



MAURICIO LASANSKY

American, born in Argentina, 1914-2012

Kaddish #1, 1976

Edition: 8 of 70

Intaglio: etching, engraving, soft ground, aquatint, electric stippler, scraping and burnishing

Gift of The Alice and Richard Bowers Family, 2015.16.1

Kaddish #2, 1976

Edition 26 of 70

Intaglio: etching, engraving, soft ground, aquatint, electric stippler, scraping and burnishing

Gift of The Alice and Richard Bowers Family, 2015.16.2

Kaddish #1 | Kaddish #2



Mauricio Lasansky (1914–2012) Mauricio Lasansky is considered to be one of the “Fathers of 20th Century American Printmaking.” Born in Argentina in 1914, Lasansky marked the beginning of his career at age 22 when he became director of the Free Fine Arts School, Villa Maria, Cordoba, Argentina. He moved to America in 1943 on a Guggenheim Fellowship to study at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and went on to receive four more of these prestigious awards in his lifetime. While in New York, he joined fellow artists of the era at the New York Atelier 17 workshop, established by Stanley William Hayter, which allowed him the opportunity to experiment with the intaglio techniques of printmaking. In 1945, he established the print department in the School of Art and Art History at the University of Iowa. To this day, it serves as a model for other university printmaking departments. Lasansky held six honorary Doctorates of Art degrees and an array of awards and special prizes. His works are found in hundreds of public collections and virtually every major museum in the United States.

A product of its time

Kaddish #1 and *Kaddish #2* are works from a series of eight intaglio prints Lasansky created between 1976–1978. *Kaddish* is the mourners’ prayer of the Jews, seeking peace and everlasting happiness for the deceased as well as for those in mourning. They followed ten years after Lasansky’s unveiling of *The Nazi Drawings*, which capture his heightened repulsion toward the atrocities of the Holocaust. The *Kaddish* prints were intended to bring a sense of peace and completion to the aftermath of an abhorrent era, offering hope and mortality to those who survive.

Take a closer look

Etching, engraving, burnishing, soft-ground, and aquatint are some of the many techniques combined with precisely aligned multiple-plate prints to create a single image. Lasansky includes a number of motifs, like a white dove for the traditional symbol of peace and a sequence of numbers referencing the Nazi camps and the victimization of over six million Jews. *Kaddish #1* includes a life-size self-portrait, unlike the others in the series, with palms raised to reveal the stigmata that invoke a feeling of persecution and crucifixion. The profiled skull seen in *Kaddish #2* reinforces Lasansky’s message that among us are survivors and victims of every kind.

Did you know?

Up to the age of fourteen, Lasansky was interested in music. It wasn’t until he experienced a slight hearing impairment, which turned out to be temporary, that he changed his course of study to sculpture. Because his father was a printer of banknote engravings, he became familiar with the printmaking field; this influence greatly shaped the artist he became over the course of his life.

On your own

www.lasanskyart.com

www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8VmsgC53nA

www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/prnt/hd_prnt.htm