

ONE WALL, ONE WORK:

Richard Serra

The latest in the One Wall, One Work series is Richard Serra's Rosa Parks from 1987. Serra had begun working with printmaking techniques by the early 1970's, but by the early 1980's, he was pushing out - experimenting with treating the paper so it wouldn't need to be behind glazing so as to create not just an image but also a 'sculpture as paper'. Soon thereafter, he began to investigate a screenprint process that employed Paintstik, a dense oil-based medium that added greater weight and surface texture to his work for which he had been searching. In Rosa Parks, the artist began by screenprinting a single layer of flat black ink onto a specially treated paper in the areas to be coated with the substance. A synthetic fabric screen, stenciled with the image, was laid over the paper and layers of black Paintstik were pushed through by hand. The striations and other rich surface textures seen in this work resulted from forcing the viscous material through the screen. All of this innovation in process provided an opportunity for Serra to create a work that was equal parts image on paper and sculpture on and with paper. The ink and Paintstik illustrate visual formal properties (i.e. the diagonal in the upper right corner creates a negative space in relationship to the black). The sculptural quality of the black, along with the physicality of the paper chosen and one's direct access to it, give a strong sense of tension between the weight of the black and the lightness of the paper.

BARBARA

KRAKOW GALLERY