

## Charley & Edie Harper at the Cincinnati Art Museum

Saturday, 28 July 2007



*Passenger Pigeon*, 1957 - Charley Harper,  
Screen print - 13 x 18 1/4" - Collection of the Estate  
© Estate of Charley Harper

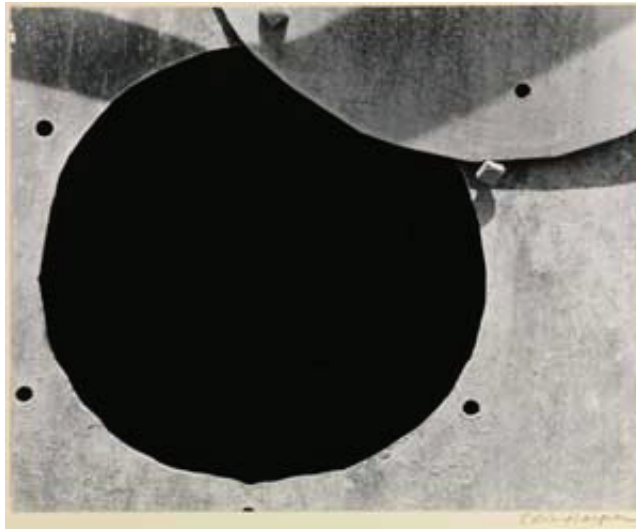
CINCINNATI, OHIO – The whimsical art of one of Cincinnati’s most respected and loved couples, Charley and Edie Harper, will be the subject of an exhibition later this summer at the Cincinnati Art Museum. *Minimal Realism: Charley and Edie Harper, 1940–1960* will include 40 works by both artists. This exhibition will remain on view Aug. 18 through Oct. 21.

Although Charley and Edie pursued similar approaches, they developed distinct styles, as seen through the rich variety of colors and forms on display in this exhibition. Visitors will have a rare opportunity to examine Charley and Edie’s art side by side and gain a fuller understanding of their relationship as a couple and as individual artists.

Charley and Edie Harper’s story began on their first day of class at the Art Academy of Cincinnati in 1940. Upon their graduation in 1947, they married and immediately took a six-month honeymoon, a road trip across the Western parts of the United States. Through their travels on the road, the Harpers developed their own styles while exploring nature and wildlife, which became the subject for most of their art.

Recognized for his colorful images of wildlife, especially ladybugs and birds, Charley Harper’s art appeared not only in fine art galleries, but also on everything from posters to fabrics, and ornaments to coffee mugs. The exhibition features his well-known images of birds first published in the automobile promotional magazine *Ford Times*. Also on display are several watercolors Charley Harper created during his honeymoon with Edie. His work continues to influence artists and designers today and has gained national recognition.

Born in the same year as her husband, Edie Harper developed her modernist style as an illustrator, painter and photographer. Her enduring love of cats is seen through the playful paintings included in the exhibition. A group of enameled copper bowls will also introduce visitors to the variety of media in which she works.



**Edie Harper, *Untitled (Black Hole)*, c.1950, vintage gelatin silver print, 9 1/2 x 7 5/8", Cincinnati Art Museum Collection, Museum Purchase with funds provided by Carl Jacobs - © Edie Harper**

Also included in the exhibition are four photos by Edie Harper examining the details of everyday objects. These works both show the influence of Edie's stint as an Army Corps of Engineers photographer and the work of her favorite photographer, Edward Weston, and demonstrate her keen eye for abstraction. Similar to her photographic style, Edie reduced everyday images to abstract forms, which is seen through her works on canvas included in the exhibition.

The Cincinnati Art Museum is grateful to the Harpers for their assistance in making this exhibition possible. *Minimal Realism: Charley and Edie Harper, 1940–1960* has been made possible in part through the generous support of LPK and Fidelity Investments Inc.

Located in the nearly 200 acre Eden Park, the Cincinnati Art Museum has an encyclopedic collection that ranges from ancient Egyptian and Greek works of art to paintings by European masters to pieces by modernist and contemporary artists in all media. Some of the Museum's most notable holdings include the only collection of ancient Nabataean art outside of Jordan, the renowned Herbert Greer French collection of old master prints, and an outstanding collection of European and American portrait miniatures. The Museum has an active program of organizing and presenting traveling exhibitions and presents a wide range of arts-related programs, activities, and special events. General admission is always free.



**Charley Harper, *White Sands, N.M.*, 1952, screen print - 13 x 18 1/2, Collection of the Estate, © Estate of Charley Harper**