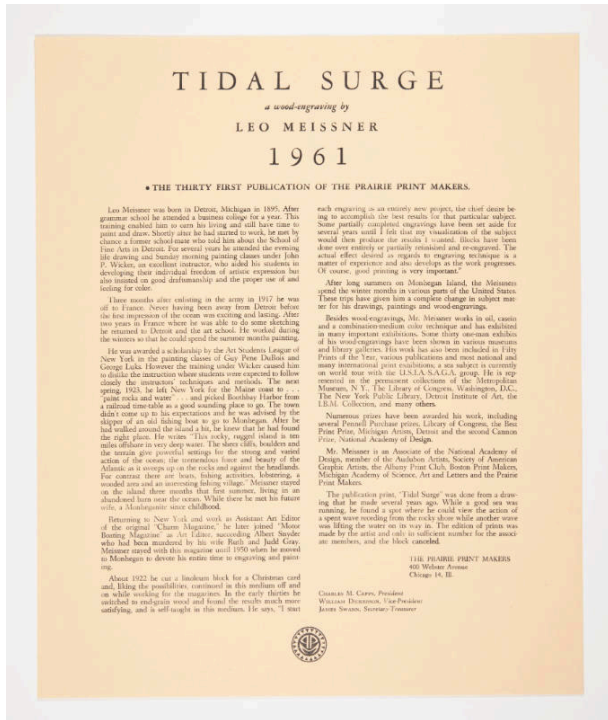


Basic Detail Report



"Tidal Surge" leaflet

Date

1961

Primary Maker

Prairie Print Makers

Medium

Lithograph on color paper

Dimensions

FOLDED: 12 5/8 x 10 1/4 in. (320.7 x 260.4 mm)

Credit Line

KSU, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art

Object number

CM136.2015

TIDAL SURGE

a wood-engraving by

LEO MEISSNER

1961

• THE THIRTY FIRST PUBLICATION OF THE PRAIRIE PRINT MAKERS.

Leo Meissner was born in Detroit, Michigan in 1895. After grammar school he attended a business college for a year. This training enabled him to work his living and still have time to paint and draw. Shortly after he had earned to work, he met by chance a former school master who told him about the School of Fine Arts in Detroit. For several years he attended the evening life drawing and sculpture classes, painting classes under John P. Walker, an excellent instructor, who asked his students to develop their individual freedom of artistic expression but also insisted on good draftsmanship and the proper use of and feeling for color.

Three months after enlisting in the army in 1917 he was off to France. Never having been away from Detroit before the first impression of the ocean was exciting and lasting. After two years in France where he was able to do some sketching he returned to Detroit and the art school. He worked during the summer so that he could spend the summer months painting.

He was awarded a scholarship by the Art Students League of New York in the painting class of Guy-Pierre Dufrenoy and George Lusk. However the training under Walker caused him to dislike the instruction when students were expected to follow closely the instructor's technique and methods. The next spring, 1923, he left New York for the Marine Coast to "paint rocks and water" . . . and picked Boothby Harbor from a national contest as a good painting place to go. The more didn't come up to his expectations and he was advised by the skipper of an oil barge to go to Mackinac. After he had walked around the island a bit, he knew that he had found the right place. He writes "This rocky, rugged island is one mile offshore in very deep water. The shore cliffs, breakers and the straits give powerful settings for the strong and varied action of the ocean; the tremendous force and beauty of the Atlantic is conveyed on the rocks and against the headlands. For contrast there are bays, fishing activities, lobstering, a wooded area and an interesting fishing village." Meissner stayed on the island three months that first summer, living in an abandoned barn near the ocean. While there he met his future wife, a Montserratian since childhood.

Returning to New York and work as Assistant Art Editor of the "Daily Chron Magazine," he later joined "Moose Hunting Magazine" at St. Louis, succeeding Albert Swales who had been murdered by his wife Ruth and Jack Gray. Meissner ended with this magazine until 1950 when he moved to Mackinac to devote his entire time to engraving and painting.

About 1922 he cut a wooden block for a Christmas card and, liking the possibilities, continued in this medium off and on while working for the magazines. In the early thirties he switched to end-grain wood and found the results much more satisfying, and is still working in this medium. He says, "I treat

each engraving as an entirely new project, the chief desire being to accomplish the best results for that particular subject. Some partially completed engravings have been set aside for several years until I felt that my visualization of the subject would then produce the stress I wanted. Blocks have been actual effort devoted as regards to engraving technique, a matter of experience and just devices in the work progress. Of course, steel printing is very important."

After long summers on Mackinac Island, the Meissners spend the winter months in various parts of the United States. These trips have given him a complete change in subject matter for his drawings, paintings and wood-engravings.

Besides wood-engravings, Mr. Meissner works in oil, canvas and a combination medium color technique and has exhibited in many important exhibitions. Some thirty one-man exhibitions of his wood-engravings have been shown in various museums and library galleries. His work has also been included in Fifty Prints of the Year, various publications and most national and many international joint exhibitions, a sea subject is currently on world tour with the U.S.N.A.S.A.C. group. He is represented in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum, N.Y., The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., The New York Public Library, Detroit Institute of Art, the U.S.N. Collection, and many others.

Numerous prizes have been awarded his work, including several Pulitzer Prizes, Library of Congress, the Leo Pine Print, Michigan Art, Detroit and the second Cannon Prize, National Academy of Design.

Mr. Meissner is an Associate of the National Academy of Design, member of the Audubon Artists, Society of American Graphic Artists, the Gallery Four Club, Boston Four Artists, Michigan Academy of Science, Art and Letters and the Prairie Print Makers.

The publication print, "Tidal Surge" was done from a drawing that he made several years ago. While it had not yet been running, he found a spot where he could view the action of a spot wave moving from the rocks down while another wave was lifting the water on its way in. The edition of prints was made by the artist and will be sufficient number for the artist and members, and the block cancelled.

THE PRAIRIE PRINT MAKERS
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