



LEFT: Bea Mandelman, *Untitled (Three Men, Barrel Fire)*, ca. 1936. Lithograph on paper. Gift of Richard Levy and Dana Asbury.
BELOW: Bea Mandelman, *Three Houses*, ca. 1936. Color lithograph on paper. Gift of Richard Levy and Dana Asbury.

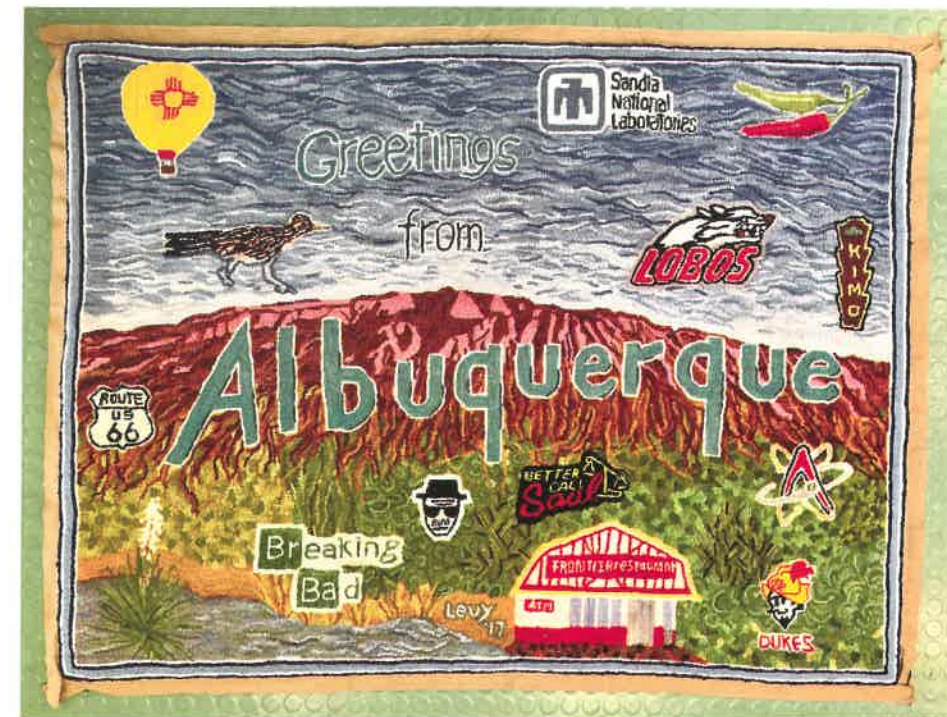
Collector and Collected

Richard Levy's imaginative gifts keeps an eye to the future.



THE RECENT ACQUISITION of 31 Beatrice Mandelman prints is just one of many Museum gifts from gallery owner and collector Richard Levy. Levy's donations can be found on the walls and in the vault of the Museum. He promised a gift of Emi Ozawa's maquette *Big Orange Bite*, which is included in the Works on Paper gallery exhibition *Unfolding Tradition*. There are also prints by the late photographer Patrick Nagatani; and in the future, there will be selections from Levy's astonishing collection of postcards (tens

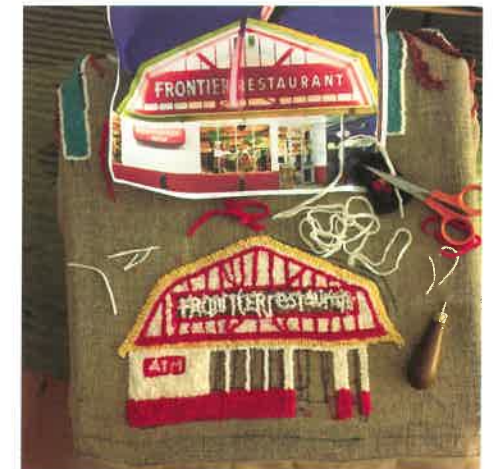
of thousands), stereographs, albumen print photography, art nouveau and deco posters, paintings, sculptures, and prints. Another recent acquisition is a folk-art style hooked rug Levy made himself in the style of an Albuquerque Route 66 tourism postcard. This consummate collector donates art to the Museum, he says, in part because it's local, but also because it sheds light on area history. "I've been here since about 1970, and it's the local museum and I've collected the local stuff. Josie [Lopez, curator of art] came and picked works from



the Valerie Roybal show. We found a couple of people who made donations to the Breast Cancer Foundation so the Museum could have them. The joy in all of that, is that Andrew [Connors, museum director] or Josie will do something with all of those things. They show Patrick's [Nagatani] prints. They'll do something with Bea Mandelman's WPA stuff." A UNM graduate in art and art history, Levy owned the Silver Sunbeam antique store in the 1970s and '80s, named after an 1890s photographic manual. He frequented the Fourth Street Flea Market, where he purchased Works Progress Administration photographs and art nouveau lithographs for very little money. He knew he was on the right track as a collector when the curator of the UNM Art Museum visited the store to see what he had. Later Levy went to work for Beatrice Mandelman as an archivist. "In cataloging her paintings, we came across these prints, and every now and then we'd come across another. Every time I went there, I'd find a few more," Levy says. "She

didn't always want to sell them to me." Levy also champions Albuquerque artists nationally. "I started here as an art dealer, and Tamarind was here, and there were interesting artists coming from all over. The artists I show now are more from Albuquerque than at any other time in the history of the gallery. Emi Ozawa I discovered in a survey of Albuquerque artists that Andrew Connors did—local artist, Japanese American, paper. We were thrilled to buy [that piece] from Emi and show it in *Unfolding Tradition*." "Richard's collections have astonishing diversity," says Connors. "There's a really eclectic spirit in his collecting. He shows very cutting-edge contemporary work at the gallery, and yet his personal collections range from popular culture to prints, to folk art, to paintings and sculpture. His personal enthusiasm is all over the map, yet consistently imaginative." Connors saw one of Levy's hooked rugs in a show at 516 Arts and asked if the Museum could acquire it, but because Levy's rug works are highly

OPPOSITE PAGE: Richard Levy dyes fabric for his hooked rugs.
LEFT: The Albuquerque hooked rug Levy created for the Museum.
BELOW: It took two years to create this highly detailed piece.



personal—they depict the family dogs; Biddeford Pool, Maine, where his family spends summers; and the Isotopes—he was not willing to part with them. Instead, he made one specifically for the Museum. It took two years. Knowing that work Levy has collected will have a home is a driving motivation. "He's really thinking about the future of the objects, that they do have a life," says Connors. "Richard is making sure that they are placed so they help the community." ■