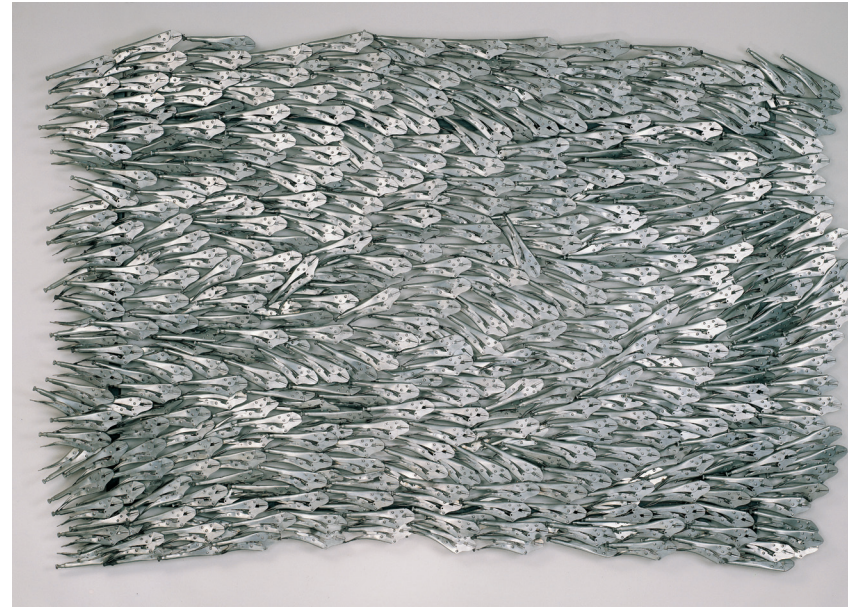


*[A tool is a]n inanimate object that one uses
or modifies in some way to cause a change
in the environment, thereby facilitating ones
achievement of a target goal.*

— Marc D. Hauser

*Among the low-priced, factory-produced
goods, none is so appealing to the sense as the
ordinary hand-tool. Hence the hardware store
is a kind of offbeat museum show for the man
who responds to clear “undesigned” forms.*

— Walker Evans



*Exhibition organized by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC
and featuring works from International Arts & Artists' Hechinger Collection*

FURTHER READING

Pete Hamill and John Hechinger, *Tools as Art: The Hechinger Collection* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Graphic design by Kimberley Nichols & Patricia Pohlman,
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Cover and above: Armand P. Arman, *School of Fishes*, 1982, vise grips, steel

Brochure text: Phillip Earenfight

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Works from the Hechinger Collection

October 29, 2010–February 5, 2011

THE TROUT GALLERY / DICKINSON COLLEGE

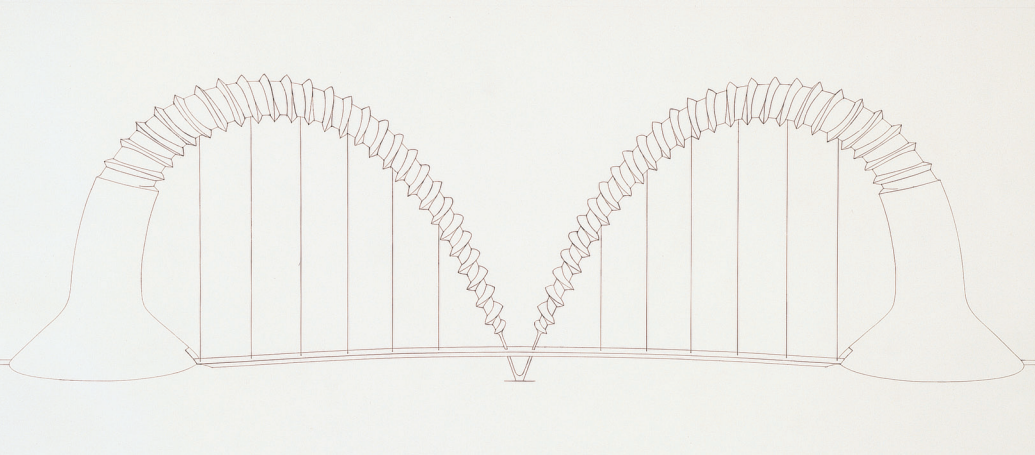
NOTION MOTION N S TOOL

TOOLS IN MOTION

The primate order includes the only species on earth that makes tools to perform specific tasks. But of the primates, Homo sapiens are perhaps the only tool-makers who appreciate tools not only for their utility, but also for their aesthetic value. Indeed, Jim Dine’s inspired drawings of a pipe-wrench or a band of marching claw hammers cause one to fundamentally re-evaluate the tools themselves, to say nothing about the subject of contemporary art. To this end, *Tools in Motion* brings together a clever selection of art that incorporates everyday tools and hardware. The works in *Tools in Motion* demonstrate how tools take on a life—even a personality—when thoughtfully isolated from their original function, combined with other objects, or presented in conjunction with like works. Drawn from the Hechinger Collection, many of the works in this exhibition are directly associated with or descend from the forms and ideas pioneered in Pop Art, and toy with these elements in a lighthearted, playful way.

The works draw attention to everyday tools in ways that awaken our appreciation for them on an iconic, dare one say, sacred level. (If the behavior displayed in hardware stores is any measure, one can surely speak of tools as possessing an array of shamanistic powers.) In this exhibition, inanimate objects such as a bunch of vise grip pliers—when carefully arranged—appear remarkably like a school of fish. Or wood screws, when conceived as gigantic architectural forms, become the basis for a lively, animated bridge design. The collection was compiled by John Hechinger, who headed a hardware and building materials chain established by his father in 1911. When the Hechinger Company moved to new headquarters in 1978, John was disappointed by the interior spaces:

The building seemed to rebuke the fantasies that a hardware store inspires. For anyone whose passion is to work with his or her hands, a good hardware store is a spur to the imagination and a source of irresistible delights.



Claes Oldenburg, *Screw Arch Bridge*, 1980, etching.



Jim Dine, *Tool Box 3*, 1966, serigraph.

To return the company to the spirit of tools and tool-making, Hechinger contacted Ivan Chermayeff, a friend and designer, to create photographic prints of tools carried in the company’s hardware stores. With these photographs as well as an edition of Jim Dine’s *Tool Box* prints—which Hechinger already owned—he set off to build a corporate art collection that focused on the tools of the family business. The resulting collection of more than 400 works are much more than office art; they celebrate human ingenuity and creativity.

The works also remind one that artists, who were long regarded as craftsmen, use tools to create art. Brushes, hammers, nails, saws, and paint are as much the tools of an artist as a carpenter. Indeed, an artist’s studio is a workshop in the most literal sense, and no small number of artists, like the rest of us, stand in the aisles of hardware stores sorting through bins and shelves, looking for the right tool to complete the project at hand. Indeed, the first artists were no different than their primate relatives—both fashioned sticks to perform a specific task. But rather than fishing termites from a mound, primitive artists were painting on the walls of caves.

Exhibition Checklist

All works courtesy International Arts & Artists

ARMAND P. ARMAN
School of Fishes, 1982, vise grips, steel

MARK BLUMENSTEIN
Barney Wiggle, 1991, metal

RICHARD BRONK
Ship of Tools, 1992, wood, metal

IVAN CHERMAYEFF
Untitled, 1978, silver gelatin on polyester film

Untitled, 1978, silver gelatin on polyester film

STAN DANN
Hand Tools, 1988, mixed media, wood

JIM DINE
Tool Box 1, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 2, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 3, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 4, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 5, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 6, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 7, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 8, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 9, 1966, serigraph
Tool Box 10, 1966, serigraph

RON ENGLISH
The Reconstruction, 1992, oil on canvas

HANS GODO FRABEL
Faucet (In the Middle of the Night), 1979, glass

COLIN GRAY
House and Home, 1988, mixed media, metal tools

GINTS GRINBERGS
Handtool, 1996, steel, wood

STEPHEN HANSEN
Man on a Limb, 1985, papier-mâché, wood

COLIN IVES
The Tools We Carry, 1996, shovels, soil, digital monitors

CHUCK JOHNSON
Red Still Life, 1989, oil on canvas

MARIA JOSEPHY
Prometheus, 1980, mixed media

MARILYN KEATING and DEBORAH SACHS
Two Carpenters, 1989, wood, paint

PATRICK KIRWIN
Hammers Inside, 1991, oil on canvas

JACOB LAWRENCE
Builder's Three, 1991, lithograph

JIM MCCULLOUGH
Diorama, 1983, mixed media

MARTE NEWCOMBE
March 94, 1994, digital pigment print
Nightrider, 1994, digital pigment print
Geshrotate, 1994, digital pigment print
Cathedral, 1994, digital pigment print

CLAES OLDENBURG
Screw Arch Bridge, 1980, etching, aquatint

MARIA PORGES
Table Saw, 1983, ceramic

MICHAEL RAMUS
Needle Nose, 1989, cardboard, plywood, pigment

EDGAR SOBERON
The Kiss, 1989, pastel on paper
Dancing Scissors, 1989, pastel on paper

LINDATHERN-SMITH
Phoenix, 1987, hammers, chair rockers

SILAS WEST
Climbing Man, 1895, tin, paint

BILL WILSON
Pliers and Nails, 1989, wood, paint

PHYLLISYES
Untitled, 1980, acrylic, saw