

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY ART EXHIBIT



WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL LIBRARY

MARCH 6-JUNE 26, 2012

INSIDER ART
by
Shannon Gulliver, PGY III

The depth, breadth, and sheer volume of artistic production amongst the members of the Payne Whitney Department of Psychiatry at New York Presbyterian Hospital are striking: what other department could mount such a deep field of artists? I would hazard that *no* other department could do so. But why? What is it about art-making that draws—or produces—psychiatrists?

Art has long been known as a way to help psychiatric *patients* express their inner distress and to help their treaters better understand this distress. The results can be aesthetic as well as therapeutic: whole art exhibitions have been mounted of patients' art, beginning with psychiatrist Walter Morgenthauer's *Madness and Art* of 1921 (translated by Aaron Esman)¹ and Hans Prinzhorn's *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* of 1922.² Artist Jean Dubuffet championed the art of the psychiatrically ill in his own collection of what he called *art brut*, and the tradition continues today with the annual Outsider Art Fair in New York City (it now includes art by mentally healthy as well as mentally ill artists).

But art produced by the treaters themselves has received less attention. Some of our contributors describe, in their artists' statements submitted for this exhibition, art-making as way to use another part of the brain than the one used to think medically and psychiatrically (Diana Diamond). Others find artistic practice, and the way in which it entails careful observation and interpretation of the physical world, to be an extension of the analytic and synthetic processes of practicing psychiatry (Theodore Shapiro). Indeed, Dr. Shapiro, in describing his artistic practice, writes, "a tree will never be just green," much the way a psychiatric patient will never be just crazy.

Indeed, a theme that recurs in many contributors' descriptions of their artistic practice is that of using one's hands: sewing, painting, carving, sculpting. We are the only physicians who never touch our patients: we watch, we listen, and eventually, we speak, but never do we produce a tangible, physical outcome.

¹ Morgenthauer, W., Esman, A. H. (trans.), *Madness and Art: The Life and Works of Adolf Wolffli*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992

² Prinzhorn, H., *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*, New York: Springer-Verlag, 1972

How different from capturing an image on film and developing it into a photograph! How different from taking a dead tree branch and sculpting it into a recognizable shape! And how different it is to take a mess of pigment and water and create a scene on paper than it is to take a mess of thoughts and feelings in a patient and create a...a case formulation?

While the creative end-product in psychiatry may not be a tangible object born out of a tactile and manual practice, the processes of forming an artwork and formulating a case are not entirely different. Michael Stephenson writes that in his artistic practice he “tr[ies] to transform unassuming subject matter into what [he] hope[s] are moving and challenging images.” This is not dissimilar from taking offhand or seemingly inconsequential statements by patients and making interpretations out of them.

Michael Sacks takes this transformation of insignificant objects into meaning a step further into the psychiatric realm: his photography routine is to go an arbitrary number of paces from his front door, capture twenty images, and then transform them, using Photoshop, from “‘objective’ image[s]” into “hallucination[s]” that are part of his “personal reality” rather than part of the manifest visual world that he initially photographs. The vocabulary with which Dr. Sacks describes his artistic process, while clearly that of a master psychiatrist, would also be appreciated by *art brut* champions Morgenthaler, Prinzhorn, and Dubuffet.

To say that psychiatry is an art, or that art reflects psychiatry, would be pat. But the relationship between the two processes is undeniable. Robert Michels, in a recent grand rounds lecture about how to study psychotherapy, when discussing the possibility of examining psychoanalysis in a randomized control trial, noted that, while art schools cannot manualize Picasso, it's worth their students studying him as a master. Similarly, he said, it's worth students of psychoanalysis to study the masters in unmanualized form. In this exhibit, we have some of those masters' artworks....Enjoy.



Yo-Yo Quilt, fabric, 75x75

Like most quilters, I learned to quilt from my mom, who learned to quilt from her mother. My mom never sat me down to teach me how to sew, but she is constantly sewing. I learned by watching her and experimenting on my own (and making frequent phone calls to my mom for sewing crisis interventions). I have been sewing for years but only recently starting quilting. I made my first quilt 2 years ago, when my husband, Mark Cesarik, started designing quilting fabric. This quilt is made from Mark's second fabric collection for Free Spirit, called "Morning Tides." It is a variation of a popular technique called "yo-yos," which are hand-stitched gathered circles of fabric. Typically yo-yos are about 2" wide. In this quilt, I made giant yo-yos to better showcase Mark's patterns. The only part of this quilt that is machine stitched is the binding (edge of the quilt) and the backing. The slow, rhythmic pace of hand-stitching is my favorite part of quilting.

JACK BARCHAS

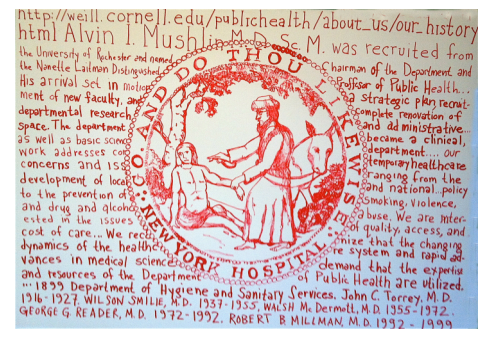
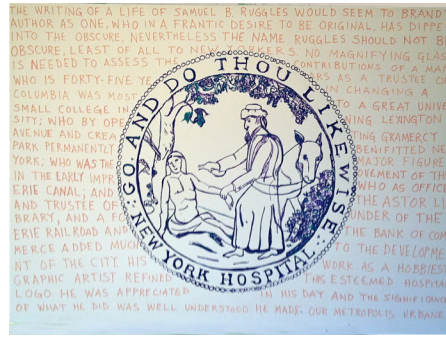
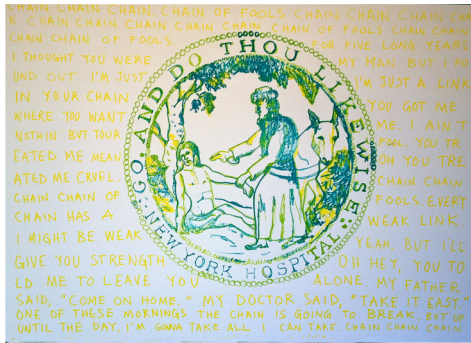


Winter in Virginia,
photograph, 8x10

The changing moods and tempos of the Shenandoah Valley have come to captivate me and have become a focus of my photographic efforts. We have an 1830's two story log cabin home in a rural area of the Valley, 65 miles due west of Charlottesville, over the Blue Ridge Mountains. Beautiful, it is a place through which armies marched in war that has a deep history with tides of pride and pain.

As part of our restoration of the property, we have added an art studio and a book barn library. The logs needed no work whatsoever, a testament to the care with which the original home was built. It is quiet, we see no neighbors, but we do see the beauty of the Valley by day and a perfect sky at night. We are able to do various forms of art work, write, and read literature as well as history. Sometimes when everything looks peaceful one also senses how at other times it has had no peace. And then the land restored itself.

ANN BEEDER



The Department of Public Health at WCMC, Watercolor and oil based enamel pens on paper, 90x41



Howard the Cat and Lucas, watercolor and watercolor pens on paper, 40x 30



Anna Chapman MD takes Polaroids, watercolor and watercolor pens on paper, 35x47

I am interested in drawing and painting the people I know. Artists in my family encouraged me to pursue formal study in painting as a child. I have studied with several painters including Frank Lobdell and Nathan Oliviera and received a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art, painting at Stanford University in 1983. I am represented by Galerie Rambert, 4 Rue Beaux Arts, Paris, France. Recently, I have produced several series including "Portraits of Narcissism," 2005 (47 portraits of Bob Shaye) "Tolf Hanson was the Most Famous Omahan," 2008-2009 (36 portraits of Alexander Payne), "Psychiatrists I Like," 2010-2011 (23 portraits of Payne Whitney Psychiatrists-including "Anna Chapman takes Polaroids"). My current series, "The most abundant protein on earth is rubisco," (12 portraits of physicists and a Japanese fashion designer living in Tangiers) will be completed in Spring 2012. My work attempts to use edges, line and color to portray people in situations as I see them. I work in a large format on paper, canvas, and linen and use watercolor pens, graffiti tools, watercolor, oil and enamel paints.

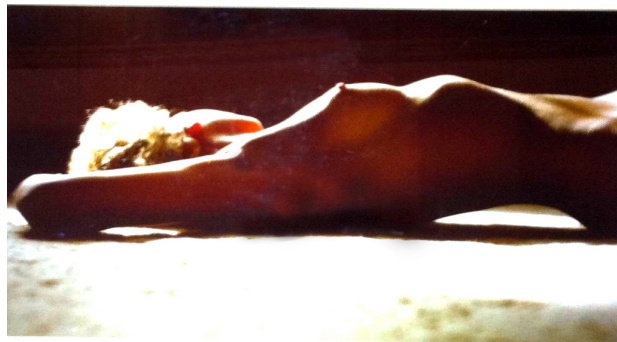
MICHAEL BELDOCH



New Jersey from New York,
oil on canvas, 34x45,



Rorschach, ink on paper, 24x30



Nude, photograph 16x20

So far as I can recall, I have always been “seeing” things, but I have not been on medication for this condition. When I was thinking of publishing some of my photographs in book form, I considered using as the title, “Eye-found Photos”. I started drawing in elementary school but I was never pleased with my draftsmanship. In college I experimented with, and liked, watercolors. I began photographing in earnest in my 20’s and was a professional fashion photographer in the 1950’s with a studio off lower Madison Avenue. I couldn’t make a living at this so I became a psychologist. I tend to see “line” and “shape” everywhere, so I photograph what my eye has seen, thus “Eye-found Photographs”. I used to carry a camera everywhere I went, but lately it has become too heavy, so I am planning on picking up water colors again.

KATHERINE DALSIMER



Untitled, watercolor on paper,
16 x12



After Emil Nolde, pastel
on paper, 17x17



Nude, pastel on paper, 21x18

From the age of 10, every Saturday morning I'd tuck a huge pad of newsprint under my arm and take the subway from deepest Brooklyn to "the city" (as it was always called), and the Art Students' League. It's customary, in life drawing classes, to start with short poses and build to the longer ones most students favor. My teacher, Alice Harold Murphy, loved the quick poses—one or two minutes--and I came to relish them, too. They forced you to *look*, and catch quickly the essence of the pose. You hardly had time to be self-conscious about the resulting charcoal sketch, because you were so absorbed in the hard work of looking, and seeing. It's only in adult life that color has burst on my scene—far more vivid than when I was a child—and I've chosen for this show three recent works of color. Two are pastels, and one is a watercolor, titled "Untitled."



Apple, watercolor
on paper, 13x10



Caneel Bay, watercolor
on paper, 17x13



Peaches, watercolor on paper,
13x10

About eight years ago I took out my childhood drawings, and remembering my pleasure in painting, I began to paint again. I started with watercolors because they are so forgiving and enable one to capture nuances of light and color without too much formal precision. I also focus on objects and people I encounter everyday, because painting them makes me appreciate the extraordinary in the ordinary. Painting enables me not only to value the natural and human world more fully, but also to enter it in a way that expands and deepens my momentary experience. As I paint a peach, for example, I see that it is composed of shades of red, orange, yellow and green with hints of lavender running through. This act of deconstruction and reconstruction, this immersion in color, light, texture, and form as well as the tactile, sensuous aspects of mixing the colors and putting the paint on paper have added a dimension to my life that has also affected my experience as a clinician, researcher and teacher. When I paint I feel that I am using parts of my brain that have been undeveloped. Painting also connects with an aspect of myself, long forgotten and neglected. Wherever my father's anthropological investigations took us, my mother always brought along paper, crayons and paints, encouraging us to respond to and represent the visual splendor of art, landscape and peoples in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. For me, painting is a vehicle not only to discover the present, but also to rediscover the past.



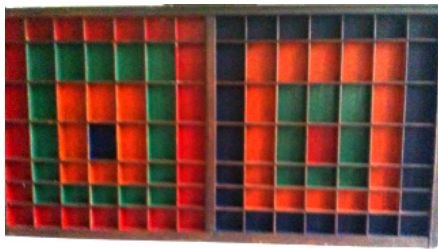
Memoir, mixed media on wood,
17x32, 2010



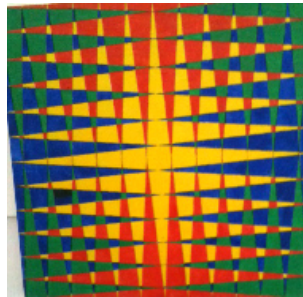
Secondaries,
acrylic on wood, 17x21,
2011



#4, acrylic on canvas,
12x12, 1963



Inside/Out, acrylic on Wood
17x32, 2011

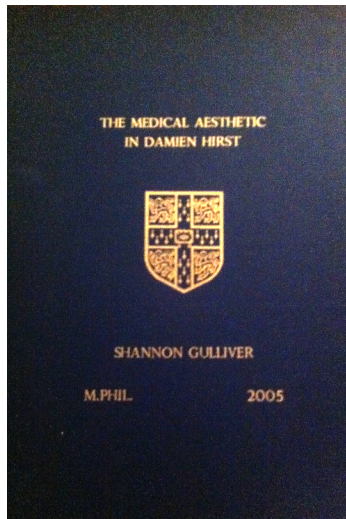


#3, acrylic on canvas,
12x12, 1963



Dutch Exterior,
acrylic on Wood,
21x14, 2011,

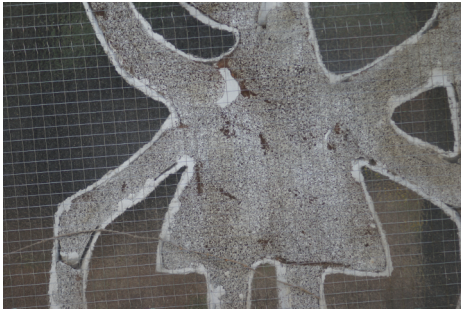
As an untrained art lover and self-educated student of art history I have long felt an affinity for the eloquent geometric abstraction of Mondrian and the DeStijl circle and that of the Russian Suprematist Malevich and his Constructivist peers like El Lissitzky. Lacking any talent or skill as draftsman, and given to obsessive doodling, my creative bent has been shaped by these influences, coupling geometry with at first colored markers and then with multicolored acrylic paint. Most recently, I have turned to the wooden typesetter's cases from the pre-digital era as formal structures within which to experiment with color variations and, of late, mixed-media constructions. It all helps to while away the hours on long summer days, and to help me believe that I may, some day, create something that is truly mine.



*The Medical Aesthetic of
Damien Hirst,*
Cambridge University
Masters Dissertation

This dissertation was written for my master's degree in art history at Cambridge during the year between college and medical school. When I was accepted to the art history program there, I was expected to write about scientific aspects of George Stubbs' horse paintings (the Brits, unaccustomed to the notion of a bachelor of science in molecular biology applying to graduate studies in art history en route to medical school, wanted me to study something British and biological for my MPhil). There was much consternation in the department when I jumped ahead from George Stubbs (1724-1806) to Damien Hirst (1965--), but I argued that Hirst was not only a British artist but also a master [if amateur] scientist: he knows his medicalese and his basic biology cold, and incorporates them into his anatomical and cadaverous sculptures, spot paintings, and *memento mori* canvases of dead flies, butterflies, cows, and swine. Indeed, all of his spot paintings are named for pharmacological compounds, and his production company is called Science. I explored how he used medical aesthetics--the gorgeous, brightly-colored and sterile visual language of healthcare--to express societal attitudes towards modern medicine through his art.

STEPHEN JOSEPHSON



3149, photograph, 20x30



Face with Leaves, photograph
20x30



Pink Graffiti, photograph,
20x30



Scribble, photograph, 20x30

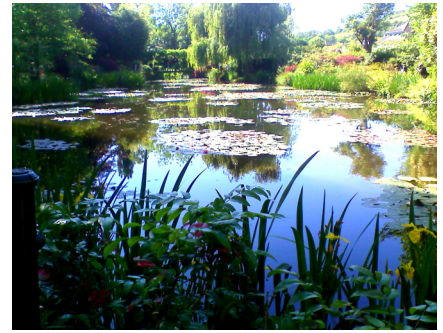
I received my arts training at the International Center for Photography and the NYC Art Students League. My photographic work represents my interest in identifying and dissecting the textures and shapes of architectural and other environmental patterns. The particular clusters of disfigured marks and articulated surfaces that preoccupy me include random emblems, walls, peeling wood and signage that I see on my travels locally and abroad. I try to transform unassuming subject matter into what I hope are moving and challenging images.



Jerusalem,
pen and ink on paper, 15x15



Chestnut Vendor, Kyoto,
photograph, 15x12



*Giverny,*photograph 15x12

I've always found international travel to be transformative, rewarding and inspiring. For me, the travel experience is especially valuable because it enriches me and provides both insight and perspective when I return to my office and listen to narratives and memories of patients. The three works I've included in this exhibit vary in mood and tone. The first, a pen and ink drawing, is of the Mea Shearim neighborhood in Jerusalem. The spare palette mirrors the limited range of hues--black, white and sometimes gray-- that I observed as residents went about their daily routines towards dusk. The second work is a photograph of a chestnut vendor in a Kyoto market. Her open and smiling face was a welcome sight as the busy and bustling street filled with crowds celebrating the traditional annual cherry blossom festival. The third work, another photograph, was taken on a glorious, sunny May day in Giverny. Monet's pond glowed and shimmered as it reflected the brilliant blue sky. Also present that day was a chorus of frogs energetically croaking in the distance.



Summerland #1, photograph, 18x24



Suummer Drive By #1, photograph, 18x24

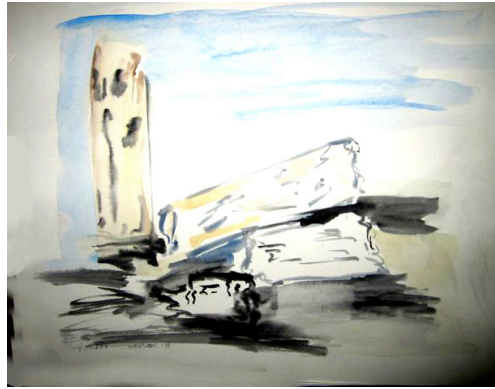


Trees '09 #1, photograph, 18x24

I take a lot of photographs and always have. I am drawn to the visceral experience of capturing a moment. You take a photograph of someone or someplace, or the way the light falls against a building and you don't have to know why you're taking that picture, for it to be a good picture. You get to trust your eye and find out later why you were drawn there. I'd rather take a photograph than shop or work or sit down to dinner.



Fantasy Forest,
watercolor, 9x12



Salishan Sea Shore,
watercolor 11x14



Plethora of Pansies,
watercolor 11x14



Nested Nasturtiums,
watercolor 11x14



Emily Jade,
graphite on paper, 11x14

I grew up in a household steeped in Central European tradition, surrounded by art, music and culture. Always inspired to attempt drawing, painting and sculpting with lessons and on my own, I was frustrated by a lack of skill and natural talent e.g. "drawing on the wrong side of the brain." I then discovered watercolor - a medium wherein exact measures are negligible and mistakes are not only tolerated but can be incorporated into part of the final work.



Homage to CB,
wood, limestone,
36x80



Basswood leaf #1,
photograph, 18x24



Basswood leaf #2,
photograph, 18x24



Basswood leaf #3,
photograph, 18x24

When I was a young boy, my parents sent me to art school on Saturdays, and I loved the smell of the paints. I learned to draw there. In woodshop in my public school, I made cutting boards, bowls on a lathe, and enjoyed the atmosphere there too. I love the smell of freshly sawn wood. I also climbed the cherry trees in my backyard, and was forever perching on the top branches for long hours. So now, all this comes back to me, or has stayed with me from then. I am excited about doing things with my hands, which my profession doesn't allow for, so I spend long hours in my country woodshop carving branches and tree trunks for functional things like tables and cheeseboards, and for sculpture. Brancusi, a Romanian like my forebears, has been a prominent inspiration. And my fascination with trees, and the aesthetics of change and decay, also expresses itself in my photographs of leaves and tree bark.

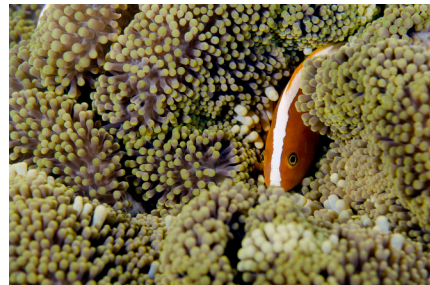
ALVIN ROSENFELD



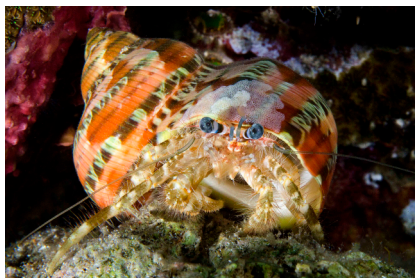
Polka Dots, photograph,
16x24



*The Republican Marching
Band*, photograph, 20x30



Nemo's Cousin 2, photograph,
16x24



Ol' Blue Eyes, Too,
photograph, 16x24



Greenie, photograph,
16x24

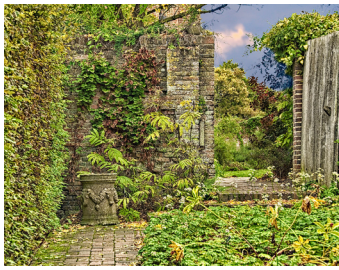


At the Plaintiff's Bar,
photograph, 20x30

Finding what is hidden beneath the surface, bringing the unseen to light, being awed by great power, uncovering the unknown: These are my goals and experiences, both as a psychiatrist and as a nature photographer. With patients, I take dangerous inner journeys that explore the psyche's strong forces and frightening depths. We go through dark secrets, hidden pitfalls, shy embarrassments, and forbidden joys. But in the midst of all that our patients have feared and tried to avoid seeing, most find wonderful treasures, beauty, and unrecognized strengths. The Botswana elephants have enormous power, observed as they are by a tiny lilac breasted roller on a nearby branch. My underwater work also looks at these issues. Under the ocean surface – a place where *Jaws* can get you at any moment – lays a world of astonishing beauty and subtlety that usually goes unseen. In its Zen-like tranquility lie surprises and fascination, maybe even wisdom. I hope that in some small way my photos bring this world to you and make the hidden – both in the sea and in yourself – a bit more appealing.



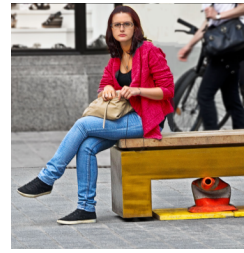
Cafe,
photograph,
23x16



Garden, photograph,
22x18



Ghost,
photograph,
16x20



Girl, photograph,
17x17.5



Three Figures,
photograph, 17x22



The Connection, photograph, 23x12

Photography is a way for me to see the world; to discover the uniqueness in the familiar. This can be color, an unexpected harmony, a humorous or confusing juxtaposition, a mystery, or the quality of the light. A favorite exercise for “learning to see” is walking an arbitrary number of steps from the front door and then finding 20 interesting images without moving, despite having passed this spot daily for many years.

Seeing is followed by the Photoshop transformation of the image into a personal reality. The “objective” image becomes a hallucination. The two young people in *The Connection*, separated by gray monoliths, are connected by their symmetry. I sharpened them and the monoliths and blurred and desaturated the background to give the picture a dream-like quality. Now it is about the awkward expansiveness of the boy and the painful tightness of the girl, and the space that both brings together and separates them. The person under the orange blanket is my wife. It is a playful picture as she hides from the camera; only later did I see the ghost and experience a fleeting fear. A woman looks toward me with a bored disdain, not knowing that she is mimicked by the cyclopean eye of a crushed street cone. I changed her grey sweater to red to suggest a more intimate connection to the cone. The cafe and garden images are about loss of care and abandonment, nostalgic recollections from a past that never actually occurred. The three people in the street are a mystery. I look for the connection that links them but it eludes me.

THEODORE SHAPIRO



Pond Moorings,
watercolor on paper,
6x9



Swimmer's View,
watercolor on paper,
10x14



Backyard, watercolor
on paper, 10x14



Ebb Tide,
watercolor on paper,
10x14



Cape Pond,
watercolor on paper,
6x9



Atlantic View,
watercolor on paper, 6x9



Rosehips, watercolor
on paper, 8x10

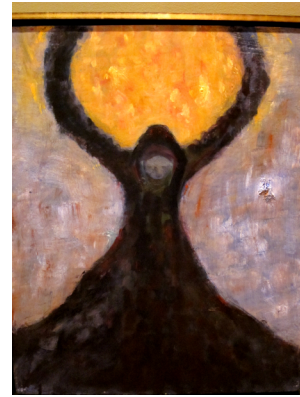
My artistic efforts are in part a response to adversity. I was confined to bed with an illness at six and eight. My mother kept me busy with serial volumes of a new Encyclopedia and with colored pencils and paper. Paints were too messy. At fourteen I showed little talent as an athlete. Consequently, I retired to the Art Students League on Saturdays to draw from life, paint still life and visit MOMA with “city” friends. I achieved some recognition, but knew I’d never be a first rate artist. I admired the painterly artists. Franz Hals, John Sargent, Winslow Homer, who seemed to create a magical reality with bold visible brushstrokes. They were my teachers .

Now, after long dormancy I am impatient with my technical ineptitude. I love the bold effects of watercolors, the fresh, bright, transparent colors and speed of creation. The end product is never as my eye wishes, but doing art has changed the way I see nature. A tree will never again be just green.

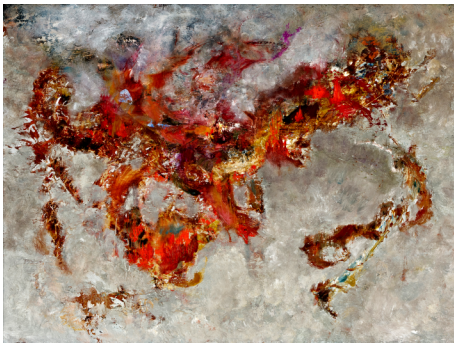
ROSEMARY STEVENS



Wind, oil on board, 23x26



Shaman, oil on board, 18x21



Day of the Dragon, oil on board,
23x29



Maelstrom, oil on board 21x18

My painting career began in my late forties. I had not dabbled with paint since high school, but now, I took up art with a vengeance: undergraduate fine arts courses at the University of Pennsylvania, where I was then teaching, and a full-day weekly studio program organized by Wade Schuman in Philadelphia. Francis Cortland Tucker was my next mentor in Philadelphia. Tucker allowed me a place to work in his studio, an honor indeed. Both are wonderful and wonderfully generous professional artists.

For me painting is a serious and magical experience. I try to express movement, mood, and images of our time, but often have no preconceived idea of how a painting will look when finished. Each has its own logic. Color is the magic ingredient, and form provides the discipline. I love the tactile qualities of oil, including the way it moves, spreads and layers (and can be scraped and tussled with), and use palette knife and rag (and even fingers) as well as brushes. Painting can be like working in a lab or a kitchen: hands-on, challenging, utterly fulfilling.



Spiral Plate,
ceramic, 9x9



Wired Plate,
ceramic, 8x8



Leaf platter,
ceramic, 14x10



*Persimmon
Covered Jar,*
ceramic, 6x5



Nautilus Bowl,
ceramic, 12x5



Cauldron, ceramic, 6x5



Cut tile, ceramic,
8x8



Leaf vase,
ceramic,
10x4



Green covered jar,
ceramic, 5x5

My husband likes my doing ceramics work. He finds me easier to live with when I am doing ceramics. That is because I am less likely to want to rearrange our apartment or come up with other creative (but disruptive) ideas if my creative energy is absorbed in ceramics. This creative energy is a potential energy always seeking a way to become kinetic. I have always done something with my hands: needlework, woodworking, cooking, etc. Ceramics has an appeal in that you start with a lump of clay and if the idea has no legs, it goes back to its primordial mud stage. But with luck and patience, the clay can be transformed to something interesting or useful.

MILTON VIEDERMAN



Untitled, gouache
on paper, 24 x 19



In the Spirit of Soulages,
gouache on paper, 24 x 19



Hommage à Freundlich #1,
pastel on paper, 24 x 18



Hommage à Freundlich #2,
pastel on paper, 14 x 11

Although I drew in high school, it was not until college that I became hooked on art. I followed the required survey course with courses on Northern European and Italian Renaissance painting. The decision to try my hand at painting resulted from my frustrated desire to collect. So I decided to copy paintings of the modern masters that I like, ones that seem simple enough to execute. Imagine my surprise to find that even here there was much to be desired in what emerged from my efforts since in paintings that appeared to be very simple in construction, I discovered unanticipated complexities. What it did for me, however, was to discover the subtleties of the idiosyncratic and personal factures of the artists. My more recent efforts have been directed toward my own abstractions influenced by a school I much admire, the postwar abstract school of Paris. What binds me to looking at paintings and trying to make them is the opportunity this offers to enter into a magical and very different world from our familiar world of reality.

PARTICIPANTS

Cara Angelotta

Jack Barchas

Ann Beeder

Michael Beldoch

Katherine Dalsimer

Diana Diamond

Aaron Esman

Shannon Gulliver

Stephen Josephson

Ellen Klausner

Judith Lusic

Verena Michels

Jay Rohrlich

Alvin Rosenfeld

Michael Sacks

Theodore Shapiro

Rosemary Stevens

Lena Verkhovsky

Milton Viederman



Weill Cornell Medical College

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Chairman

Art Exhibit Committee

Aaron Esman
Jay Rohrlich
Rosemary Stevens

NOTES

