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Post-Digital Graphics

The core of modern printmaking is to improve reproductive means of graphical communication. The use of digital manufacturing techniques in printmaking is revolutionary—but only in a sense. Although artists' adoption of computer numerical control (CNC) tools and related devices has resulted in novel printmaking processes, these processes still conform to enduring printmaking convention, in that the print is produced through physical interaction with a transfer mechanism. For the process described in this chapter, I use the term *post-digital* because it goes beyond just using a computer; and I use the word *graphics* in the chapter's title because techniques like those created by Mike Lyon marry printmaking with drawing and other graphic mediums.

Mike Lyon, *Carrie Robe*,
2013, drawing and
watercolor print,
76 x 43 inches
(193 x 109.2 cm).
Courtesy of the artist.

Mike Lyon has been called a father of post-digital printmaking because of his extraordinary use of digital technologies. He has created large drawings, paintings, and woodblock prints using computer software that he has written or adapted to control machinery, and he has invented or adapted the machinery itself in order to manipulate traditional tools and materials using very unconventional methods. In his own words: "I'm an experimenter, an artist, a scientist, an engineer. My need to make stuff is fulfilled in the studio."