

TYLER GRAPHICS LTD.



Josef Albers

*Four Portfolios*

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Josef Albers's lifelong study of the interaction of colors and his love for precise printing techniques were the inspiration for the four portfolios *Gray Instrumentation I*, *Gray Instrumentation II*, *Mitered Squares*, and *Never Before*, each consisting of twelve screenprints. Three of the portfolios are followed by separate but related editions, *Gray Instrumentation I, Plus I* (31-JA13), *Gray Instrumentation II, Plus II* (44:JA26), and *Mitered Squares, Plus II* (57 -JA39) .

Josef Albers and Kenneth Tyler decided that the areas of color in each edition would be printed side by side, without overlapping, to maintain the purity of the mixed colors and to create a uniform printed surface. Every color screen for the fifty-one screenprint editions was made from a master set of Ruby lith films that Tyler hand-cut using the artist's original graph-paper drawings as models. The Ruby lith films for each edition were carefully registered using registration pins. The pins were essential for maintaining precise registration between the cut films, the screen stencil, and the punched paper attached to fixed pins on the press bed. The color screen had to register perfectly with every sheet of paper during the print runs for each impression. If registration was not exact (due to expansion and contraction of the paper or stretching of screens caused by squeegee pressure during runs), Tyler, Charles Hanley, or Kim Halliday remade the stencils and screens.

Albers communicated his ideas about color to Tyler by using a variety of samples, such as partially painted images on blotting paper, leaves and flowers he picked to illustrate certain color effects, and fragments of colored paper from his studio. Tyler, assisted by Halliday and Hanley, mixed and proofed numerous inks. Color variations were screen-printed on Arches 88, the edition paper, and Albers cut and collaged the colored papers into trial combinations that were then made into prints and proofed for further study. Each print was revised repeatedly until Albers achieved the desired color interaction. The lengthy proofing sessions for each portfolio led to the creation of hundreds of color trial proofs. Nearly all of these proofs were destroyed because of poor registration or damage that took place during proofing.