

Reminder

July 30, 2002

Print to be pulled from original Audubon printing plate

From University of Southern Indiana, John James Audubon State Park, and Kentucky Department of Parks

Contacts: Kathy Funke, director, News and Information Services, USI, 465-7050, kfunke@usi.edu and Jim Carroll, public information officer, Kentucky Department of Parks, 502/564-8110, ext. 307.

USI art professor Michael Aakhus, will pull an impression from an original Audubon copper printing plate beginning at 10 a.m. on Thursday, August 1 in the Art Studio at the University of Southern Indiana.

The plate, a most sought after treasure, is one of only 78 remaining plates of the original 435 used in the printing of Audubon's masterpiece, *The Birds of America*. It is an impression of the Tell-Tail Godwit or Snipe.

The last to take an impression of the plate would have been the employees of Robert Havell Jr. of London, the firm involved in the printing of *The Birds of America* in the spring of 1827.

Prints pulled from original copper plates without the input or direct involvement of Robert Havell Jr. or John James Audubon are called restrikes. Only five other institutions are known to have reproduced restrikes and the restrikes are of other Audubon copper plates.

This event is open to the media. It is not a public event. A full release about the plate and the process to make the impression was sent July 23, 2002. For a copy of that release, contact Kathy Funke (access information above) and she can forward a copy to you.

A Web page will be created during the afternoon of Thursday, August 1 with photos from the event. We'll be sending you a link to the Web page after it is uploaded.

The Art Studio, Rm. 109, is located along University Boulevard, the main thoroughfare through campus. It is south of the Technology Center and the last building on the west side of the boulevard. Parking is available in Lot E, across the boulevard from the studio.

Sent to: Roger McBain, Judy Jenkins (Henderson Gleaner), Owensboro Messenger-Inquirer, Mt. Vernon Democrat, WIKY, WKDQ, WNIN, WGBF, WEHT, WFIE, Fox 7, Kim Hefling (AP), Jimi Carroll. Sent by Jim Carroll to Louisville Courier-Journal and Lexington Herald-Leader.

July 23, 2002

Media Advisory

From University of Southern Indiana, John James Audubon State Park, and Kentucky Department of Parks

Contacts: Kathy Funke, director, News & Information Services, USI, 812/465-7050, kfunke@usi.edu and Jim Carroll, public information officer, Kentucky Department of Parks, 502/564-8110, ext. 307, jim.carrroll@mail.state.ky.us

Who: USI art professor Michael Aakhus

What: Pulling an impression from an original Audubon copper printing plate

When: 10 a.m., Thursday, August 1. This event for a select audience is not open to the public. Media are invited.

Where: Art Studio, Rm. 109, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville. The Art Studio is located along University Boulevard, the main thoroughfare through campus. It is south of the Technology Center and the last building on the west side of the boulevard. Parking is available in Lot E, across the boulevard from the studio.

Print to be pulled from original Audubon printing plate

An activity that hasn't taken place for over 160 years will be demonstrated at 10 a.m., Thursday, August 1 at University of Southern Indiana when a print will be pulled from an original John James Audubon copper printing plate. The session is expected to take two hours.

Michael Aakhus, professor of art, will pull a print from an Audubon copper plate acquired by the Friends of Audubon, a support group for the John James Audubon Museum in Henderson, Kentucky, and the Preston Family Foundation.

The plate is considered a most-sought-after treasure, one of only 78 remaining plates of the original 435 used in the printing of Audubon's masterpiece, *The Birds of America*. The impression is of the Tell-tail Godwit or Snipe (*Totanus Melanolbucus*, Vieill) of one male and one female, View in East Florida which was engraved, printed, and colored by Robert Havell in 1836. It is numbered 62, plate CCCVIII.

After the printing of *The Birds of America* was completed in 1839, the plates were packed away and sent from London to New York.

Some of the plates were used in the printing of the Bien edition completed in 1862. This Audubon Museum plate was not among those.

The last to take an impression of the plate would have been the employees of Robert Havell Jr. of London, the firm involved in *The Birds of America* project since the spring of 1827.

Friends of Audubon had, at the time of the purchase of the plate in 2001, requested from Havell descendants the right to make restrikes from the plate to help replenish their treasury.

Restrikes, prints pulled from the original copper plates without the input or direct involvement of Robert Havell Jr. or John James Audubon, have been done in the past, the most notable are called Alectos. The Alectos were commissioned by the American Museum of Natural History. Six of the plates in their collection were re-conditioned and shipped to England where Alecto Press produced a limited edition of the images. Only five other institutions are known to have produced restrikes.

Don Boarman of the John James Audubon State Park said it is hoped that the results of this event will be encouraging and will lead to the production and release of the seventh issue of restrikes from the copper engraving plates.

The John James Audubon Museum displays priceless artifacts of Audubon, the premier natural history and wildlife artist of the 19th century who lived in Henderson for a number of years, as well as a rare edition of *The Birds of America*. The copper plate used in the August 1 restriking is on display at the park museum.

Process for making the impression

The process Michael Aakhus will use to make the impression is intaglio printing where the plate is wiped with oil base ink, forcing the ink down into the engraved lines. All the surplus ink is removed from the surface with a cloth called a tarlatan, which is sized cheesecloth. He will then take the plate to the press, place the handmade paper over the image, cover it with soft thick felts, and run it through the press. The felts and the roller of the press push the paper into the inked engraved lines and an impression is made.

Note to Media

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