



JAMES ALLEN

The Builders, 1932

Etching, aquatint and drypoint on laid paper.

Edition of 100. Signed in pencil.

9 7/8 x 11 7/8 in : 25.1 x 30.2 cm

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After photography became the most popular documentary mode in the early 1900s, some artists were inspired by current photography. *The Builders* directly borrowed, or at least strongly echoed, Lewis Hines' photographs of the construction of the Empire State Building. Allen worked out his figures by drawing models in the studio, often creating life-size charcoal studies for his prints. For *The Builders*, Allen called in a construction site foreman to check his accuracy before allowing the plate to be printed. (Mary Ryan Gallery, 1984). *The Builders* was Allen's first print to earn him awards and recognition. It was published as the cover for the Herald Tribune Magazine in 1933 and for the cover of the Sunday Review Brooklyn Eagle the following year.



Lewis Hines in action during construction of the Empire State Building



Who were these builders? Click to hear about these fearless men.