 2003, one of many rewarding moments in which the coalescing of our roles as both professional printshop and community teachers occurred. We brought our class of at-risk young men, who were wards of the state, to see Kerry James Marshall's work, on display at the Art Institute of Chicago. They had their sketchbooks with them and marveled to see paintings that depicted and validated their lives—his paintings of the housing projects (Many Mansions, Our Town, and others). In recognizing themselves on the museum's walls, and in meeting an African American artist, the young men were awakened to possibilities in their lives. Both Kerry and his wife Cheryl Lynn Bruce encouraged them and answered their questions: "Could we be artists too?"

Our internship program became our main

figure 7. Lecture/demonstration by artist Julian Cox, Anchor Graphics, 119 W. Hubbard, Chicago, 2004

figure 8. Anchor Graphics' Printmaking Tent at Gallery 37 Summer Jobs Program, Chicago. Students printing with Team Teacher Nyame Brown, background, 1997-2003

mechanism for training students and volunteers about collaborative printing, shop etiquette, problem solving, ability to take orders and to develop a sense of what the artists required when working on projects. Interns were encouraged to take part in the collaborative experience and come up with solutions when possible. Every artist who ever worked with us pressed us to grow creatively and professionally. Some of our interns came to us as high school students, and returned when they were in college and then again to teach when they graduated. We provided internships for over 100 students, with interns coming from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Wellesley College, the Kansas City Art Institute, Northwestern University, University of Chicago, University of Illinois-Chicago, Harold Washington College, the Kansas City Art Institute, and others. Many of our interns went on to establish their own shop or become chairs of their departments. Kevin Haas came back to be an Artist in Residence. He has taught courses in printmaking, book arts and design at Washington State University since 2000. Tom Lucas founded Hummingbird Press, Chicago. Regin Igloria, who was one of the first fifteen year olds to take our free litho class, went on to study under one of David's mentors, came back as an intern, and then taught for us. He is the Director and Founder of North Branch Projects, Chicago, and is the Ragdale in Schools Manager, Ragdale Foundation, Lake Forest, IL. Anchor Graphics had become recognized internationally as an important addition to the print world. Many shops have been based on what we began, including the Highpoint Center for Printmaking in Minneapolis, founded by one of our Resident Artists, Cole Rogers, and Spudnik Press, Chicago, founded by former intern Angee Leonard.

In 2005 change was in the air. Anchor Graphics was continuing to grow, and we were presented with an opportunity to develop a relationship with Columbia College Chicago that would enable us to provide a professional organization that would be an integral component to the Art and Design Department. We saw this as an opportunity to put printmaking on the map in a significant way. Our board of directors, staff and Columbia College administration had numerous discussions about the benefits of what a move could be. There were even talks of a collaborative relationship with the established Center for Book and Paper. During the negotiations Leonard Lehrer was hired as Dean of the School for the Visual and Performing Arts at Columbia College Chicago. The Provost at the time was Steven Kapelke and the Chair of the Art & Design Department was Jay Wolke. All were enthusiastic about Anchor Graphics merging with the College.

In 2003 my mentor Robert Blackburn (Founder of the Printmaking Workshop) had passed away. I flew to New York to attend his memorial service, share in the celebration of his work and mourn his passing. While at the event, I chanced to meet the Executive Director of the Elizabeth Foundation, Jane Stephenson. I asked about plans for the future of the Printmakers Workshop and Ms. Stephenson mentioned that things were in the works and they would be looking for an Executive Director in the near future. I returned to Chicago and continued to move the merger of Anchor Graphics to Columbia College.

During a meeting with Dean Lehrer we were talking about printmaking and I recited bits of a poem that had made an impact on me - it was about the nature of collaboration and the reality of edition printing. I didn't realize it at the time but Mr. Lehrer had written the poem, and as I looked over at Leonard sitting across from me, he had this beaming smile, and he said "You know I wrote that." From then on out Anchor Graphics had Leonard's unwavering support, plus that of the Provost and Chair. We undertook projects for Leonard Lehrer who later confided to me that they were a way to test our abilities as professional printers and collaborators. He gave us some lithographic plates that had been proofed but, because of faulty storage or processing, the lithographic plates were in terrible shape. It was nearly impossible to restore some of the images to their former bloom and richness. We succeeded in saving three out of the six plates and Leonard redrew one plate. [4]

Leonard Lehrer had a deep relationship with printmaking. He had made dozens of lithographs at the Tamarind Institute and had worked intimately with them to integrate their programs with the curriculum of the University. Lehrer envisioned Anchor Graphics providing the expertise and capability to transform a mediocre print program into one that would serve as a magnet that would draw students from around the world to study the rigors of fine art printmaking. Coupled with the robust programs and activities of Columbia College's Center for Book and Paper a few blocks down the street, everything was possible.

While the negotiations were going on between Anchor Graphics and Columbia College I was offered the directorship of the Robert Blackman Printmakers Workshop in New York. I shuttled back and forth working to rebuild Bob's shop and manage the affairs of Anchor Graphics. At the night of the Grand Opening of the New York shop, when my appointment as Director would be announced, I had to make a decision. I had called the Provost of Columbia College and explained my situation and insisted that if Columbia wanted Anchor Graphics to be a part of the College they must make an offer. They did and I accepted. At that point I left the RBPW and returned to Chicago to turn my attention to the transition of Anchor Graphics to Anchor Graphics at Columbia College Chicago. An article in the June 25, 2006 Chicago Tribune, by Jeff Huebner, entitled "Dropping Anchor at Columbia," describes this choice to "continue to be an advocate for arts in Chicago." [5]

At Board meetings and consultations with lawyers, it was determined that the best course of action to facilitate the move to Columbia College was to relinquish Anchor's assets to the college. In spite of being warned by Marge Devon, the Director of Tamarind Institute, that any change in administration endangers the organization, the attorneys on both sides would not put in a rider ensuring the longevity of Anchor at Columbia.

We negotiated salaries and benefits for our full time staff of three: David Jones, Director and Master Printer, Chris Flynn, Assistant Printer, and James Iannaccone, Assistant to the Director. Columbia arranged to move the presses, equipment, and archives to a space that would be built out to the needs of the organization and those of the printmaking area of the college. The vision was to have a professional shop that would augment the student facilities. We worked with faculty, staff and administration to establish our third home. As Ann Weins describes in her article "The Fine Print" in *DEMO 3*:

> [Leonard Lehrer] saw the presence of Anchor on campus as a huge opportunity for the school and a potential "jewel in its crown" for the Department of Art and Design—comparable to the benefits brought to the photography department by its relationship with the Center for American Places, or the music department by the Chicago Jazz Ensemble. "These programs that bring the professional world to the institution are one thing that separates Columbia from other schools. . .. If you point to those programs in the country that have professional fine-art print shops in their programs," Lehrer says, "you're talking about the best—Tandem at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Graphicstudio at the University of South Florida, Tamarind at the University of New Mexico—these are synonymous with the highest quality, and they've established a strong precedent for fusing the professional and the academic." [6]

Our first five years were an intense time of program development. We grew our Artist in Residency (figure 9.) program further, with residents offering lecture, demos and informal conversations with the students and faculty. Residents were offered accommodations, honorariums, materials and of course assistance from our technical staff. Gordon Brennan and John Brown, faculty at the Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland; Elizabeth D'Agostino, Toronto; Katrina Andry, New Orleans; Amanda Knowles, Seattle; all national and international printmakers, established and emerging, came to Anchor for residencies. Margo Humphrey was invited to be a Visiting Artist. (figure 10.)

We also reached out to artists from around the country to partake in our publishing projects. These artists also presented lectures to the college community. Some of these artists were Ed Paschke; Sue Coe; Jim Nutt; Karl Wirsum; Michiko Itatani; Gladys Nilsson; Kay Rosen; Margo Humphrey; Phyllis Bramson; Eric Avery; McArthur Binion; Industry of the Ordinary: Adam Brooks and Mat Wilson; Enrique Chagoya; Fred Stonehouse, and others. (figure 11.)

Through a generous grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art (funded from 2006-2010), we re-established our well received lecture series, Scraping the Surface. At these events we had curators, artists, or collectors talk about their work. Our first lecture series at Columbia featured Debora Wood, then senior curator at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art. James Iannaccone was our art historian, researcher, marketing director, and grant writer. He produced interesting articles on both our activities and on different print topics, published in our biannual glossy color magazine. He also assisted at the press, and with Prints on Wheels (POW), and documented our activities. Anchor Graphics' presence on campus provided students access to academic internships, classes and workshops, as well as visiting artists and lecturers from across the country. In addition, it provided Columbia's students and faculty the opportunity to work on special collaborative projects designed to integrate the professional world with the educational experience. The Anchor Graphics POW program continued as before: we rented a van, loaded up our press, and took it to schools to conduct workshops. This program provided us with an opportunity to teach young people about printmaking and also to provide our interns with a valuable and rewarding learning experience.

During the move the Anchor Graphics Gallery was eliminated from budgetary support, so in response we arranged to feature one exhibition per year through the Averill and Bernard Leviton A+D Gallery. We also began showing work in the glass case outside our door. Known as "The Fish Tank," artists applied in order to exhibit their work at Anchor Graphics. We continued to provide internships to students from all over the United States, with interns coming from the Kansas City Art Institute, Wellesley College, Savannah College of Art and Design, and others. We gave priority to Columbia College students. Interns worked closely with the Artists in Residence. Faculty from the English, Photography, Design, and other departments regularly brought their students in for lectures and demonstrations. Our Open Studio program continued to bring in Chicago area printmakers, who could access the shop two nights per week. Chris taught classes at Anchor (figure 12), and I collaborated with faculty within the Interdisciplinary Arts Program. (figure 13)

In 2009 Columbia College Chicago and Anchor Graphics hosted the Southern Graphics Council (SGC) annual printmaking conference, featuring five days of exhibitions, demonstrations, workshops, lectures, award ceremonies, portfolio exchanges, and round table discussions exploring the artistic and social currents found in printmaking throughout the world. With activities taking place at the Chicago Hilton and at over forty locations around Chicago, including several Columbia College buildings, we attracted over 1800 attendees. Andrew Whately and I worked together to coordinate the entire event. The Theater Department presented performances on Warrington Colescott's series of lithographs "The History of Printmaking." Phil Sanders of the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop printed a limited edition book by Stanford University professor and printmaker Enrique Chagoya. The conference was an opportunity to showcase Columbia College's print, book, and papermaking facilities, and was a milestone

figure 9. Katrina Andry, Artist in Residence, preparing her woodblock, Anchor Graphics, 623 S. Wabash, Chicago, 2011

figure 10. Intern Eric Salgado, Chris Flynn, David Jones, and Visiting Artist Margo Humphrey, Anchor Graphics, 623 S. Wabash, 2012

figure 11. Karl Wirsum working on his lithograph *Gab Grab*, Anchor Graphic Editions, 623 S. Wabash, 2011

in Anchor's history. After the conference we published a print by Chagoya with paper that was made by the Center for Book and Paper students.

In 2010 Anchor Graphics displayed projects at the SGC Conference in Philadelphia and at Chicago's Art Expo, and in 2011 exhibited newly published work at Editions/Artists' Book Fair in NYC. Chris Flynn went to Crown Point Press in San Francisco for further training, so in 2011, at the newly renamed SGC International Conference in St. Louis, Chris demonstrated photopolymer intaglio plates, James Iannaccone chaired a panel on how to make a business out of screen printing, and I displayed our prints at the publishers' table. The Fish Tank continued to exhibit the work of young innovative print artists, and the A+D Gallery continued exhibiting national recognized printmakers such as Phillip Chen and Thomas Vu. Chris became an invaluable printer in litho, etching, and photogravure. (figure 14)

Soon after 2010 the Dean and the Provost left the college. The Administration was changing and support for Anchor Graphics was waning. Despite our efforts to integrate our activities with other venues at the College we could garner little faculty or administrative support for our programming, though the shop was always humming with activity, and teaching demonstrations were always available to any faculty member who asked.

During this time of transition, the enrollment of Columbia College began to plummet, much of which was attributed to market forces beyond its control. New Deans were hired to implement cost cutting strategies, targeting departments or institutional entities not tied to curriculum or championed by faculty. We appealed to the administration, in vain, to curricularize our programs. We were already involved with Columbia students through internships and demonstrations to classes. The Columbia interns received year-long intensive training. In 2011, James' position was eliminated and my salary was cut by 30%. With James gone, our marketing efforts were diminished and our magazine was discontinued. Chris Flynn remained as printer, his formidable skills in etching and photogravure contributing to our publishing and classes.

During this time of contraction, we looked for alliances, and an obvious one was with the Center for Book and Paper. The Center had been a part of the College for a number of years, had successfully created a Masters program and had a well known history, in some ways parallel to that of Anchor Graphics. The major difference was that there were faculty committed to the success and furtherance of the Center's history and academic programming. The 2012 Prioritization Blueprint, which called for Anchor's elimination, resulted in over 400 letters from artists, printmakers, educators, funders, and previous interns from the U.S. and internationally, attesting to the importance and recognition of Anchor Graphics as a seminal leader in community-based professional print shops and to Anchor's influence on them professionally and personally. Anchor was momentarily spared. During this time Book and Paper Interdisciplinary Arts faculty member Paul Cantanese, who was writing *Post-Digital Printmaking*, [7] collaborated with Anchor Graphics to explore the possibility of making prints using lasers and CNC routers. Out of this experimentation came Stones and Drones, a performative collaboration between Paul and myself, resulting in a number of large lithographs created by passing an ink-filled sumi brush, attached to a drone, over the surface of stones and plates. (figures 16 and 17)

In 2013 we began to discuss a merger with the Center for Book and Paper. This was in the midst of college-wide change. Other centers at the college had been dissolved and each month we would see our programming further reduced or cut. In 2014 we merged with the Center for Book and Paper to become the Center for Book, Paper and Print, with Anchor Graphics losing its name, and its administrative offices moved to the Book and Paper facilities. Though a Master Printer, David was moved out of the printshop to an administrative desk. Chris, whom David had trained as a young intern, was now the recognized Master Printer. After five years of uncertainty, program reduction,

figure 12. Chris Flynn and his Columbia College Chicago Photogravure Class, Anchor Graphics, 623 S. Wabash, 2014

figure 13. David and VIsual Arts Student

figure 14. Chris Flynn preparing John Knudsen's etching plate, Steel City, Anchor Graphics, 623 S. Wabash, 2006

and no curricular integration, it was evident that the programs we valued and championed could no longer continue. We moved to Wisconsin, where we started the non-profit Center for Collaborative Research (CCR), which continues our Press on Wheels and Anchor's vision. With a donated van that has a wheelchair lift gate, we carry an etching press and papermaking equipment into the community. Our portable shop has traveled to Madison to work with veterans, to Milwaukee to work with both children and adults, to Chicago's Albany Park through Regin Igloria's North Branch Projects, and to the Boys and Girls Club in Kenosha.

What Anchor began is now cutting edge for all the young printmakers who are starting up community-based shops of their own. Social practice, as begun at Anchor in 1990, is now an important part of artistic practice. Another Anchor intern, Kevin Orlosky (2004-06), with his partner, started his Art on Wheels in Richmond, Virginia, which takes the press out into the community. Marilyn has offered a panel and an Inkubator session on how to start a non-profit print shop at two SGCI conferences, with over 100 grad students attending. I have given talks on Anchor Graphics at universities and workshops throughout the country. Anchor Graphics has influenced two generations of printmakers.

In hindsight, would we have done things differently? The story is not over yet. As of this writing, discussions are starting about opening a shop in Milwaukee for our Center for Collaborative Research, through the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee faculty and graduate students-- an extension and evolution of Anchor Graphics, and its continued involvement in the arts, printmaking, and community partnerships.

ENDNOTES

1. *Printmaking in America: Collaborative Prints and Presses, 1960-1990*, by Trudy V. Hansen, David Mickenberg, et al. New York: Harry Abrams, Inc, in Association with Mary and Leigh Block Gallery, Northwestern University 1995, 107 & 109.
2. *Second Sight: Printmaking in Chicago 1935-1995*, by Mark Pascale, James Yood, and David Mickenberg. Mary and Leigh Block Gallery Northwestern University, 1996, 50 & 51.
3. Ibid.
4. *Demo 3*, Summer 2006, Ann Weins, "The Fine Print," pp. 27.
5. *Chicago Tribune*, Jeff Huebner, "Dropping Anchor at Columbia," June 25, 2006, section 7, p. 9.
6. *Demo 3*, Summer 2006, Ann Weins, "The Fine Print," pp. 24-28.
7. *Post-Digital Printmaking*, by Paul Cantanese and Angela Geary. A&C Black Publishers, London 2012, 72-76.

figure 15. David and Folleh Tamba, Art of Collaboration Graduate Class, Interdisciplinary Arts Program, Anchor Graphics, 623 S. Wabash, 2013

figure 16. David printing one of the experiments for *Stones and Drones* Anchor Graphics, 623 S. Wabash, 2014

figure 17. Paul Catanese, Professor and Associate Chair, Interdisciplinary Arts Department, Columbia College Chicago, during a test run of *Stones and Drones*