With friends : six magic realists, 1940-1965.

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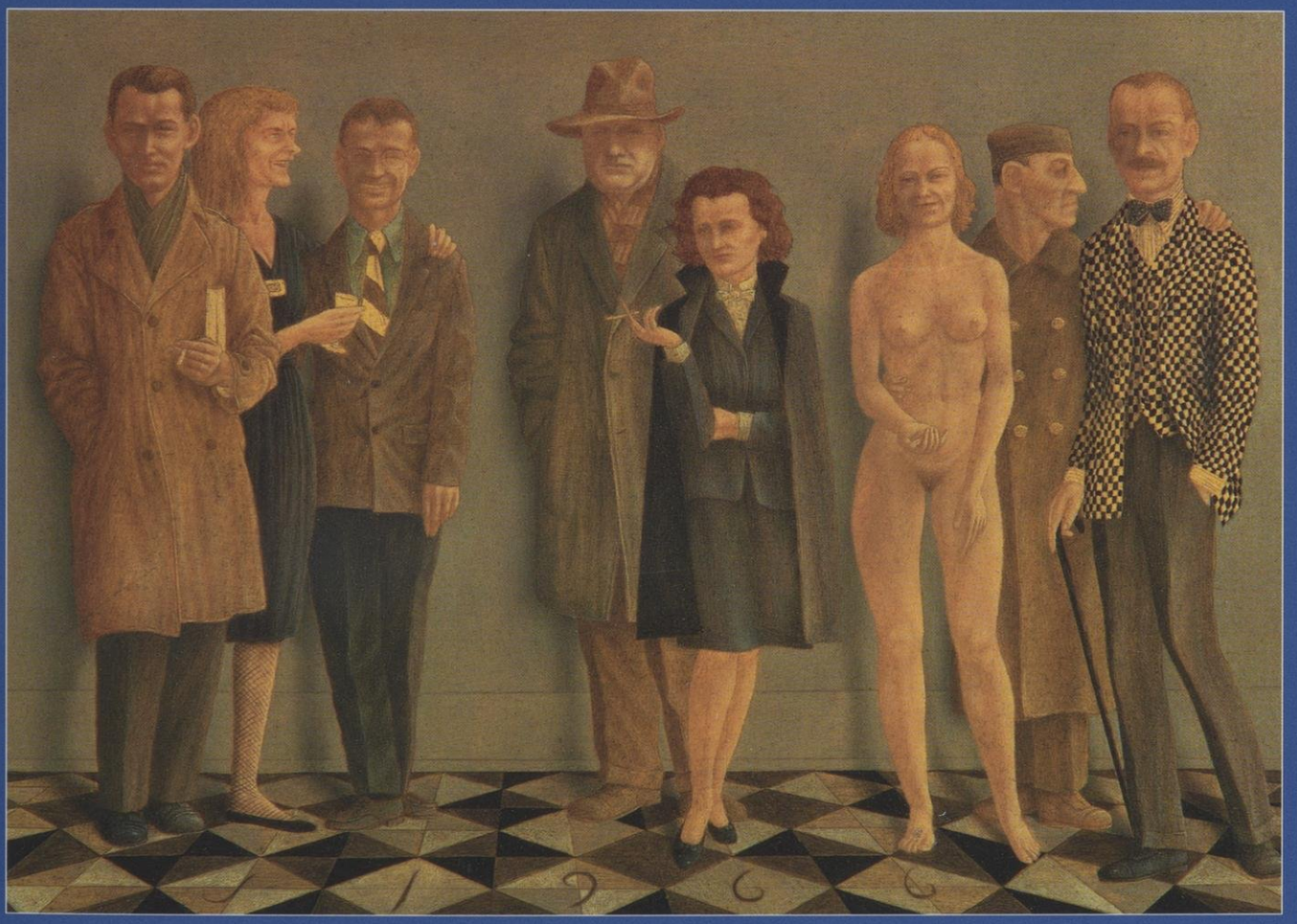

With Friends

With Friends


about 1940-43
Howard Mass
Wilde
Bill Schaub
Arnold Dadian
← marshall Glaser
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Sylvia Fein
Helen
Dudley Hupples
Wilde
Lisa Hupples
Carl Priebe
James Watrous

With Friends
Six Magic Realists
1940–1965

Robert Cozzolino

Elvehjem Museum of Art

University of Wisconsin-Madison

2005

The book is published on the occasion of the exhibition *With Friends,* organized by Robert Cozzolino and held at the Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison from June 18 through September 18, 2005.

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Frontispiece: collage by John Wilde

Back cover: Gertrude Abercrombie, drawing by Dudley Huppler; Sylvia Fein, painting by Sylvia Fein and Marshall Glasier; Marshall Glasier, self-portrait; Dudley Huppler, drawing by Karl Priebe; Karl Priebe, painting by John Wilde; John Wilde, self-portrait.

Foreword

This exhibition focuses on the art produced between 1940 and 1965 by six close friends: Marshall Glasier (1902–1988), Gertrude Abercrombie (1909–1977), Karl Priebe (1914–1976), Dudley Huppler (1917–1988), Sylvia Fein (b. 1919), and John Wilde (b. 1919). While several previous exhibitions and publications have addressed the work of Abercrombie, Huppler, and Wilde individually, no scholar has yet considered that of Fein, Glazier, or Priebe, or the activities, subject matter, and affinities of this entire close-knit group. At a time in which scholars of American art are reassessing modernism in the United States, the Elvehjem is uniquely placed to contribute new perspectives on midwestern artists' roles in the transformation of traditional iconography for new purposes. The intellectual community of Madison trained, supported, and influenced the artists in this group, who each helped shape art in the postwar period. This exhibition breaks with earlier presentations on midwestern artists by arguing that artists in Madison and Wisconsin participated in important shifts in the art world usually credited exclusively to New York artists. Rather than treat the Midwest as an eccentric place on the margins of American culture, *With Friends* postulates that it was central in that culture.

Moreover, this exhibition continues the Elvehjem's documentation of Wisconsin artists, which began with its 1997 retrospective exhibition and catalogue of the works of John Steuart Curry. This regionalist commitment continued with the 1999 exhibition and catalogue for Wisconsin painter John Wilde, the 2002 exhibition and catalogue of Wisconsin native Dudley Huppler, the 2004 retrospective and catalogue of wood-engraver Ray Gloeckler, and the 2005 exhibition and catalogue of ceramic artist Don Reitz.

The intellectual circle of artists Marshall Glasier, Gertrude Abercrombie, Karl Priebe, Dudley Huppler, Sylvia Fein, and John Wilde convened informally in the 1940s in Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago. These artists spent time in one another's studios, visited area museums and galleries together, and held gatherings or salons for drawing sessions, discussion, and music. Over a period of thirty years, Glasier, Abercrombie, Priebe, Huppler, Fein, and Wilde shared artistic values, learned from one another, and supported each other's individual successes. *With Friends: Six Magic Realists, 1940–1965* offers the first intensive study of these six midwestern artists who gained national recognition but thought of themselves as independents unaffiliated with any formal movement in modern art. The term "magic realist" was often used to describe artists who "created mystery and the marvelous through juxtapositions that are disturbing even when it is difficult to see exactly why," or translated "everyday experience into strangeness." The artists in this group acknowledged that the term came very close to characterizing their art.

As a group, these artists saw their work as means for reflecting on the state of the world and their own lives. They concerned themselves with the body, issues of identity, psychology, and the wonders of nature, producing portraits, self-portraits, still lifes, landscapes, which often featured native Wisconsin plants and animals. They maintained an interest in craft, carefully studied traditional artistic techniques, and developed personal iconography in response to the complexity of modern life. These artists were profoundly affected by the Depression and the Second World War and created art that explored the irrational and revealed the fantastic in the everyday.

While they shared a sense of craft and interest in reviving older painting formulas, the subject matter and intellectual sources for work by these artists is rooted in the twentieth century. Although this group originated in the Midwest,

they shared their concerns with other artists working elsewhere in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. They had ties to New York, San Francisco, and Philadelphia, exhibiting widely. Members of the group exhibited with or were friends of artists Peter Blume, Paul Cadmus, Jared French, George Grosz, George Tooker, and Andy Warhol.

Many people contributed to the successful completion of this exhibition and catalogue. First of all I wish to acknowledge the excellent scholarship and personal commitment of our guest curator Robert Cozzolino. Mr. Cozzolino worked with us on the John Wilde project in 1999 and was later catalogue author and curator of our exhibition on Dudley Huppler. He was therefore perfectly positioned to carry our interests in the mid-twentieth century Wisconsin artists further with the present project. We are also grateful to John Wilde and Sylvia Fein for so graciously sharing their personal memories and their collections. Without them this exhibition would not have been possible.

For a project of this scope, many instrumental contributions are made by the museum staff. Particularly important were the professional efforts of Patricia Powell, our editor, who also assisted with myriad curatorial details. Museum registrars Ann Sinfield and Andrea Selbig negotiated loan agreements and arranged safe shipping of the works of art. Exhibition designer Jerl Richmond and preparator Steve Johanowicz planned the best possible placement and lighting for each individual work in the exhibition; while curator of education Anne Lambert organized programs and speakers for visitor enlightenment. One must not overlook the contribution of development specialist Kathy Paul who pursued grants and funding for the project; and the museum's assistant director for administration Carol Fisher who oversaw the budget and contracts.

I especially wish to thank the thirty lenders to this exhibition listed on page 172, who were willing to part with works of art for many months to provide educational benefits and aesthetic satisfaction to our audience.

I express the gratitude of all of us to the following institutions whose financial support made possible the exhibition and catalogue: Elvehjem Museum of Art Council; National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; Norman Bassett Foundation; Madison Community Foundation; Anonymous Fund; Hilldale Fund; Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission with additional funds from the Madison Community Foundation and the Overture Foundation; Society for the Preservation of American Modernists; Kohler Foundation Inc; and Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin.

Russell Panczenko
Director, Elvehjem Museum of Art

Curator's Acknowledgments

"I can't deny I miss old friends, mostly gone now . . . I'm a bit saddened
that such marvelous talent should seem to disappear so rapidly—
but perhaps someone, someday will find them."

John Wilde in a letter to Sylvia Fein, January 31, 1992

I have long desired to organize an exhibition devoted to this period in American art. Initially, I considered a larger study devoted to the impact of surrealism on midwestern artists from the 1930s to the 1950s. On a visit to Sylvia Fein in November, 2001 to conduct research for a Dudley Huppler retrospective it struck me that there was a full and compelling story within this circle of friends. Their interests and relationships overlapped in Wisconsin, but each had ties to the national art world and by extension the international scene. When I returned to Madison, Russell Panczenko asked me how I would approach my initial idea. I described my wish to organize a more focused show. He promptly sent me off to do so.

It was my pleasure to undertake this project with the support, encouragement, and critical eyes of many who were part of the intellectual circle discussed in this book. Sylvia Fein and John Wilde have taught me a great deal over the years, least of all the material that made it into this publication. Their generosity and friendship has been a constant inspiration for the quality of my work. It is dedicated to them and the memory of their friends. Sylvia and John's spouses, Bill Scheuber and Shirley Wilde, offered advice and reminiscences every step of the way and always treated me as family.

Huppler's niece Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari and her husband, Raffaele, have similarly supported my efforts over the years. Their willingness to lend so many works by the group formerly in Dudley's collection insured the success of this show. Best of all, they, like John and Sylvia, believed in the exhibition and my ability to do it in a manner that would respect Dudley, Karl, Marshall, and Gertrude. My understanding of Huppler and his circle was broadened through discussions with Dudley's brother, John M. Huppler, brother-in-law Louis Tenenbaum, nephew, Toby Tenenbaum, and niece Louise Tenenbaum.

This show has been charmed from the outset. It is an extraordinary tribute to the artists involved that so many of their old friends, students, and peers enthusiastically helped me locate archives, artwork, and collectors. Many endured repeated interviews, letters, and last-minute phone calls as I completed my work. Kenneth C. and Christine Charstrom Lindsay contributed much to my momentum by allowing access to a portion of Glasier's papers and showing me a number of artworks. I will forever cherish their hospitality and the many hours of conversation that brought 1940s Madison to life. Ken's input as an art historian and friend of Marshall was crucial; he transformed how I see Glasier's art and life. Glasier's many devoted students and friends were eager to help along the way at every step. I must single out Susan Dawe, Tom Hibbard, Rosanne Klass, Yan Kong, and especially Elinor Randall Keeney. Others who helped shed light on this period, the personalities involved and the social and historical context were James Auer, Gerald Coleman, Warren Enters, Charles Gelatt, the late Dr. Warren Gilson, Nathan Gluck, Marvin Haesle, Mary Hibbard, Lee Hoiby, Dr. James Jacobs, Jerome Karidis, Archie Rand, George Tooker, George Walker, and Theodore Wolff.

The final shape of this exhibition was determined through visits to examine artwork in

many public and private collections. I am grateful to the following people for answering research questions and showing me works of art: Sarah Haberstroh, Charles Allis Art Museum, Milwaukee; Daniel Schulman, The Art Institute of Chicago; Renee Baumgartner and Katy Rawdon-Faucett, The Barnes Foundation, Merion, PA; J. B. Bensick on behalf of Jack Frost; Jami Severstad, Bergstrom-Mahler Museum, Neenah, WI; Jackie Hogan, University Art Museum, State University of New York, Binghamton; Oliver Bjorksten; Mike Maloney, Bjorksten Research Laboratories, Madison WI; Diane Carlyle, the School of the Arts, Columbia University; Peter and Helga Gardetto; Curtis L. Carter and James Kieselberg, Haggerty Art Museum, Marquette University, Milwaukee; George Kaiser; Douglas Mayhew for Klaus G. Perls; Leigh Albritton, Barrett Belastram, Sarah Kirk, and L. Elizabeth Schmoeger, Milwaukee Art Museum; Albert Muchka, Milwaukee Public Museum; Debbie Daubert, Oshkosh Public Museum; Gregory Parr; Michael Rosenfeld; Kent Smith and Robert Sill, Springfield (IL) Art Museum; Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth J. Urlakis; Warren and Anne Weisberg; Darlene Oden, Whitney Museum of American Art; Ralph Russo and Casandra Thornton, Wisconsin Union Directorate Art Committee, University of Wisconsin–Madison; and Nancy Bedalov, Charles A. Wustum Museum of Fine Arts, Racine WI.

Without the help of countless librarians and archivists, my job would have been much harder, considerably less pleasant. I wish to thank particularly Bart Ryckbosch and Brice Blatz, The Art Institute of Chicago Archives; Stephanie Cassidy, The Art Students League of New York; Paula Gabbard, Avery Library, Columbia University; Leslie A. Morris, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Richard Griscom, Music Library, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana; Rebecca Steele, Kalamazoo Art Institute; Phil Runkel, Department of Special Collections and University Archives at Marquette University; Barbara C.A. Santini; Julia Stringfellow, Golda Meier Library, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. I was fortunate to have access to the library collections at Princeton University as I researched this exhibition and wrote the catalogue. I am grateful to Janice J. Powell and Catherine E. Cooney for making this possible.

I have had constant support and good faith from my colleagues at the Elvehjem. Russell Panczenko has been dedicated to this project from the outset; I am thankful for his constant support. Pat Powell was, as always, full of great suggestions and an excellent coconspirator.

Many friends, colleagues, and professors discussed issues pertinent to this exhibition with me while I was formulating the shape of the project, researching, and writing. I relied on Cate Cooney's thoughtful criticism and far-reaching conversation throughout the project. Many others affected the shape of the arguments, whether they realize it or not: my dissertation advisor, Professor Barbara Copeland Buenger, Kathleen Cozzolino, Professor Thomas E. A. Dale, Isabelle Dervaux, Ryan Grover, Richard Holland, Joann Skrypzak, Susan Weininger, Katherine White, and Professor Anna Andzrejewski, who invited me to present material in progress to her graduate seminar class in March, 2003. Emma, Ella, Jeanne, and Ernest Cooney provided a home in Wisconsin whenever I needed one, which was frequent! I am always delighted by their kindness. Finally, I am grateful to Minion, reliable muse.

Robert Cozzolino
Media, Pennsylvania
November 2003

Figure 1. Sylvia Fein and William Scheuber's "wedding photo." May 30, 1942. Probably taken near Castle Rock, Wisconsin. Photograph by Lorin Gillette. Left to right: Dudley Huppler, John Wilde, William Scheuber, Jeanne Webster, Sylvia Fein (sitting), Marshall Glasier, and Helen Ashman. As reported by the *Muscoda Progressive*, "Madison Couple Married at Blue River Saturday," May, 1942: "Dudley Huppler entertained a group of friends from Madison at his home here Friday and Saturday of last week. Two members of the party, Miss Sylvia Fein and William Scheuber, were married early Saturday morning by the Rev. W. F. Tomlinson at the Blue River parsonage. A wedding breakfast was served at the Huppler home, after which the wedding party journeyed to Castle Rock for a picnic. The young Mrs. Scheuber is Wisconsin's foremost woman painter, and was given in marriage by Marshall Glasier, landscapist, of Madison. The attendants were Miss Helen Ashman, and John Wilde. Miss Jeanne Webster of Prairie du Chien visited at the Huppler home to attend the wedding of her friends."

"A close group, quite sympathetic to each other yet totally independent in manners"[1]

American culture changed radically and rapidly during the 1940s, stimulated by the myriad effects of the Second World War on society, technology, the economy, and the arts. The reach and impact of these changes were national and crosscultural.[2] Artists reacted to the exhilaration and despair brought by global crises and postwar reconstruction through artwork that privileged contingency and subjectivity and explored the self. The end of a horrific war coupled with America's growing prosperity elicited joy and relief, but it also ushered in new uncertainties about technology, power, and the position of the individual in an increasingly global community. Like other Americans, artists struggled to make sense of the changed landscape and their place in it.

Abstract expressionism is the phenomenon most often associated with American art of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Its formal and intellectual development has been well documented; an extensive body of literature on the movement's meaning, cultural significance, and individual artists continues to grow.[3] Jackson Pollock's (1912–1956) appearance on a United States Postage stamp in 1999 and treatment in a popular Hollywood film the following year reveal the extent to which he and abstract expressionism have become synonymous with American culture. Politically and artistically, the 1940s was a volatile, complex decade that witnessed major changes in the international balance of power. Scholars have often focused on the modernist avant-garde despite the collective impact of powerful cultural forces on a wide variety of American artists.[4]

A group of artists (figure 1) in the Midwest became friends during this important period: Gertrude Abercrombie (1909–1977), Sylvia Fein (b. 1919), Marshall Glasier (1902–1988), Dudley Huppler (1917–1988), Karl Priebe (1914–1976), and John Wilde (b. 1919). Active nationally but rooted in Madison, Milwaukee, and Chicago, they valued craft, carefully studied traditional techniques, and developed personal iconography in response to the complexity of modern life. Profoundly affected by the Depression and the Second World War, they made art that explored the irrational and revealed the fantastic in the everyday. Their work was often a means to understand the self and its relationship to an unstable world. While that impulse was shared with the avant-garde, their methods set them apart.

Like their better-known contemporaries, Abercrombie, Fein, Glasier, Huppler, Priebe, and Wilde drew on the visual language of surrealism, read psychology, studied myth, and looked to nature for meaning. Unlike the abstract expressionist artists, they asserted narrative, the visible body, and tangible objects in order to explore sexuality, identity, history, and the wonder of nature. They came together through shared artistic values, learned from one another, and supported their individual successes. By departing from overtly political social realist or romanticized agrarian artwork that is often associated

with the Midwest, they established a tradition of the absurd, magical, and introspective that persists in the region. Although they cultivated similar interests, each thrived on competition and developed a mode of working that asserted individuality. Often considered magic realists but never happy with stylistic distinctions, they made important contributions to American art that should be seen as part of the total picture of modern art.

In 1936 Marshall Glasier returned to his native Wisconsin after over a decade of drifting, losing himself, and then finding a direction in art school. He left home in 1922 to study and work in Chicago. During a night of heavy drinking he was tricked by a bemused recruiter into enlisting in the Marine Corps, where he spent four "lost years."[5] After his release in 1928 Glasier moved to New York City where he worked in advertising and commercial art before enrolling at The Art Students League. From 1932 to 1935 Glasier studied with George Grosz (1893–1959), and the experience changed his life. He maintained that Grosz influenced his "whole future ... I often wish to draw a line through all my life which leads to Grosz and The Art Students League." The two men remained friends until Grosz's death, and there is evidence that their artistic relationship was symbiotic.[6] Transformed by his experience in New York, Glasier returned to Madison to begin an "apprenticeship" in the Wisconsin landscape.

Glasier set up a studio in his parents' home, reunited with old friends, and quickly became a well-known local character. He prowled bookstores, attended concerts, frequented art exhibitions, and held court at the University of Wisconsin's student union. Glasier's charisma, warmth, and erudition drew a catholic group of friends from the community. Professors from the arts and sciences, lecturers passing through town, resident artists, musicians, writers, journalists, dancers, and political activists: all found Marshall enthralling. One friend, then a lecturer in neurology, recalled Glasier as "an extraordinarily well-read person, highly educated, literate. There was with that a naughty playfulness about him ... Glasier adapted to each one of us individually. It was a great gift. I think he must have related to us as a teacher in some ways."[7]

A lively and sometimes raucous salon sprouted up at Glasier's studio. It was, according to John Wilde, "a kind of university within a university."[8] Glasier also organized drawing sessions—occasionally at his parents' house, often at the home of philosophy professor Harold Taylor. Among those drawn to Glasier was artist and art historian James Watrous (1908–1999). Together they shared a passion for drawing and a reverence for late medieval and renaissance art. Watrous, in the forefront of an American revival of historical techniques, was experimenting with centuries-old painting recipes.[9] This interest expanded from personal research to a hands-on advanced seminar course and laboratory at the university.[10] Watrous and his advanced students often joined in the mayhem that surrounded Glasier at the student union. Undergraduates Sylvia Fein and John Wilde witnessed this whirlwind of debate and drink, and soon afterward they were absorbed into Glasier's circle.

Glasier had a profound effect on Fein and Wilde that each considers invaluable. Few students were allowed into the milieu, but Glasier recognized their curiosity and intellect. They became friends and often met to draw in more intimate sessions in which participants took turns posing. On weekends they gathered in groups and drove out to sketch in the landscape. Fein considers the period crucial to her artistic and personal development. She maintains that it was Glasier who truly taught her how to draw, "especially how to draw my own personal way and how to draw <u>while</u> transforming and taming nature and human nature. He did not pick at his drawings—he attacked them with his whole body AND SOUL almost sexually. His loving attention help[ed] strengthen my really shy nature

... He embraced me artistically and injected me with courage."[11]

Portrait of Sylvia (ca. 1942; color plate 29) shows how powerful and pervasive Glasier's influence could be. What began as Fein's self-portrait became a backdrop for the older artist's anxious brush. He dashed in landscape details, wisps of cloud, invented the medal worn by Fein, and even dared to add highlights to her hair. Although she now considers it an important early record of their friendship, Fein recalls feeling hurt that Glasier intruded on her work.[12] More often, Glasier encouraged and expressed his confidence in their talents. During a trip to New York in 1942, he wrote to praise Sylvia and John for their quality and concluded, "they need artists here. Christ how few there are. Really hold out—you have a hell of a good start—hold on—you & John are better than you think ... Everyone is very impressed that things are going to happen in art after war—we must have a chance to continue on."[13]

Through their association with Glasier, Fein and Wilde mingled with a growing circle of talented Madisonians. They were exposed to ideas and life stories that complemented their university education, and they thrived in the environment. Glasier gave the impression that art and life were one and that making things should be as natural as breathing. A professional artist with a growing reputation, Glasier was a kind of role model for Fein and Wilde; an example of what one might do after art school. In 1937 Glasier had a solo exhibition at the Milwaukee Art Institute followed by a commercial debut with the Julien Levy Gallery in New York City in 1940. A voracious reader, Glasier constantly suggested new writers to friends. His library included art books, and he had subscriptions to contemporary journals, including the American surrealist magazines *VVV* and *View*.

By 1940, Fein, Glasier, and Wilde were joined by Dudley Huppler, then working towards his PhD in English. Restless and in search of a more creative, passionate social circle, Huppler fit in naturally with the group. He became a devoted friend, posed for each of them, and eventually assumed a role as critic, group historian, and occasional agent. He devoted his creative energy at the time to writing and produced much of the ornate prose that appears in his first book as "an oblique critique of the work of Fein, Priebe, Wilde, and Glasier."[14] Although he surrounded himself with art, devoured books on art history, and lingered in the studios of his friends, Huppler did not begin drawing and painting seriously until the fall of 1943. Once he began, he delighted in paying homage to his friends (1944; cat. no. 23).

Into this circle Wilde introduced Karl Priebe, an old acquaintance from Milwaukee where the Priebe and Wilde families had lived only a few doors apart. Priebe and Wilde's older brother Robert had been childhood friends in their old neighborhood; John remembers being fascinated by Karl's *wunderkammer* of a studio as a high school student just beginning to discover art. Like Glasier, Priebe had a growing reputation as a professional artist and was particularly adept at attracting high-society patrons. Fein recalled, "Karl was all-inclusive. He'd introduce us to his rich lady patronesses ... He was a little older and that stuff was over our heads ... Karl knew everybody and was very generous ... He was very good at making contacts because he was so charismatic ... He was very mobile, very liquid, could move in and out of circles and he did ... He made it look easy, maybe too easy."[15]

Fein, Glasier, Huppler, and Wilde frequently piled into a borrowed car and drove off to visit Priebe in Milwaukee. Often they would spend the afternoon drawing at the Milwaukee zoo; other times they would meet at Priebe's parties. While Priebe cultivated patrons among Milwaukee's upper crust, he felt most comfortable in the black communities of Chicago and Milwaukee. A jazz and blues aficionado, he had many friends among internationally known musicians who would drop in on his soirees when they passed through

the area. Priebe shared this passion with Gertrude Abercrombie, whom he met in Chicago during the mid-1930s. Her presence was felt among all in the group through her many paintings that Priebe owned and hung in his house, including the large, spooky *Tree at Aledo* (1938; color plate 10), which was the centerpiece of his collection.

Together they shared a predilection for fifteenth- and sixteenth-century art, especially artists who favored the fantastic or mystical, including Hieronymus Bosch (ca. 1450–1516), Pieter Brueghel the Elder (ca. 1525/30–1569), Carlo Crivelli (1430/35–1495), Gerard David (1450/60–1523), Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), Hans Baldung Grien (1484/5–1545), Joachim Patinir (ca. 1485–1524), and Piero di Cosimo (1462–1521). Among contemporaries, they looked to the surrealists and artists who could clearly reproduce objects from nature, saw the beautiful in the unusual, and held tightly to representation. What appealed to them was not surrealism's distortion and metamorphosis but its permission to transcribe clearly and vividly their hallucinations, sexual fantasies, or represent emotional states through symbol and setting. Whereas Salvador Dalí or René Magritte gave visual form to the impossible, the work of this group often shows juxtapositions that are possible but unlikely. Abercrombie could have been describing shared values when she wrote, "I am not interested in complicated things nor in the commonplace. I like and like to paint simple things that are a little strange. My work comes directly from my inner consciousness and it must come easily. It is a process of selection and reduction."[16]

By virtue of their close friendships and mutual interests they gradually realized that they formed a loose "group." Fein and Wilde, still students, became known as rebels and attracted as much respect as notoriety for aspiring to be professionals. Wilde described how this affected him at the time:

> We talked ART, drank ART, did ART, loved ART and, as a group felt very superior and rather exclusive. We began to participate in exhibitions, local and national. Also we felt radical, advanced, liberal, liberated. All of this established my natural inclination toward and for the odd, the other, the neglected, the unacceptable, the quirky. This led to criticism and raised eye-brows … I, and others of our group, not only ignored but cherished and embraced criticism.[17]

Like Wilde, Fein spent hours painting beyond her coursework, stimulated by the excitement of discovery and her bursting imagination. When her independent experiments encroached on school assignments, it caused friction. She recalled, "I couldn't draw from the model without adding some dimension of myself that was considered alien and not appreciated by the instructor. Nudes were supposed to look … as naturalistic as possible … [my inventions] were all looked upon with distrust."[18] In October of 1941 Fein and Wilde mounted a joint exhibition at the University of Wisconsin Memorial Union Gallery, an unusual honor for undergraduates. The show stirred controversy, and the local press lapped it up; they were attacked as alienated, antisocial "surrealists" in an editorial signed by "A Realist."[19] A cartoon parodying Fein's nearly nonobjective *Landscape with Bird* (1941) ran in the student newspaper (figure 2).

By 1942 Fein and Wilde were no longer seen as Madison students but were known as Wisconsin artists. Linked to Glasier and Priebe and confident enough to turn their gaze towards more complex subjects, they engaged in wider debates about art and its role in the world. Eager to use their training at the service of internal imagery, they looked towards graduation as liberation. As 1942 slowly unfolded, it became clear that they would have little say in their immediate future

Figure 2. Cartoon lampooning Sylvia Fein's *Landscape with Bird*, 1941. Published in the *Wisconsin Octopus*, November, 1941. University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives

as the United States committed itself and young bodies to the Second World War.

Even on the home front, the war was a traumatic experience.[20] It affected daily lives, took loved ones away indefinitely, and brought previously unknown anxieties to American soil and into homes. Although it scattered the group physically, their relationships strengthened through emotional support, frequent letters, and occasional visits. Glasier and Priebe cultivated their careers, Abercrombie tended to her newborn daughter, Huppler started to draw, and Wilde and Fein immersed themselves in their art. The war proved to be a prolific time for the group, provoking imagery and bodies of work that sustained them for decades. As the war entered their lives, the work often took on a tragic, vehement, and apocalyptic intensity. Their emotional lives permeated their art to produce images that reflected interior conflicts and related to the state of the world.

By 1943 the group was part of a larger culture phenomenon that developed analogies between individual predicaments and collective tragedy, the world situation and ancient myths.[21] In New York, Adolph Gottlieb and Mark Rothko made well-known contemporary statements on these issues. In an October, 1943 radio broadcast they publicly defended their use of ancient myths as modern artists. Rothko asserted:

> If our titles recall the known myths of antiquity, we have used them again because they are the eternal symbols upon which we must fall back to express basic psychological ideas. They are the symbols of man's primitive fears and motivations, no matter in which land or what time … Modern psychology finds them persisting still in our dreams, our vernacular, and our art, for all the changes in the outward conditions of life …The myth holds us … because it expresses to us something real and existing in ourselves.

By invoking the raging war, they connected timeless tragedy to a real, immediate, modern situation. Gottlieb declared: "In times of violence, personal predilections for niceties of color and form seem irrelevant." Naturalistic representation was not their primary concern—it was emphatically damned by supporters such as critic Clement Greenberg—but subject matter remained essential. Gottlieb defined what made it valid:

> All primitive expression reveals the constant awareness of powerful forces, the

> immediate presence of terror and fear, a recognition and acceptance of the brutality of the natural world as well as the eternal insecurity of life. That these feelings are being experienced by many people thruout [sic] the world today is an unfortunate fact, and to us an art that glosses over or evades these feelings, is superficial or meaningless.[22]

During the 1940s and well into the postwar period artists turned to subject matter that expressed continuity with fears, terrors, and tragedies of the ancient world. Artists of wide-ranging backgrounds working in every conceivable style found a need to explore universality through iconography that connected humanity's past with the present. It reveals how much artists relegated to the historical margins shared with the championed avant-garde.[23] Rothko's *The Syrian Bull* (1943), Gottlieb's *Rape of Persephone* (1942), and Pollock's *Pasiphaë* (1943; figure 3) have their contemporary counterparts in Glasier's *Philoctetes and the Second World War* (1943; color plate 1), Fein's images of Persephonê, and Wilde's violent self images of psychological terror. If the form of Pollock's work differed from theirs, the emotional intensity and need for a powerful, resonant subject did not. Pollock's frenzied interpretation of a sexually brutal myth related to deep-rooted struggles within the self and humanity. Fein saw the same capacity in Persephonê, Wilde in himself.

In 1937 George Grosz praised Glasier for qualities he found rare in the United States, his

Figure 3. Jackson Pollock (American, 1912–1956), *Pasiphaë*, 1943, oil on canvas, 56 1/8 x 96 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Rogers, Fletcher and Harris Brisbane Dick Funds and Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1982. © 2004 Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

"apocalyptic feeling" akin to "certain old masters towards the end of the medieval period." What Grosz saw in the 1930s as Glasier's bewildering "feeling of punishment" in an "ever changing and often cruel American scene,"[24] took on epic meaning after 1941. During the war Glasier repeatedly described the Wisconsin landscape as a place of regeneration, rebirth, and chaos. He saw the driftless, unglaciated region of the state as closest to the "primitive" origins of the world as one could experience. As he immersed himself in the landscape, it became his preferred visual metaphor for powerful, unseen natural forces. In a letter written from a sketching excursion he told Wilde that he was

> holding down the River landscape with the help of Huppler—so help me!... when one starts to develop a brush stroke one can never tell just where it will lead to—I'm working on a large painting that has me competing with god—rediscover[y] and invention of the garden of Eden—god must have been disappointed—I shall be too but I can always start over again—shadows over the river and pregnant soldier and wife furlough return to childhood haunts—give it the dignity of man—a cave—rocks—ledges—trees—birch—pine and oak and great Faustian distance. I dare say it scares me ... stage setting—the twilight ... one moment of man's existence in this poor world—we must discover its illusionary—transient splendors—make a statement and die so much each time.[25]

Glasier frequently captured life and death in dramatic, wild landscapes. He also imagined them bearing the weight of myth or legend beneath the omnipresent threat of the spreading war. He called the ancient tales "eternal truths"[26] and freely associated the wartime situation with their moral and philosophical lessons. Glasier often altered the attributes of specific characters to relate them to the contemporary situation. Rather than bearing Christ, Glasier's *Saint Christopher* (figure 4) delivers clumps of the threatened earth to safety as cities burn in the distance. Although he has a giant's strength, the implications of his task are overwhelming. Huppler posed for Glasier's *Philoctetes and the Second World War* (color plate 1), which shows Hercules' friend banished to the isle of Lemnos during the Trojan War.[27] The tale was a hopeful talisman for 1943, as Glasier noted, "The Greek hero sat on an island waiting patiently, nursing a festering wound, until he should be called to end the Trojan war. For he knows he has the secret bow and arrows, to bring it to an end. Night and day, earth and sea and sky, and the passing of time."[28] Despite these sentiments, Glasier's painting suggests only despair, helplessness, isolation, and the persistence of humanity's will to destruction.

Fein's husband William Scheuber entered the war in 1942. Devastated, she embarked on a series in which she "dealt with ancient traditions, myths, and legends in a contemporary form of expression."[29] Fein painted herself in the alter ego of Persephonê to explore her emotional state and by extension, the greater world crisis. She summarized her wartime relationship to the abducted daughter of Demeter (Ceres) bluntly: "Persephonê spent 6 months in Hell. I spent over *three years* in Hell."[30] The war had shattered Fein's earlier reverie by taking friends and her lover/husband away. For the first two years of American involvement in the war Fein lived in an underworld of apprehension and anxiety, wondering if she would see loved ones again.

In *The Lady in the Cage* (1943; cat. no. 37) or *Eve* (1943–44; color plate 33) barren, spent landscapes imprison Fein's abandoned figures. They clutch or sit near blood-red pomegranates, whose sweet, juicy seeds promise fertility, resurrection, and the rejuvenation of the earth. In the Greek myth, Hades (or Pluto), the god of

Figure 4. Marshall Glasier (American, 1902–1988), *The Return of Saint Christopher*, 1943, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Former collection of Johan Bjorksten; present whereabouts unknown. After illustration in Marshall Glasier and Harry Salpeter, "The Research Magnificent." *Esquire* (May 1945): 93.

the underworld, abducted Persephonê and gave her a pomegranate seed to eat while she was still in his realm of death. By eating the fruit, she was doomed to return for a third of the year. Springtime does not arrive in Fein's narratives; like Philoctetes, Persephonê waits indefinitely for her ordeal to end. They embody the helplessness that overcame Americans struggling with the contradiction of a "good war."[31] In *Lilith* (1943; cat. no. 36), Fein performs her rage as the demonic, mythological first wife of Adam, usurped by Eve. Her husband's face appears as an apparition in the clouds, a distant memory married off to the Pacific war. A friend wrote to Fein in 1944, "I understand only too well the terrors and bottomless feelings and pain you must have."[32] It was a message of empathy from Helen Ashman Wilde (1919–1966), who had watched the war scrape away her husband's grip on reality.

John Wilde spent 1942 to 1946 in the army where he worked in the medical corps, drew venereal disease prevention propaganda, made and lectured about camouflage, before making strategic maps for the OSS (Office of Strategic Services, the precursor to the CIA). During what he called his illegal confinement, he filled a 275-page sketchbook with drawings and text (1942–46; cat. no. 45), made over thirty-five major drawings and completed two paintings. Long, horrifically embellished, excruciatingly detailed letters sent to friends charted Wilde's growing state of anxiety and breakdown beneath the strain of the service. Wilde reserved his most pessimistic parable about the war for Fein, who was then making paintings that expressed her own despair:

> Observation of value: last night strolling on the beach, escaping, contemplation, walking hand in hand with death

> & his just assistance...decay—I came across a huge sea turtle, and I went up to it and kicked it violently and it pulled within its shell and hissed and urinated profusely over everything. I thought—why in Christ should you be able to escape into your shell, when other more charming animals have no shell & they must suffer. So I was angry with the huge monster and I thought you shan't get away so easily—so I turned it on its back—and watched the creatures mighty struggles & pains to right itself and in the effort which I watched for 1/2 hour it hissed and bashed & excreted his green sticky waste all over himself. There was a nice symbol for man's own struggle—his duty life—swimming in his own filth. It was a deplorable sight, but indeed I forced myself to watch the doings, for this I know was a perfect staging of actuality—this was no damn lie. A scrap of truth! The thing to do was to kill the creature then, for I wanted to demonstrate to myself that the struggle does not end in niceness and rescue but only in the blackness of death & decay—but weakness overcame me & I righted the poor beast and watch[ed] him, covered with filth amble into the deep & lonely gulf and disappear—which was a great success for how can the bottom of the sea differ from destruction?[33]

Although Wilde was not posted overseas, the constant threat that he might be and the feeling that he had been "sentenced" to complicity with aggression wore hard on his conscience. Helen Wilde characterized wartime feeling this way: "It out Kafkas Kafka ... I am convinced the world won't be much better, nor living either, after the armistice, which shouldn't be too many years off ... The only living will be in obscure places, Lynxville [WI] or a Canadian town, or a middle Mexico village ... the rest of this country shall seethe."[34] Her husband's letters describe a miserable existence spent waiting to be mobilized, listening to racist rhetoric from his superiors, and finding symbols of absurd, tragic humanity in daily incidents. Early on, during basic training Wilde wrote to Glasier:

> A fellow shooting by me accidentally shot his foot off—it was beautiful—his shoe was ripped open and it was all black and dry—and then the bright red blood came in spurts like a spilt bottle—and it flowed in little rivulets over the sand. And the man was pale and he smiled sheepishly. He had made, a mistake—oh, yes a rotten mistake. It was a lovely symbol—such a funny thing.[35]

Wilde's monstrous self-portrait, *The Sons of Worse Than Bitches Have Put a Hole in My Head!!* (1944, cat. no. 48), shows him staring in fascination and shock as he probes an irregular cavern in his skull. The accompanying text admonishes the viewer that although we may feel untouched by trauma, "often we have holes which we do not know" that can silently grow within us, overtaking us like a parasite devouring a host from the inside out. This device appears in various forms in Wilde's war drawings to suggest moral complicity with a hateful, rotting humanity.

In postwar paintings such as *Mother and Sick Child* (color plate 39), Wilde appears with a grotesquely swollen cranium, a feature that originated in his war sketchbook. Rather than causing his head to deteriorate, the war multiplies private thoughts and fears, forcing his skull to expand around its contents. Wilde called variations on the large head "fetal monsters" in his sketchbook and correspondence. His self-portrait as a sick child bearing the startling motif draws a direct link between war trauma and the shattering of childhood innocence.

Fein also turned to childhood to explore the emotional effects of the war. In *The Tea Party* (1943, color plate 32) she depicted herself as Alice in Wonderland, setting a tea party in the Wisconsin landscape for absent guests. A card on the table is inscribed "WKS/Hawaii," revealing the picture's dedication to her husband, off in the Pacific.

Wilde's visible wounds and transformed body revealed the emotional effects of war despite his distance from the battlefield. Fein's experience as a war bride and the channeling of grief through symbolic figures revealed a similar effect. Their new work clearly moved Huppler, who regularly received Wilde's drawings in the mail for safekeeping and saw Fein's paintings. Huppler was so astonished by the intensity of Wilde's new drawings that he started making his own in response to the war. His contemporary letters reveal a sense of disgust with the state of a world that had degenerated to such a degree that it could conspire to take his friends away. *Tragedy Enacted by Three Unwilling Spectators* (figure 5) expresses the wartime absurdity felt by Helen Wilde and the anxiety of imminent violence witnessed in John's drawings and their accompanying text.

After the war Wilde returned to Wisconsin where he rejoined Huppler, Glasier, and Priebe. They often traveled between Chicago and Milwaukee to see friends and exhibitions. Abercrombie's contact with the Wisconsin group increased, and she regularly exchanged ideas for paintings with Dudley, Karl, and John. Fein lived in Mexico from 1944 to 1946 before moving with her husband to California, a choice that was hard on old friends. While prewar activities resumed, Sylvia's "boyfriends" pined for her company. Huppler wrote:

> The three Madison artists went into the landscape today. John spied on birds with glasses and Marshall recounted his autobiography and current antics, and I read art books (I can't use nature and like it but it bothers me lying unmanageable there). We found violets and flowering bushes. Then I came home and couldn't paint—and this is supposed to be my painting week. You should have been along to 1) distract John from warblers, 2) lend an ear to the delirium, and 3) just be there.[36]

Glasier sent Fein a letter analyzing the characteristics of his, John's, and Dudley's work. He worried that "our paths don't cross much anymore—we need you to bring all of us together since we each go on our way ... Do you ever expect to be back?"[37] Huppler concurred, "I think one of the most disastrous omissions in our all not being closer is our not seeing each other's work [as often] ..."[38]

The visual exchanges in their art happened despite distance, and they frequently wrote to one another about new work and daily life. Gertrude exclaimed to John that "[Dudley] seems gassed that I told him I'm a new kid due to your influence," bursting with excitement over interconnected friendships and art.[39] In the postwar period they found more common ground than ever. Faith in the object, contemplative working methods, personal mythology, sexuality, and an intensity of observation united them. They drew on surrealism but did not consider themselves surrealists; they assimilated its lessons into a cauldron of personal proclivities.

Surrealism provided a valuable vocabulary for American artists during and after the war. In contrast to many earlier modernist movements, the surrealists emphasized subject matter. Their versatile methods ranged from Dalí's hallucinatory illusionism (figure 6) to the automatist trance-drawings of André Masson (1896–1987). Each posited a means to transcribe the unconscious, theoretically with little or no filter. Such catharsis could be an extraordinary means to understand and express the self especially in unset-

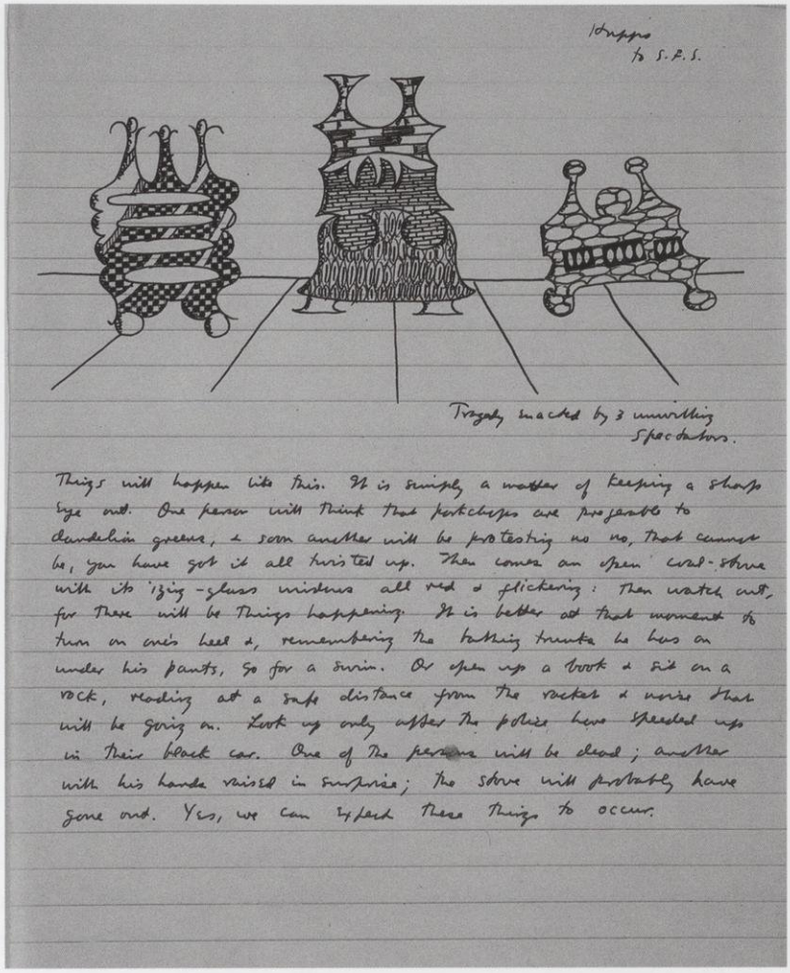


Figure 5. Dudley Huppler (American, 1917–1988), *Tragedy Enacted by Three Unwilling Spectators*, ca. 1943, ink on paper, 11 x 8 1/2 in. Private Collection.

tling times. Surrealist art had been exhibited and publicized in the United States regularly since 1931 and maintained much popularity among artists and the public. Because it offered extraordinarily fluid choices for *how* to approach new subject matter, surrealism attracted the academically trained as well as those who were self-taught. Gertrude Abercrombie felt surrealism was made for her

> because I am a pretty realistic person but don't like all I see. So I dream that it is changed. Then I change it to the way I want it. It is almost always pretty real. Only mystery and fantasy have been added. All foolishness has been taken out. It becomes my own dream.[40]

Towards the end of 1945, however, surrealism was being discredited by some artists and critics. Surrealism's importance, wrote Barnett Newman, was in prophecy: "For the horror they created and the shock they built up were not merely the dreams of crazy men; they were prophetic tableaux of what the world was to see as reality."[41] In the face of the war's unparalleled atrocities, Newman found that reality had exceeded the surrealists' uninhibited visions and rendered tame its most fearsome inventions. Critic Clement Greenberg could not reconcile the "literary" qualities of surrealism with his theory that modernist art should progress towards pictorial flatness (no illusionism) and nonobjectivity (no tangible references to a subject).[42] Greenberg's views were influential, and

Figure 6. Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904–1989), *Inventions of the Monsters* (*Les Inventions des monsters*), 1937, oil on canvas, 20 1/8 x 30 7/8 in. The Art Institute of Chicago, Joseph Winterbotham Collection, 1943.798.

as he championed artists associated with abstract expressionism, he attacked artists clinging to naturalism as antimodern.

Artists who continued to use narrative or rendered objects and figures in clear, recognizable ways did not fit the established language of formalist modernism. Writers often invented new categories for them. Critics and curators adopted the older, imprecise term "magic realist" to describe postwar artists who rendered the plausible yet uncanny as clearly as possible.[43] Not quite surrealists and not straight realists, they "created mystery and the marvelous through juxtapositions that are disturbing even when it is difficult to see exactly why," or translated "everyday experience into strangeness."[44] George Tooker (b. 1920), who like Abercrombie, Huppler, and Wilde showed at the Edwin Hewitt Gallery in New York, was often characterized this way. Viewers peering into *The Subway* (figure 7), discover a cold, haunting, corridor populated by anxious figures who appear frozen in fear. Urban spaces can be powerfully oppressive, alienating lairs, but Tooker's vision is far from straight naturalism.

Magic realism was not a formal movement in the visual arts, but some independent artists acknowledged that the term came close to describing their unusually intense representational approach.[45] Critics and curators such as Lincoln Kirstein and Monroe Wheeler championed these figural artists, many of whom exhibited at Edwin Hewitt's gallery. Kirstein included Wilde in *Symbolic Realism* (April 3–22, 1950), which was a sort of Hewitt gallery manifesto show, and wrote the essay for a pamphlet that accompanied Wilde's first Hewitt solo exhibition. Kirstein's inclusion of a core group—Paul Cadmus, Ken Davies, Jared French, Bernard Perlin (figure 8), Ben Shahn, Pavel Tchelitchew, Tooker, Wilde, and others—in museum and gallery exhibitions led to the public perception that magic realism was a cohesive movement. While Clement Greenberg or Harold Rosenberg saw modernism embodied in the work of Jackson

Figure 7. George Tooker (American, b. 1920), *The Subway*, 1950, egg tempera on composition board, 18 1/8 x 36 1/8 in. Whitney Museum of American Art, purchase with funds from the Juliana Force Purchase Award, 50.23. Photo © 1989 Geoffrey Clements.

Pollock or Willem de Kooning, Kirstein saw an alternate modernist trajectory in the work of the precise, sexually frank, and jarring narrative paintings of French or Wilde.

Just as scholars have discussed the gendered, explicitly masculine discourse that accompanied abstract expressionism, it is possible to identify a sexualized undercurrent in the Kirstein and magic realist literature. Because many of the artists supported by the Hewitt Gallery were gay or bisexual, in-jokes and assumptions about the "effete" implications of 1950s realist painting spread throughout the art world. This assumption ran deeper than the innuendoes dropped by critics or New York School artists. Wilde recalled that at an early party for artists of the Kirstein/Hewitt circle, Lincoln took him aside to view a portfolio of erotic photographs by George Platt Lynes. He was delighted by the imagery, but the viewing was interrupted when an amused Edwin Hewitt came over to alert Kirstein that Wilde was straight and married. Huppler frequently raised the issue more crudely in his correspondence. "Yes, you look good at Whitney and soon we'll see you at Met," he wrote to Wilde. "But wish you could escape Lincoln's symb. realist classification. It really is all cock and balls and you don't, and shouldn't fit in."[46]

Despite often rigorously partisan views by critics on what constituted modernist art—abstraction versus realism—artists in this period often admitted common ground. Franz Kline (1910–1962) complained, "People have the crazy idea that an abstract painter doesn't like realism ... The final test of painting, theirs, mine, any other, is: does the painter's emotion come across?"[47] Pollock and Rothko rejected the notion that they were abstractionists, insisting on the primacy of the subject even when viewers could not apprehend one.[48] In Pollock's words, "today painters do not have to go to a subject matter outside of themselves. Most modern painters work from a different source. They work from within."[49] Elsewhere he emphasized that "painting is self-discovery. Every good artist paints what he is."[50]

Abstract expressionists and artists described as magic realists each found something of value in surrealism. Automatism and illusionism became simultaneous aspects of postwar

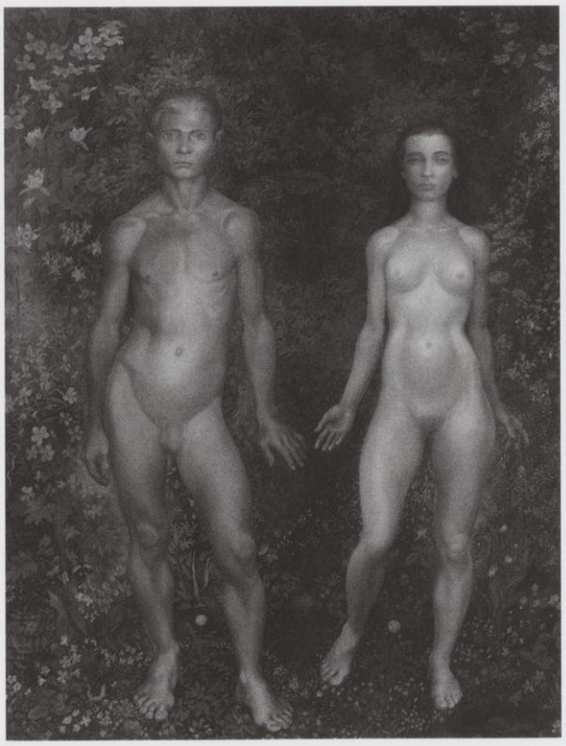


Figure 8. Bernard Perlin (American, b. 1918), *In the Garden*, ca. 1946, tempera on paper, 75 1/4 x 57 1/16 in. The Art Museum, Princeton University. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry D. Feltenstein, Jr. This painting appeared on cover of Lincoln Kirstein's catalogue for the *Symbolic Realism* group exhibition at the Edwin Hewitt Gallery.

modernism employed by artists to paint the self and intimate experience. Abercrombie, Fein, Glasier, Huppler, Priebe, and Wilde each found meaningful subject matter in their environment and unfolding lives. United in self-representation, they explored identity using their own bodies. Their methods were meditative, process-oriented, and often involved a kind of search for the slowly emerging image. They role-played, projected themselves into imagined realms, transcribed their emotions, and made glowing icons of natural objects.

Huppler developed an austere, obsessively controlled technique in 1947 that he applied towards rendering people in his life, food from his garden, antiques from his collection, and animals as naturalistically as possible. Inspired by friends who captured the intimacy and magic of the natural world with feeling and precision, his unusual method involved the gentle application of hundreds of tiny dots in ink on white paper. Huppler achieved the optical sensation of volume, shading, and texture by using the space between specks to provide tonal gradations. From the moment he realized his ability to reproduce objects from the real world, Huppler was astonished. He wrote to Fein:

> What has happened to me that somehow I have interest only in the exact and natural—the faithfully, laboriously described? I don't know. Maybe because I have no faith in the world's duration and feel a need to know the wonders of growing things for my own safety of mind. One thing I now realize: Nobody can know a thing like an artist who sits and looks at it and literally transcribes. Sometimes I'll do a whole day of dots, say on a bunch of grapes and not know at all what they're about: It's just "guess and go." Then suddenly I'll light up and sure enough. I know forever what a grape is. It's like learning the language once again.[51]

Huppler may have aimed to "literally transcribe" objects from his garden, but drawings such as *Dixie Queen Melon* (1950; cat. no. 31) buzz with an electric palpable sensation of life that exceeds mere reproduction. Opposite the image, Huppler noted that the melon was "imagined; not from life" declaring that artist and nature had merged. As Huppler grew things in his garden, drew and consumed them, they became part of his interior landscape.

Priebe, who had a great love of bird watching, was an amateur ornithologist. He often took birding trips with Wilde, and they addressed one another after two obscure eighteenth-century ornithologists.[52] In 1949, just before Priebe's major exhibition of bird paintings, Wilde wrote to him: "Do you feel we should form the nucleus of a new school of nature painters?"[53] Priebe pre-

ferred the most unusual species and delighted in nature's inventions such as the whiskers a whippoorwill uses to lure insects to their death. Although Priebe insisted that his birds were real, "instead of figments of the imagination,"[54] he frequently gave them an otherworldly quality that befits their ancient relationship to the soul. *The Hummingbird* (1947; color plate 23) showcases Priebe's ability to coax a luminous atmosphere from carefully layered veils of soaked-in color. A gnarled, wrinkled tree-trunk rises out of a misty twilight setting into a sickle-shape. Upon the branch that extends from the base, a brilliantly colored hummingbird stands alert, head cocked to the wind. Its yellow and red speckled breast and cranium splashed with crimson radiate sonorous warmth.

Search for Rest (Nile River) (1951; color plate 15) shows Abercrombie willfully transforming her surroundings through the reordering of experience. The artist strolls into an imagined landscape as though in a trance or sleepwalking. Along the horizon a row of trees, mostly dead, trembles and points branches towards the night sky. A giraffe in the deep distance silently faces a river. The river meanders from the horizon down to the right side of the painting to run parallel with the train of Abercrombie's dress. On the left side of the scene, a chaise longue and table rest beneath a brilliant, glowing moon whose intensity and shape is doubled by the marble tabletop. Abercrombie extends her left arm, hand slightly cupped and palm up as though asking for an answer to the mystery before her. *Search for Rest* is her meditation on the mysterious nature of inspiration and the role it plays in daily life.

Wilde spent three years working on *Wildeworld* (1953–55; color plate 41). As a counterpart to Abercrombie's *Search for Rest,* it embodies the artist's immersion in his art; it required an enormous time commitment, and it literally contains the body of the artist shown gesturing with silverpoint at the expansive vista. He recalled:

> I remember consciously standing back and thinking, "I can lay it all out in one single painting, my position, how I've been formed, and what kind of situation I have created for myself." But I also realized that my private world existed in relationship to the external world, that is, everything that's out there. [55]

Wilde faces the landscape clothed in a harlequin outfit pulsating with hot color. Cadmium reds and yellows that blend and swirl on his outfit also stain his hair and drawing board. To his left, a row of houses from his Evansville neighborhood delineates the edge of the external world; to his right, the pale ruins of classical architecture tower over the Wisconsin landscape like doomed apparitions; in the center, where he directs his vision, erupting granite slats from beneath the earth open up to reveal African animals, a bear, and a tiny version of the artist, busy drawing, looking back at the harlequin. Like Abercrombie, Wilde pulls back the curtain so that we see his interior life as if it were a tangible landscape. As in so many works by the other artists in this group, we witness the artist engaged with imagery from overlapping biographical sources.

As the years progressed, they each began to realize the great importance of their friendships during their formative years. Fein wrote to Glasier:

> I have the terrible desire to crawl back into the womb that is Madison … Little heed did I take to your warnings and now all I can say is that you were and are right. All those things that I took so much for granted, the walks in the woods, the drives through the landscape, the talks, the listening to music, the love and understanding of you people now are so precious as memories it is torture to think back on them …[56]

Huppler continuously marveled at "how we all knew each other—and how we'll never know any others as well!—I just stop to think."[57] In a letter that shows how typically interconnected they were, Wilde reported to Huppler:

> News here? Very little, indeed. Glasseye [Glasier] was here for a few days in late summer ... He was as indefatigable as always, but made a real effort to ask or talk about others once in a while ... I hear from Karl, but not much and Gertrude says she is in midst of divorcing Frank & very low ... There are now 80 million artists in Madison and so many on the art staff I don't even know who half of them are. And there isn't one of 'em I can talk to or have anything I can understand about them. How deep those early things go, because all of my art thinking or conversations are always (in my head) with you & Syl & K. & G. and the novelists I read ... Could we still, I wonder, do a manifesto together? ... Anyway, I wish we could see each other more often & I could see your new things & I wish you could have seen all of mine. That's important."[58]

Despite constant contact beyond the 1950s, they had a gnawing feeling of nostalgia for an earlier time. The manifesto that Wilde teased Huppler about materialized in the form of a small panel painting depicting the group gathered together on a shallow stage, arranged on a chessboard tiled floor (1966; color plate 46). He based their portraits on old sketches and photographs. The painting gave visual expression to a collective intimacy among a group of artists who were unaffiliated with any mainstream, well-publicized movement in modern art. Karl, Gertrude, and Dudley recognized its importance to their lives immediately and vied for it.

Gertrude acquired the painting, and she cherished it for the rest of her life. When it arrived at her house, she shook with joy so that "it took nearly an hour to uncrate it. Since then all I have done is sit and stare. I am simply flipping over it ... I am not going to hang it, I am going to hold it on my lap all the time."[59] Later that year, Abercrombie, Wilde, and Huppler gathered together at an opening of Priebe's recent work:

> "We're all from the same school," [Priebe] said ... Wilde jokingly referred to their school as "the school of hard knocks." Huppler explained that for 25 years, during the period when the art world was becoming more and more abstract, the group has remained "essentially realists." Although separated, he said, each always painted, "with the thoughts of the others."[60]

While Fein painted in California and Glasier taught at The Art Students League, they too drew on lessons learned during those critical years of group activity in the 1940s. It remained a powerful experience for all. While individuality remained essential to their identity as artists, there remained an undeniable feeling of collective purpose and voice. Wilde put it succinctly:

> There was no [famous] "Cedar Bar" [Cedar Tavern was where the New York School hung out] and I don't think there was ever a time we were all together physically ... Yet there was a commonality: a distrust of regionalism, of abstract art just coming into vogue in America, a faith in caprice, fantasy, the odd—a kind of light-heartedness even when fully aware of the somber and tragic.[61]

Notes

Abercrombie papers: Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.
Fein papers: Sylvia Fein Personal Papers, Martinez, CA.
Glasier papers: Marshall Glasier Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
George Grosz Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
Hupper papers: Dudley Huppler Personal Papers, Longmont, CO.
Priebe papers: Karl J. Priebe Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI.
Wilde papers: John Wilde Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

1. My title is a quotation about the group from Dudley Huppler in a letter to Charlotte Russell Partridge, May 10, 1946. Charlotte Russell Partridge and Miriam Frink Papers, Manuscript collection 167, box 41, folder 2. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Archives [hereafter Partridge and Frink papers].
2. See William Graebner, *The Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the* 1940*s* (Boston: Twayne, 1991).
3. For a range of approaches to the subject see Dore Ashton, *The New York School: A Cultural Reckoning* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1979); Ann Eden Gibson, *Abstract Expressionism: Other Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Michael Leja, *Reframing Abstract Expressionism: Subjectivity and Painting in the* 1940*s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Stephen Polcari, *Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and Martica Sawin, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995). In the last decade many artists associated with the so-called New York School have received major retrospectives.
4. Notable exceptions in American art include Greta Berman and Jeffrey Wechsler, *Realism and Realities: The Other Side of American Painting* 1940–1960 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Art Gallery, 1982); Bram Dijkstra, *American Expressionism: Art and Social Change* 1920–1950 (New York: Abrams, 2003); and Frances K. Pohl, *In the Eye of the Storm: An Art of Conscience* 1930–1970 (San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1995).
5. For Glasier's time in the Marines, see the correspondence dedicated to the subject in the Marshall Glasier Papers, 1990M-0064 [unprocessed].
6. Preceeding quote from Harry Salpeter and Marshall Glasier, "The Research Magnificent" *Esquire* (May 1945): 93. Grosz's work of the early 1940s bears a strong resemblance to contemporary works by Glasier.

It is possible that this happened coincidentally; it is probable that they frequently shared photos of recent works. Glasier also saw Grosz's works in progress on his visits to New York during the war. Compare Glasier's *The Return of Saint Christopher* (figure 4) with Grosz's *The Wanderer,* 1943 (Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, NY, Marion Stratton Gould Fund). For an illustration see *George Grosz: Berlin-New York,* exh. cat. by Peter-Klaus Schuster, et al. (Berlin: Ars Nicolai/ Düsseldorf: Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1994): 378.

7. Anonymous interview with the author, November 20, 2002.
8. John Wilde, "Marshall Glasier—A Personal Memoir," *Wisconsin Academy Review* 36 no. 4 (September 1990): 36.
9. For this phenomenon and its effect on a wide range of artists see Berman and Wechsler, *Realism and Realities,* 22–25; *Milk and Eggs: The American Revival of Tempera Painting,* 1930–1950, by Richard J. Boyle et. al. (Chadds Ford, PA: Brandywine River Museum/ University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2002).
10. For an outline of the goals of this course and reflections on its achievements, see James S. Watrous, "Technique Courses as Art History," *College Art Journal* 2, no. 1 (November 1942): 7–11. For a specialized article on a recipe that Watrous had Sylvia Fein use in the laboratory, see James S. Watrous, "Observations on a Late Mediaeval Painting Medium," *Speculum* 22, no. 3 (July 1947): 430–34. Fein's copy is inscribed by Watrous: "To Sylvia who was the first to make it!" Fein papers.
11. Fein, letter to author, February 14, 2003.
12. Fein, letter to author, April 26, 2003. Photos of early drawings by Fein show that some—including studies for *Ladies with Many Faces* (1942; color plate 30)—were signed "Sylvia Glasier" and "Marshall Fein." Fein papers.
13. Glasier, letter to Fein, ca. October, 1942. Fein papers.
14. *The Lesson Book* (Muscoda, WI: The Lawhead Press, 1946) is characterized that way by Huppler in a biographical information sheet he filled out for the Wisconsin Centennial exhibition (1948), Box 42, folder 7. Partridge and Frink papers.
15. Fein, telephone interview, October 10, 2002.
16. Gertrude Abercrombie, statement written in 1945 for publication in a catalogue accompanying the exhibition *Painting and Sculpture by Chicago Artists,* Renaissance Society of the University of Chicago, May 12-June 6, 1945. Reprinted as her contribution to Allen S. Weller, *University of Illinois Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1951), 157.
17. Wilde letter to author, November 15, 2002.
18. Interview with Fein by author, May 2002.
19. "Surrealism Puzzles UW Students," *Daily Cardinal Sunday Magazine,* November 15, 1941; see also "Student's Painting Most Popular," *Daily Cardinal,* November 12, 1941.
20. See *The Home-Front War: World War II and American Society,* ed. Kenneth Paul O'Brien and Lynn Hudson Parsons (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995); and Studs Terkel, *The "Good War": An Oral History of World War Two* (New York: Pantheon, 1984).
21. See Leja, *Reframing Abstract Expressionism,* chapter two, for a discussion of this issue.
22. Quotations of Adolph Gottlieb and Mark Rothko, "The Portrait and the Modern Artist," typescript of a broadcast on "Art in New York," Radio WNYC, October 13, 1943. Reprinted in Lawrence Alloway and Mary Davis MacNaughton, *Adolph Gottlieb: A*

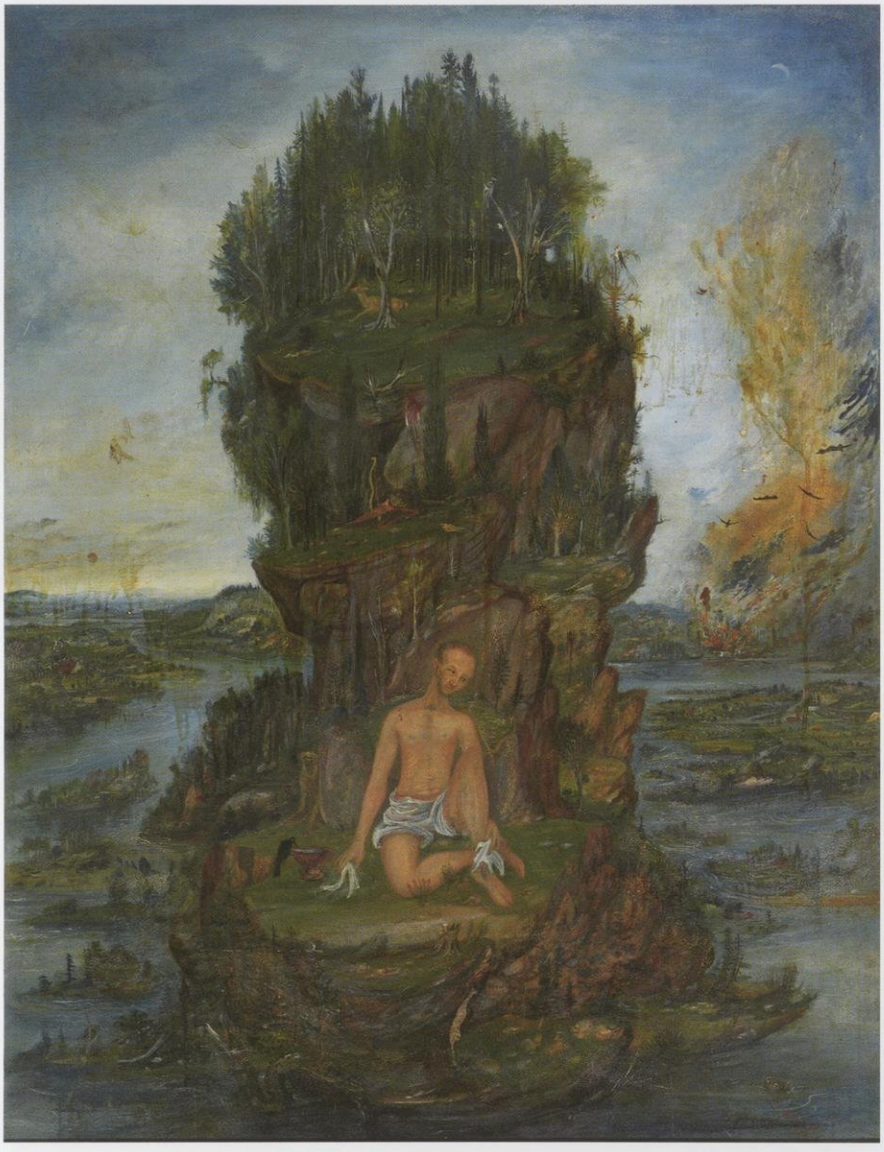
Retrospective (New York: -Arts Publisher, 1981), 171.

23. For another discussion of this issue see Stephen Polcari, "Ben Shahn and Postwar American Art: Shared Visions," in Susan Chevlowe, *Common Man, Mythic Vision: The Paintings of Ben Shahn* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 67–109. Leon Golub (1922–2004), who served in World War II, began his career in Chicago, and is of the same generation as Fein and Wilde, also turned to these themes in the wake of the war. See Donald B. Kuspit, *The Existential/Activist Painter: The Example of Leon Golub* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986).
24. All quotations in a letter from Grosz to Glasier, October 10, 1937, George Grosz Papers bMS Ger 206 (599), Houghton Library, Harvard University.
25. Glasier to Wilde, August 1944, Wilde papers.
26. Glasier with Salpeter, "The Research Magnificent," 120.
27. Huppler's correspondence with Fein reveals that Glasier made over ten preparatory drawings of him as Philoctetes by the end of January, 1943. Huppler postcard to Fein, January 25, 1943. Fein papers.
28. Glasier in *Glasier,* exhibition pamphlet, Associated American Artists Gallery, New York, September 20-October 2, 1943. Huppler papers.
29. Fein to Roland McKinney, regarding *Eve* (1943–1944), June 11, 1946. Fein papers.
30. Fein, letter to the author, February 14, 2003.
31. For an overview of this issue see Michael C. C. Adams, *The Best War Ever: America and World War II* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).
32. Helen Ashman to Fein, February 14, 1944. Fein papers.
33. Wilde to Fein, J[anuary or June] 18, 1943. Fein papers.
34. Ashman to Fein, January 14, 1943. Fein papers.
35. Wilde to Glasier, November 15, 1942. Glasier papers.
36. Huppler to Fein, April 29, 1948. Fein papers.
37. Glasier to Fein, ca. 1948. Fein papers.
38. Huppler to Fein, undated letter, ca. 1950. Fein papers.
39. Postcard from Abercrombie to Wilde, December 26, 1951. Wilde papers.
40. Abercrombie, undated statement on scrap of paper, Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.
41. Barnett Newman, "Surrealism and the War," in *Barnett Newman: Selected Writings and Interviews,* ed. John P. O'Neill (New York: Knopf, 1990), 95.
42. See for instance, "Surrealist Painting," in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism,* vol. 1, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 225–31.
43. For the uses of magic realism, see, *American Realists and Magic Realists,* ed. Dorothy C. Miller and Alfred H. Barr, Jr. (New York: Museum of Modern Art/ Arno Press, 1943); Jeffrey Wechsler, "Magic Realism: Defining the Indefinite," *Art Journal* 45, no. 4 (Winter, 1985): 293–98; and Seymour Menton, *Magic Realism Rediscovered,* 1918–1981 (London: Associated University Presses/ Philadelphia: Art Alliance Press, 1983).
44. H. H. Arnason, *History of Modern Art,* 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1986), 298. See also his alternate definitions, pp. 243 and 246.
45. All of the artists in this exhibition were called magic realists at some point during the 1950s and some accepted the term.

Others collected under this appellation despised being labeled. On this issue see Justin Spring, "An Interview with George Tooker," *American Art* 16, no. 1 (spring 2002): 66. See also Erika Doss, "Sharrer's *Tribute to the American Working People:* Issues of Labor and Leisure in Post-World War II American Art," *American Art* 16, no. 3 (fall 2002): 55–81.

46. Huppler to Wilde, December 5, 1950. Wilde papers. Kirstein's assumption that Wilde was open to sexual exploration due to the fit with Hewitt's roster was raised and confirmed in conversation with the artist, November 2001.
47. Kline, quoted in Selden Rodman, *Conversations with Artists* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1957), 106.
48. Rodman, *Conversations with Artists,* 82 [Pollock], 93 [Rothko].
49. Pollock interviewed by William Wright for WERI radio station, The Springs, Long Island, New York, late 1950, Reprinted in *Jackson Pollock: Interviews, Articles, and Reviews,* ed. Pepe Karmel (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1999), 20.
50. Pollock quoted in Rodman, *Conversations with Artists,* 82.
51. Huppler to Fein, ca. 1948. Fein papers.
52. John Wilde, "A Reminiscence," in *Karl Priebe,* exhibition pamphlet (Milwaukee: Charles Allis Art Museum, 1982).
53. Wilde to Priebe, card postmarked August 30, 1949. Karl J. Priebe Papers, Department of Special Collections, Marquette University, Milwaukee.
54. Frances Stover, "Artist Priebe is Spellbound by Bird Life," *Milwaukee Journal,* December 22, 1946.
55. Wilde interviewed by Russell Panczenko in *Wildeworld: The Art of John Wilde* (New York: Hudson Hills/ Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1999), 35.
56. Fein to Glasier, August 23, 1948. Glasier papers.
57. Huppler to Wilde, January 12, 1959, Wilde papers.
58. Wilde to Huppler, November 11, 1965. Fein papers.
59. Abercrombie to Wilde, July 10, 1967. Wilde papers.
60. Patricia Roberts, "Priebe's Recent Works Draw Record Turnout," *Milwaukee Journal,* September 25, 1967.
61. John Wilde, letter to author, October 16, 2002.

Color Plates



Color plate 1
Marshall Glasier
Philoctetes and the Second World War, 1943
Oil on Masonite panel, 38 1/2 x 29 1/2 inches
Binghamton University Art Museum

Color plate 2
Marshall Glasier
See the Burning City, ca. 1943
Oil on board, 16 1/2 x 13 1/2 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 3
Marshall Glasier
Life of the Cabbage, 1944
Oil on Masonite panel, 17 7/8 x 24 1/8 inches
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of William
Monroe White and artist by exchange
Photo by John R. Glembin

Color plate 4
Marshall Glasier
Peggy, 1946
Oil on panel, 28 x 36 inches
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art,
Gift of Thomas Sheridan Hyland

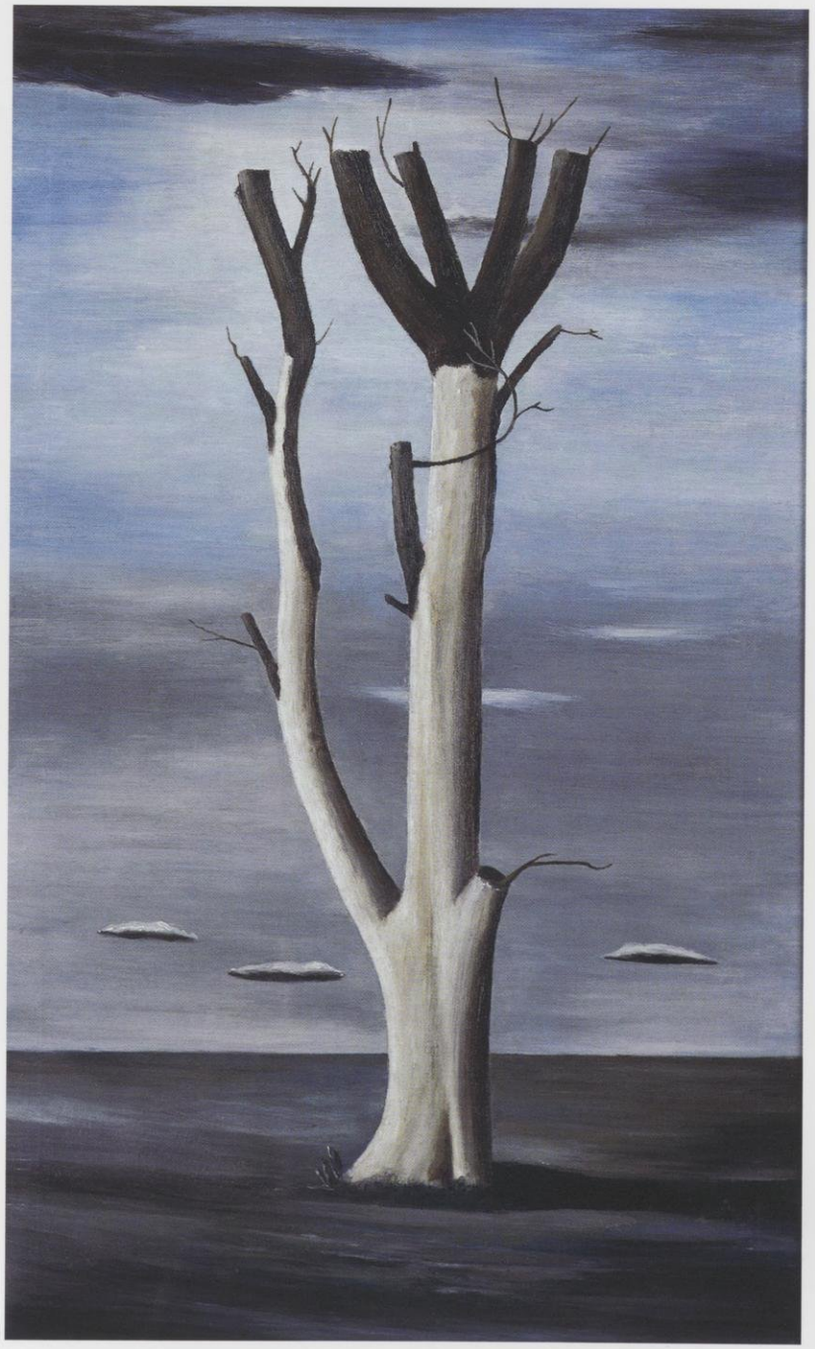
Color plate 5
Marshall Glasier
Night Tournament, 1947
Oil on canvas, 13 1/2 x 20 inches
Mary Gilson Feay

Color plate 6
Marshall Glasier
John Steuart Curry and the University of Wisconsin Bull-Breeding Machine, 1948
Oil on Masonite panel, 19 5/16 x 25 1/2 inches
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of Gimbel Brothers
Photo by John R. Glembin

Color plate 7
Marshall Glasier
A Winter Adventure, 1948
Oil on Masonite panel, 23 x 29 5/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 8
Marshall Glasier
Johan Bjorksten, ca. 1951–52
Oil on Masonite panel, 23 1/2 x 17 1/2 inches
John Roth and Cathleen Corbett
Photo by Gregory Wittler

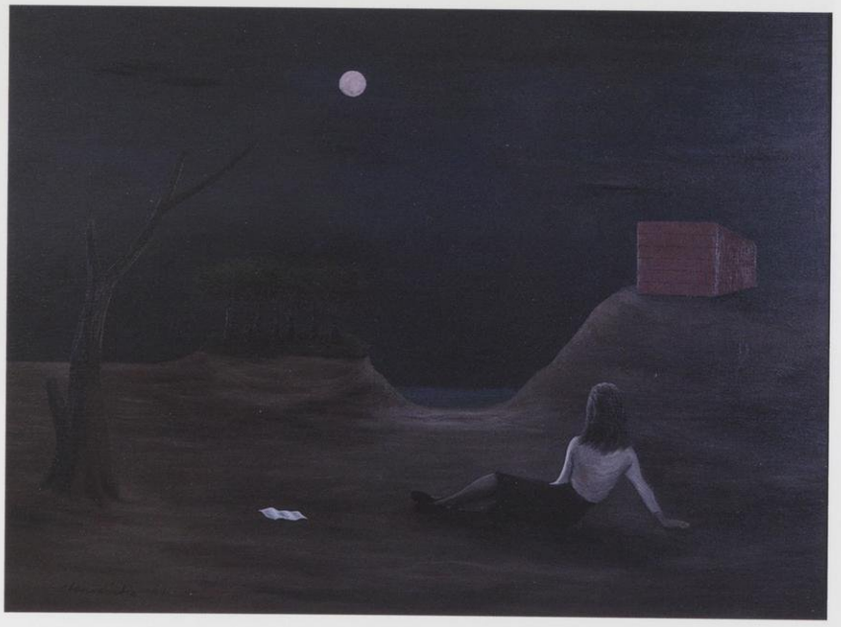
Color plate 9
Marshall Glasier
Self-Portrait in Chinese Armor with Philomel as a Doll, 1955
Oil on canvas, 36 x 26 1/2 inches
Binghamton University Art Museum



Color plate 10
Gertrude Abercrombie
Tree at Aledo, 1938
Oil on canvas, 40 1/2 x 24 1/4 inches
Elmhurst College, Gift of Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Color plate 11
Gertrude Abercrombie
Design for Death (Charlie Parker's Favorite Painting), 1946
Oil on Masonite, 17 15/16 x 21 15/16 inches
Ackland Art Museum, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Color plate 12
Gertrude Abercrombie
The Past and The Present (Weinstein Interior), ca. 1946
Oil on Masonite, 22 x 27 inches
Art Institute of Chicago, Estate of Gertrude Abercrombie

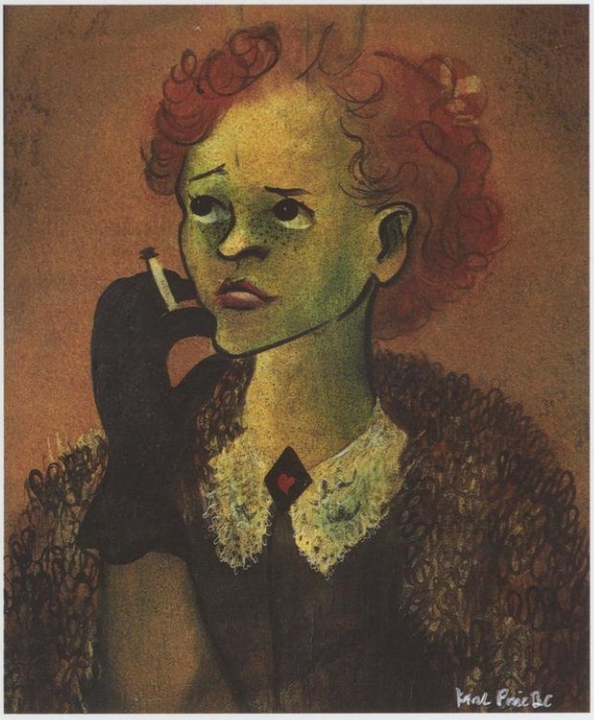


Color plate 13
Gertrude Abercrombie
Reverie, 1947
Oil on Masonite, 12 x 16 inches
Illinois State Museum

Color plate 14
Gertrude Abercrombie
The Courtship, 1949
Oil on Masonite, 21 3/4 x 25 1/4 inches
Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Color plate 15
Gertrude Abercrombie
Search for Rest (Nile River), 1951
Oil on Masonite, 24 x 36 inches
Bram and Sandra Dijkstra

Color plate 16
Gertrude Abercrombie
My Second Best Box, 1957
Assemblage, painted wood box with glass door and objects, 9 1/2 x 11 1/2 x 4 inches
Illinois State Museum

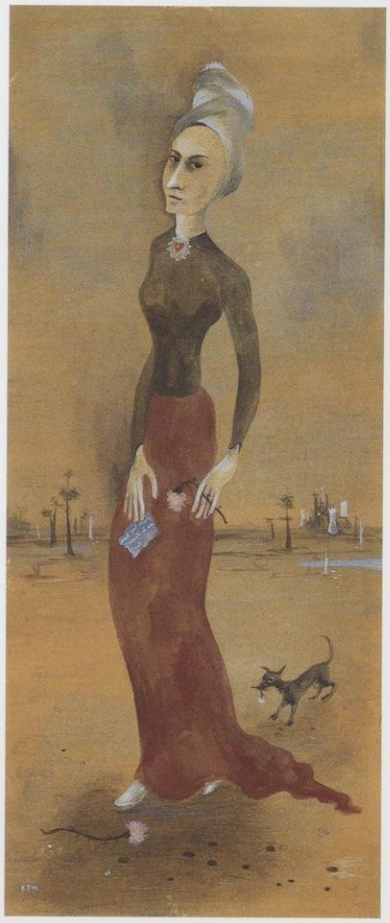


Color plate 17
Karl Priebe
Portrait of Sylvia Fein, ca. 1940
Casein on paperboard, 11 1/2 x 9 5/8 inches
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Gift of Ms. S. Gertrude Mulaney in memory of Sister Catherine C. Mulaney

Color plate 18
Karl Priebe
Saint Sebastian, 1941
Casein on paper, 17 x 11 7/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 19
Karl Priebe
Untitled Portrait of Edward Heth, 1942
Casein on paperboard 11 x 10 1/2 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art General Endowment
Fund purchase
Photo by Cory Radlund

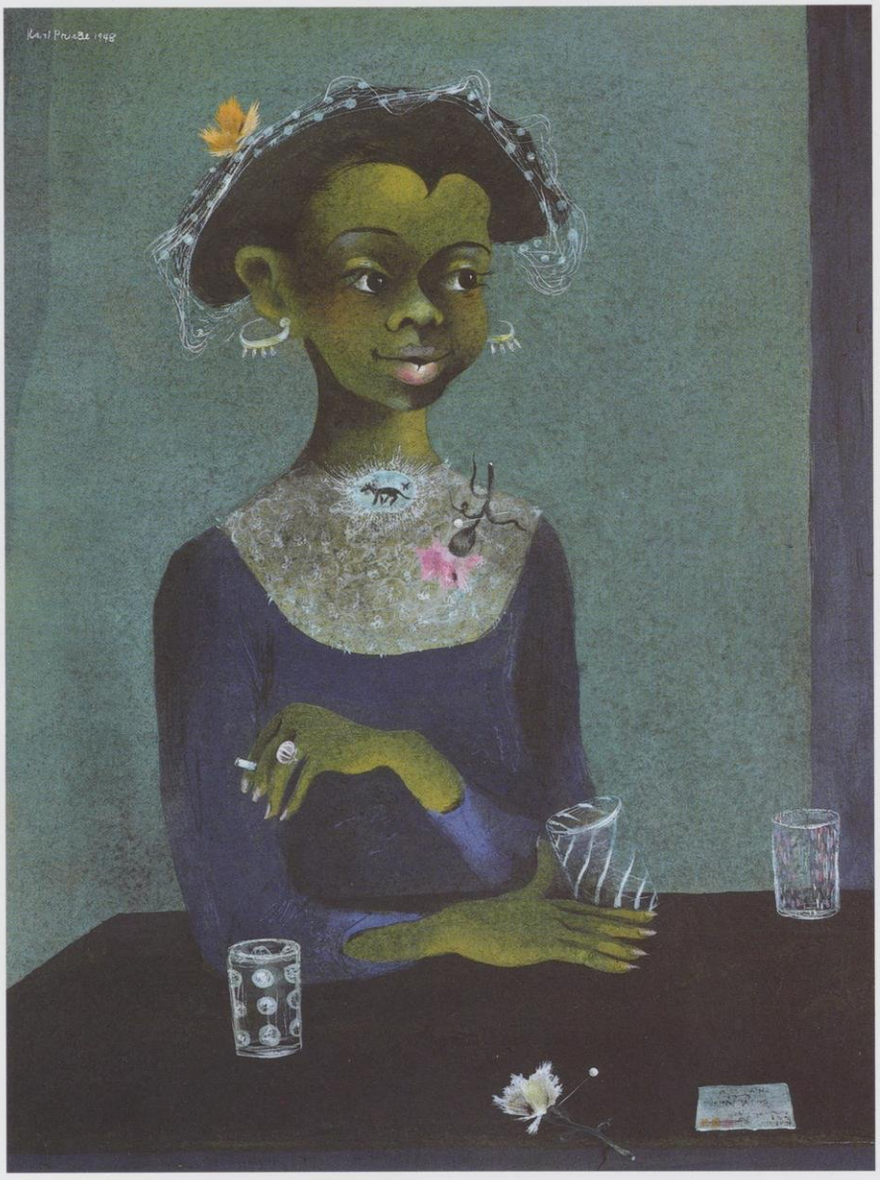
Color plate 20
Karl Priebe
The Eclipse, 1942
Casein on cardboard, 12 x 16 7/16 inches
Milwaukee Art Museum, purchase
Photo by John R. Glembin



Color plate 21
Karl Priebe
The Poet—Homage to Edith S., 1944
Casein and oil on cardboard, 23 5/8 x 10 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

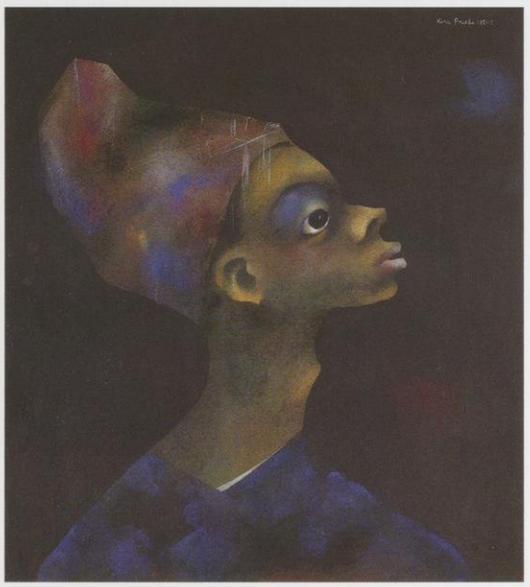
Color plate 22
Karl Priebe
The Ornithologist, 1946
Casein and oil on paperboard,
10 3/4 inches x 12 7/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 23
Karl Priebe
The Hummingbird, 1947
Casein on board, 15 x 19 1/4 inches
John and Shirley Wilde



Color plate 24
Karl Priebe
The Socialite, 1948
Casein, gouache, ink and pastel on board, 13 1/3 x 10 3/8 inches
Michael Rosenfeld Gallery

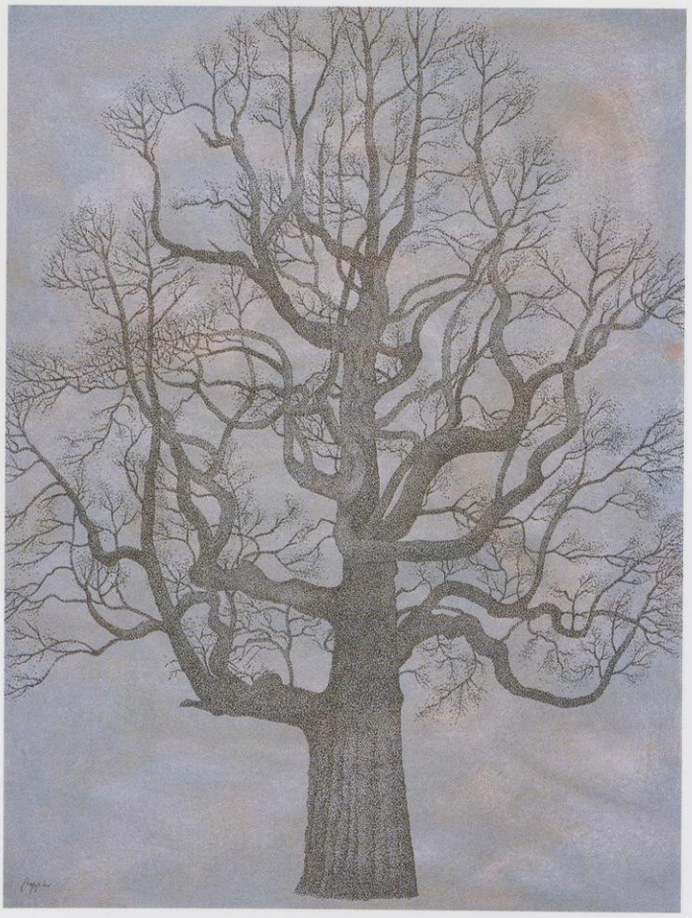
Color plate 25
Karl Priebe
Late Afternoon Arrangement, 1950
Casein on paperboard, 19 1/2 x 27 1/2 inches
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art,
Marquette University, Gift of Gimbel Brothers



Color plate 26
Karl Priebe
Untitled, 1951–52
Casein on cardboard, 15 3/4 x 14 1/2 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 27
Dudley Huppler
Homage to Dosso Dossi, ca. 1954
Pencil, ink, and wash on paper,
19 7/8 x 12 3/4 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 28
Dudley Huppler
Sassafras Tree, ca.1958
Ink and casein on paper, 22 x 16 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art,
Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment
Fund purchase
Photo by Jim Wildeman

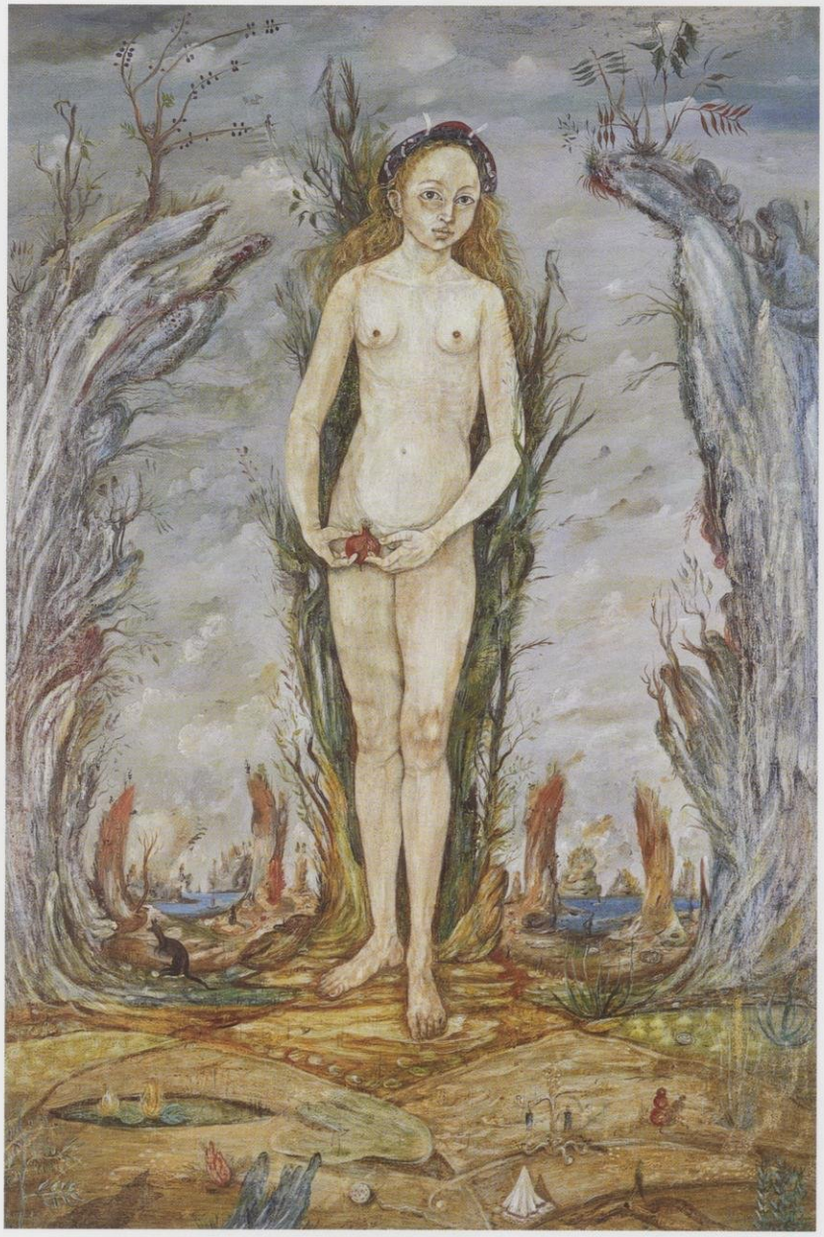


Color plate 29
Sylvia Fein and Marshall Glasier
Portrait of Sylvia, ca. 1942
Egg tempera and oil on panel, 9 5/8 x 7 3/4 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 30
Sylvia Fein
Ladies with Many Faces, 1942
Egg tempera on board, 23 x 34 1/4 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Wisconsin Union
Purchase Prize, 1942
(Wisconsin Union Art Collection)
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 31
Sylvia Fein
The Lady with the White Knight, 1942–43
Egg tempera and oil on Masonite panel, 29 1/2 x 16 3/4 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 32
Sylvia Fein
The Tea Party, 1943
Egg tempera and oil on Masonite panel, 23 1/4 x 37 1/4 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund



Color plate 33
Sylvia Fein
Eve, 1943–44
Egg tempera and oil on panel, 29 5/8 x 19 3/4 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

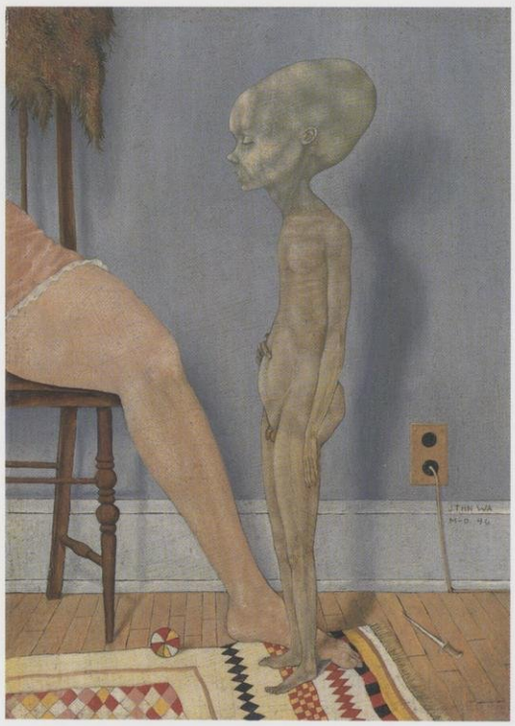
Color plate 34
Sylvia Fein
Muchacha de Ajijic, 1944
Egg tempera on panel, 19 5/8 x 14 5/8 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 35
Sylvia Fein
Lady with Her Baby, 1947
Egg tempera and oil on panel, 18 x 15 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 36
Sylvia Fein
Mama's Music Class, 1947–49
Egg tempera and oil on panel, 28 x 48 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 37
Sylvia Fein
Lady Writing a Love Letter in a Landscape, 1954
Egg tempera on panel, 29 5/8 x 21 1/8 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

Color plate 38
John Wilde
An Autumnal Still Life, ca. 1940
Oil on panel, 20 x 45 inches
John and Shirley Wilde

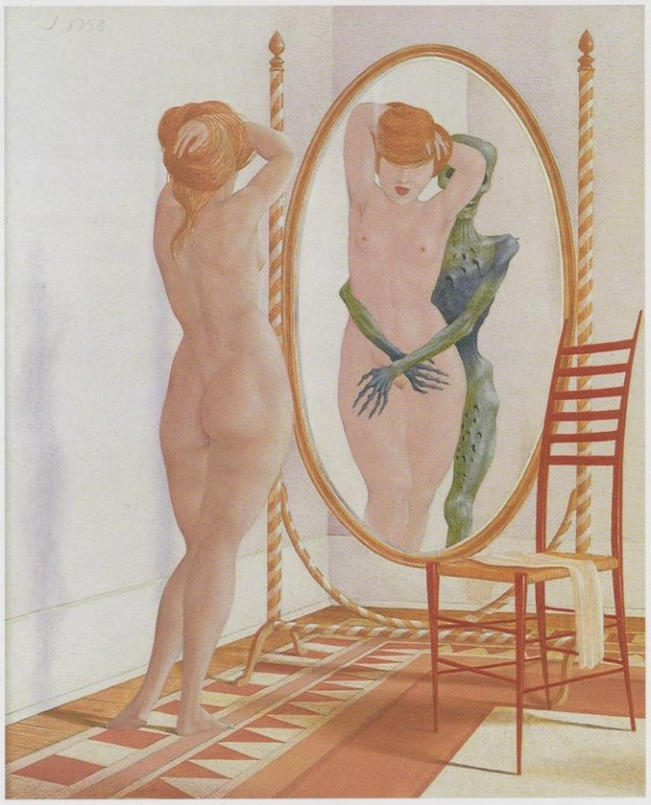


Color plate 39
John Wilde
Mother and Sick Child, 1946
Oil on panel, 8 1/2 x 6 inches
Sally A. Colussy; photograph
courtesy John Wilde

Color plate 40
John Wilde
Memorabilia, 1952
Oil on wood, 8 x 14 inches
Florence Ely Nelson

Color plate 41
John Wilde
Wildeworld (Provincia, Naturlica, Classicum), 1953–55
Oil on canvas, 32 1/2 x 52 inches
Milwaukee Art Museum Gift, of Mr. and Mrs. Fitzhugh Scott through Northwoods Foundation

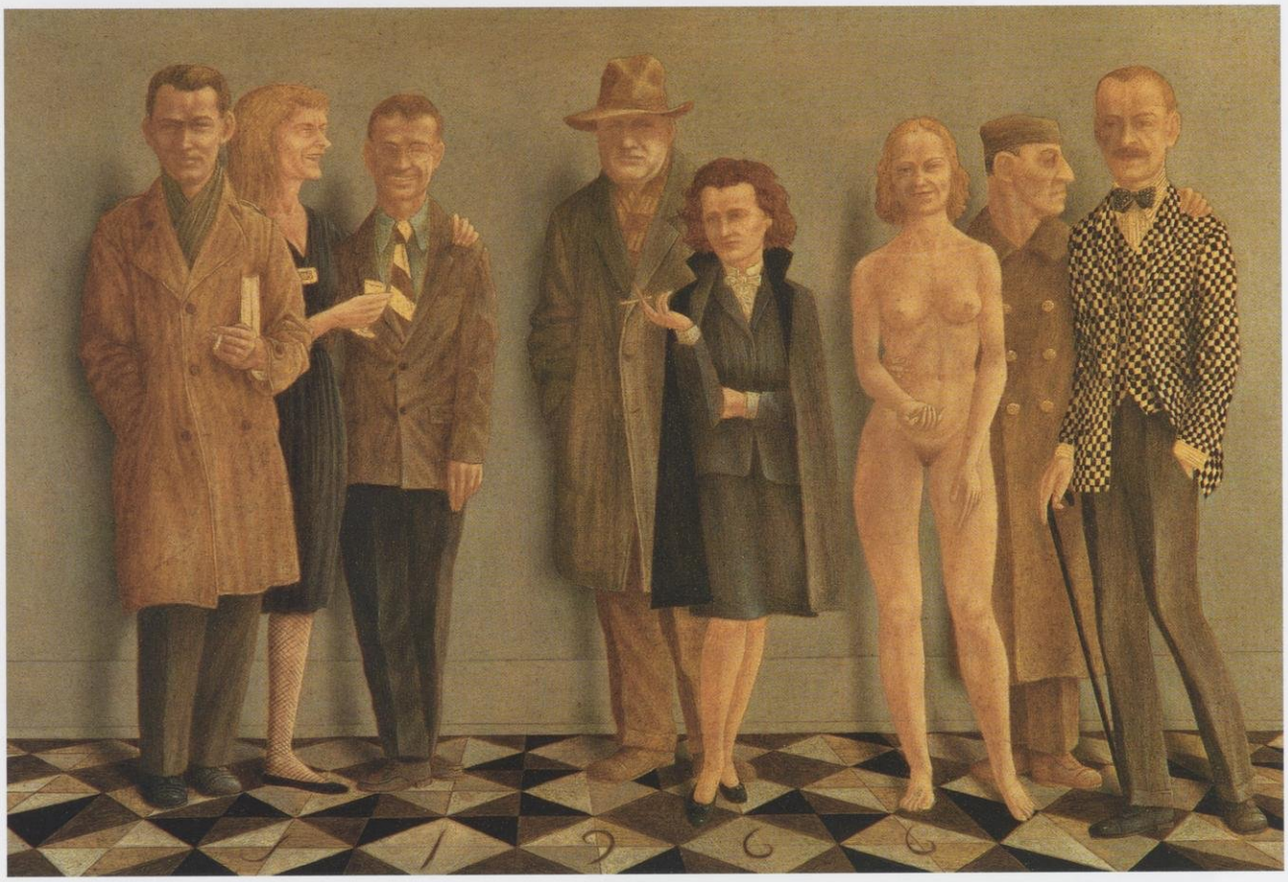
Color plate 42
John Wilde
Nightshade, 1956
Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery
and Sculpture Garden,
University of Nebraska, Lincoln



Color plate 43
John Wilde
The Mirror, 1958
Oil on board, 12 x 10 inches
Mongerson Galleries

Color plate 44
John Wilde
Where To?, 1960
Oil on panel, 10 x 12 inches
Anonymous collection
Photo by William H. Bengston

Color plate 45
John Wilde
Peeling, 1961
Oil on panel, 12 x 10 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari



Color plate 46
John Wilde
Karl Priebe, Getrude Abercrombie, Dudley Huppler, Marshall Glasier, Sylvia Fein, a Friend, Arnold Dadian, and Myself, 1966
Oil on panel, 8 x 12 inches
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

The Individuals

Marshall Glasier (1902–1988)

John Wilde described Glasier's restlessness and prolific output this way: "All of his life was a search, and his art was always in process. Though his work received wide recognition for a short time, there never was what he considered to be a finished product; only remnants and by-products."[1] Glasier (figure 1) lived by the aphorism "a student to the end—art as a way of life." The phrase appears among others on a page of advice for artists that may derive from Glasier's studies with George Grosz. Over the years Glasier compiled wisdom for his own students, but this list appears addressed to himself:

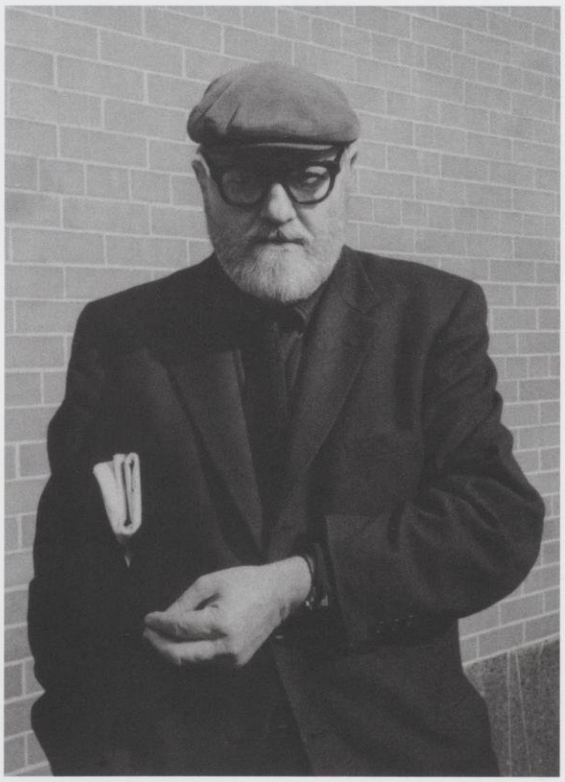


Figure 1. Marshall Glasier, 1956. Courtesy of Marshall Glasier Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

—gird yourself against the bitch-goddess success
—build on what you have
—know what to select and reject—learn all the ways one can work
—thousand strokes a day
—the first 100 paintings are (may be an indication [of]) what kind of man you are not—
—don't take your accidentally good painting for granted
—the more you know of the past the more you can feel where you are today
—prepare for your painting like a Boxer
—your participation in the act of art is your way of transcendence
—what are you willing to give up to be an artist?[2]

Glasier's letters to Fein, Huppler, Wilde, and others reveal an intense, driven man paradoxically fearful of the price of success. Like Huppler and Priebe, he made important professional contacts, not as a hustler, but out of a desire to know who he admired and witness an expanding cultural universe. Unlike Priebe, for whom art was a vocation, Glasier was the quintessential Bohemian artist. If he often lived from hand-to-mouth, it never stopped him from working, reading, discovering new music, and being "in the know." As a renowned drawing master in New York, he attracted a legendary cult-following and

related to increasingly younger students as though teaching were a fountain of youth. He told Wilde: "I find constant surprise in the young. I am continually put to a test in my class; eager kids seeking to learn and it is through them that I get my urge to carry on. 'What's the use' I would say otherwise."[3]

Glasier exhibited what he considered his first cohesive body of work between 1938 and 1940 in Milwaukee and New York. The series of paintings showed enormous meat grinders, cleavers, can openers, and imaginary devices walking in romantic landscapes. They represented "man in conflict with the machine world, hemmed in by gadgets and subservient to them," Glasier explained.[4] It was this work that attracted surrealist dealer Julien Levy to Glasier. Levy saw something else brewing in Glasier and eventually advised him "You're an American painter ... better get an American gallery."[5] Glasier worked for years on particular themes before he let work go into the world for exhibition. The process resulted in many destroyed canvases. In the period between solo exhibitions with Associated American Artists in New York he told Grosz, "as for myself I'm getting along—somewhat—have accepted my situation and adjusted myself to a year's or two more study before I have another show— nothing seems to satisfy me and I keep destroying things and starting over but I guess I will have a few things to show soon—I keep wanting more time to build up the pictures—well we will see ...your lifetime student ..."[6] By the time he met Wilde, Fein, and Huppler, Glasier was in his late thirties and completely taken with the Wisconsin landscape. "There is a poetry and expression in the jutting rocks, the bluffs and gnarled trees of the driftless area, a happy fusion of the real and the unreal in the landscape," he told one writer.[7] Glasier may have been a natural teacher and role model for his younger friends, but he also relied a great deal on them for inspiration. During the war Huppler witnessed this side of him. He told Wilde:

> Marshall is all nerves. He did not get anything out of his [sketching] trip and does not seem to be able to do anything now he is back—except chase around. He needs Sylvia and you and Helen, terribly, for the challenges you, without knowing it, supply him. How can we get him to work? He too wishes for Sylvia to leave her silly doings in Mexico. In many ways he is unlovely now—so restless it is hard to talk, and so hard on everybody and everything with his criticism and hatred. I think he needs sweetening up ... What can we do?[8]

In his works of the early to mid-1940s Glasier favored a format that focused the viewer's attention on a central object of meditation. Nineteenth-century American artists such as Jasper Cropsey (1823–1900; figure 2) or Fidelia Bridges (1845–1923) had taken a similar viewpoint in

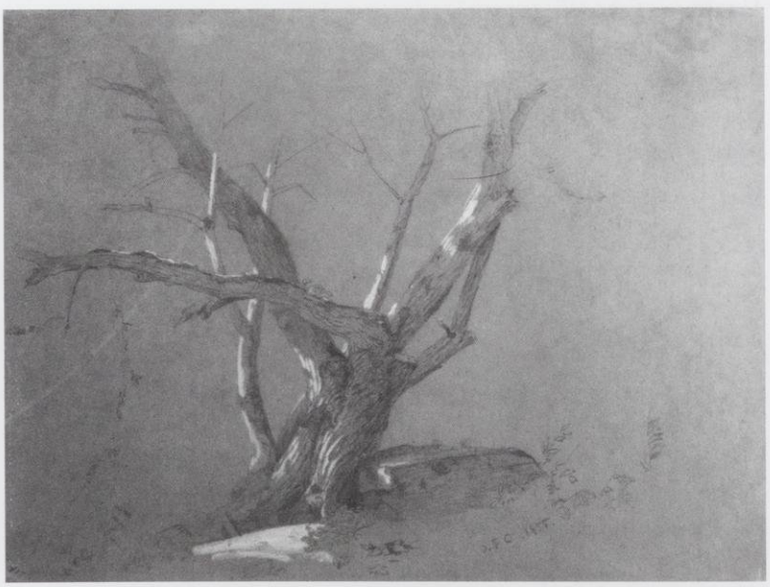


Figure 2. Jasper Francis Cropsey (American, 1823–1900), *Study of a Tree,* 1855, graphite, heightened with white, on brown paper, 9 3/8 x 12 3/8 in. The Art Museum, Princeton University, Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr. x1948-1786.

drawings and watercolors. Glasier was part of this lineage, particularly its romantic strains. He loved to explore life and death in single images as in *Tree with a View* (1942; cat. no. 3). A dead tree rises out of the ground before the deep expanse of the Wisconsin River valley. Rot has begun to hollow out its massive trunk, and its jagged branches groan against the sky. Each aching branch ends in a plume of brittle twigs that curl like the fingers of a wraith. Moss covers the tree's bark like a green shroud, assuring nature's continuum of regeneration. Glasier felt a spiritual connection to the oldest trees he visited on his excursions and hoped that they would live on in his paintings after they had returned to the soil.[9]

Glasier's vision of the Wisconsin landscape strongly contrasted with that of John Steuart Curry (1897–1946), then the best-known artist working in Wisconsin. Curry came to Madison in December 1936 as artist in residence at the University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture. He became a prime target of Glasier's growing frustration with the art world. Glasier found Curry's work insipid and superficial, but the local appointment probably struck a sensitive nerve. Glasier loathed the idea that an outsider from Kansas was selected and praised as an interpreter of the Wisconsin landscape. After meeting with Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975) and Curry to discuss an upcoming Salon of Art exhibition in Madison, Glasier's vehemence poured out in a letter to Fein:

> I saw Curry sat. at 12 noon and I must say that even a letter from [Thomas] Craven didn't do any good as far as a reception goes—was he "cold"!!—or maybe stupid. His studio was filled with this same shitty stuff (one more fall scene for the Bank)—and lousy illustrations, horses & children. I "talked" to him (you can hardly call it that) he simply does not respond. I can only describe the situation as thoroughly depressed. He will be that way and after coming from Grosz I was fed up with American artists if that's what Curry stands for—but I know he doesn't … (he didn't see any PUBLICITY which is the only way he understands whether an artist is any good. Which really has nothing to do with art. Fame, money art—No! One paints first for oneself not for art. Not for fame (vanity) not for money—putrfacture [sic]. We work because we have to understand OURSELVES—and understand OUR problems are ever before us and it's one way of forgetting how rotten our civilization is with its pretentiousness.[10]

Glasier unleashed his most bitter attack in a painting made after Curry's death. *John Steuart Curry and the University of Wisconsin Bull-Breeding Machine* (1948; color plate 6) satirizes Curry's persona, academic post, subject matter, and intelligence in a single blow. Glasier based the portrait on two well-known contemporary photographs: one shows Curry scratching his head, surrounded by entries for a 1940 rural art exhibition (figure 3), while another captured him wearing overalls, laughing with Grant Wood.[11]

Figure 3. John Steuart Curry judging rural art exhibition entries, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1940. Photograph by the *Milwaukee Journal*. Curry Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Glasier's Curry is a naïve country yokel mystified by the grotesque, flayed, headless seed repository before him. Puzzling with brushes in hand, he is literally unable to make heads or tails of the surrogate beast.

Glasier made several commissioned portraits during the 1940s (color plate 4). He also made several sensitive studies of respected friends. *Portrait of Harry Partch* (1947; cat. no. 7) captures the world-weary yet boyish features of the American composer (1901–1974) done near the end of his brief stay in Madison.[12] Partch and Glasier were kindred spirits, each trying to make art on their own terms, each with wandering pasts. Like Glasier or Fein, Partch found contemporary meaning in myths of origin, rebirth, and struggle. The forty-three-note tonal structure he used and the unique instruments he constructed to give it voice represented a kind of genesis. *Portrait of Dudley Huppler* (1948; cat. no. 8) contrasts with contemporary photographs that show Huppler as a sweet, disarming young man. Glasier picked out aspects of Huppler's personality and features that make him appear rough, swarthy, and unyielding. Huppler was a favorite model for the older artist, perhaps because he could be many things to many people.

Glasier adapted to his environment and was willing and able to change his approach to painting and drawing throughout his career. He had no fear of discarding old methods for new. He wrote to Wilde from Oregon:

> I am thinking of changing my painting name—for Glasier of Wisconsin died of slow strangulations, no doubt about it—you can tell Huppler that the artist he once was "proud" to know—is dead. No worry I won't walk into the studio. My Odyssey is to follow through—the bible says somewhere "take up thy bed and walk"—I am now falling in love with the sea and the forest. I will start signing my pictures first of the year De Graff—on my mother's side—she does not know of this. My life is none of her business now.[13]

Glasier's paintings of the 1950s and 1960s grew thick with impasto. He often mixed oil with sand, soil, and other substances as if to incorporate what was depicted into the descriptive image. In these aggressively painted canvases both figure and background seethe with an extraordinary corporeality, animated by Glasier's sculptural paint. *Lazarus Unraveling* (1955; cat. no. 10), a surrogate self-portrait, shows this technique. Glasier often referred to himself as a Prodigal and a Lazarus, returning from the crypt to have another opportunity in life. Each time Glasier prepared for an exhibition, he worried that it could be death or rebirth. He repeated a professional cycle of research, experimentation, and assessment throughout his long career. In 1962 while preparing for another exhibition, Glasier succinctly reiterated his anxieties about fame, and nostalgia for his origins:

> Sure I'm waiting for the buzzards. I can feel 'em in the trees—waiting for the end of my execution ... Worst time of life this waiting to be murdered by mediocrities. How does one become independent ... I wouldn't ask a dog to live this life—think of that. This art world is made up of the sick, half wounded and the blind ... Madison draws me like a magnet—Oregon too—why? ... god knows how many will come to see me fail. But I smile Wilde—I smile— Christ I think of other things, of old friends— familiar hills and green scenes along the river—the 4 lakes and the old capitol.[15]

Notes

Glasier papers: Marshall Glasier Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
Fein papers: Sylvia Fein Personal Papers, Martinez, CA.
Wilde papers: John Wilde Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

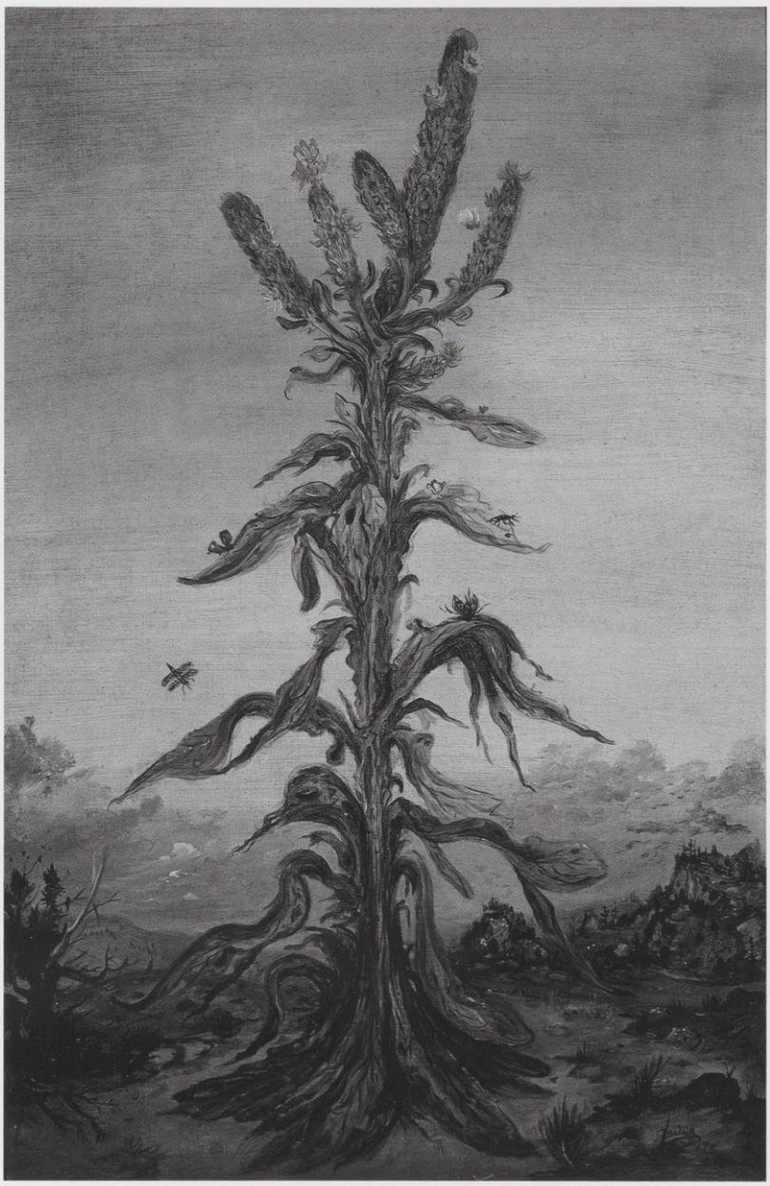
1. John Wilde, "Marshall Glasier—A Personal Memoir," *Wisconsin Academy Review* 36, no. 4 (September 1990): 36.
2. Excerpts from two pages of handwritten notes in the Marshall Glasier papers, M1990-0064 [unprocessed], Houghton Library, Harvard University.
3. Glasier to Wilde, February 20, 1961. Wilde papers.
4. "State Artist, Grosz Pupil, Paints Chaos," *Milwaukee Journal*, June 27, 1937.
5. Marshall Glasier with Harry Salpeter, "The Research Magnificent," *Esquire* (May 1945): 120.
6. Glasier to Grosz, September [28], 1945. Grosz papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, bMS Ger 206 (599). Glasier did not have a second solo show at AAA; he kept postponing it.
7. "Marshall Glasier, Artist, Returns Here to Renew the Roots of His Art," *Capital Times* [Madison, Wisconsin], October 1941[?] Clipping in the Fein papers.
8. Huppler to Wilde, April 27, 1944. Wilde papers.
9. *The Encyclopædia Brittanica Collection of Contemporary American Painting*, ed. Grace Pagano (Chicago: Encyclopædia Brittanica, 1945), 44.
10. Glasier to Fein, October 26, 1943. Fein papers. Glasier and Curry both exhibited at Associated American Artists and occasionally wound up at the same parties in Chicago.
11. For these photographs see Patricia Junker, *John Steuart Curry: Inventing the Middle West* (New York: Hudson Hills/ Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1998), 75 and 191.
12. For Partch in Madison see chapter 7 of Bob Gilmore, *Harry Partch: A Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Ronald V. Wiecki, "Relieving '12-Tone Paralysis': Harry Partch in Madison, Wisconsin, 1944–1947," *American Music* 9, no. 1 (spring 1991): 43–66.
13. Glasier to Wilde, fall, 1951. Wilde papers.
14. Glasier to Wilde, February 23, 1962. Wilde papers.

1
Marshall Glasier
Carmelita and the Upright Wippen, 1938
Oil on panel, 18 1/2 x 24 inches
John and Shirley Wilde

2
Marshall Glasier
Study of Crow, 1941
Graphite on paper, 16 3/4 x 19 1/4 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

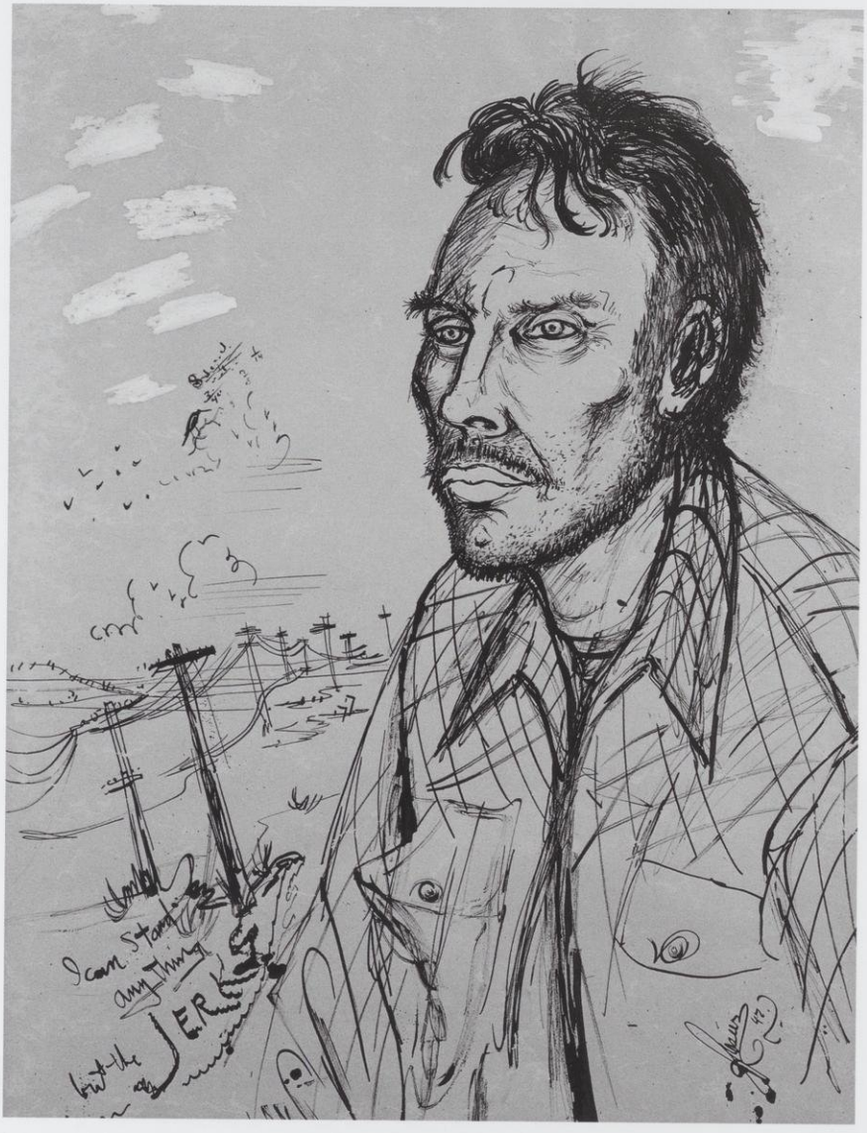
3
Marshall Glasier
Tree with a View, 1942
Oil on Masonite panel, 29 1/2 x 19 1/2 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

4
Marshall Glasier
Pregnant woman in a landscape, 1942
Graphite on paper, 23 3/4 x 17 1/2 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund



5
Marshall Glasier
Mullein, 1943
Oil on hardboard, 23 7/8 x 16 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Gift of Velma Mekeel Stauffer
Photo by Cory Radlund

6
Marshall Glasier
Soldier's Return, 1945
Pencil on paper, 23 x 19 3/4 inches
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Madison Art Center Purchase Fund
Photo by Cory Radlund



7
Marshall Glasier
Portrait of Harry Partch, 1947
Ink on paper, 23 1/8 x 18 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Edward Blake Blair Fund purchase

8
Marshall Glasier
Portrait of Dudley Huppler, 1948
Ink and watercolor on paper, 18 x 12 inches
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of Paul and Mary Hibbard

9
Marshall Glasier
Myself as Acteon Surprised by Diana while Exploring the Oregon Coast, 1952
Pencil on paper, 12 1/2 x 19 1/4 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

10
Marshall Glasier
Lazarus Unraveling, 1955
Oil on canvas, 26 x 38 inches
Elinor Randall

11
Marshall Glasier
Self-Portrait, 1964
Ink wash on paper, 40 x 27 inches
Elinor Randall

Gertrude Abercrombie (1909–1977)

Too close to her friends' ages to be a matriarch but revered so intensely as to transcend being a peer, Abercrombie was "Queen Gertrude" to herself and many others (figure 1). From the late 1930s and into the 1960s she was among the most prominent and successful artists working in Chicago and one of many influential women strengthening the city's art scene.[1] Abercrombie lived a colorful life surrounded by a talented orbit of artists, composers, writers, and musicians, the quirkier the better. She surveyed the world from a large Victorian home in the Hyde Park area of Chicago where she hosted a salon that in its heyday pulsated around-the-clock with impromptu jam sessions. Queen Gertrude attracted and captivated countless visitors, but writer Wendell Wilcox stressed the importance of her closest friendships:

> A great many came to admire and wonder at her, but out of all these, few came to be really loved. These few were loved with the truest warmth, and they gave her their warmth in return. There is in these closer friendships a feeling of something predestined, as if they had come from a long way back in time and will go on forever.[2]

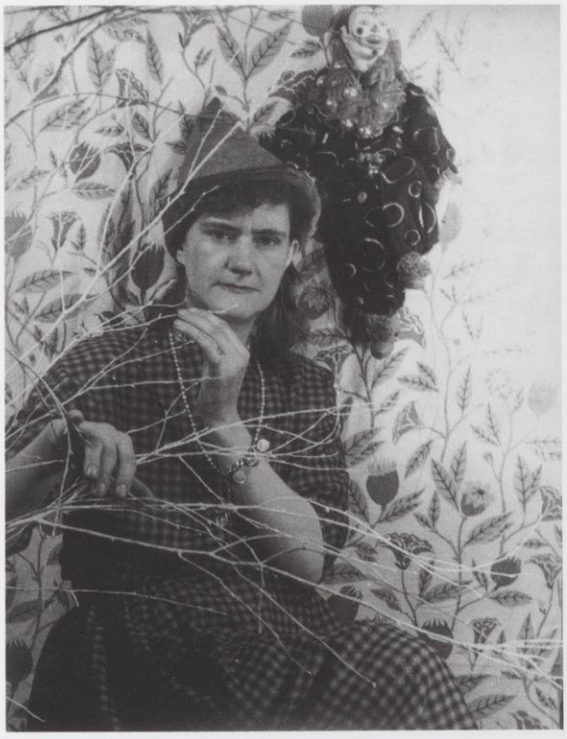


Figure 1. Gertrude Abercrombie, photographed by Carl Van Vechten, 1951[?]. Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Abercrombie found kindred spirits in Dudley Huppler, Karl Priebe, and John Wilde. For over three decades she corresponded almost daily with them and they reciprocated. Huppler sent elaborate lists of "painting ideas" and dirty stories, as much to amuse as to inspire her.[3] Wilde addressed her in feminine variants on the names of Renaissance artists and shared displeasure over art-world trends, responding in 1951: "I too feel it is terrible that our pictures are not selling like hotcakes & making us rich. No taste. Too much abstract—not enough love of the tale."[4] Glasier was only a casual acquaintance, and while Abercrombie knew Sylvia Fein's work it is unlikely that they ever met. The centrality of these latter artists in the lives of Abercrombie's mutual friends made them a virtual presence in hers.

Abercrombie and Priebe were closest; they shared a passion for jazz and immersed themselves

in the music world. Together they befriended the most influential musicians in the country. The admiration was mutual; many players collected their work and some composed pieces dedicated to Gertrude (figure 2).[5] Abercrombie compiled an impressive list of those "adorable musicians" she fed or entertained, or who stayed at her home. Included are Jackie Cain, Miles Davis, Dorothy Donegan, Bud Freeman, Billie Holiday, Milt Jackson, Elvin Jones, Roy Kral, Charlie Parker, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Hal Russell, Ed Shaughnessy, Art Tatum, and Sarah Vaughan.[6] Austrian émigré Ernst Krenek composed an opera (probably *Dark Waters*, 1950) while renting out the second floor of Abercrombie's home, and composer Ned Rorem often visited Gertrude when he returned to Chicago.

Music was prominent in Abercrombie's life from birth. She was the only child of parents who were opera singers and became competent enough on piano to improvise with bebop players during the 1940s. She claimed to possess perfect pitch and loved to scat with Gillespie. While she took some drawing classes in college, her professors identified and encouraged a talent for writing, and she earned a degree in Romance languages. Not until the Depression did Abercrombie attend classes at Chicago's American Academy of the Arts and take commercial art jobs with department stores.[7] The impulse may have been out of fiscal necessity, but the experience stimulated her latent talent and she started painting with encouragement from sculptor Tud Kempf.[8] Like Huppler, Abercrombie was largely self-taught. They both stressed this aspect of their backgrounds in witty self-deprecating statements that reveal wry pride in subverting the academy. Emphasizing the role of feeling over training she stated: "Something has to happen, and if nothing does, all the technique in the world won't make it … Art has to be real 'crazy,' real personal and real real, or it is nowhere. If it doesn't make you laugh, it's not so good either."[9] Abercrombie trained while producing art for hire; employment on government-funded art projects followed commercial stints.[10] Such jobs demanded that she represent recognizable objects, and the experience may have affected her predilection for the tangible in her mature work. Critics occasionally compared Abercrombie to earlier American self-taught artists, "primitives" popular with Modernists and with the public rediscovering the country's artistic heritage. Abercrombie and the others in this circle expressed admiration for folk artists and were familiar with collections such as that of Edgar and Bernice Garbisch.

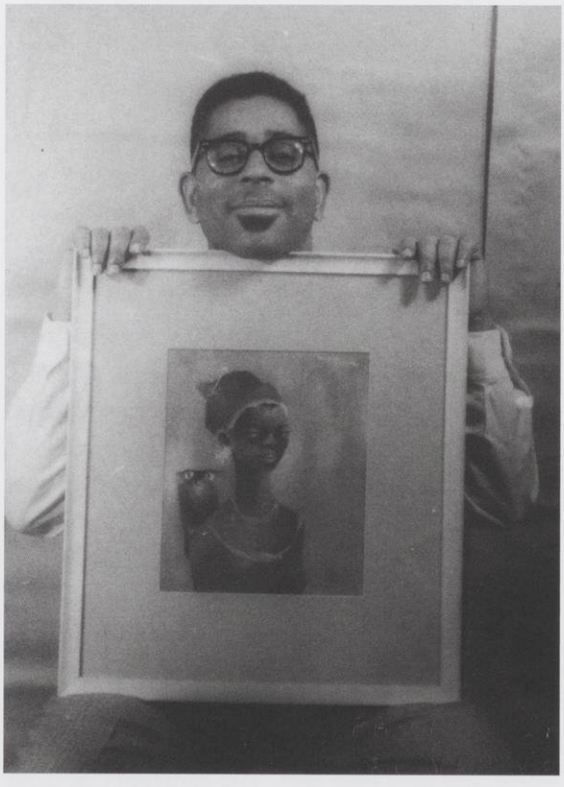


Figure 2. Carl Van Vechten. Dizzy Gillespie holding a painting by Karl Priebe, ca. 1944. Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Abercrombie established a repertoire and style by 1940 that changed very little over subsequent decades. Using a shifting sequence of theatrical stages, she explored her identity and life events as though composing a dense multilayered visual autobiography. The resultant paintings are less mirrors of her life than projections of Abercrombie's interior world. Often the relationship is explicit as in scenes of mothers carrying infants through landscapes that she painted following the birth of her daughter (cat. no. 14)

or *The Courtship* (1949; color plate 14) that dramatizes her 1948 marriage to ex-con Frank Sandiford. Abercrombie often asserted the equal validity of a lived and imagined biography: "I like to paint mysteries or fantasies—things that are real in the mind, but not real in the ordinary sense of the word."[11]

The autobiographical dimension of Abercrombie's work is complex, transcending the imagery of her body to encompass a selective variety of symbolic objects and personal talismans. Wilcox observed:

> She tended to paint small and small things which were entirely her own, things so strictly chosen to her own taste that they might almost be said to be herself; her cat, her table, her chairs, her shells, her ball and jacks. She had created herself, her life, and then she painted them—her autobiography.[12]

My Second Best Box (1957; color plate 16) shows Abercrombie's playful approach to illusionism, inspired by Wilde's growing mastery of trompe l'œil and the visual puns of her "spiritual daddy," René Magritte. A painted key, rubber ball, wishbone, shell, and a jack hover like ghosts in a shadow box near their physical models. There was a magical undercurrent to this juxtaposition of the real with their doubles. She explained this aspect of her work as clairvoyant. "But the strange thing is, once I paint something, it usually turns up in real life. For example, that marble-topped counter there (*The Magician*, 1964 cat. no. 18). It popped up in a painting I did. Then, a few weeks later I saw it in a shoemaker's shop. Naturally, he had to sell it to me. After all, I had painted it!"[13]

Abercrombie also took possession of places and interiors that were important in her life; she even claimed the moon for her intimate theater.[14] Sparse, immaculate interiors such as *The Past and the Present (Weinstein Interior)* (1946; color plate 12) are haunted by an atmosphere that suggests that space and time have been charmed by Gertrude the sorceress. Objects and the rooms they inhabit remain orderly. All things are suspended, calm, and silent. What Abercrombie could not control in her life she controlled in her art, making it part of her reality. "People try to categorize my art," she said. "I think it is better to try and enjoy it. I try to make it real. I often find my paintings more real than the world around me. And they are quieter. And I can put in that painted world just whom I choose."[15]

Tree at Aledo (1938; color plate 10) is one of a series of paintings that depicts scenes from the small Illinois town where Abercrombie spent part of her childhood. The actual tree can be seen in a photograph from Abercrombie's personal papers (figure 3). She edited out the specifics of place to suggest that Aledo's significance and identity were concentrated in the presence of this fantastic tree. Isolated in a chilly dreamlike landscape, it is a defiant image, sprouting new branches despite having been cut in several places. Its limbs seethe with an anthropomorphic vitality attesting to resurrection and renewal.

Figure 3. Gertrude Abercrombie (?), photograph of a tree depicted in the painting *Tree at Aledo* (1938; color plate 10), Aledo, Illinois, n.d. Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

For Abercrombie and Priebe, jazz and blues culture had a significance that transcended music. During the early 1940s, Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and other young black musicians helped craft the bebop sound. Identified as a bold protest against the infiltration of swing music by lilywhite players, promoters, and casual listeners, its political implications were felt by a wide range of audiences. Musically, the musicians strove for short, quick performance pieces showcasing greater freedom in harmonics, time, melody, and structure. The driving innovations in the music necessitated a virtuoso command of one's instrument, but many stressed musical consciousness, ideas, and above all improvisation in bop.[16]

Abercrombie took bebop's underlying philosophy, compatible with what she accepted in surrealism, and used it in composing her variations on the theme of her emotional interior life. This emphasis on freedom, eschewing the conservatism of earlier structures, and the assertion of one's self in one's art linked Abercrombie and jazz.[17] Thus Gillespie asserted: "I want to make an unequivocal statement that Gertrude is the first bop artist," he said. "Bop in the sense that she has taken the essence of our music and transported it to another art form."[18] They discussed this relationship during an interview. Gertrude said to Gillespie:

> "What you do is you look and look and look, with artists, and that's what I did, and then I just decided to do it my way, my own direction, it's a little offbeat, a little dreamy, and mysterious, yes, mysterious, just like the music; nobody knows what's happening, I know what's happening." And Dizzy said, "Well, of course, because it's just an extension of yourself, the art. I don't worry about it. You don't have to worry about it when you're going in the right direction. First of all, you have to seek the truth of yourself and not what somebody else tells you, and when you discover the truth, you just keep going and time will take care of it."[19]

Design for Death (Charlie Parker's Favorite Painting) (1946; color plate 11) contains the hallmarks of Abercrombie's style: the twisted tree silhouetted against a moonlit sky, a sparsely indicated landscape, and simple objects imbued with an uncanny sense of expectation. Its theme, possibly painted with a song made popular by Billie Holiday in mind ("Strange Fruit," composed by Abel Meeropol under the pseudonym Lewis Allen; recorded 1939) corresponds to contemporary images by Jacob Lawrence and feelings shared by Priebe on the plight of American blacks.

Abercrombie was plagued with self-doubt and prone to periods of depression. In 1952, during her most prolific and successful period she confided in Priebe: "Dud sent ideas for me but I can't get going. I've had a bad cough plus general depression. It makes me not like myself. I mean dislike not dissimilar."[20] "Started big self painting yesterday," she wrote to Wilde a few months later. "Think I'll cover it up today. Too big and not good enough."[21] Abercrombie underwent treatment during the 1950s — probably for depression—with Dr. Franz Alexander of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis. Her paintings often reveal an awareness of contemporary trends in analysis and the terms used to describe psychological disorders.[22]

In several paintings Abercrombie willfully acknowledges playing roles, the existence of unconscious personae, and identity fragmentation. The delicate, refined features of the subject in *Self-Portrait of My Sister* (1941; cat. no. 13) is Abercrombie's alter-ego in the guise of a fictitious sibling. Many friends recalled her perceived ugliness, a feeling that may have been imposed by her mother and that was never far from the surface.[23] She told Studs Terkel in a 1977 interview: "It's always myself that I paint, but not actually, because I don't look that good or cute."[24] *Split Personality* (1950; cat. no. 16) shows Abercrombie divided into two spectral parts, trying to retain control over her fragmented self. She points towards the lower half of her body as if to banish it from the room, a microcosm of her world.

Accelerating health problems and turmoil in her personal life gradually took Abercrombie away from her art. Huppler was alarmed to see how rapidly she was aging, and wrote to Priebe: "She surprised me terrible by being so bent over as she walks, like real old crone (or witch). I remarked on sadness of it to John and Miriam and they said she's not so bent ordinarily, but gets so when she's drunk—& sho' enuf, I remember G. pullin' on flask in hot sun."[25] Around 1970 she started a memoir of short anecdotes she called her "joke book" in which she recalled the joyous and curious in her past and made light of her recent misfortunes. "I had 3 big blows in the 60's. They didn't blow good," she wrote. "I got pancreatitis [sic] and nearly died & wished I had. Two good anagrams for pancreatitis [sic]: Trace its pain—& can't praise it. I weather the storm."[26] Throughout her career she maintained a fine balance in her work between the mysterious and the factual, tragedy and humor. "I paint the way I do because I'm just plain scared," she said in a late interview. "I mean, I think it's a scream that we're alive at all—don't you?"[27]

Notes

Abercrombie papers: Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Priebe papers: Karl J. Priebe Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

1. Abercrombie's contemporaries include Macena Barton (1901–1986), Vera Berdich (1915–2003), Fritzi Brod (1900–1952), Margo Hoff (b. 1912), and Julia Thecla (1896–1973). Little scholarship has been done on these artists or the phenomenon of prominent women modernists in Chicago. The impact of the city's women on dealing, collecting, and art education has received greater attention. Despite Chicago's important contributions to art history there is still no single comprehensive survey of its art. The best period survey remains *The Old Guard and the Avant-Guard: Modernism in Chicago* 1910–1940, ed. Sue Ann Prince (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). A collective portrait of art in Chicago is witnessed through the many entries in *Women Building Chicago* 1790–1990*: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Rima Lunin Schultz and Adele Hast (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001). Finally, some aspects of the postwar scene are addressed in *Art in Chicago,* 1945–1995, ed. Lynn Warren ((New York: Thames and Hudson / Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1996). The latter includes all of the above-mentioned women except Barton and Brod, who, with Thecla and Abercrombie, are included in the dictionary. Warren's selective catalogue accompanied a controversial exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. My work was completed before *Chicago Modern,* 1893–1945*: Pursuit of the New,* organized by the Terra Museum of American Art in Chicago went on view (July 17 through October 31, 2004). The catalogue promises to be an important contribution to the literature.
2. Wendell Wilcox, "Remembrance," in Susan Weininger and Kent Smith, *Gertrude Abercrombie* (Springfield: Illinois State Museum, 1991): 86. Wilcox's essay was

reprinted from a short catalogue produced for Abercrombie's 1977 Hyde Park Art Center retrospective.

3. See for instance, a list of thirteen Huppler sent on a postcard (ca. 1945) including, "2. A maypole with an owl, a dog, a cat each holding a string and walking in circle. 3. A clock face very realistic with moths perched in the glass … 6. A lady eating a spoonful of junket—a little pink mound, and her mouth open. (Carol [Blanchard] says anything with food in it sells, and it's true) … 11. A whole pile of letters tied with a ribbon or twist of old hair tied with ribbon." Abercrombie papers.
4. Wilde to Abercrombie, postcard postmarked June 6, 1951. Abercrombie papers.
5. Susan Weininger, "Gertrude Abercrombie," in Weininger and Smith, *Gertrude Abercrombie,* 15. Roy Kral performed a piece called "Afrocrombie," and Richie Powell wrote a tune called "Gertrude's Bounce."
6. Listed in Abrecrombie's "Joke Book." Abercrombie papers. The exact date of some of these visits, jam sessions, and longer stays can often be gleaned from Abercrombie and Priebe's personal correspondence. They rarely discussed art or upcoming exhibitions. Most of their letters and postcards concern meeting up in Chicago or Milwaukee to see music, the arrival of houseguests, or evaluations of new records. An example of art, music, and life intertwined is this note from Priebe to Abercrombie, December 1, 1954: "Marvelous time with Dizzy—you certainly must paint that horn. It opens up a whole new range of paintings for you. Had Dizzy to 1950 for dinner and used an Alice B. Toklas recipe—Gertrude [Stein] sure had a good little cook there." Abercrombie papers.
7. While Abercrombie sometimes noted on biographical cards she filled out for exhibitions that she attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the registrar's records do not show that she ever attended. She may have simply dropped-in on classes.
8. For more on these early experiences and predilections see Weininger, "Gertrude Abercrombie," in *Gertrude Abercrombie,* 10–13.
9. Frank Sandiford, "About Gertrude," *Chicago Photographic* vol. 3 (Chicago: United States International Trade Fair, The Chicago Fair of 1950, 1950), n.p.
10. All six artists did commercial work during the course of their careers: Glasier and Fein as advertising artists, Huppler as illustrator, Priebe and Wilde through corporate advertising commissions and as illustrators.
11. Agnes Lynch, "Art Critics Say Her Works Are 'Magic Realism,'" *Chicago Tribune* September 14, 1952.
12. Wilcox, "Remembrance," in *Gertrude Abercrombie,* 85.
13. Ron Offen and D. Shigley, "Artist's Eyes: Gertrude Abercrombie." *Southeast Economist* (March 8, 1972). See also Weininger, "Gertrude Abercrombie," 11–12.
14. "Oh those doll-baby nuts going to the moon finally made a 'hard dock.' And as you well know it's my moon up there. Intruders?" Abercrombie to Priebe, 1971, quoted in Weininger, "Gertrude Abercrombie," 21.
15. Quoted in Donald James Anderson, "Feeding the Artists is not Prohibited," *Chicago* 9, no. 3 (May/June, 1972): 19–20.
16. For a discussion of these qualities and their moral value see Amiri Baraka, "The Jazz Avant-Garde," reprinted in *Classic Essays on Twentieth-Century Music: A Continuing Symposium,* ed. Richard Kostelanetz and Joseph Darby (New York: Schirmer, 1996): 333–39.
17. Some critics have found it difficult to accept that jazz could inspire Abercrombie's hard-edge narrative paintings, expecting abstract interpretations such as those painted by Stuart Davis or Arthur Dove. See Deven Golden, "Gertrude

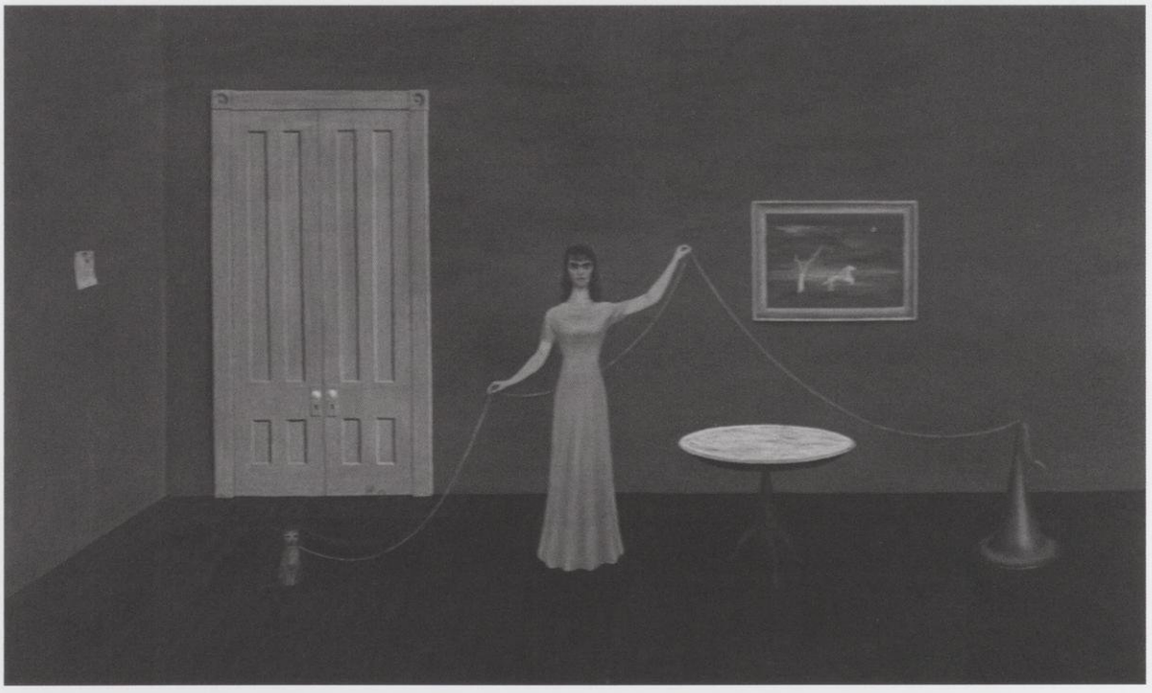
Abercrombie," *New Art Examiner* 18, no. 10 (June/summer, 1991): 43. For an example of a work painted while listening to a specific record (*Confirmation*), see Marilyn Robb, "Chicago," *Art News* 50, no. 1 (March, 1951): 54–55.

18. Quoted in Florence Hamlisch Levinsohn, "Just Plain Old Love," *Chicago* (February, 1977): 8.
19. Levinsohn, "Just Plain Old Love," 10.
20. Abercrombie to Priebe, May 28, 1952. Priebe papers.
21. Abercrombie to Wilde, October 9, 1952. Wilde papers.
22. Kent Smith, "Gertrude: An Interview with Don Baum," in Weininger and Smith, *Gertrude Abercrombie*, 69.
23. Weininger, "Gertrude Abercrombie," 19, 33–34.
24. Interview with Studs Terkel, WFMT radio broadcast on January 28, 1977, Chicago.
25. Huppler to Priebe, ca. 1970. Priebe papers.
26. Entry in Abercrombie's "Joke Book," dated May 28, 1971. Abercrombie papers.
27. Offen and Shigley, "Artist's Eyes: Gertrude Abercrombie."

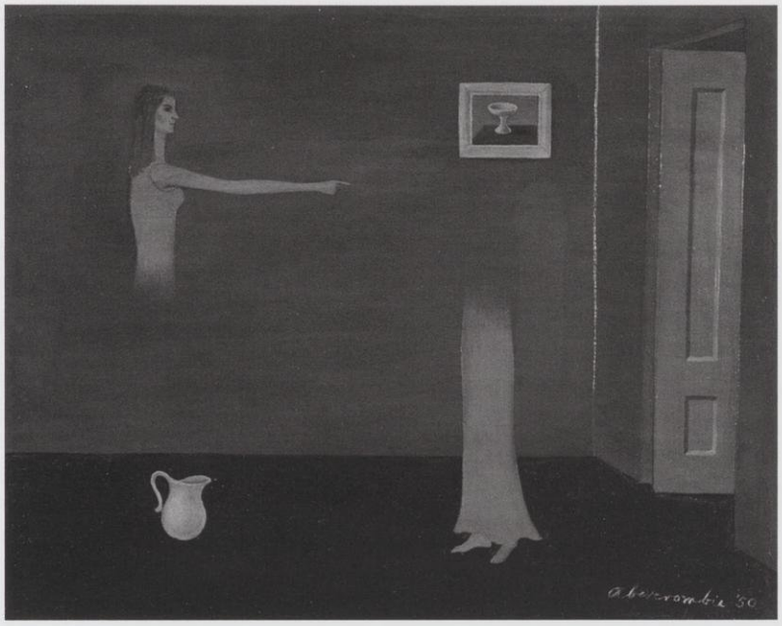
12
Gertrude Abercrombie
Return to Living, 1941
Oil on canvas, 18 x 27 inches
Susan and Michael Weininger

13
Gertrude Abercrombie
Self Portrait of My Sister, 1941
Oil on canvas, 26 1/2 x 21 3/4 inches
Powell and Barbara Bridges Collection

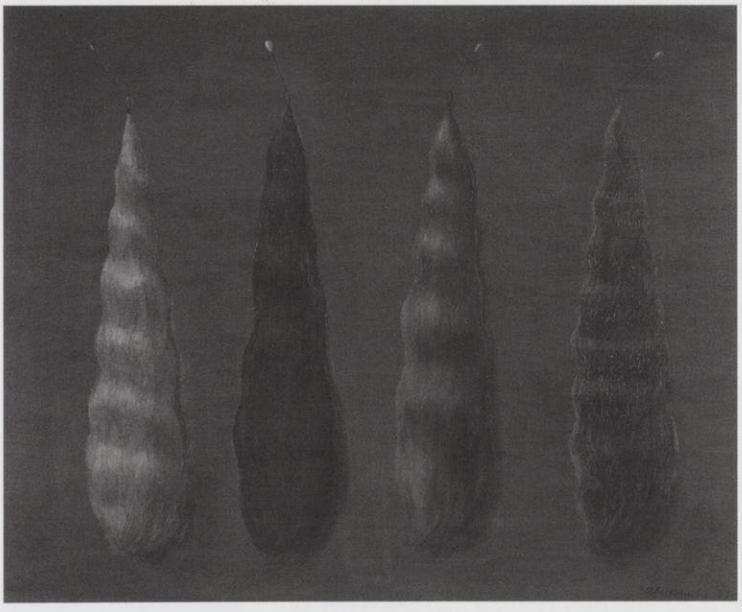
14
Gertrude Abercrombie
Gertrude Carrying Dinah (Young Mother #2), 1942
Oil on Masonite, 14 x 22 inches
Charles and Camille Baum



15
Gertrude Abercrombie
Where or When (Things Past), 1948
Oil on canvas, 21 1/2 x 35 1/2 inches
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of the Abercrombie Trust



16
Gertrude Abercrombie
Split Personality, 1950
Oil on Masonite, 7 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches
Isabelle Polacheck



17
Gertrude Abercrombie
Witches' Switchs, 1952
Oil on Masonite, 16 x 20 inches
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust
Photo by John R. Glembin

18
Gertrude Abercrombie
The Magician, 1964
Oil on linen, 20 x 24 inches
University Galleries, Illinois State University, Normal

Karl Priebe (1914–1976)

Priebe (figure 1) was the smooth socialite of the group. He courted and became part of the society in which his affluent patrons lived; he moved fluidly through the jazz and blues circles that packed clubs in Milwaukee, Chicago, and New York. Priebe was affable with the most outrageously colorful characters of the art world or the stolid professors and curators with whom he occasionally worked. A brilliant conversationalist, Priebe was fascinated by people, and he loved to learn from new relationships. His correspondents and surviving friends repeatedly describe him as a man who made them feel comfortable through his generosity and warmth. Artist Gerald Coleman, who met Priebe in the late 1960s, experienced the endearing effect of Priebe's friendships during a trip to Haiti in 1983. "While I was there I met the dancer Katherine Dunham and her husband John Pratt. When they asked me where I was from I told them Milwaukee. Pratt asked me, 'Did you know Karl Priebe?' I said of course! Pratt told me 'He was always a hero of mine.' I believe they gave me special treatment because of him. *That* was Karl Priebe."[1]

Figure 1. Carl Van Vechten, photograph of Karl Priebe, ca. 1944. Huppler Papers, courtesy of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari.

Priebe moved to Chicago in 1933 to study at the School of the Art Institute. In Chicago he met Gertrude Abercrombie, and the two became life-long friends (figure 2). Priebe and Abercrombie painted together, shared models, posed for one another, (1939; cat. no. 19) and exhibited in the same exhibitions. She turned him on to her friends, and Priebe introduced her to his. Abercrombie provided a glimpse of their early days: "Karl Priebe and I used to visit [Katherine Kuh's] gallery often and we had our own inside jokes and used to giggle a lot. One day we tried her temper and she said, 'You two must never come in here together. One at a time—O.K. but not together.' We giggled again and left and returned one by one."[2]

While in Chicago Priebe volunteered at Hull House, and his interests led him to teach art and art history in the inner city. It was a life-changing experience for the young artist. Priebe was

Figure 2. Samuel Wolf, photograph of Gertrude Abercrombie and Karl Priebe, ca. 1941. Karl J. Priebe Papers, Marquette University Archives, Milwaukee.

drawn to African-American nightclubs on Chicago's South Side, and eventually he befriended some of America's most influential jazz and blues musicians. Pearl Bailey, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Billie Holiday, Max Roach, and others corresponded with Priebe, and some stayed with him later in Milwaukee (figure 3). Priebe also met and corresponded with important figures associated with the Harlem Renaissance such as Richmond Barthé, Katherine Dunham, and Langston Hughes. Many of these new friends became patrons, and he was embraced by Milwaukee's black community when he returned home. Priebe's work of the mid-1930s reflects his immersion in the black nightlife of Chicago and Milwaukee. A number of character sketches now in the collection of the Haggerty Museum of Art in Milwaukee reveal Priebe to be a perceptive social observer of the cool and flamboyant. These soulful extrapolations are as much indebted to Picasso's Blue Period as they are to the black artists Priebe admired, such as Aaron Douglas or Archibald Motley Jr.

Priebe's other great love was nature, and birding was his passion. *The Ornithologist* (1946; color plate 22) is as much a delicately rendered still-life as it is a painted shrine to this aspect of his persona. He once remarked that "there have been very few days … that I haven't run over to the zoo to study the animals. It goes without saying that all this has influenced my work."[3] Sylvia Fein found her trips with Karl to Milwaukee's Washington Park Zoo to be "revelatory. He taught us all a lot about animals and once you saw Karl's paintings you too wanted to go home and draw animals!"[4] Priebe's animal paintings were so popular that he once lamented to Abercrombie, "I'm here doing the wildest commission of my life. The portrait of Milwaukee's most noted socialite's HORSE! Lordy."[5]

During the war Priebe's work shifted in tone as he embellished reality with invention. He wrote to Wilde about his new experiments, "I've been painting a little. Factories at night, bones, phallic—indeed—looking bananas at night, string. Then I've been drawing a lot, mostly those automatic things that I destroy lest dust falls on them."[6] *Self Portrait as a Masked Harlequin* (1942; figure 4) shows a sly, but melancholy Priebe dressed in garments dotted with little hearts. Over his left shoulder Milwaukee's factories huff jets of smoke into the night sky, fueled by the imperative defense effort. Other work,

Figure 3. Billie Holiday, Karl Priebe, and Frank Harriott, ca. 1946. Karl J. Priebe Papers, Marquette University Archives, Milwaukee.

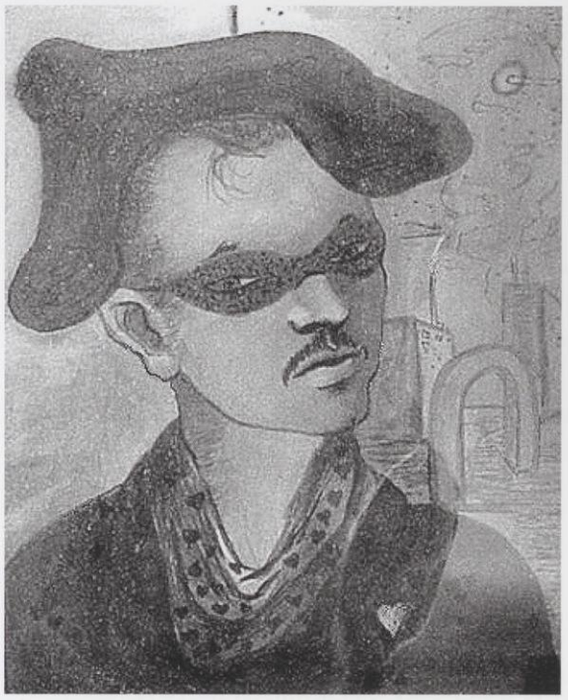


Figure 4. Karl Priebe, *Self Portrait as a Masked Harlequin,* 1942, casein on cardboard, 12 x 10 in. Formerly in the Collection of Jack Frost, Wauwautosa, WI, location unknown.

such as *The Poet—Homage to Edith S.* (1944; color plate 21) bears a distinct formal relationship to illusionistic surrealism. Priebe noted, "My new pictures get more Romantic and opposed to the real world so according to [Ronald] Firbank are possibly authentic war products."[7] Edith Sitwell rises in the foreground with a sparse desert landscape at her back, confronting the viewer with a look befitting a sorceress protecting her realm.

Critics often called Priebe a "fantasist" in response to the unreal, invented worlds he populated with frolicking circus or mythological figures. He attracted national attention for his paintings of African Americans and is still known primarily for this body of work. At the time of his first solo show at the Perls Galleries in New York, Priebe's work was praised for "delightful flights of fancy," considered "a far cry from the usual Midwestern portrayals of dilapidated barns, soil erosion and stooped farmers ..."[8] In 1947 *Life* magazine featured Priebe in a color spread accompanied by a portrait photograph by Arnold Newman. The editors asserted that Priebe was a leading figure in a new direction of representational American art focusing on beauty and subjectivity.[9] Priebe maintained that work was "realism filtered through the imagination"[10] and insisted on its relationship to people, creatures, and objects he had observed from life.

Priebe's paintings of African Americans were popular, but the press chose to emphasize the "exotic" or "whimsical" in his work. Priebe's commitment to portraying blacks in dignified ways or relating the sadness they experienced during a time of legalized racism was lost in the coverage of his near sell-out New York exhibitions. Since Priebe chose to place his figures in fantastic settings rather than gritty urban scenes, his work was often misinterpreted.[11] "Priebe declares he doesn't like his work to be described as charming," a reporter noted in 1946. "Really it's more serious," Priebe asserted, "and don't say I'm escapist ..."[12] Living as Priebe did in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s made him vulnerable to hate crimes or investigation by the F.B.I. To Priebe there was never any question of how to live his life, and he did it without regard to criticism. While he imagined blacks in a world that contained exotic animals, games, and esoteric devices, it was a projection of safety amidst the suffering he witnessed.

Priebe often transported black figures to realms that appear lit from behind by colored lights. His multilayer glazing technique made some paintings resemble stained glass. Unburdened by the threat of violence and discrimination, Priebe's figures study ornithology, adopt the characteristics of the commedia dell'arte, write letters, perform sacred rites, and accomplish the impossible as though second nature. Although much of his work fits this description, he occasionally made more direct statements about the plight of American blacks. *Saint Sebastian* (1941; color plate 18) is a rare instance of Priebe's crossover into contemporary antilynching imagery. At the edge of a towering cliff, a twisted hanging-tree and its dying victim have been transformed into a restaging of Christian martyrdom. The analogy was appropriate to Priebe's Catholic upbringing.

Apart from his narrative paintings, Priebe consistently depicted black men and women as self-made, elegant, worldly individuals in single-figure studies. Priebe's friends posed for these paintings although they are not always identified as portraits. At a time when stereotypes were prevalent in popular culture, Priebe individuated blacks. Although shown alongside the fantastic, mythological paintings, they were rarely singled-out by critics.

Charles Sebree with a Hooded Falcon (1942; cat. no. 20) shows the African-American artist (1914–1985) seated behind a table, his long hands and tapered fingers sensuously accentuated. His right hand rests upon a white chalk drawing of his friends Priebe and Abercrombie. A hooded bird of prey sits atop his left wrist. The fingers of Sebree's left hand curve and dip, his forefinger leading the viewer's eye to the edge of his neck, up to the jaw, and around the soft texture of his hair. Priebe has captured his friend's soft, sensuous lips and youthful, radiant face. Sebree adopts overlapping personas as artist, elite man of refinement, and by extension, a confident descendent of Alain Locke's *New Negro* (1925). He is desirable because of his good looks, his intelligence, and his social position.

The Socialite (1948; color plate 24), once owned by the photographer Carl Van Vechten,[13] shows a fashionable young woman seated in a nightclub or at one of Priebe's parties. She wears a blue dress topped by a semitransparent lacy collar. She tips a glass tumbler backward with her right hand and casually holds a burning cigarette with her left.[14] Her stylish hat is decorated with an orange carnation, while a pink one falls along the curve of her collarbone. Priebe has brushed the petals in a way that makes them appear feathery, soft to the touch. With fancy gold earrings and a dazzling pink ring gracing her left hand the lady *is* elegance and style. Her eyes sparkle with happiness; her delightful mouth smiles as if to hint at secrets held in the letter at the table's edge. As an independent woman captured in a moment of reflection, she embodies the confident and seductive modernity that attracted Karl Priebe.

Although he became an intimate of Billie Holiday and had a passionate, intense relationship with Van Vechten, his midwestern bonds remained strongest. Black or white, gay or straight, and a mixture of each, Priebe's friends occupied a central role in his art and life. An uncommon ability to relate to each, however different, was his great talent.

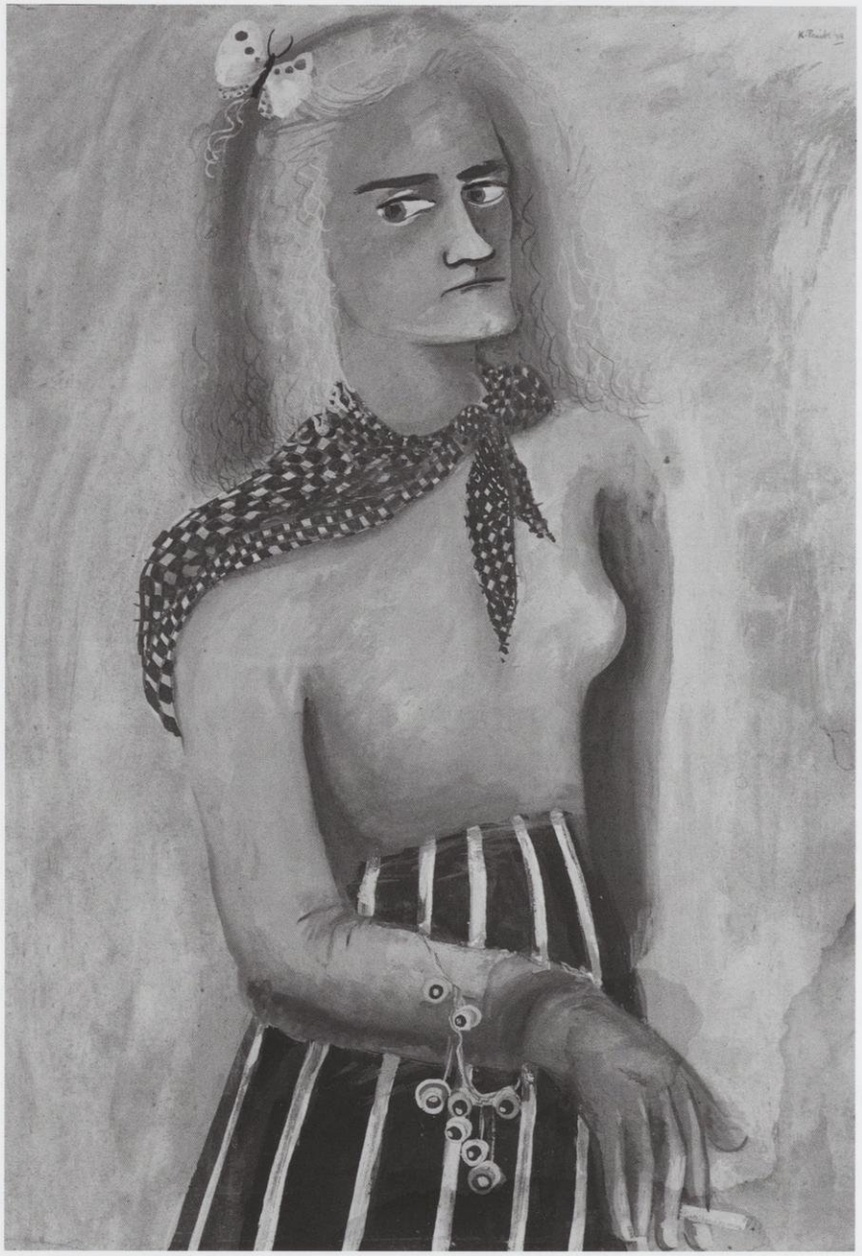
Notes

Abercrombie papers: Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Priebe papers: Karl J. Priebe Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University, Milwaukee.

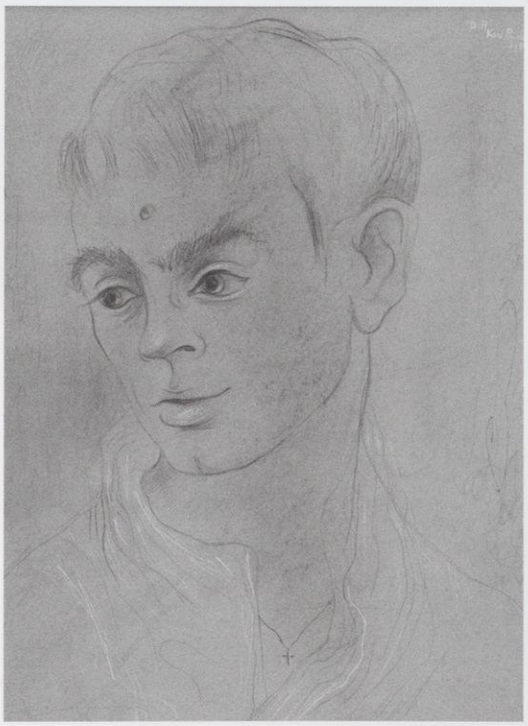
Wilde papers: John Wilde Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

1. Telephone interview with the author, July 28, 2003.
2. Gertrude Abercrombie, from her Joke Book, ca. 1970s. Abercrombie papers.
3. Richard S. Davis, "Credit Zoo with Assist in Karl Priebe's Success," *Milwaukee Journal*, Green Sheet Section, October 13, 1944.
4. Fein interview with author, October 10, 2002.
5. Priebe to Abercrombie, January 10, 1949. Abercrombie papers.
6. Priebe to Wilde, April 27, 1942. Wilde papers.
7. Priebe to Wilde, March 30, 1944. Wilde papers. Priebe named this work specifically in the next breath, "I must finish one now to be called 'The Poet—Homage to Miss Edith S[itwell]. I won't be able to spell out the last name, though. That family is famous for their lawsuits." Priebe's depiction is much more flattering than earlier and contemporary examples by Pavel Tchelitchew, which he would have known.
8. Helen Boswell, "Fifty-Seventh Street in Review: Imaginative Karl Priebe," *Art Digest* 17, no. 7 (January 1, 1943): 18.
9. "Karl Priebe: Young Midwestern Artist Lives and Paints in an Odd World of Fantasy," *Life* (November 24, 1947): 68
10. Frances Stover, "Artist Priebe is Spellbound by Bird Life," *Milwaukee Journal,* December 22, 1946.
11. Priebe was recently dismissed as insensitive with the implication of being a racist by William Jeffett, "Catalogue," in William Jeffett, ed. *Surrealism in America During the 1930s and 1940s: Selections from the Penny and Elton Yasuna Collection* (St. Petersburg, FL: Salvador Dalí Museum, 1998), 145–46. It is difficult to reconcile that view with Priebe's actual reception within the black community.
12. M.F., "Karl Priebe Wins Acclaim in New York Art Circles," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 20, 1946.
13. The envelope in the foreground is addressed to Van Vechten from Priebe. Michael Rosenfeld confirmed my suspicions about the provenance; conversation April 8, 2003.
14. Priebe was an avid collector of antique glass and had a large collection of eighteenth-century tumblers. Huppler depicted six of them in a 1949 still-life, *Art and Nature II: Tumblers and Hollyhock Leaf (Homage to Karl Priebe)*. Robert Cozzolino, *Dudley Huppler: Drawings* (Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 2002), 48.

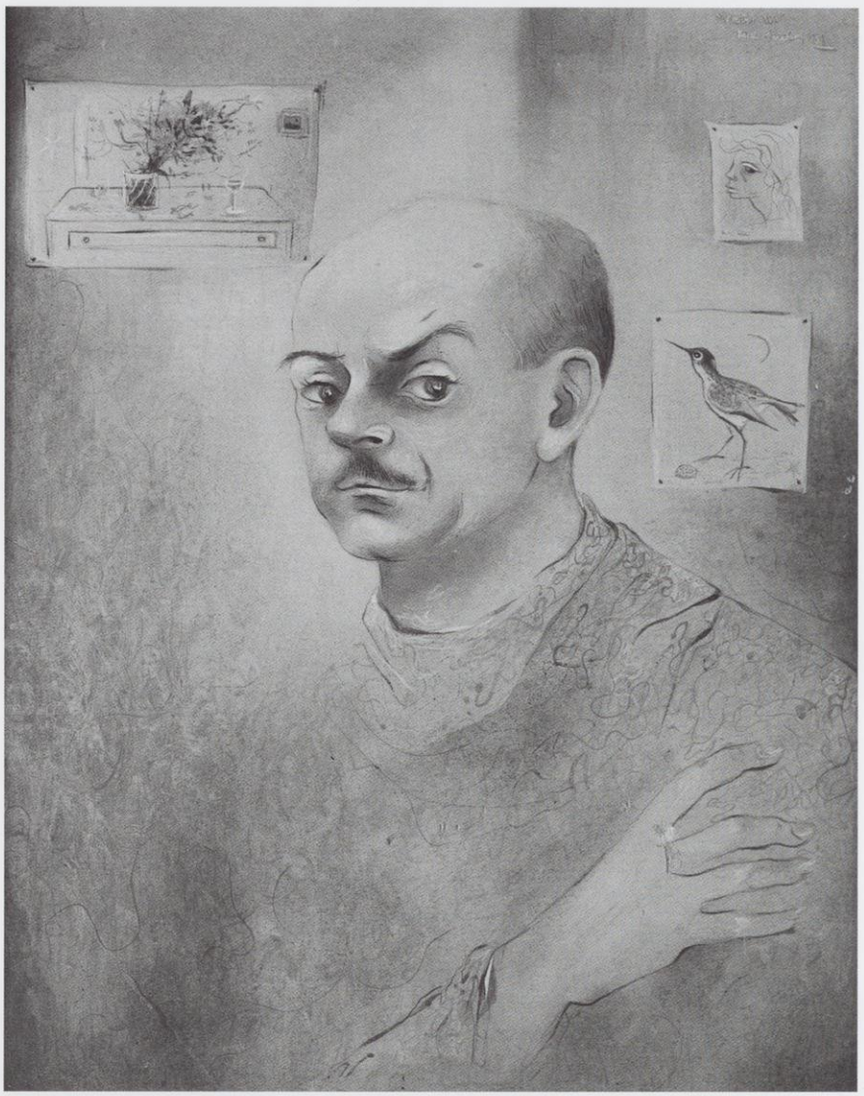


19
Karl Priebe
Gertrude Abercrombie, 1939
Casein on cardboard, 21 1/2 x 15 7/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

20
Karl Priebe
Charles Sebree with a Hooded Falcon, 1942
Casein on cardboard, ca. 16 x 14 inches
John M. Huppler
Photo by Jim Wildeman



21
Karl Priebe
D. H., 1944
Pencil, chalk and casein on cardboard,
11 3/8 x 8 1/2 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund



22
Karl Priebe
Portrait of Victor W., 1951
Casein on paperboard, 20 1/2 x 16 1/8 inches
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University,
Gift of Victor J. Williams

Dudley Huppler (1917–1988)

Huppler was the axis around which the entire group revolved. Trained as a writer and exceptionally well read, he thought of himself as the group chronicler. On sending a draft of his third, never-published book of prose to Karl Priebe, he said: "It's too bad that I am left to be 'historian'—but I feel that if I don't write it down, who will?"[1] John Wilde once said that Dudley was the group's "apologist,"[2] and that appellation is supported by Huppler's many roles: agent, collaborator, collector, critic, model, protector, and tireless national promoter. Glasier admitted that Huppler had an eye for their best work. He told Fein, "I remember how envious I was of Huppler when I saw some of your things on the walls—yet all I could do was to stare at them ... He's got one of the best collections ... he had some damn fine pieces."[3]

Although Huppler (figure 1) never did write a formal history of the group's activities, his extraordinarily detailed, enthralling correspondence composes a lively portrait over the years. As the group's observer, he was candid and perceptive; Huppler did not mince words. He once reported: "Marshall has the most clumsy, ill-painted pic in Salon called 'Three Babes in the Woods.' Even the gentle Mrs. Ashman spoke out against it."[4] During a trip to Europe, he critiqued his friends before launching into a reverie about Glasier:

> How quickly and early you [Sylvia] learned to draw peculiarly unto yourself, and how rare a thing that is. I've been threshing it out, and have only the faintest mannerist leanings to guide me, but am approaching just exactly the kind of picture I like to look at and think of as mine. John's always had that Lutheran morbidity to sour his art up for me and Marshall's that oafishness and Karl's that prettiness and yours that 'lady' stuff that escapes me in the end and while you're all the great artists ... Vienna told us again what a modern master of an old tradition Glasier is. How he relates to Altdorfer and Cranach and Baldung-Grien, etc.—and how because of that he can't ever look for appreciation in America where nobody knows what it's all about. In Vienna there's an Altdorfer of a young girl being embraced from behind by a

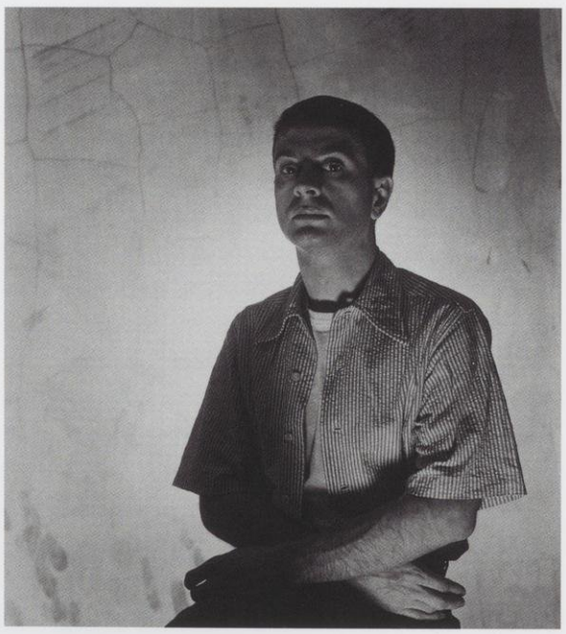


Figure 1. George Platt Lynes, photograph of Dudley Huppler, 1950. Huppler Papers, courtesy Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari.

> lewd old man (both lying down) that would slaughter in an American gallery but there is as natural as can be—and it ain't so much the subject as the aesthetic, just as clear in any 2 inches of landscape … that makes me know how Marshall is of that alien tradition and a perfect master of it.[5]

Drawing was infectious within the group; it seemed inevitable that Huppler would start once he surrounded himself with artists. Fein and Wilde recall that Huppler made his earliest drawings while watching them work on designs for *Orchesis,* the University of Wisconsin dance department's annual festival. Unlike his friends, Huppler remained without formal training his entire life.[6] He initially adopted aspects of surrealist art that they had chosen not to. Huppler's drawings sprang spontaneously from his imagination, and he turned to biomorphic, abstract modes of surrealism for inspiration. His earliest works parade a colorful menagerie of insectlike creatures across sheets of paper in orderly grids. They bear literary or narrative titles despite their hieroglyphic nature. *The Friends of Karl Priebe by One of Them: A Tribute Piece* (1944; cat. no. 23) is his most ambitious work in this mode. It pays homage to Priebe's diverse social circle (and favorite animals) by gathering them together, carefully labeled like specimens in a shadow box.

Huppler shifted gears completely in 1945 to adopt a technique that involved making hundreds of tiny circles of varying sizes or applying dots with an ink pen. He wrote to Fein about the new work:

> I am doing philosophic drawings now and they are so deep I have to fish myself out every time a meal comes around. They have many dots in them—2 million dots a square foot really. My eyes drop little trickles of anguish all day but I think I am going to die young so I do not worry too much. There are bones and treasure in these drawings, and I do things called coronals, for around the head. I don't look like Henry Moore at all anymore. My new favorite is Ben Shahn and he does things I couldn't even derive from if I wanted, so I am safe.[7]

These drawings are strongly organic even when they depict imaginary objects, as in the bubbling *St. Catherine Reliquary* (1945; cat. no. 24). Drained of color and stripped of flesh, *Night Moth* (1946; cat. no. 25) appears like an isolated, magnified element from Huppler's earlier multiform compositions. The creature's body is a marvel of overlapping patterns and textures suggesting potential fluttering flight. These drawings suggest metamorphosis, primordial matter, and reality in constant, volatile transformation. They correspond to new anxieties in the postwar world regarding the atom and its destructive capabilities.[8]

Huppler changed gears again in 1947 in favor of naturalism and was elated by the "magic" of his new method. He often described the drawings literally popping to life: "Finished the eagle drawing & it's so realistic it ate my eyes out. Least, I can't see much today;" or "I did some mushrooms so real I think I'll cream them and eat on toast."[9] While Huppler developed his drawing abilities, he practiced ingenious marketing strategies. By 1950, when he arrived in New York, Huppler was widely known through a series of postcards he had made reproducing dozens of new drawings. Among the many artists, writers, and curators who acquired his postcards was photographer George Platt Lynes, whom Huppler greatly admired. Lynes welcomed Huppler into his circle with open arms. "Oh did I ever get a welcome from Paul Cadmus and Jared French and a nice new painter called George Tooker, a cute name," he wrote to Abercrombie. "I might as well be in Europe, I'm that happy."[10]

Huppler rarely addressed sexual identity directly in his work. Not until the late 1960s was he comfortable being "out" in his art. Even then, the works he exhibited publicly were sensuous torsos; more explicit work, often copied from pornographic magazines was kept private in sketchbooks. In the late 1970s Huppler was known to boast about the good old days, when lifestyles were kept concealed and the hidden,

secretive culture of homosexuality attained a sort of mystique to outsiders.[11] He bitterly objected to ostentatious public display, preferring erudite references and intellectual codes among insiders.

The work on which Huppler's reputation was founded is filled with puns, symbols, and in-jokes that simultaneously reveal and veil his sexuality. Huppler's sense of humor led him to channel his energy into the depiction of roosters, sensuous still-life objects *Cocozelle Squash (Or Vegetable Marrow Squash)* (1948; cat. no. 27) and "memorials" in homage to gay artists and writers. Huppler's lithe, wild satyrs in search of lovers were often based on photos of his own arms and legs (figure 2) such as *Homage to Dosso Dossi* (color plate 27). *Canes* (1950; cat. no. 30) shows five fantastic cock-topped staves grouped together closely above a sparsely indicated horizon. On the left, a rope with a texture like silk loops around and languidly dangles down, suspended in the air. A jewel in the form of a pomegranate hovers before the rope and is split open to reveal its juicy seeds. Two canes are topped with heads of cocks and stand erect, about to be lassoed by the elegant cord.

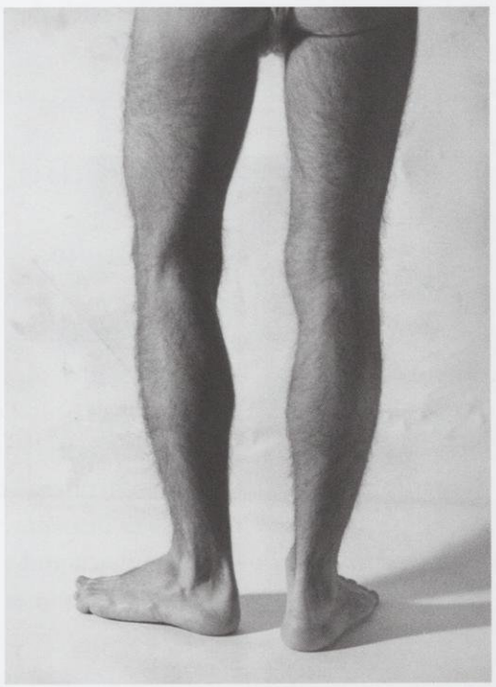


Figure 2. Otto Fenn, photograph of Huppler's legs, ca. 1954. Huppler Papers, courtesy of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari.

In correspondence with his intimates, Huppler developed a textual analogy to the coy and seemingly innocent subjects of his work. On a postcard of his drawing "young cock" he teased Abercrombie, "Yr. favorite subject matter. Ho ho."[12] Elsewhere he told her he was busy "Doing 3 long squashes now, any or all of which would be a pleasure to fondle, if not worse. Ho ho."[13] When George Platt Lynes wrote to Huppler regarding the difficult selection of an offered drawing, we can safely assume he is being as flirtatious as he is witty, playing on Huppler's naughty references:

> The drawings ... enchanted me, of course, and they also enchanted the "too many people" all of whom are envious of me, how rightly. I chose the young cock, one of the best I think and appropriate to me—for somehow, accidentally, I've acquired a little collection of cocks, a Chinese one, a large wooden one—you'll see when you come to New York ... I was, I confess, a bit tempted by the page of mouths, by its oddity. But the cock I like better, really. I am delighted.[14]

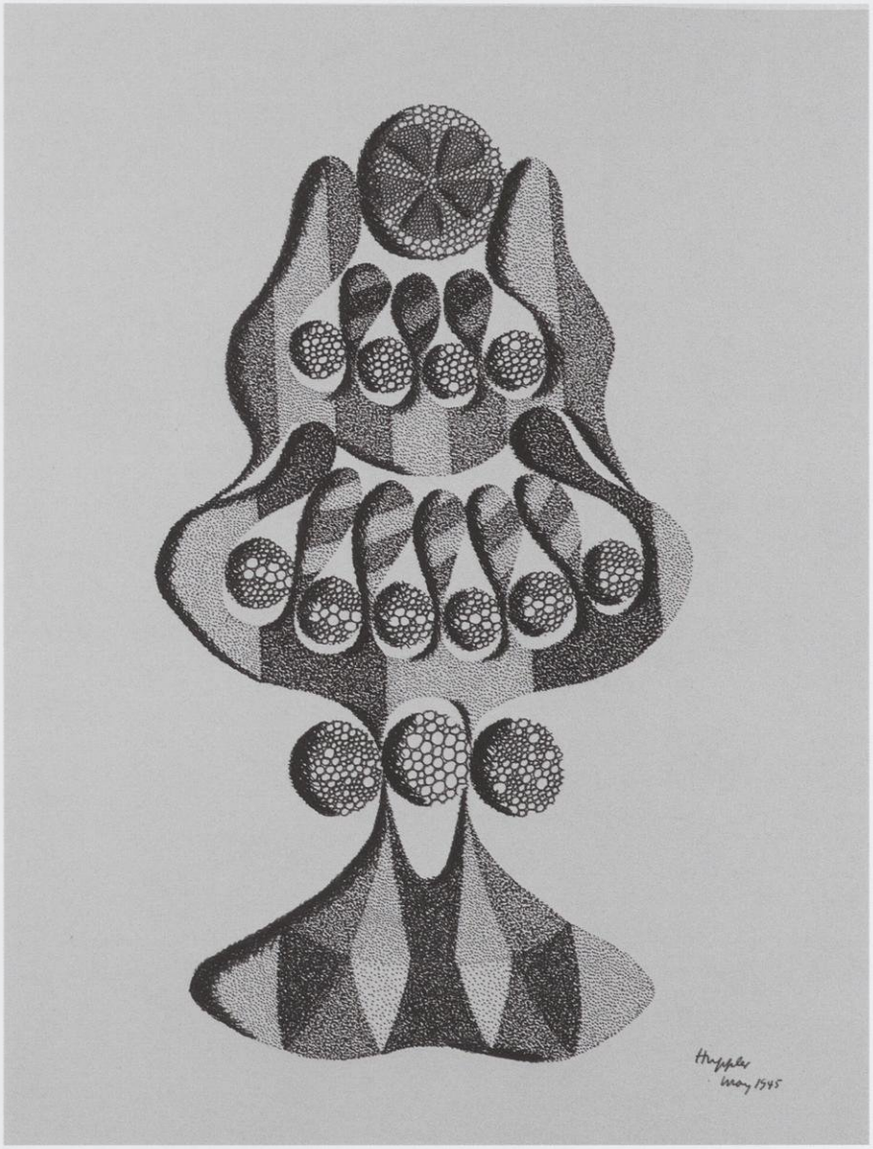
Huppler had good reason to veil his identity. Advertisements, popular magazines, novels, and films that clearly defined gender roles and demarcated a normal male or female were pervasive after World War II and contributed to Americans' sense of readjustment in postwar prosperity. Deviations such as homosexuality were thought peculiar at best but were often dangerous. During the Cold War, at the height of McCarthyism, homosexuality was seen as the only social peril worse than Communism.[15] In the 1950s homosexuals were hidden from view in mainstream culture but safe or tolerated in the arts. But even in artistic circles, effeminate gays were targeted by their peers and were often forced to conceal their identity in public or in their work.[16] Both Huppler's midwestern friends and Lynes's group used their own bodies in sexually frank, if anxious or melancholic narratives. In each group he found a place.

Notes

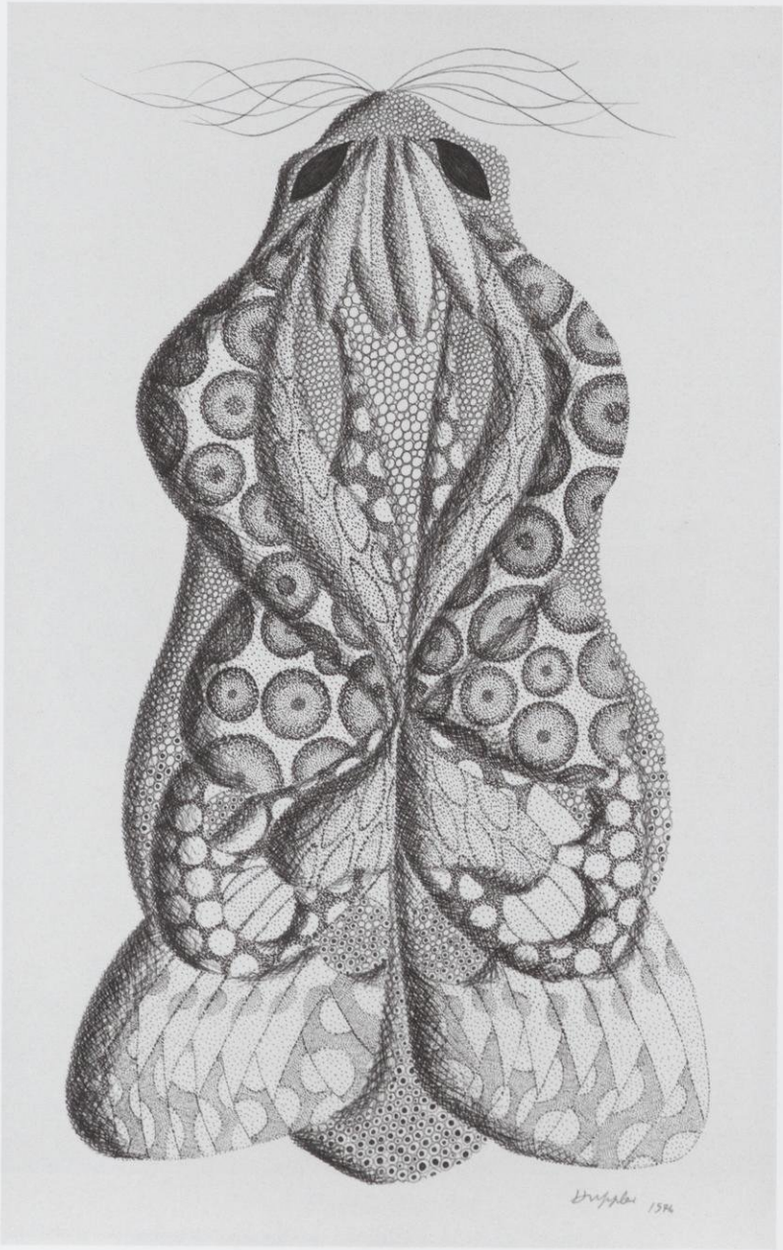
Abercrombie papers: Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.
Fein papers: Sylvia Fein Personal Papers, Martinez, CA.
Huppler papers: Dudley Huppler Personal Papers, Longmont, CO.

1. Huppler to Priebe, regarding *The Antiquerie,* ca. 1966. Priebe papers, correspondence folder 2.
2. Wilde in conversation with the author, June, 2001.
3. Glasier to Fein, December 29, 1951. Fein papers.
4. Huppler to Fein, November 1, 1947. Fein papers.
5. Huppler to Fein, August 14, 1951. Fein papers.
6. Huppler never took art courses but he did receive tips and advice from friends. He credited Wilde with one lesson in perspective (probably the tiled floor in *Bust: Alessandro Severo [Myself as a Colored man as Alessandro Severo]*); Priebe and Andy Warhol with lessons in color, and in a mischievous letter to Abercrombie he anticipated another lesson: "I'm leavin' for San Fran. shortly at last—for a visit to Sylvia Fein, my favorite artist. Yo ho, will that rile ya! No, I love all you girls about equal. But Sylvia's gonna teach me dry paintin' technique ..." May 8, 1952. Abercrombie papers.
7. Huppler to Fein, May 11, 1945. Fein papers.
8. Huppler made numerous humorous and macabre references to "the bomb" in letters to his friends starting on August 8, 1945. See postcard to Wilde. Wilde papers. Abercrombie made at least one work of art in response to the anxious climate of the postwar period, *Atom Bomb* (ca. 1950; oil, twine, and fabric on Masonite). Reproduced in Susan Weininger, *Gertrude Abercrombie and Friends.* (Springfield: Illinois State Museum, 1983), n.p.
9. Huppler to Fein, April 24, 1947; February 16, 1948. Fein papers.
10. Huppler to Abercrombie, February 16, 1950. Abercrombie papers.
11. Toby Tenenbaum, conversation with the author, July 13, 2002.
12. Huppler to Abercrombie, October 23, 1948. Abercrombie papers.
13. Huppler to Abercrombie, August 1, 1949. Abercrombie papers.
14. Lynes to Huppler, December 27, 1949. Huppler papers.
15. Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War,* 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 43.
16. See Jonathan Katz, "The Art of Code: Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg," in *Significant Others: Creativity & Intimate Partnership,* ed. Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 188–207.

23
Dudley Huppler
The Friends of the Artist Karl Priebe by One of Them: A Tribute Piece, 1944
Ink, graphite, and casein on paper, 29 1/2 x 21 1/2 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Gift of John and Shirley Wilde
Photo by Jim Wildeman



24
Dudley Huppler
St. Catherine Reliquary, 1945
Ink on paper, 12 x 10 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art,
Gift of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Jim Wildeman

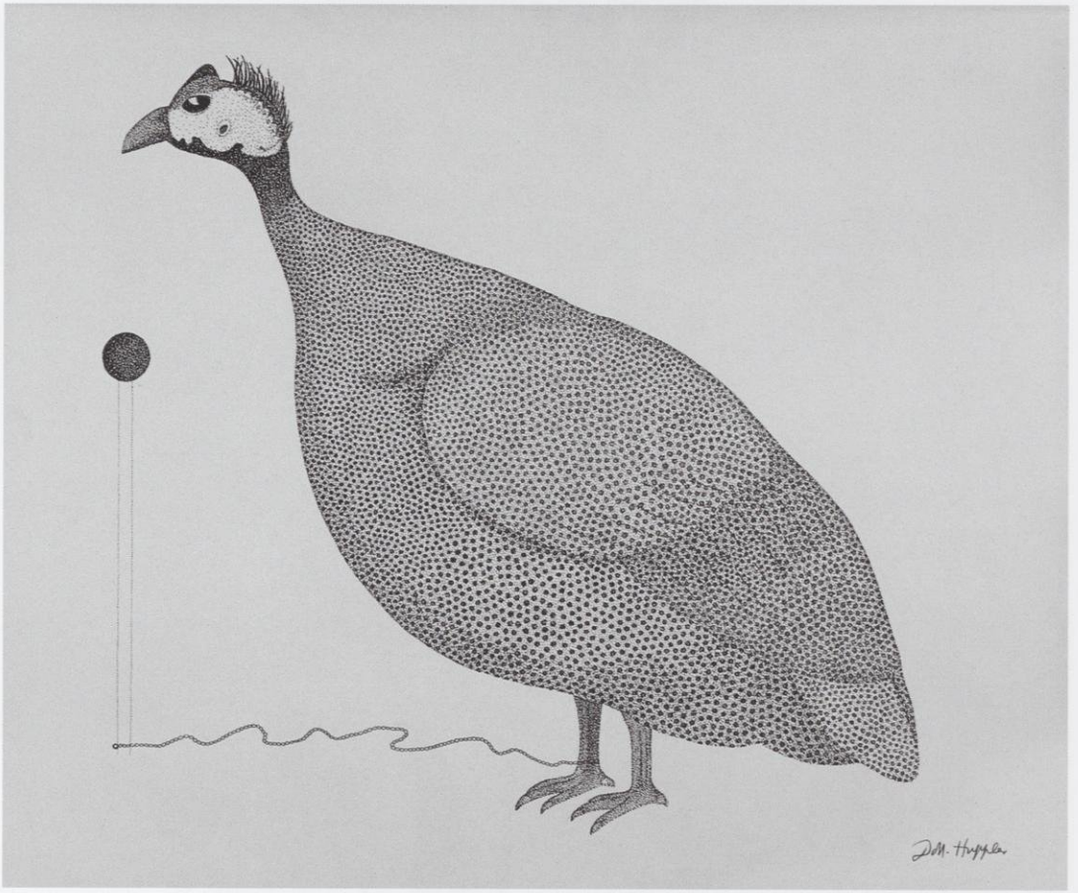


25
Dudley Huppler
Night Moth, 1946
Ink and pencil on paper, 16 x 10 1/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

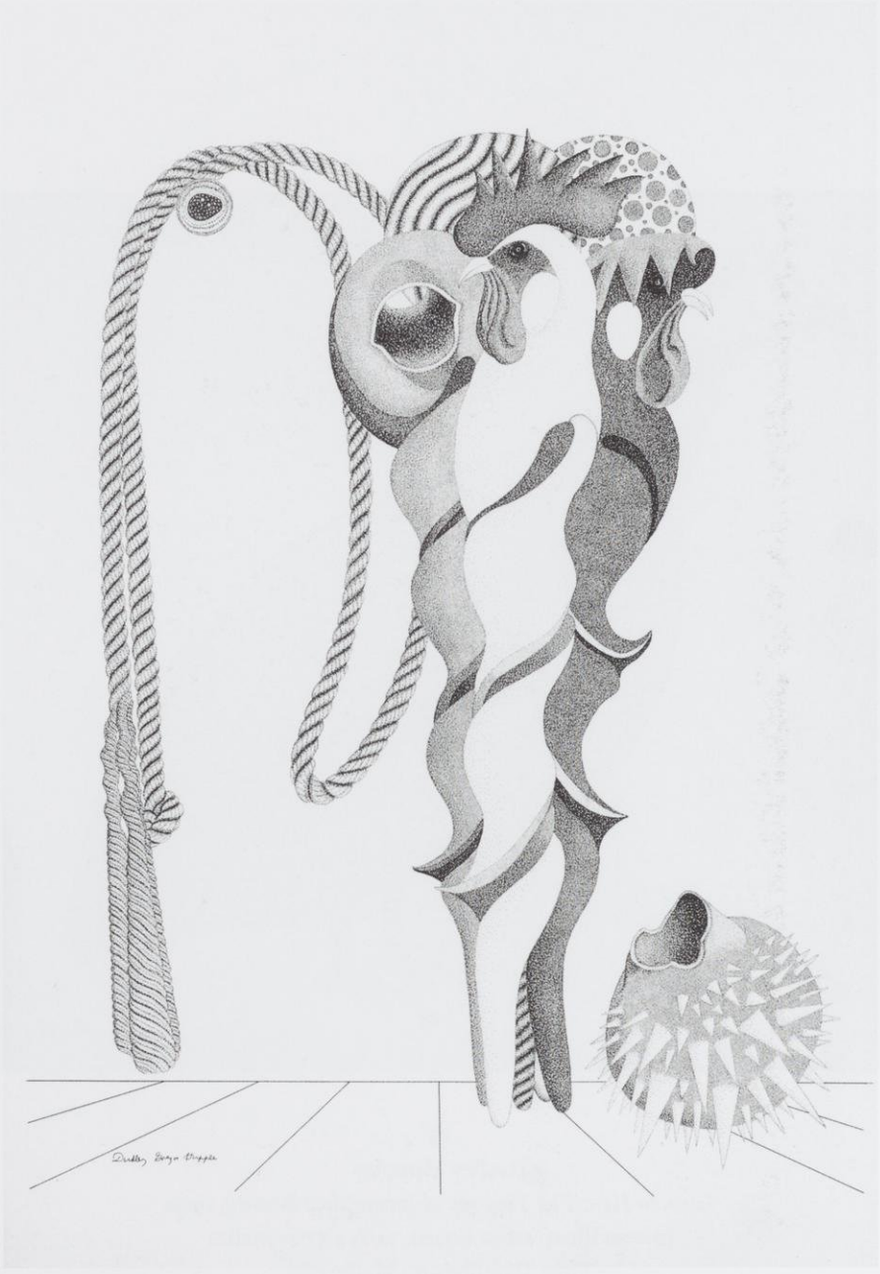
26
Dudley Huppler
XIV Century English Cup, 1948
Ink on illustration board, 19 7/8 x 15 1/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

27
Dudley Huppler
Cocozelle Squash (or Vegetable Marrow Squash), 1948
Ink on illustration board, 16 7/8 x 14 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

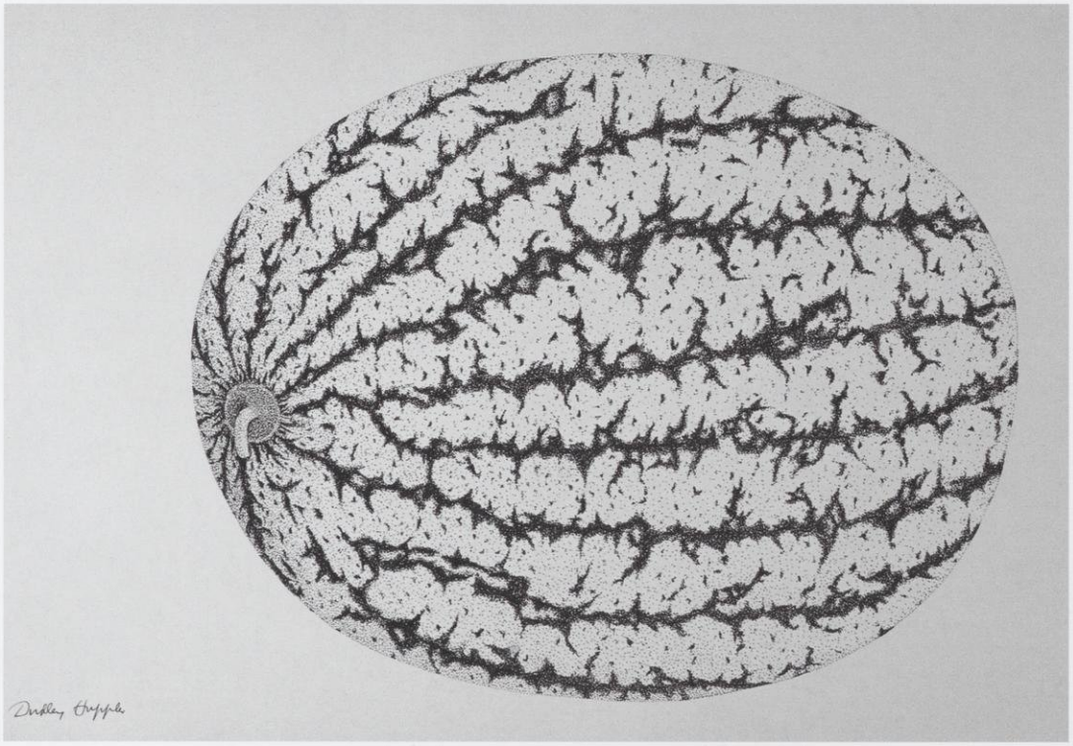
28
Dudley Huppler
Gertrude Abercrombie, 1949
Ink and graphite on illustration board, 24 5/8 x 16 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman
Endowment Fund purchase
Photo by Jim Wildeman



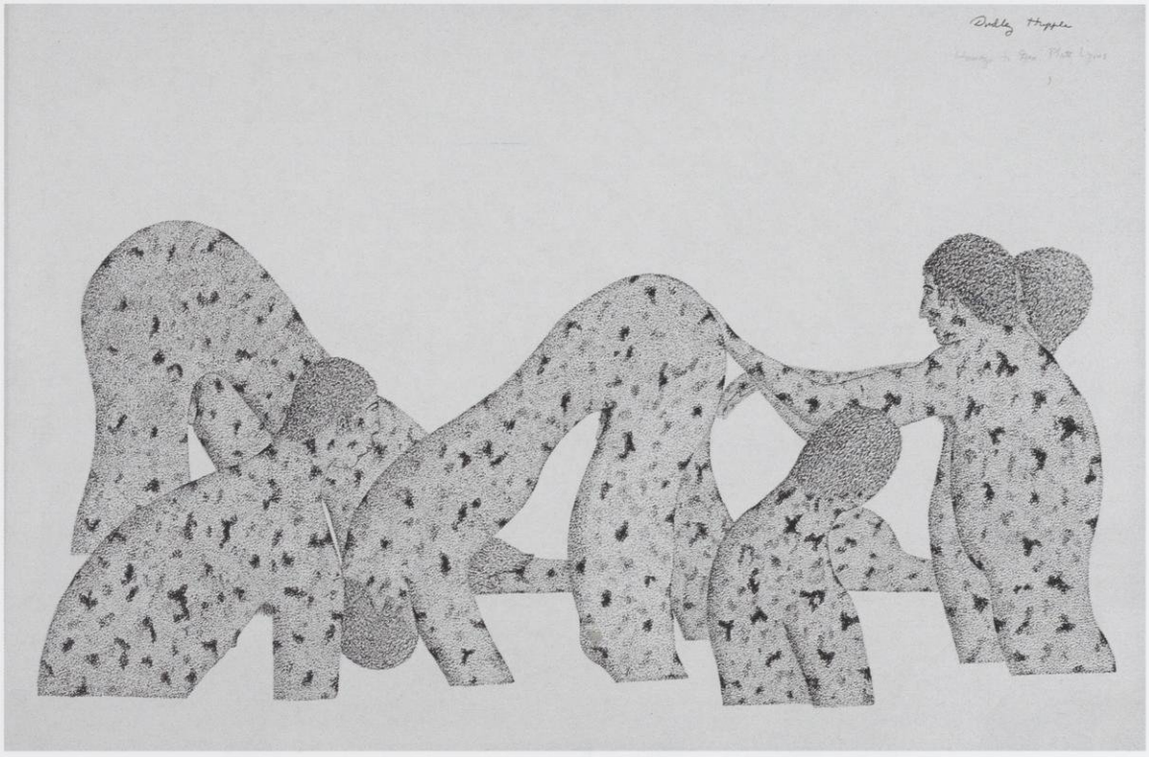
29
Dudley Huppler
Guinea Hen: The Tragedy of Incomplete Beauty, 1949
Ink on illustration board, 14 1/8 x 17 3/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Jim Wildeman



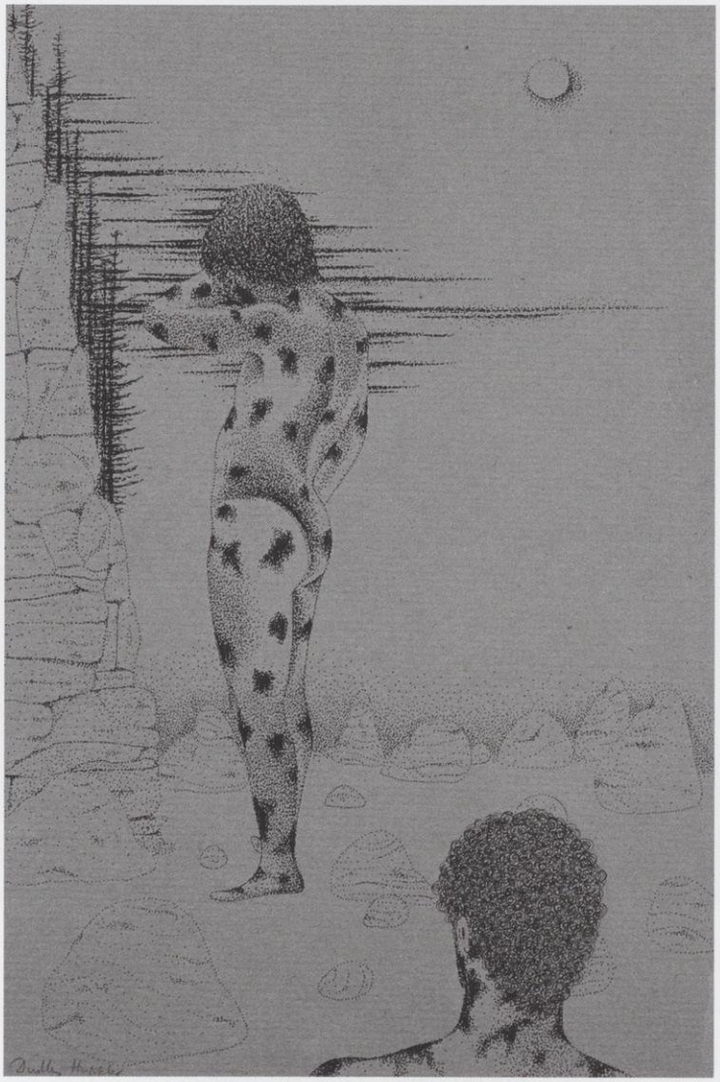
30
Dudley Huppler
Canes, 1950
Ink on illustration board, 29 5/8 x 20 1/8 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman
Endowment Fund purchase
Photo by Jim Wildeman



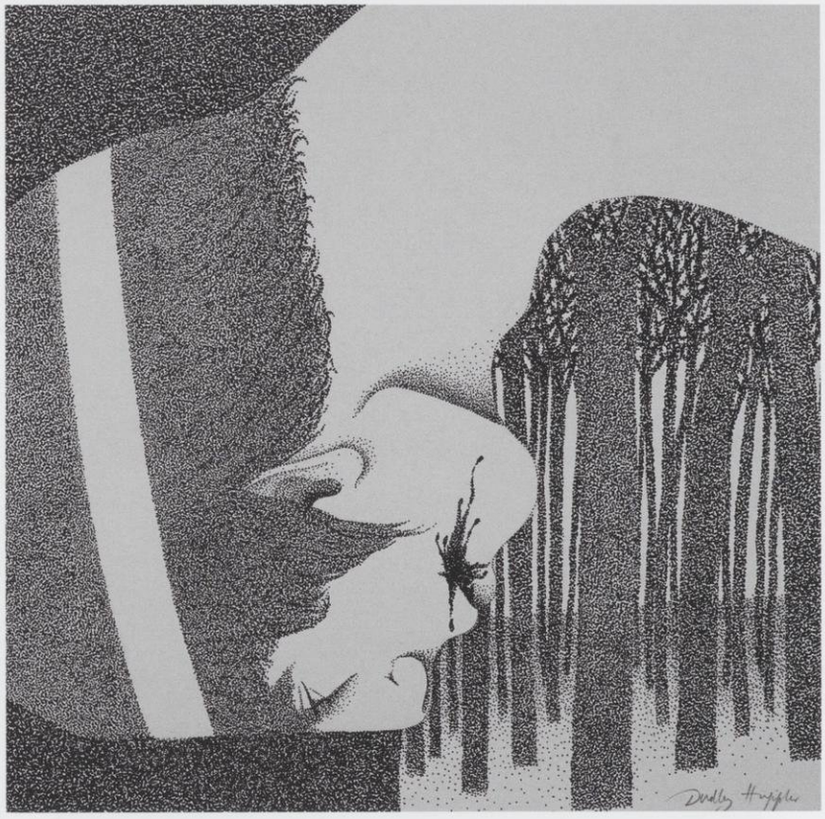
31
Dudley Huppler
Dixie Queen Melon, 1950
Ink on cardboard, 13 5/8 x 20 1/8 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman
Endowment Fund purchase
Photo by Jim Wildeman



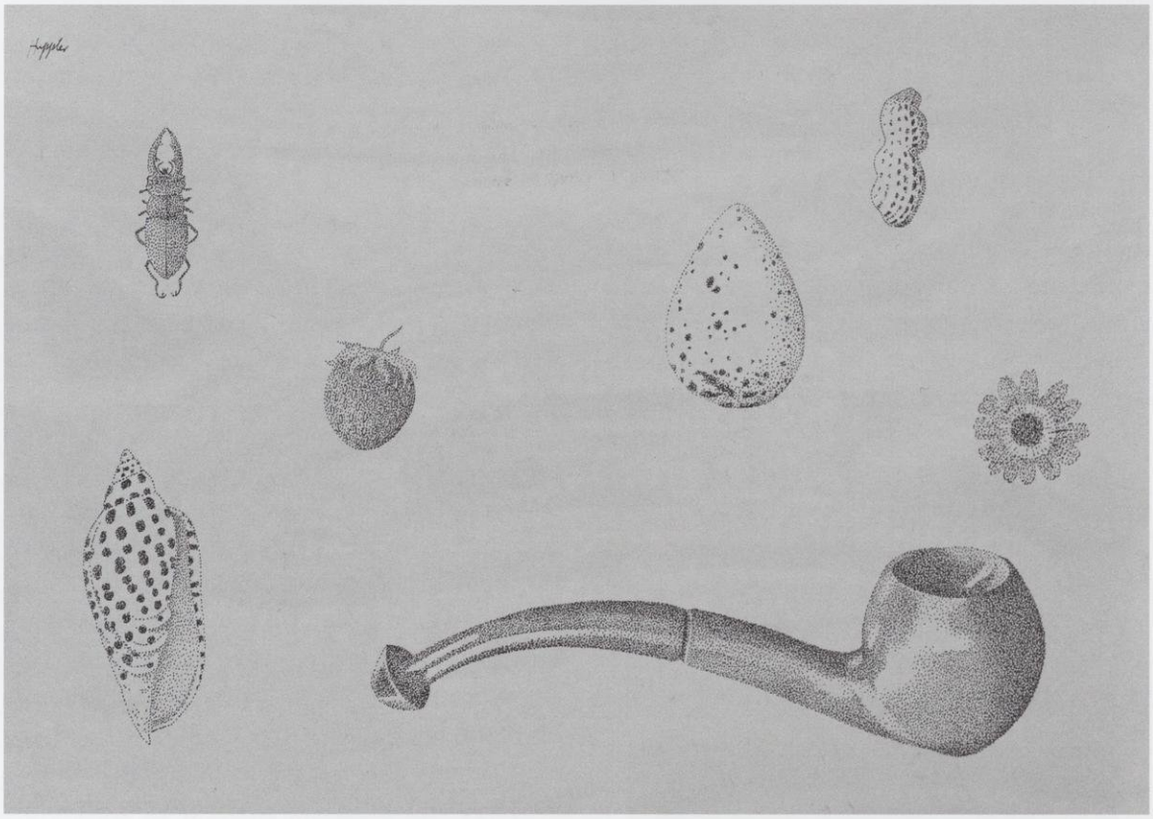
32
Dudley Huppler
Satyrs Bathing (Homage to Geo. Plat Lynes), 1951
Ink on paper, 13 1/8 x 19 5/8 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Gift of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Jim Wildeman



33
Dudley Huppler
Untitled, ca. 1953
Ink on paper, 12 5/8 x 8 3/8 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman
Endowment Fund purchase
Photo by Jim Wildeman



34
Dudley Huppler
Untitled, ca. 1953
Ink on paper, 9 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman
Endowment Fund purchase
Photo by Jim Wildeman



35
Dudley Huppler
Homage to John Wilde, ca. 1960
Ink and casein on illustration board, 9 x 13 5/8 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

Sylvia Fein (b. 1919)

Sylvia Fein (figure 1) was devoted to the sensual craft of painting. She studied and experimented with ground pigment and emulsions like an alchemist in a secret workshop. Fein often destroyed works that did not meet her high standards, a habit that made her first dealer extremely nervous.[1] Her search for clear, succinct, meaningful form and process led her to make increasingly small, precious panels in the 1960s. John Wilde accompanied a 1997 silverpoint he made of Fein with this text: "[she] worked in such detail that eventually she was devoured by filling in the air bubbles in her gessoed panels, seeking the perfect transition of form."[2] After she put down her brushes in the early 1970s, Fein wrote two acclaimed books on visual cognitive development. Despite their focus on the art of others they reveal much about Fein's aesthetic predilections and showcase her great sensitivity as an artist and viewer.[3]

Figure 1. Sylvia Fein, 1946. Courtesy Sylvia Fein.

Fein sculpted, drew, and painted from an early age, but her studies with James Watrous and, informally, with Glasier transformed her understanding of art. Fein credited Glasier with teaching her "the value of drawing above anything else, drawing in a way I had not understood it before. He showed me how to make a line that had strength and life force … My values are so much his that it is difficult to esteem him too highly … He has been of inexpressible importance to me, for his personality as much as his work. His influence has been in deeper and less traceable regions than design and subject."[4] At the university she dedicated herself to historical and practical research into materials, an interest that remained with her for decades. Fein's introduction to this aspect of the craft came through a course taught by Watrous. She recalled that

> Watrous collected recipes for drawing and painting techniques from his research as art historian and just a few of us—I think John Wilde, Joe Bradley, Helen Ashman, and I—worked out these recipes making silver and lead points, going out to farms for goose quills for pen and reeds, making india ink and trying many exotic gouaches, encaustic, egg and oil, egg and water, egg and

> vanish techniques. Egg emulsions found a home in me. One recipe came from a 15th century notation. It called for 12 pounds of ashes which we rescued from Marshall Glasier's parents' fireplace. He called the formula Alcherius Le Bègue—a mixture of fish glue, whale wax, gum mastic, dissolved in a lye solution prepared from wood ashes and lime. My *The Tea Party* [color plate 32] painting was painted in this technique.[5]

Fein's favored medium demanded extraordinary patience and virtuosity. Egg tempera dries quickly and mistakes are notoriously difficult to correct. Many of Fein's contemporaries—including Paul Cadmus, Jacob Lawrence, Reginald Marsh, Ben Shahn, and Andrew Wyeth—experimented with and perfected egg mixtures, but the practice was considered old-fashioned. It was so maligned that using it rendered artists antimodern to contemporary critics. Even dealers representing figurative artists strongly urged against its use.[6] Fein's search for meaning in the process of painting mirrored similar impulses that drove nonfigural artists, such as Franz Kline, Mark Rothko, or Mark Tobey. Watrous, aware that this practice was no antimodern longing for the past, wrote, "the exploitation of modern materials and the re-evaluation of techniques of earlier masters by contemporary artists are stimulated by the desire to discover the technical resources, whatever they may be, which will most effectively assist them in attaining their goals of personal artistic expression."[7] Fein's perpetual experiments with the hand-prepared ingredients of paintings were a way of assuring that the chemical make-up of her imagery was as individual as the pattern of brushstrokes.

Like Abercrombie, Fein's paintings are driven by a strong autobiographical impulse. She painted few specific self-portraits, but Fein closely resembles the women in her anxious landscapes. During the Second World War, Fein explored her anguish through a powerful series of self-images. In *Ladies with Many Faces* (color plate 30) Fein sits cross-legged at right, propping her melancholy face upon a clenched fist. She is lost in thought, but the swelling beneath her eyes communicates her despair and grieving. The ground beneath Fein and her companion is hard, strewn with stones and promising no bounty. On close examination it contains little heads and faces that appear amidst the rocks and dirt, materializing to stare at the two women. The apparitions embody the unreality Fein felt during the war, a sense that a poison had seeped into the world. "Subject matter was probably an escape," she wrote. "The only place one had control was in painting. The war was here ... What did that mean? What was going to happen to us? Where would the war take my darling [husband] Bill?"[8]

Fein often envisioned herself at the center of ancient tales related to her emotional state, merging her identity with their tragic female protagonists. *The Lady with the White Knight* (1942–43; color plate 31) is a double portrait of Fein and her husband as Adam and Eve. Shamed into wearing clothes, they serve their expulsion in an arid land, far from the lush Wisconsin landscape that witnessed the happiest moments of their prewar years. Physical and psychological distance has set into their relationship, and they are unable to face one another. Upon receiving a photograph of the painting from Fein, Wilde related to the sentiment immediately. He wrote: "It do have all the excellent knowledge feeling & insight—all the real knowledge & hate—and beyond all the wonderful paint. The man is grand and perfect—indeed the face do haunt me much ... It make me feel you be so brave—while everyone be a coward."[9] Like Wilde, Fein was both emotionally and physically affected by wartime stress. By the end of 1943 she was hospitalized for pleurisy and pneumonia.

Fein spent 1944–1946 in Mexico where the change of environment improved her failing health "(figure 2). After meeting up with her mother in Mexico City, she joined an old friend in Ajijic, set up a studio and delighted in the new colors, sounds, and tastes of her adopted village on Lake Chapala. Fein continued to inhabit her paintings, as when she absorbed the roles of saints Michael and George as a female knight[10], but

Figure 2. Fein in Ajijic, Mexico with *Three Ladies Hunting Idols*, present location unknown, 1944. Courtesy Sylvia Fein.

soon found herself surrounded by willing and fascinating models. *Muchacha de Ajijic* (1944; color plate 34) and *Niña de Ajijic con Mayate* (1944; cat. no. 39) reveal an eye for the peculiar and other-worldly. The latter drawing, inspired by a custom among local children, shows a girl holding "a live toy they tied to a thin thread. It flew about like an airplane for awhile, and then they allowed it to escape, flapping its wings."[11] Rendered with crisp, sparkling clarity that parallels the intensity of Wilde's contemporary portraits, the girl appears more hallucination than observed fact. Other works from Mexico such as *Insects That Inhabit My Studio in Ajijic* (1944; cat. no. 40) and *Saint Sebastian* (1944; cat no. 41) show her technique transformed, her eye voracious during exile. She reveled in transcribing local fashions, documenting exotic plants, fruit, and dangerous insects, no matter how complex their forms or patterns. Mexico focused Fein; separated from the sickly associations of wartime Milwaukee, she expanded her artistic range and challenged her abilities. Fein's postwar work bears the acuity of observation that suggests her exile provoked epiphany.

After the war Fein and her husband moved to California, but her thoughts drifted often to the Midwest, her family, and her friends. Fein paid tribute to her mother Bessie in *Mama's Music Class* (1947–49; color plate 36). "My mother was a graduate of the Milwaukee Conservatory of Music," Fein noted. "[Her] friends were liberated women. They cut their hair short. They smoked. They played golf and swam at the Elks club. They had a book club and they cooked 'gourmet.'"[12] The enormous painting caused a stir at the 1948 *Wisconsin Centennial Exhibition* in Milwaukee. Huppler wrote to Bessie Fein:

> It is a virtuoso piece if ever there was—she has accounted for the glint in every eye, and has practically made every dress, she has tended to its painting so carefully. You—if you are the central, first-row figure—are idealized in a way that is a daughter's highest tribute; you are inspired and placid while the others look troubled by assorted degrees of ecstasy or anguish or dumbness, at least psychologically disturbed. I hesitate however to identify you as that figure, for the girl in the back-row at the left end is such a spitting image of Sylvia that I wonder if it isn't you … The formal backdrop with clipped bushes like roosters, and a delightful naked Hermes (?) which is a sly sweet reflection on what you girls are thinking of, perhaps![13]

The period and regional nostalgia embodied in this iconic memorial to Wisconsin and childhood were timely. In 1947 Fein gave birth to her daughter Heidi. That year Fein depicted the very tiny child, holding a pomegranate, riding upon her head (*Lady with Her Baby* [1947; color plate 35]). Mother and daughter stand behind a shallow ledge, a fanciful landscape unfolding at their

backs in the manner of Renaissance portraits. She considered her growing daughter to be

> quite a wonder but there is nothing really more boring than taking care of a baby ... The best thing is to see them develop. Almost so rapidly that it is like some of those flowers you can see open. But in between it is just pants changing and feeding and this and that. One can't take every woman and expect her to do this duty with grace ... She is in the humming-bird stage now when there is never a still moment except in sleep.[14]

In the early 1950s Fein completed her last series of large-scale paintings. Erotically-charged, psychologically complex, some show women in peril, others depict them absorbed in solitary pursuits. In a letter to Glasier, Harry Partch remarked,

> Sylvia is doing some wonderful work. Sunday, I helped her with a frame. She hates even to think about frames, and so I fill the vacuum. I like it. Her three virgins standing in water being frightened by a water snake and a waterdog is perfectly delightful, and her love in a gully (the one we framed) is about as forthright as you can get. Did I say love? I meant Penetration in a Gully.[15]

Fein's study of Indian and Persian manuscript painting is evident in the colorful, lovingly imagined costumes worn by *The Lady Magician* (1954; cat. no. 44) for which her male neighbor posed. The magician rests her right heel on a maroon pillow and pushes upward on her insteps while releasing a spherical aviary to float on the breeze. She may have conjured the brilliantly plumed bird, or merely encased it in a hazy bubble. Behind her, clouds cluster like grapes in the cool sky. Every centimeter of the panel is a visual feast, each line and form carefully interdependent as Fein emulates manuscript illumination on a grand scale.

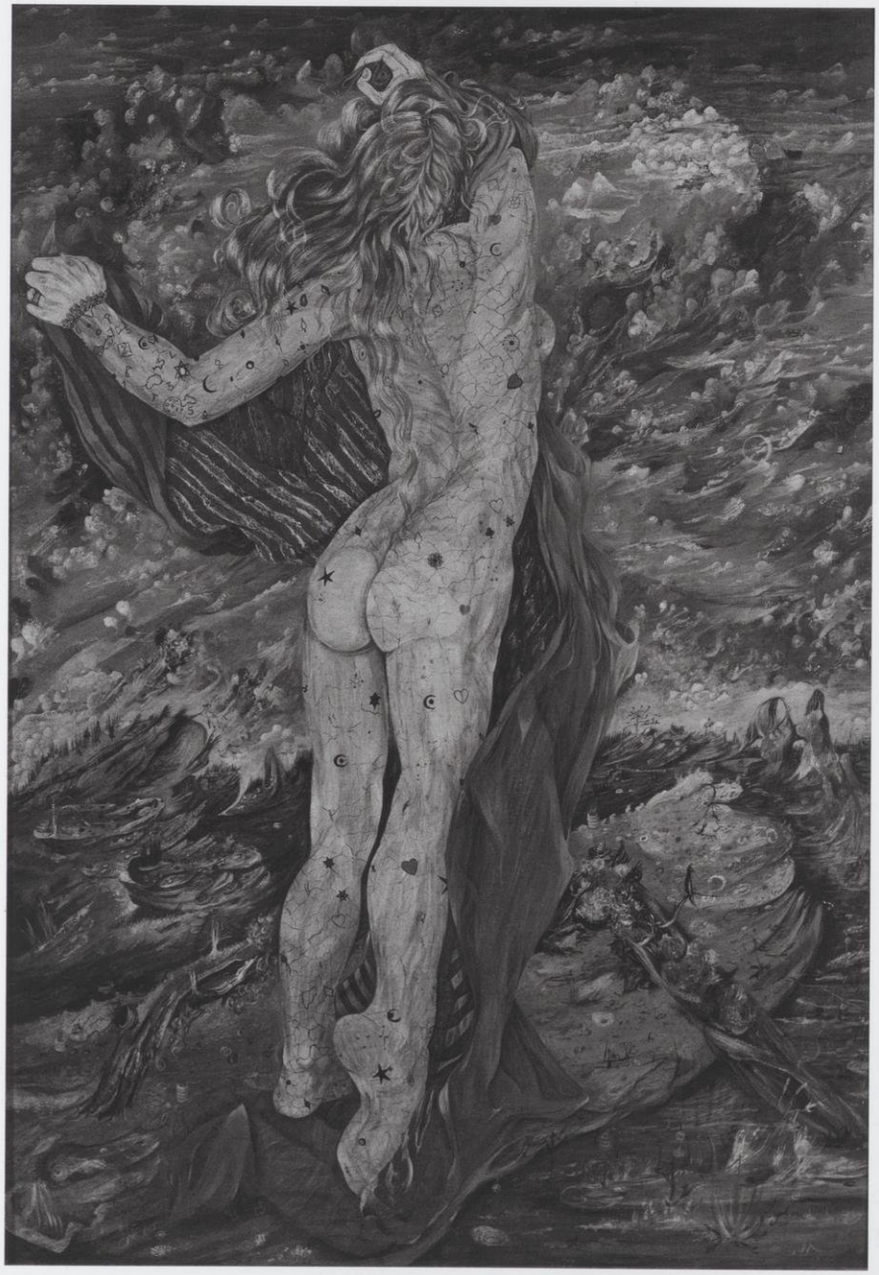
In 1956 Fein abandoned large-scale figure paintings, and the change revitalized her. She told Huppler: "Them ladies went years ago along with a lot of other ghosts. I am so tuned in on myself now I cannot see why it took so long—just pure landscapes and seascapes with multifarious things and very very small—some are almost the size on the [exhibition] brochure. It kills people. The say the paintings are too big to wear and to[o] small to hang ... I have my nose on the wheel again but it is not an effort but a pleasure."[16]

In these tiny paintings, Fein often tried to capture the fleeting, churning, gushing motions of the sea by focusing on a carefully observed portion from her boat. She found herself working with greater spontaneity, achieving faster results, even more detail, and was relieved, "not having to hold the same huge painting in my view for so long." As Fein turned to the San Francisco Bay area for inspiration, a group of abstract and gestural artists, including Richard Diebenkorn, was doing the same. Fein denies any implicit reaction to her Bay Area artist-peers in these works but acknowledges that their philosophies were incompatible with her own. "The Bay Area painters and teachers ...were absolutely enthralled with "isms"—a new one every other year ... Ignoring their existence was better. In the midst of all their monsters I kept exhibiting and selling my little landscapes and seascapes and getting good reviews."[17] As Fein took up new interests during the early 1970s she stopped painting. Like her earlier move to the West Coast, it left a noticeable gap in the group. Priebe wrote to Huppler: "Surprise of surprise. Sylvia spent the afternoon here with me yesterday. She was a dazzle and something to remember ... Gertrude phoned while Sylvia was here and when told that told me to tell Sylvia to "get back in the group!" referring to John's picture ..."[18] Fein remained close to her Wisconsin friends and pursued a spectacular range of accomplishments but has not returned to the art world.

Notes

Fein papers: Sylvia Fein Personal Papers, Martinez, CA.
Glasier papers: Marshall Glasier Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
Hupper papers: Dudley Huppler Personal Papers, Longmont, CO.

1. Klaus Perls frequently begged Fein not to destroy art work, and he retained certain paintings at his gallery if he feared for their safety. Perls correspondence with Fein, October 6, 1943; January 20, 1944; December 30, 1949. Fein's works ledger contains many entries that are crossed out or annotated "destroyed." Fein papers. After she finished her master's degree, she "destroyed all its 40 course paintings in the 'modren' mode." Letter to author, April 27, 2003.
2. Collection of the Milwaukee Art Museum, M1998.107.
3. Sylvia Fein, *Heidi's Horse* (Pleasant Hill, CA: Exelrod Press, 1976) and *First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking,* with a foreword by Rudolf Arnheim (Pleasant Hill, CA: Exelrod Press, 1993).
4. Fein, application for a Guggenheim Fellowship, September 1943. Fein papers.
5. Fein interview with the author, March-May 2002.
6. Perls to Fein, September 15, 1943. Fein papers. Salvador Dalí declared that a revival of craft was the most subversive thing in which a modernist could participate. See his 50 *Secrets of Magic Craftsmanship,* trans. Haakon M. Chevalier (New York: Dial Press, 1948).
7. James S. Watrous. *The Craft of Old-Master Drawings* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press; repr., 2002): vii.
8. Fein interview with the author, March-May 2002.
9. Wilde to Fein, March 28, 1943. Fein papers. In a letter to her husband Fein called the painting, "THE XPULSION OR THE LADY WITH the red KNIGHT – you and me." She went on to explain, "See it really is like Adam and Eve but its more like Alice in W. so it makes me happy because it is really all about the war but the man (you) god what does a man look like all you have so far is a head and a pair of dog tags…" Fein to William Scheuber, October 26, 1942. Fein papers.
10. Fein's *The Lady Who Killed the Dragon* (1945–46; unlocated) was sold through Braswell Galleries (CT) as lot 143 on July 18, 1999. All of my inquiries to the auction house regarding the painting's current location were ignored.
11. Fein, letter to author, April 27, 2003.
12. Fein interview with the author, March-May, 2002.
13. Huppler to Bessie Fein, April 24, 1948. Fein papers.
14. Fein to Glasier, March 18, 1948. Glasier papers.
15. Partch to Glasier, September 30, 1951. Wilde papers.
16. Fein to Huppler, October 15, 1957. Wilde papers.
17. Both quotations, Fein to author, February 14, 2003.
18. Priebe to Huppler, June 24, 1974, Huppler papers.



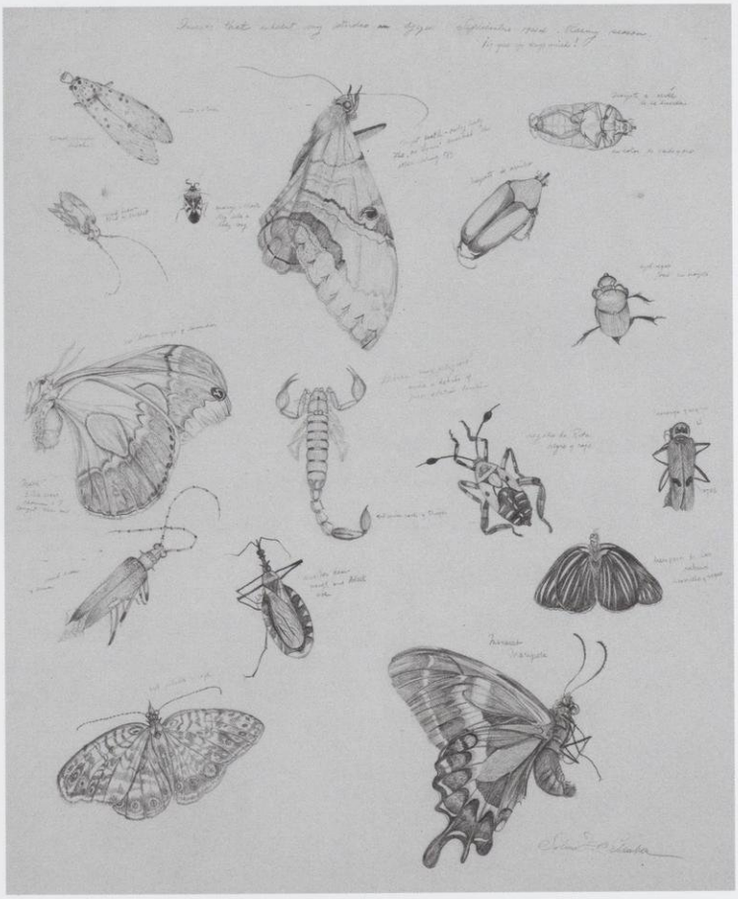
36
Sylvia Fein
Lilith, 1943
Egg tempera on panel, 26 x 18 1/2 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

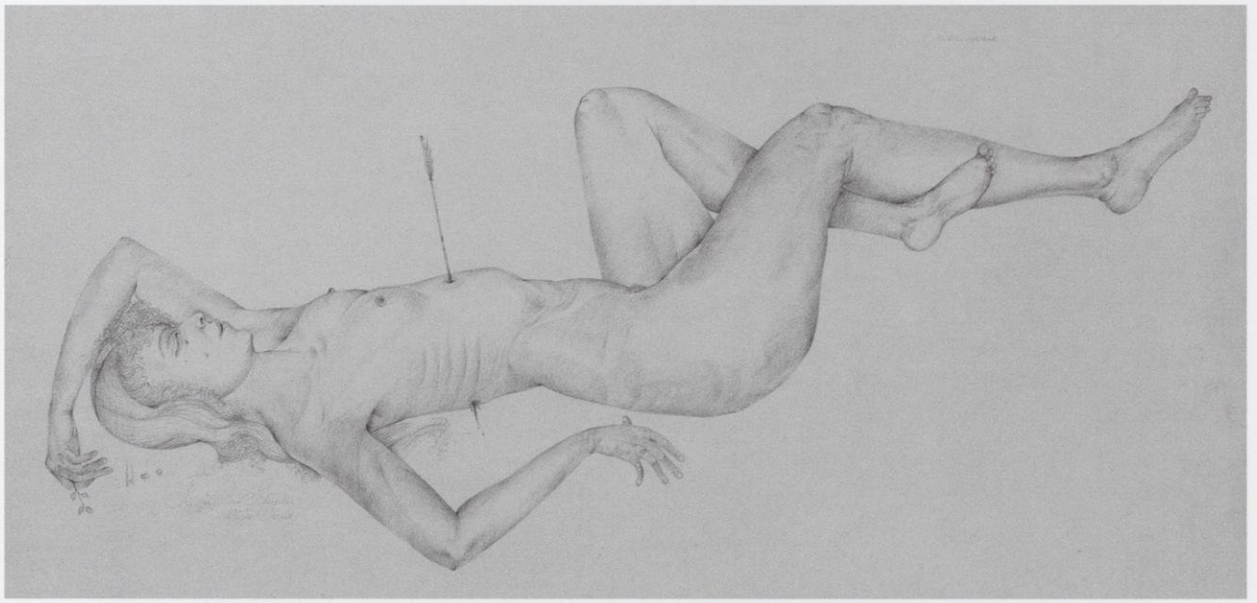
37
Sylvia Fein
The Lady in the Cage, 1943
Egg tempera and oil on Masonite panel, 25 7/8 x 20 inches
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Photo by Cory Radlund

38
Sylvia Fein
Lady Looking for Her Lover, 1943–44
Ink on paper, 28 x 22 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

39
Sylvia Fein
Nina de Ajijic con Mayate, 1944
Pencil on paper, 20 1/2 x 13 1/8 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

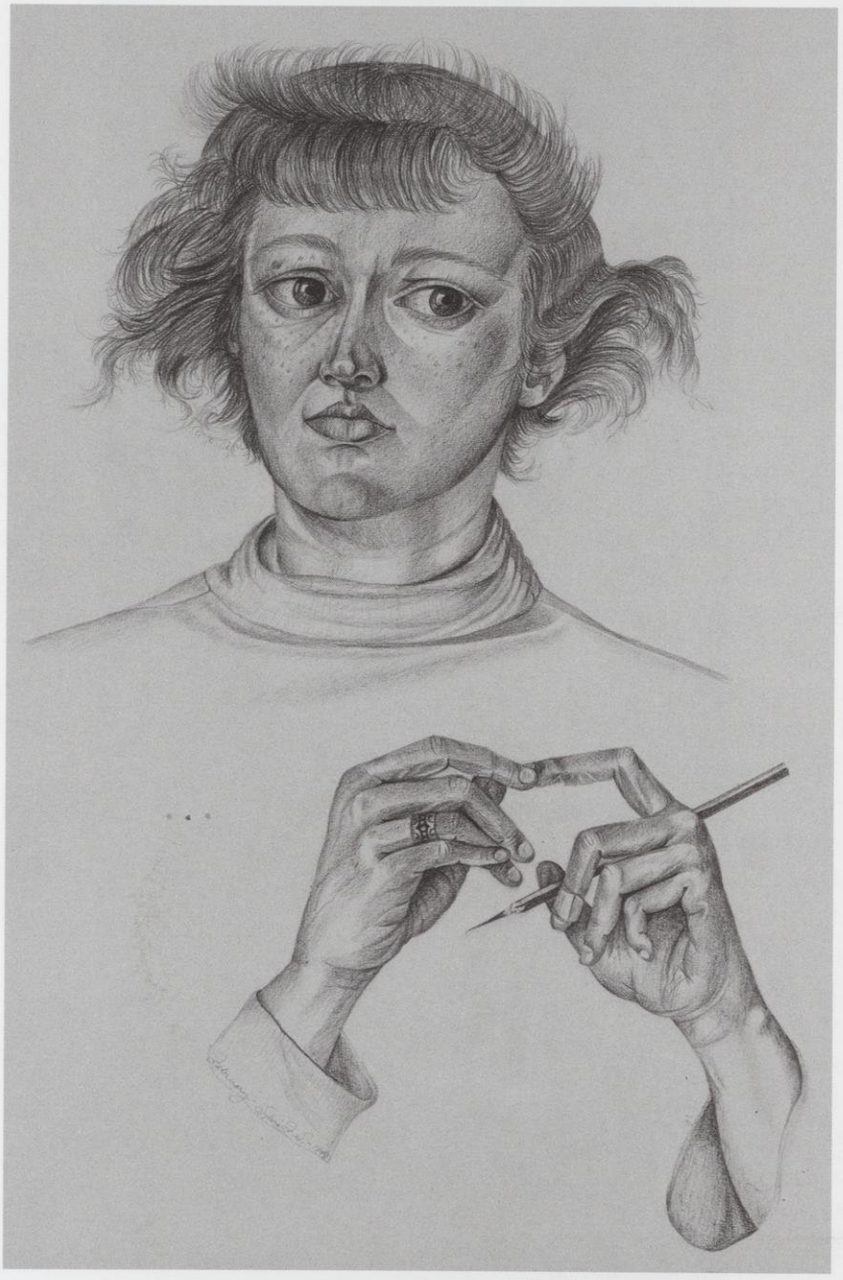
40
Sylvia Fein
Insects that inhabit my studio in Ajijic, 1944
Pencil on paper, 13 1/2 x 11 1/8 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund





41
Sylvia Fein
Saint Sebastian, 1944
Pencil on paper, 12 x 24 1/2 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

42
Sylvia Fein
Market Basket, 1948
Pencil on paper, 20 x 25 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund



43
Sylvia Fein
Self-Portrait, 1949
Pencil on paper, 19 x 12 1/2 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

44
Sylvia Fein
The Lady Magician, 1954
Egg tempera on panel, 47 1/4 x 19 1/2 inches
Sylvia Fein
Photo by Cory Radlund

John Wilde (b. 1919)

Wilde (figure 1) routinely affirms the role his friends have played in his work; he swapped ideas with Abercrombie, painted objects given to him by Huppler and Priebe, thought of Glasier as he sketched the landscape around his home, and exchanged painting recipes with Fein as if they were still students. If Huppler was the literary center of the group, John Wilde became its visual chronicler. Throughout his career he has painted many overt or symbolic tributes to friends and historical influences.[1] *Memorabilia* (1952; color plate 40) shows overlapping paraphernalia related to eight friends spread out upon and pinned to a wood surface.[2] It is in the form of the trompe l'oeil "rack picture" made popular in the United States by John Peto (1854–1907) and John Haberle (figure 2).

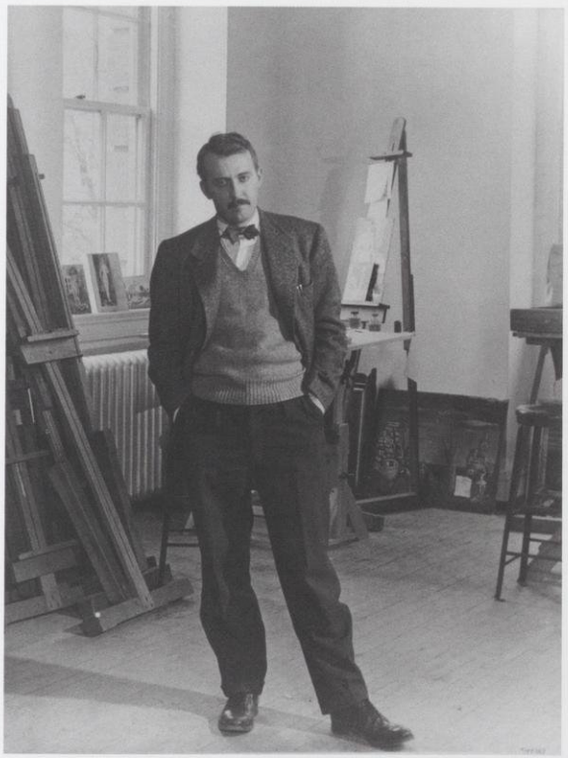


Figure 1. John Wilde in his studio in the education building, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1946. Courtesy John Wilde.

A few objects in *Memorabilia* are straightforward, such as Abercrombie's Edwin Hewitt Gallery exhibition announcement or Fein's faded snapshot. Others require group intimacy: The stuffed scarlet tanager represents Priebe as well as the love of birding he shared with Wilde. Huppler's *Cotton-Tail Rabbit* appears on a privately printed postcard he probably sent to Wilde reporting on mutual friends. A letter from Glasier, cocked at an angle, escapes its envelope to display a landscape drawing on its back page.[3]

Wilde's arrangement seems casual, but the placement of particular artifacts reinforces close bonds among pairs and the role of individuals within the group. Priebe's bird is attached to Abercrombie's card reflecting their intense relationship. Huppler's card touches the greatest number of items and lies in the center of the arrangement, linking the left and right sides. Glasier's letter lies beneath Fein's photograph, a visual reminder of his importance in her artistic background. His restlessness is embodied in the letter's refusal to stay folded inside its envelope. Wilde signed the panel with a simple, elegant trompe l'oeil "J" in the upper left corner, identifying himself as the common bond. By "carving" his initial into a panel supporting the attributes of his friends, Wilde acknowledged their roles as constituent parts of his artistic persona.[4] Like the more conventional 1966 painting *Karl Priebe,*

Figure 2. John Haberle (American; 1856–1903), *A Bachelor's Drawer,* 1890–1894, oil on canvas, 20 x 36 in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Henry R. Luce Gift, 1970.

Gertrude Abercrombie, Dudley Huppler, Marshall Glasier, Sylvia Fein, A Friend, Arnold Dadian and Myself (1966; color plate 46) and the apocalyptic *The Way Things Seem to Be* (1964–1965), *Memorabilia* is both a group portrait and a composite of Wilde's self.

From boyhood, Wilde possessed "a very deep instinctive love of drawing. There wasn't any outward reason for it, nor any particular encouragement."[5] On a high school trip to see the studio of Santos Zingale (1908–1999) and Alfred Sessler (1901–1963) Wilde witnessed "real artists, at work," and realized for the first time that art could be a serious profession. Soon afterward he began an informal apprenticeship with Milwaukee painter Paul Clemens (1911–1992). Wilde mixed paints and prepared panels for Clemens and studied life-drawing with him in evening classes. By the time he enrolled at the University of Wisconsin in Madison in 1938, Wilde had shown his work in professional exhibitions and knew where his aspirations lay.

Like Fein, Wilde's studies with art historian James Watrous and friendship with Glasier fueled his passion for making art. He spent hours studying reproductions of drawings from all periods of art history, fascinated by the technical and expressive capacity of charcoal, chalks, graphite, and wash. As Wilde experimented with prepared papers, handmade inks, and metalpoints, his facility grew, and he explored an extraordinary range of imaginative subjects. Fein recalled that her fellow classmate

> was always the star in the sky at which we pointed our brushes. He quietly smoked and painted—hardly moving—and what paintings! … Where did his ideas come from in that dirty old environment of the studio? … It was apparent from the beginning that something extraordinary was taking place. This just wasn't talent and training. There was a supernatural happening, rare, exquisite, fierce, very consistent and stable and constantly generating and cranking out [work] with no apparent struggle or missteps.[6]

Two early paintings already show the subject matter, compositional structures, and twilight settings that Wilde favored throughout his career. *An Autumnal Still-Life* (ca. 1940; color plate 38) presents a tree stump, squash, apple, and pear

swelling with animation and sensuality that Wilde learned by drawing with Glasier. The grasses in Wilde's pitcher and the serpentine ribbon at the edge of the table slither as though charmed, preparing to escape the confines of the picture. They reveal an early interest in metamorphosis and physiognomic analogies. Wilde's double portrait *Helen Ashman with Sylvia Fein* (figure 3) places the women before a deep view of the landscape near Madison. They play a mysterious game; Ashman, blindfolded, draws cards while Fein gestures in response, her face intense and stern. Like Abercrombie, Wilde early on selected the people and places of his immediate experience in combination with personal objects to make enigmatic narrative paintings.

Wilde was drafted into the army during World War II and spent the war on American soil. The experience emotionally and physically tormented him. All of Wilde's war-related works are inscribed I.C. for "in confinement" or "illegally confined," emphasizing the feeling of mental, physical, and spiritual imprisonment he experienced in the service. Wilde may have had a nervous breakdown during his army service, but his solace in art had a positive, lasting effect on his draftsmanship and repertoire.[7] He poured racing thoughts and visions into desperate, often confrontational drawings that were the most technically accomplished he had yet made. Many include cathartic stream-of-consciousness texts similar to the surrealist parables he included in his war letters.

Figure 3. John Wilde (American; b. 1919), *Helen Ashman with Sylvia Fein,* ca. 1941, oil on panel, 50 x 36 in. John and Shirley Wilde.

As Fein explored her relationships to her husband and self during the war, Wilde turned to himself and his first wife, Helen, to explore inner conflict. *Myself in the War* (1943; cat. no. 46) shows Wilde peering from behind a window indicated by a thin border framing the scene. His calm but unsettling stare is unfocused, encircled by concentric rings that draw attention to glazed eyes. In the landscape beyond Wilde, a soldier, clothed only in a thin shirt and helmet fights off a wild dog with a pair of daggers. Deep lacerations on the soldier's right thigh drip blood onto the ground. His legs end in cloven hooves. The belligerent hallucination is as much an indication of Wilde's war-induced psychosis as is his troubled, unblinking stare. In *Portrait of HDPRAW* (1944; cat. no. 47) Wilde's emotional strain spills over into Helen Wilde like a disease rotting her body from the inside out. She confronts the viewer directly, enticing us to meet her gaze and admire her husband's loving and delicate touch. Any comfort or adoration we might perceive in Wilde's wartime portrait of Helen is undermined by the holes spreading through her chest.

After the war, Wilde often strove for the subtle integration of observed phenomena with his emotional response. Maintaining that "the object" was essential in his practice, he declared that imagination should be allowed its marvelous course. In 1950 he wrote:

> I find that I am continually devoted to the object—the fallen leaf here, the fruit there, the marsh grass here, the grape there—into endless continuation. There is no end to the supply of things that

> might be accomplished—there is no end to the stimulus I find in these objects or to my adoration of their divinity. In fact I want little more than to record, through the facet of my oft-miraculous sensitivity, the actuality of these things.[8]

Downstairs, the Red Cat (1955; cat. no. 52) is a careful transcription of appearances filtered through a veil of subjectivity. The painting shows the living room of the Wildes' Evansville home, frozen as in a snapshot. Helen Wilde sits nude in a rocking chair, her torso and face turned slightly away from the viewer. Their daughter Phoebe runs in from the right, caught in stride as she chases a striped bouncing ball. Near the center of the picture a little cat prepares to bat a tiny ball with its paw. Every inch of the intricately detailed room has been rendered with rigor and clarity. The interior and its furnishings are tangible, yet the entire scene is overlaid with a high-keyed piercing red. It acts like a chromatic floodlight, changing the hues of everything within its reach. While the color coats all within the house, the windows reveal the world outside untouched and naturalistic. In a flash, Wilde transformed a genre scene into one of optical and psychological discord.

Nightshade (1956; color plate 42) is a succulent arrangement of tomatoes and tomatillos from Wilde's garden. As light enters from the left, it gently brushes the smooth skins of the plump fruit. Their red, orange, and green skins glow with extraordinary luminosity as though lit from within. The tomatoes tilt forward, swell asymmetrically, and threaten to burst over the edge of their wooden basket. Thick, weathered wooden boards compose the table top. Its deep crevices and grain contrast with the full, unblemished tomatoes and tomatillos. *Peeling* (1961; color plate 45)[9] also imbues plant life with sensuality, painted with a clarity that rivets the viewer's attention. Wilde's adoration of the natural world is evident in this encapsulation of our delicate relationship to the environment. Fecundity and death feed one another in the deceptively straightforward image of hands denuding a banana. As its fruit nourishes the person about to consume it, the peel will shrivel, rot, and return to the soil. Wilde often used the human body to address the dual nature of existence, as he examined the coexistence of death and the erotic throughout his career. He summarized his philosophy in a 1993 interview: "'All art from sex' is a quote from Marilyn Monroe. And I said, 'That's a great truth except you gotta add awareness of death.' That makes the whole works, the whole ball of wax."[10] *The Mirror* (1958; color plate 43) is a terrifying modern manifestation of death and the maiden adapted from Hans Baldung Grien (German, 1484/85–1545).[11] A curvaceous woman stands in a contrapposto pose before a long oval dressing mirror. As she raises her arms to arrange the locks of her red hair, an emaciated figure covered in green, rotting skin joins her reflection. As it stands behind the woman, its bony arms cross over her soft lower belly to rest its skeletal hands on her thighs. The greedy grasp of death lies, appropriately, on either side of her uterus.

Wilde's confrontation with the wonderful and ominous in life is direct in a drawing titled to celebrate his advancing age and underscore his susceptibility to the whims and power of nature. He peers through the empty eye socket of an animal skull in *Here, AE 36, I am Partially Within the Object Looking Out to Find Reality* (1956; cat. no. 53). This self-portrait is less a morbid meditation on death than an assertion of faith and awe before nature's cycle of growth. Wilde renders the basic tools of his art, the hand and eye, while documenting an object found in the woods. His willingness, even compulsion to contemplate these issues is emphasized in a journal entry from the 1960s:

> I continually sense the tentativeness of all things—the brooding ever-presence of disaster and death—each day and every day and every moment … There is hardly a moment's letdown from rigid fear—an appalling anticipation … It is easy to call this a neurosis and I suppose it is … but I prefer to consider it simply

Figure 4. John Wilde (American, b. 1919), *The Way Things Seem to Be*, 1964–65, oil on panel, 21 1/2 x 33 in. Private Collection. Photo courtesy John Wilde.

> a sharpening (an excruciating sharpening) of an ever present sensibility or hyper-awareness of reality (growth and death) … Under the circumstances I am appreciative of every day.[12]

The Way Things Seem to Be (figure 4) presents these observations in a land strewn with hybrids of the real and the imaginary, the possible and the impossible. They coexist in a vision Wilde described as "the story of a beginning and an end, a fable of nonsense and idiocy."[13] Nothing obeys its relative size, menace lurks around every corner, and cities burn in the distance. Skeletons, giant beetles, internal organs, vegetables, and even a bust of Marilyn Monroe sprout from the troubled earth. Wilde stands in the center foreground facing the viewer, accompanied by a spotted dog and calmly sporting a hat and cane. His journal entries suggest that it was partly a response to current events, including U.S. involvement in Vietnam.[14] The scene that unfolds at Wilde's back is a breathless compendium of his life and career to 1965 that includes images from his war sketchbook. It was the first of many cumulative or "summing up" paintings that Wilde painted.[15] As the hallucinatory contents of Wilde's head multiply before the viewer, they breed the comic and the tragic. Significantly, his friends are integral parts of this internal landscape. They are found throughout the picture, attesting to their continual presence in his art and life.

Notes

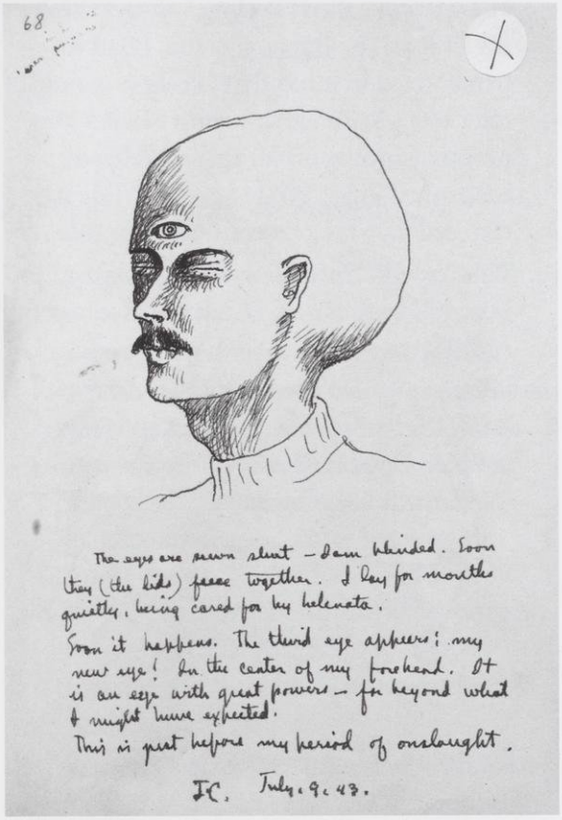
Wilde papers: John Wilde Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

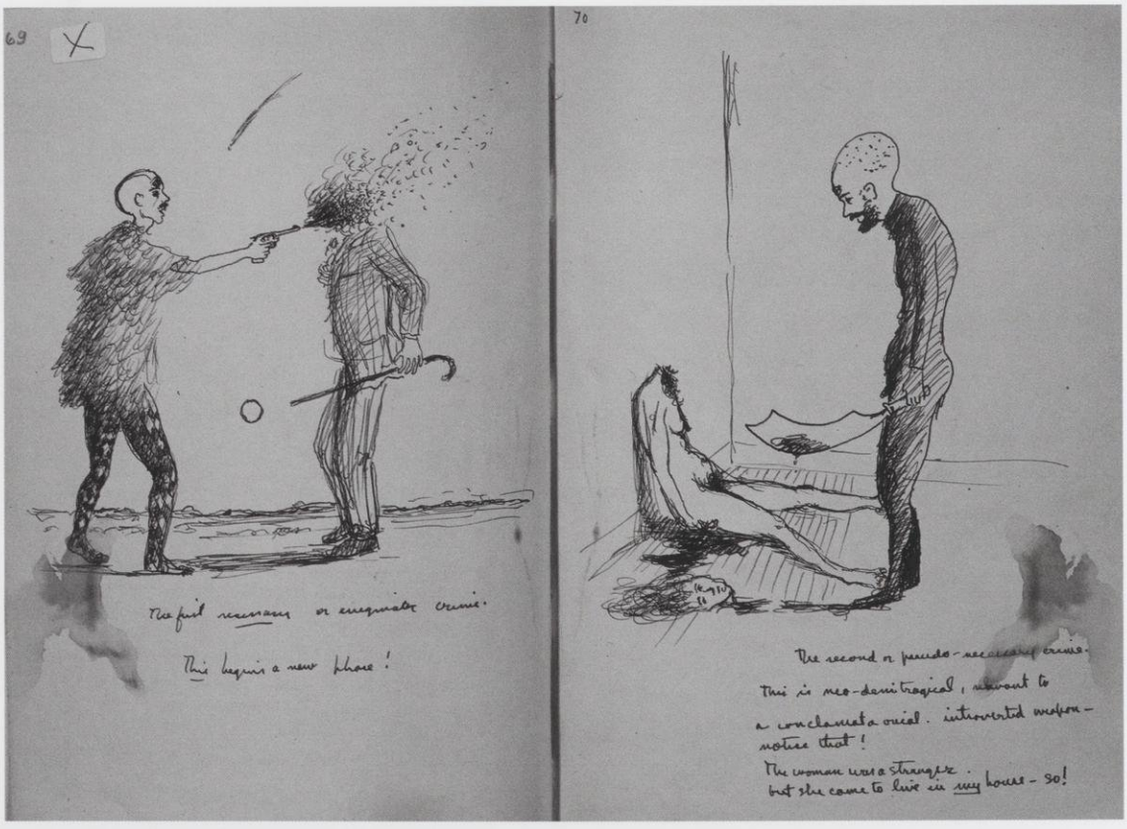
1. Among these is a 1998 painting called *My Art Targets,* which was based on a sketch in the notebook that also contains the design for *Memorabilia* (1949–1952). Collection of John Wilde; available on microfilm in Wilde papers. The 1949 sketch includes "Uccello, Degas, Winslow Homer, Messonnier, Puvis, Casper David Friedrich, Hans Memling," and others. In a series of paintings from 1985 to 1988 Wilde did panel paintings that paid homage to Piero di Cosimo (Italian, 1462–1521), Richard Dadd (British, 1817–1886), Abercrombie, Julia Thecla (American, 1896–1973), Max Ernst (German, 1891–1976), Otto Dix (German, 1891–1969), Alfred Rethel (German, 1816–1859), and others. There are numerous other examples throughout Wilde's oeuvre.
2. The painting was originally titled *Memorabilia of Friends* according to the sketchbook design mentioned above. The sketchbook also includes the design for a conventional group portrait depicting Glasier, Priebe, Huppler, Ashman, Fein, and Wilde.
3. This letter, postmarked April 21, 1949 starts with the phrase "as it was in the beginning" and is among the correspondence in the Wilde papers.
4. In addition to the objects relating to the six artists in this show, Helen Ashman Wilde is represented by scissors, sewing needle, and thread (she often designed and made her own clothes); and Elwyn Chamberlain is represented by the Oscar Wilde postcard; Arnold Dadian is present in a snapshot between Dudley's *Rabbit* and Sylvia's photo. Dadian signed his letters to John "AD" in emulation of Albrecht Dürer's monogram. Dürer, present in a color postcard at left may be an allusion to Wilde; Glasier and Huppler sometimes called Wilde, "Dürer," and Wilde drew himself as Dürer in an early self-portrait. See *John Wilde: Drawings* 1940–1984 (Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1984), 7.
5. Russell Panczenko, "Interview with John Wilde," in *Wildeworld: The Art of John Wilde* (New York: Hudson Hills Press/ Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1999), 22.
6. Sylvia Fein, interview with author, March-May, 2002.
7. Robert Cozzolino, "'Myself during the War': John Wilde's World War II Sketchbook," *Elvehjem Museum of Art Bulletin* (1999–2001): 43.
8. Sketchbook, ca. 1949–52; entry dated May 29, 1950. Wilde papers.
9. The title of this painting has been published variously as *Peeling: A Banana* [as though part of a series], *Peeling (a Banana)* [to clarify subject], *and Peeling a Banana* [emphasizing the figural content]. Confusion over the original, correct title can be traced back to Huppler, who was unaware that Wilde had titled it simply *Peeling* until the latter included it in his 1967 retrospective. See letter from Huppler to Wilde regarding the Milwaukee Art Center's loan request, October 31, 1966: "I almost fell dead. Karl explained you (or the Inst.)

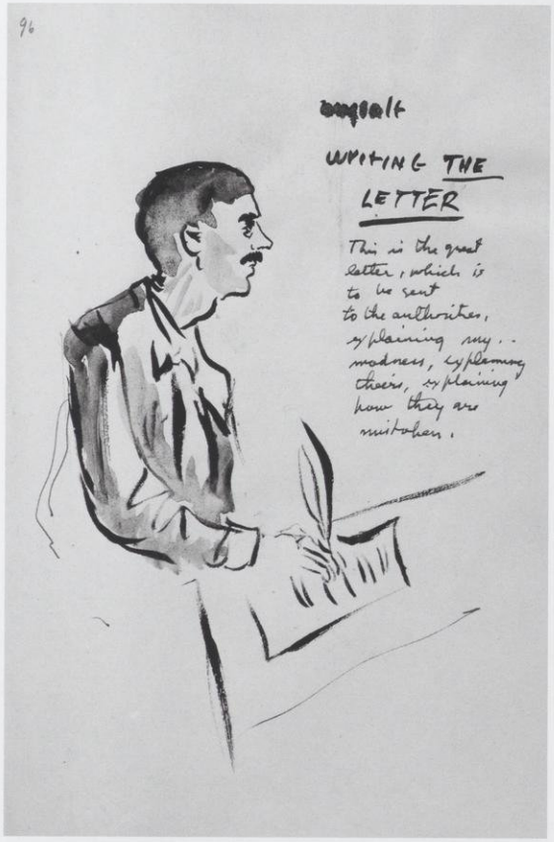
meant The Banana! I had forgotten if I ever knew it was called "Peeling," always thinking of it as The Banana; & too, I had so firmly fixed in mind that "Peeling" would refer to a pic I once saw, didn't I, of a long peeling winding off an apple. Well, will certainly oblige." Wilde papers. Wilde has clarified that the present title is *the* title.

10. Tina Yapelli, "Interview with the Artist," in *John Wilde: Eros and Thanatos* (Madison Art Center, 1993), 14.
11. See for instance *Death and the Maiden* (1517; Kunstmuseum, Basel). Reproduced in James Snyder *Northern Renaissance Art* (New York: Abrams, 1985), 379.
12. John Wilde, *What His Mother's Son Hath Wrought: Twenty-Four Representative Paintings with Excerpts from Notebooks Kept Off and On Between the Years Nineteen Forty Through Nineteen Eighty-Eight* (Mount Horeb, WI: Perishable Press, 1988), n.p. [opposite plate 9].
13. Wilde, *What His Mother's Son Hath Wrought*, n.p. [opposite plate 15].
14. Wilde, *What His Mother's Son Hath Wrought*, n.p. [below plate 8, *The Way Things Seem to Be*].
15. Wilde letter to author, July 27, 2002. See also Cozzolino, "'Myself during the War': John Wilde's World War II Sketchbook," 49–50.

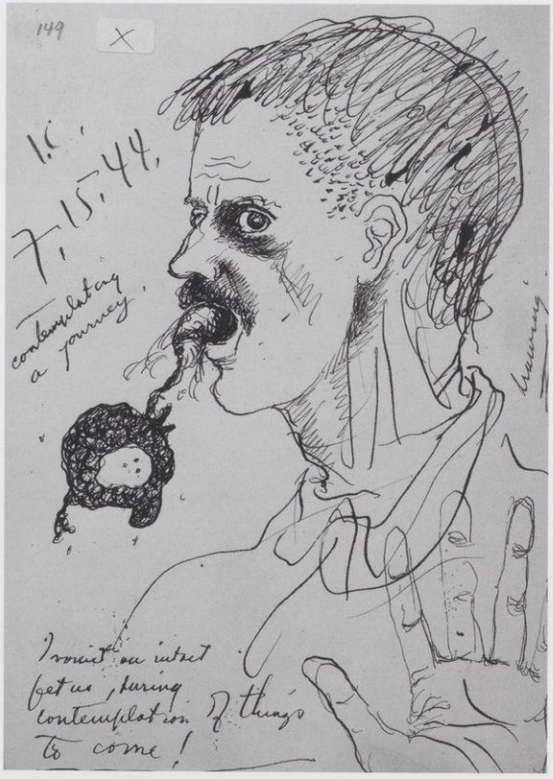
45a
John Wilde
Sketchbook, 1942–46: pages 68, 69–70
Ink, pencil, wash, collage and other media on paper,
12 x 6 x 7 1/2 inches
John Wilde
Photos by Jim Wildeman

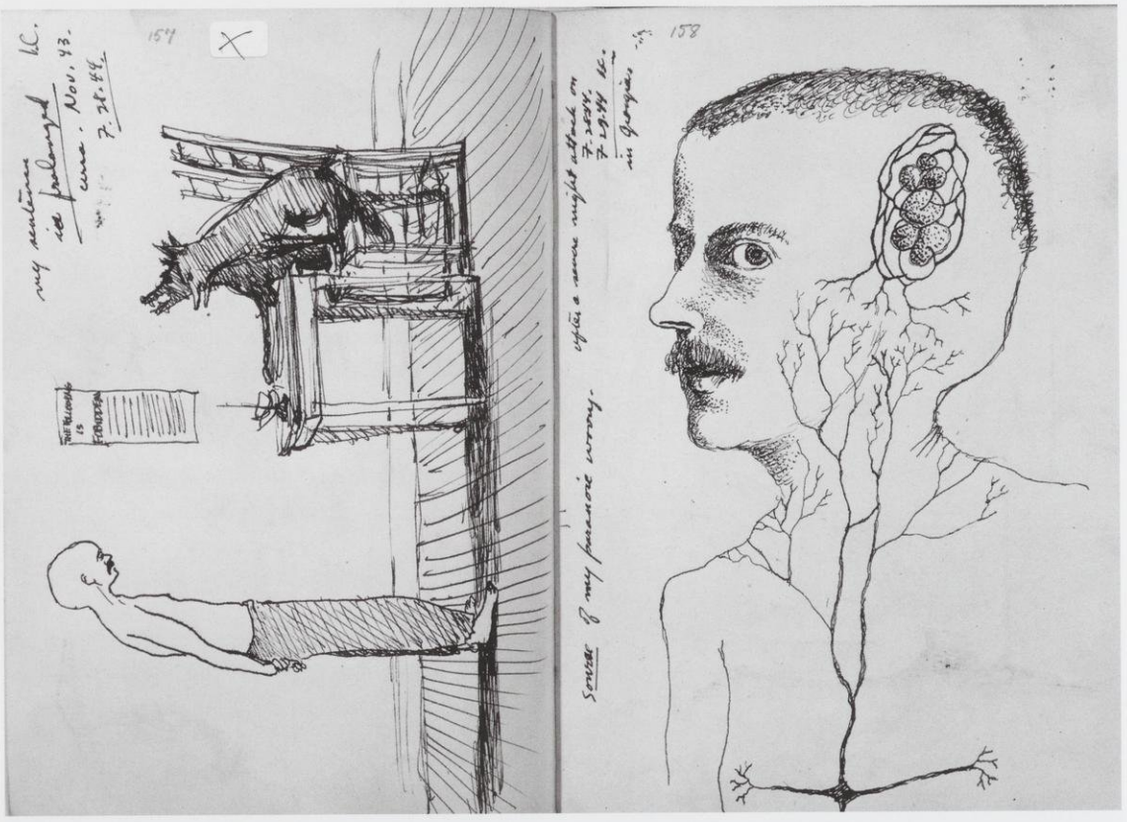




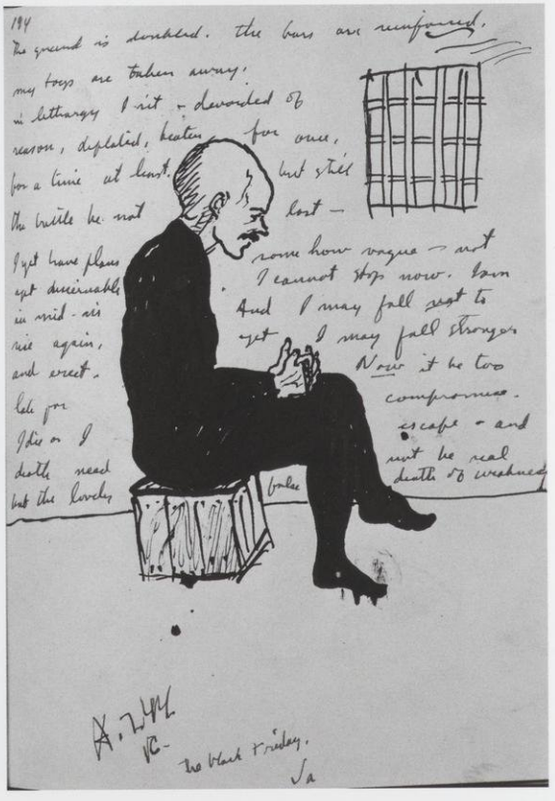


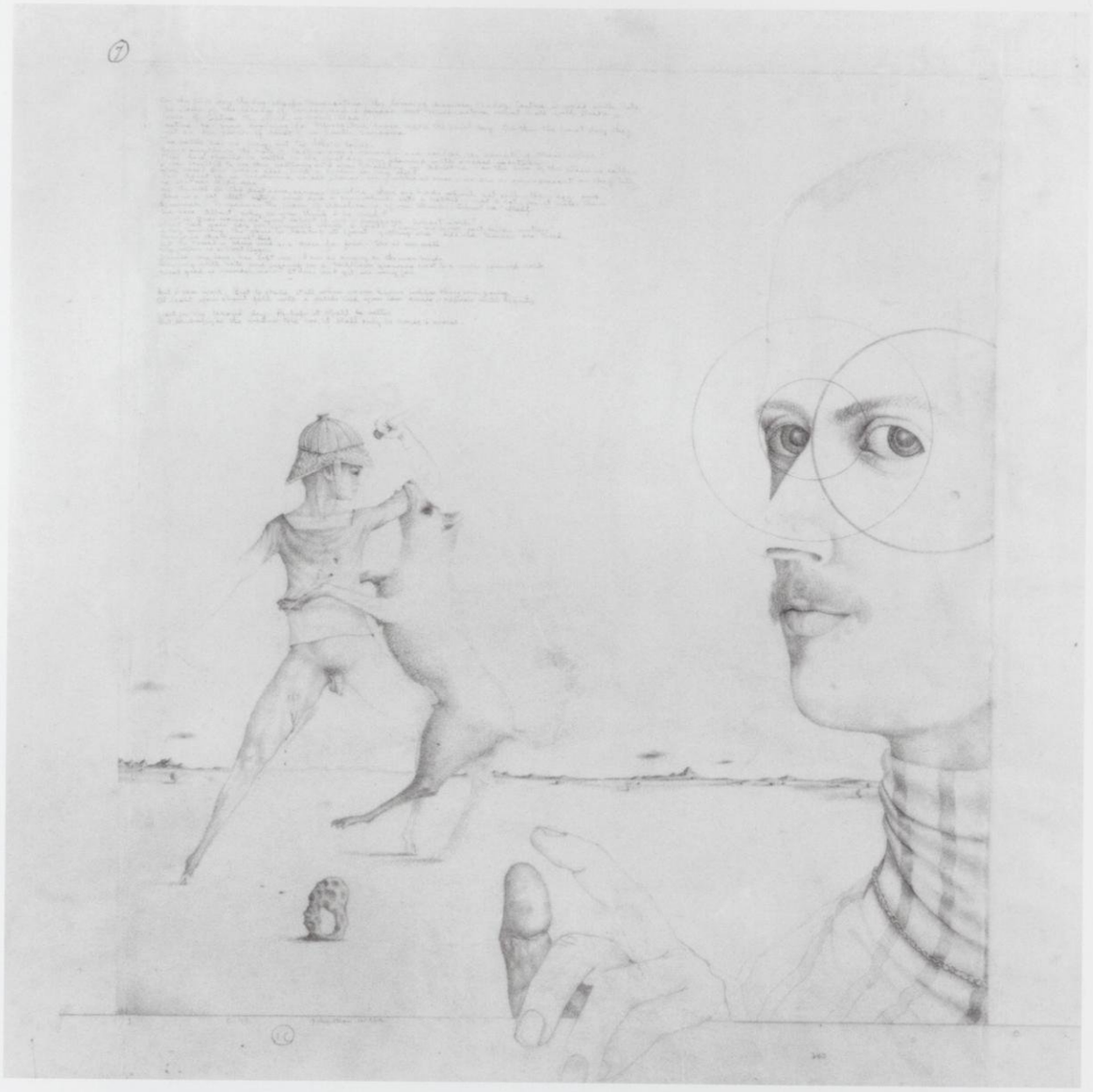
45b
John Wilde
Sketchbook, 1942–46: pages 96, 149
Ink, pencil, wash, collage and other media on paper,
12 x 6 x 7 1/2 inches
John Wilde
Photos by Jim Wildeman





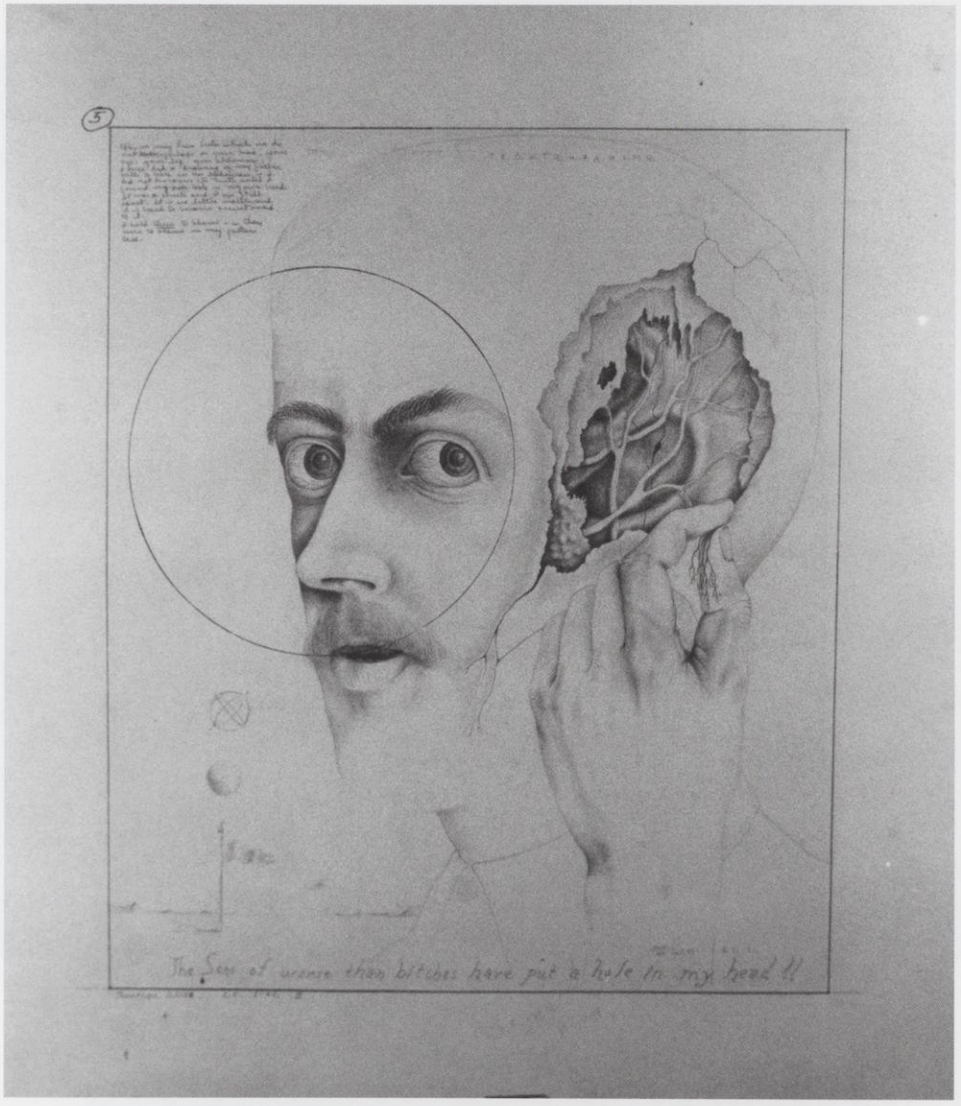
45c
John Wilde
Sketchbook, 1942–46: pages 157–58, 194
Ink, pencil, wash, collage and other media on paper,
12 x 6 x 7 1/2 inches
John Wilde
Photos by Jim Wildeman





46
John Wilde
Myself in the War, 1943
Pencil on paper, 18 7/8 x 18 3/8 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Richard E. Stockwell Endowment Fund purchase

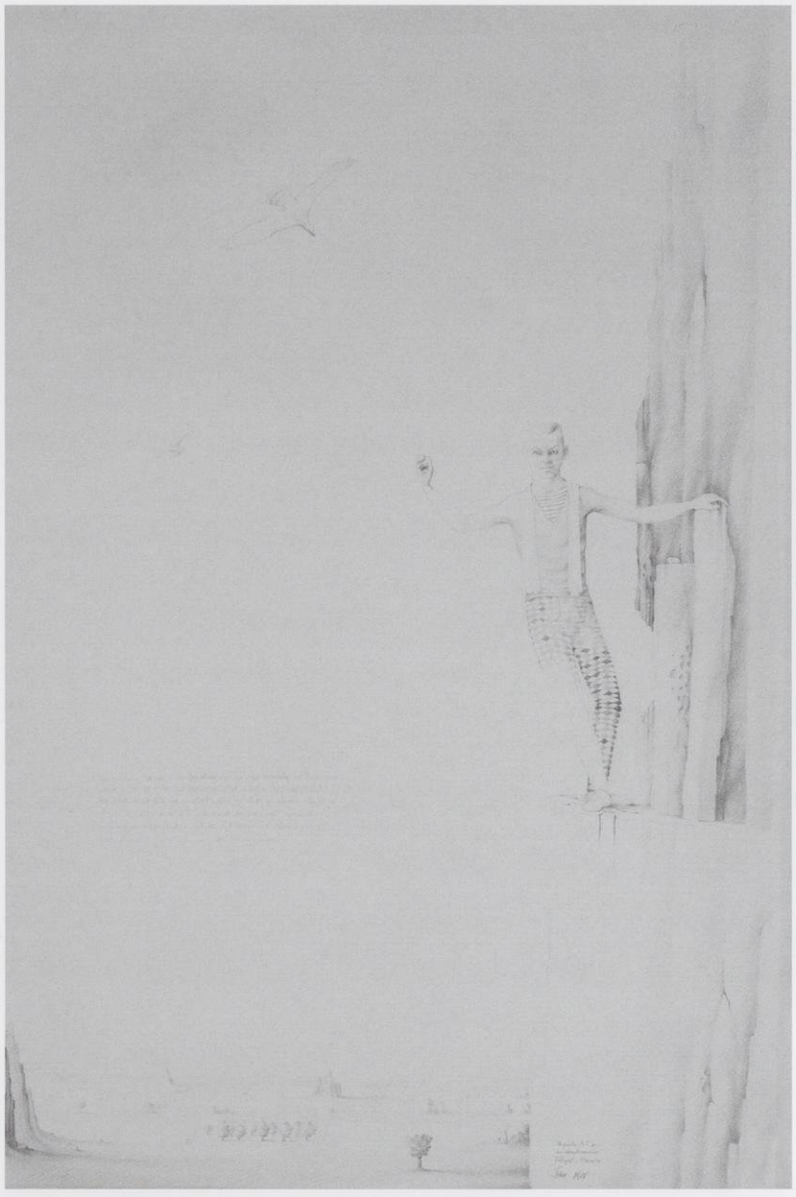
47
John Wilde
Portrait of HDPRAW, 1944
Pencil with touches of wash on paper, 18 1/2 x 12 3/16 inches
Elvehjem Museum of Art, Gift of John Wilde



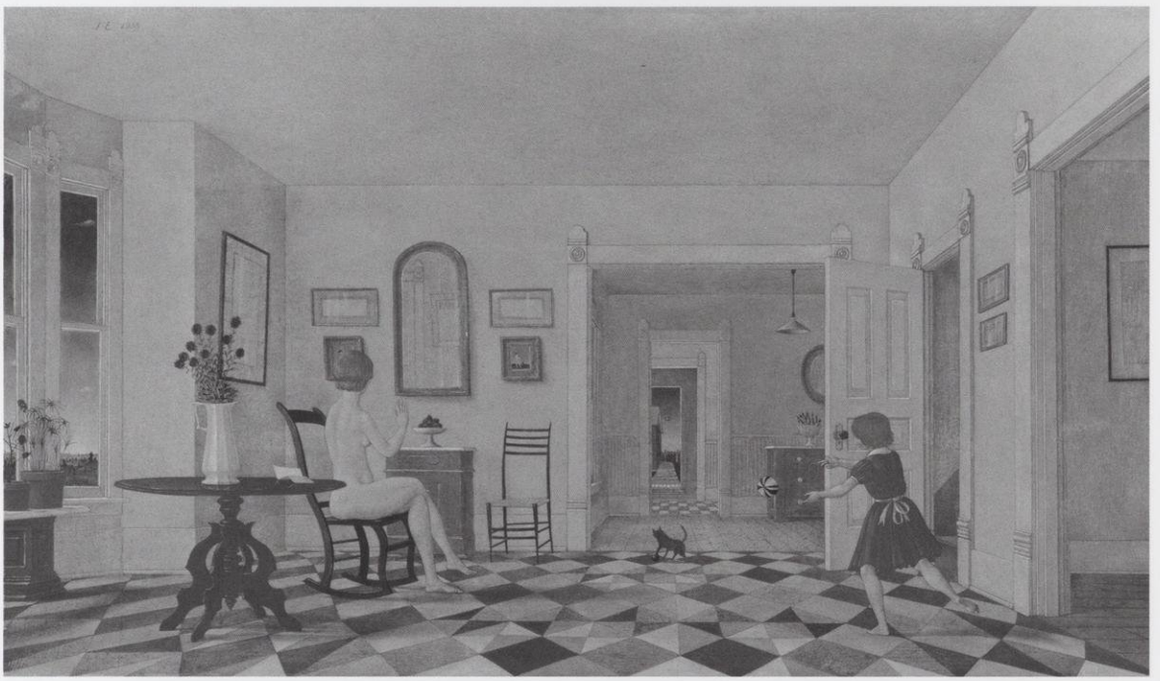
48
John Wilde
The Sons of Worse than Bitches Have Put a Hole in My Head!!, 1944
Pencil and ink on paper, 14 x 11 1/2 inches
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of the artist

49
John Wilde
Love Murders the Artist, 1947
Pencil on tan paper, 21 7/8 x 27 1/4 inches
Arkansas Arts Center Foundation Purchase: Tabriz Fund, 1986

50
John Wilde
The Painter M. Glasier with a Reed Drawing Pen, 1949
Silverpoint on toned paper, 37 x 10 inches
Warren Enters



51
John Wilde
The Painter K. P. as an Adventurous Ololgist, 1950
Pencil on paper, 26 1/2 x 17 5/8 inches
Dr. and Mrs. Peter Gardetto
Photo by Cory Radlund



52
John Wilde
Downstairs, The Red Cat, 1955
Oil on panel, 14 x 24 inches
Private collection; photo courtesy the artist

53
John Wilde
Here, AE 36, I am Partially Within the Object Looking Out to Find Reality, 1956
Pencil on paper, 19 x 16 3/8 inches
James M. Ray; photo courtesy the artist

Chronologies

The following six chronologies include biographical information and selected career highlights. The primary source for each artist was their personal papers. Additional archival collections provided supplementary materials. These collections are listed first in the selected bibliography. The Abercrombie, Huppler, and Wilde chronologies were expanded from those published in earlier catalogues: Weininger, 1991 (Abercrombie), Cozzolino, 2002 (Huppler) and Cozzolino, 1999 in Panczenko (Wilde). Fein, Glasier, and Priebe receive their first scholarly treatment in this volume.

Marshall Glasier Chronology

1902	September 8: Marshall Glasier born in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, an identical twin to brother Franklin. Glasier has a younger brother, John, who goes on to be a microtonal composer. Glasier's father is State Law Librarian and Secretary and Treasurer of the Wisconsin State Bar Association. His mother educated at Downer College in Milwaukee.
1904	Glasier family moves to Madison.
1916–20	Attends Central High School in Madison. Becomes state tennis champion at age 16.
Ca. 1919	According to a high school autobiography spends a summer making art at the Chicago Academy of the Fine Arts.
1922–23	Attends the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Takes life drawing, design, still-life, lettering, perspective, art history, and research classes. Frequently visits the Field Museum of Natural History and works at Alexander Greene's bookstore in the landmark Fine Arts Building designed by Solon S. Beman.
1923	Summer: attends the University of Wisconsin in Madison.
1924	Enlists, as Glasier later tells friends, while intoxicated, in United States Marine Corps. Is stationed in Port au Prince, Republic of Haiti by fall. Elected secretary and treasurer of the enlisted men's club.
1925	Summer: transferred to Paris Island, South Carolina
1926–27	Is the assistant librarian at the Post Reference Library at Quantico, Virginia
1928	May: released from the Marine Corps. Works as a commercial artist in Washington, DC before returning to Madison.
	Summer: attends the University of Wisconsin in Madison.
1929	Summer: attends the University of Wisconsin in Madison.
1930	Moves to New York to work as a commercial artist in advertising. Unable to find work, is advised to return to school.
1931–33	Studies at The Art Students League of New York; becomes monitor in George Grosz's courses, 1932–33.
1934–36	Works for the CCC and WPA; does a series of crime prevention posters.
1936	Returns to Madison.
1938	July-August: Glasier takes a life drawing class at The Art Students League
	Awarded Milwaukee Art Institute medal for *Native Landscape* at 25th annual Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors exhibition.
1939–40	Meets Helen Ashman, Sylvia Fein, and John Wilde.
1940	October: Glasier takes a life drawing class with George Grosz at The Art Students League of New York.
1941–42	Spends each fall in New York.

1943	Begins showing with Associated American Artists.
	Turns down an offer to work as a war artist covering the Army Medical Corps domestically and overseas.
1944–47	Composer Harry Partch lives and works in Madison where he completes his book *Genesis of a Music.* Partch and Glasier become friends and Partch meets Glasier's circle. Partch's ensemble rehearses in the Glasier home.
1945	Wins prize at *Twelfth Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
1945	Wins prizes for *Discovery of the River* and *The Road Home* at the *Twelfth Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
1948	Wins prize at the *Wisconsin State Centennial Exhibition of Contemporary Wisconsin Art* at the Layton Art Gallery.
1948	Announces to Associated American Artists Galleries that he is withdrawing from the art world for three years.
1950	June 16: Glasier marries his nineteen-year-old model, Jo Chamberlain, in Elkader, Iowa. UW music professor Gunnar Johansen is best man and witness.
1951	Glasier visits and paints on the Oregon coast, where Chamberlain's family lives.
	Takes odd jobs, including a stint as security guard for Bjorksten Research Laboratories, Madison and then janitor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison where his duties include cleaning the art department studios. Glasier frequently "corrects" and comments on student work left overnight. A group, curious about who is conducting the anonymous critiques, waits for him one evening. Glasier starts giving informal drawing classes to art students, secretly, at night. When the sessions are discovered, Glasier is fired.
1951–53	Glasier works in Wisconsin on a grant-in-aid from Bjorksten Research Laboratories. The arrangement is really arranged by Johan Bjorksten who pays Glasier $200 per month for half his output. Glasier is required to send every other painting to Bjorksten. Bjorksten calls the venture a "speculation" rather than a grant, as he believes Glasier's work is an investment.
1952–53	Glasier is artist in residence at Reed College, Oregon.
1953	Summer: returns to Madison.
Ca. 1953	Daughter, Philomel is born.
1954–57	Glasier frequently visits and stays with George and Eva Grosz in Huntington, New York. Helps out around the house and with Grosz's art school.
1955	Separates from Chamberlain.
1957	Divorces Chamberlain.
1957–59	Glasier takes over Grosz's class at The Art Students League, New York while Grosz takes a break from teaching.

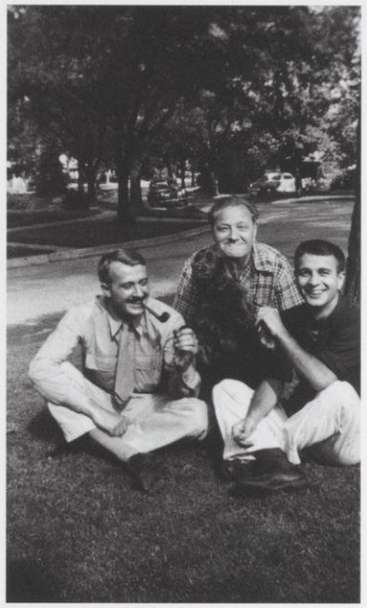


Figure 1. John Wilde, Marshall Glasier, Dudley Huppler, in 1945. Courtesy of John Wilde.

Figure 2. Glasier holding his painting *Peggy*, 1946 in Madison. Courtesy of John Wilde .

1960	After Grosz dies in Germany (July 6, 1959), Glasier officially takes over his position at The Art Students League of New York, where he teaches until his own death.
1960s	Lives at the Chelsea hotel for many years before moving into an apartment on Riverside Drive in Manhattan.
1962	July: Glasier visits Prague, Vienna, and Venice.
1963–87	Teaches in the summer session at the League in addition to his regular course offerings.
1964–78	Glasier simultaneously teaches at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and The Art Students League of New York.
1988	October 31: Glasier dies in his sleep in Manhattan. Taught at The Art Students League earlier in the day. In accordance with Glasier's wishes, money from his estate and the sale of his apartment goes to establish a fine arts fellowship in his name. The executrix of the estate, rather than Glasier, selects Columbia University.
	November 18: a memorial tribute is held for Glasier at the Gallery of The Art Students League of New York.

Figure 3. George Grosz and Marshall Glasier with skeleton doll, 1954. Glasier Archives, State University of New York, Binghamton.

Gertrude Abercrombie Chronology

1909	Born in Austin, Texas, February 17, to Lula (who used the stage name Jane) and Tom Abercrombie, singers in a traveling opera company on tour in the south. Lula Abercrombie's maiden name was Janes, the Wisconsin family after whom the town of Janesville, Wisconsin is named. Gertrude is their only child.
1912	Moves to Ravinia, Illinois, where Jane Abercrombie becomes a *prima donna* in an opera company.
1913–14	Travels with her family to Berlin where Jane Abercrombie studies opera, Tom Abercrombie works for the Red Cross. Gertrude develops fluency in German. The outbreak of World War I prompts them to return to the United States in December, 1914.
1915	The family settles, briefly in Aledo, Illinois where Tom Abercrombie had family. Abercrombie starts school in the small town. Over the course of her life she often spends summers in Aledo. Its landscapes and buildings provide inspiration for numerous paintings during her artistic career.
1916	Moves to Chicago where she attends grammar school.
1921–25	Attends Hyde Park High School.
1925–29	Attends the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, and graduates with a degree in Romance languages.
1929–30	Attends the American Academy of Art, Chicago; may have enrolled in some classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.
1931–35	In Chicago, works her first job at Mesirow Department Store drawing gloves, flour sifters, beaded bags and other objects; in 1932 works in a similar capacity at Sears, Roebuck and Company as a commercial "revamp" artist.
	Meets brothers Tom and Tud Kempf, artists who encourage Abercrombie to become a painter.
1932	Exhibits her work publicly for the first time at Increase Robinson's Studio Gallery in Chicago.

1933 Abercrombie becomes an active member of the Chicago art scene. She exhibits with the Chicago Society of Artists, the Chicago No-Jury Society of Artists, and in the Grant Park Outdoor Art Fair.

Meets Thornton Wilder, the first of many writers with whom she becomes close friends.

1933–34 Employed on the Public Works of Art Project.

1934 Meets the writer Wendell Wilcox.

1935–40 Employed on the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration.

1935 Meets writer James Purdy. Also meets Karl Priebe in Chicago. Priebe begins introducing her to his artist and musician friends, including Charles Sebree and many jazz and blues artists. Through Wilder, Abercrombie meets Gertrude Stein and shows her some recent paintings following a lecture Stein gives at the University of Chicago. According to Abercrombie, Stein advises, "they are very pretty but girl you gotta draw better."

Figure 1. Clockwise from upper left: Ann Krasnan, Karl Priebe, unknown woman, Bob Davis, Gertrude Abercrombie, and Dudley Huppler, at a party at Priebe's place in Kalamazoo, Michigan, ca. 1944. Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

1936 Awarded the Joseph Eisendrath Prize for *There on the Table* (1935) at the *40th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago & Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago.

1938 Awarded the Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Armstrong prize for *Slaughter House Ruins at Aledo* (1937) at the *42nd Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago & Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago.

1940 Marries attorney Robert Livingston.

1942 Daughter, Dinah is born.

1943 Meets Dudley Huppler.

1944 Abercrombie moves to 5728 S. Dorchester in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood where she lives for the rest of her life. Her home becomes a salon for writers, musicians, and others on weekends. Internationally known jazz musicians stop in for jam sessions and occasionally the activities are written up in the magazine, *Downbeat.* The sessions occur regularly for decades.

1946 Awarded the William and Bertha Clusmann Prize for *The Past and the Present* (1946; color plate 12) at the *50th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago & Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago.

1947 Exhibits regularly in the Hyde Park Art Fair from its inception through the 1960s.

1948 Divorces Robert Livingston and marries Frank Sandiford, writer (using the pen-name Paul Warren) and former burglar who had served prison time.

Around this time meets John Wilde, although Abercrombie had been familiar with his work for many years.

Figure 2. Gertrude Abercrombie with her paintings. Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

1949 Buys the first of three used Rolls-Royces.

1950s Abercrombie has her most prolific period, painting and exhibiting frequently.

Undergoes psychoanalysis with Dr. Franz Alexander in Chicago.

1953 Sandiford publishes a memoir as Paul Warren, *Next Time Is for Life* (New York: Dell, 1953).

1959 Purdy bases the character of Eloisa Brace on Abercrombie in his novel *Malcolm* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1959).

Undergoes gallbladder surgery. Abercrombie's health begins a noticeable decline, exasperated by her increasing dependence on alcohol.

1960–64 Plagued with financial troubles; separates from Sandiford.

1966 Divorces Sandiford.

1970s Abercrombie is increasingly confined to her house due to illnesses. She paints infrequently during this period. Works on her "Joke Book," an autobiographical collection of anecdotes, stories, and observations culled from her entire life.

Abercrombie repurchases or otherwise acquires works from earlier owners, assembling an excellent collection of works spanning her entire career. She writes a will and sets up a trust in her name to preserve and distribute her work. John Clark (a cab driver), Priebe, and the artist Don Baum are appointed executors.

Figure 3. Gertrude Abercrombie and John Wilde at an exhibition of Wilde's work at Newman Brown Gallery, Chicago, 1953. Courtesy of John Wilde.

1977 February: honored at the opening of her retrospective exhibition at the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago.

July 3: Abercrombie dies in Chicago. Baum, the only surviving executor of her trust, distributes the paintings in her estate to museums primarily in the Midwest.

Karl Priebe Chronology

1914 Karl J. Priebe born July 1st in Milwaukee to Emil and Katherine (Wacker) Priebe. His mother was born in Cologne, Germany, his father in Milwaukee. Karl had three sisters (Esther, Haddie, and Eleanor) but was closest to his brother Emil, who eventually joined the Dominican order.

The Priebe and Wilde families live a few doors apart on 49th street. John Wilde's older brother Robert and Karl Priebe become friends.

1928–32 Attends Marquette University High school in Milwaukee.

1932–33 Attends Layton School of Art in Milwaukee.

1933–34 Attends the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Meets Charles Sebree. Works at Hull House, and later at a settlement house at 32nd and Wabash Avenue where he teaches art to children. Frequents music clubs throughout Chicago and befriends many artists and musicians from the black community.

1935–37 Probably meets Gertrude Abercrombie and Julia Thecla around this time and continues to live and work in Chicago.

1938–42 Works in the ethnonology department of the Milwaukee Public Museum.

1939 Wins Honorable Mention for watercolor painting *Striped Dress, Sixth Salon of Art,* Wisconsin Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1940 Does mural for Layton School of Art student lounge.

1941 Awarded the Prix di Roma, the only Milwaukeean to have done so.

1942 Awarded first honorable mention for *The Lost Bird* at *Ninth Salon of Art,* Wisconsin Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1943 Awarded purchase prize for a watercolor, *The Eclipse* (color plate 20), in *Thirtieth Annual Exhibition of Wisconsin Art,* Milwaukee Art Institute.

1943 June: appointed director of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. Priebe announces that Dudley Huppler will be his "assistant." During his tenure Priebe exhibits work by

Abercrombie, Fein, Glasier, Huppler, and Wilde. Abercrombie and Huppler visit Priebe, who throws great parties in his new town.

1944 Summer: visits Carl Van Vechten in New York with Huppler.

October: leaves his position at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and returns to Milwaukee.

1945 Winter-spring: Priebe and Huppler do war work at the Gallum Tannery in Milwaukee.

Probably meets Frank Roy Harriott (1921–1955), associate editor of *Ebony* magazine, who was also on the editorial staff of *PM*. Harriott, also a writer, received a Rosenwald fellowship to write a novel loosely based on the life of Billie Holiday. Priebe may have met Harriott through Holiday or casually at the same clubs and parties. The two begin a devoted relationship and frequently live together over the next decade.

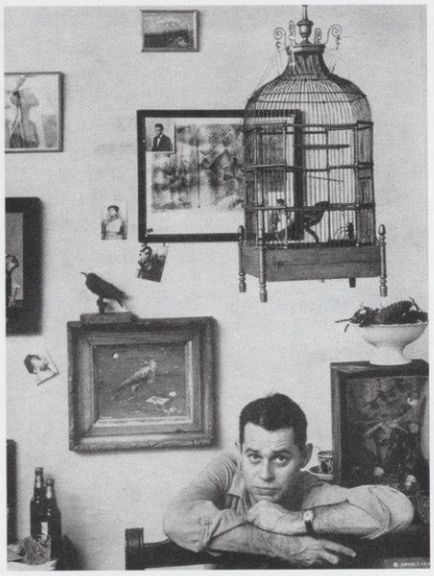


Figure 1. Portrait of Karl Priebe by Arnold Newman from *Life* magazine, November 20, 1947. Karl Priebe Papers. Marquette University Archives, Milwaukee.

1946 September: takes a trip along the Mississippi River with Abercrombie.

1947 November: Priebe and his paintings featured in a four-page color spread in *Life* magazine.

1947–60 Teaches at the Layton School of Art. Instructs in painting, design, and analysis of nature forms.

1948 Wins prize at the *Wisconsin State Centennial Exhibition of Contemporary Wisconsin Art* at the Layton Art Gallery.

1948 Priebe lives with Harriott in an Evansville, Wisconsin farmhouse over the next few years.

1949 Awarded the William H. Tuthill prize at the 59th annual watercolor exhibition at The Art Institute of Chicago.

1951 Judges Miss Wisconsin beauty pageant.

Harriott is plagued with health problems. As Harriott's health deteriorates over the next few years, Priebe remains devoted to him and provides care and support as they live together in Milwaukee.

Figure 2. Priebe teaching at Layton School of Art, ca. 1950. Karl Priebe Papers, Marquette University Archives, Milwaukee.

1955 September 7: Frank Harriot dies after a long battle with Addison's disease.

1956–57 Takes a leave of absence from teaching to focus on painting.

1959–60 Spends five weeks in Europe. Visits Greece and Italy.

Writes a play, called "Constable," with Mary (Lisa) Decker.

Figure 3. Priebe birding with Wilde, ca. 1960. Courtesy John Wilde.

1962 November: visits New Orleans, Texas, and Mexico (through 1963) where he makes many paintings and goes bird watching.

1963–65	Travels to Mexico frequently, where he watches birds and paints.
1968–69	Travels to Mexico in January, 1968 and then visits again from December to January of the following year.
1969	August: travels to Tokyo on the invitation of Japanese government to attend opening of group show that includes his work. Visits Bangkok.
1970s	Priebe and his brother Emil live together in Wauwautosa, near Milwaukee. Despite growing health problems, Priebe continues to throw parties, paint, and exhibit.
1975	November: undergoes surgery to have an eye removed.
1976	July 5: dies in Wauwatosa after a long battle with cancer. Faced with funeral arrangements that exceed his means, Emil Priebe sells much of Karl's extensive collection in a series of hasty auctions. As a consequence, there is no record of what was in the collection at the time of his death.
	Emil donates much of Karl's own work along with his personal papers to Marquette University, Milwaukee.
1978	February 12: dedication ceremony for the Karl Priebe Collection, Marquette University.

Dudley Huppler Chronology

1917	Dudley Gregor Huppler born August 8 in Muscoda, Wisconsin. Attends high school in Muscoda and develops a life-long love of reading and literature. Younger brother John (Tarzie) born 1919 and sister Elizabeth (Liza) born 1921.
1935–39	Enrolls at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Majors in English and minors in art history. Receives both bachelor's and master's degrees in 1939.
1939	In a writing class taught by Helen C. White, Huppler meets Terry Fein, who introduces him to her sister Sylvia. Through Sylvia Fein meets Helen Ashman, Marshall Glasier, John Wilde, and others. Wilde introduces Huppler to Karl Priebe.
1940–41	Named Adams Scholar in the department of English at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Begins working on his doctorate in English and passes preliminary exams.
1940–44	Works as a teaching assistant in the Department of English, at the University of Wisconsin, Madison
1943	In Chicago, meets the artists Gertrude Abercrombie, Charles Sebree, and Julia Thecla through mutual friend Priebe.
	September: makes his earliest dated drawings.
1944	Wins *The Capital Times* Award at the *Eleventh Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art,* Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
	Summer: stays with Karl Priebe in New York.
1945	Winter-spring: Priebe and Huppler do war work at the Gallum Tannery in Milwaukee.
	Is awarded The Paul Hammersmith Memorial Prize at the *Thirty-Second Annual Exhibition of Wisconsin Art,* Milwaukee Art Institute.
	Awarded Wisconsin Union Purchase Prize at the *Twelfth Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art,* Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
	Fall: teaches English at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

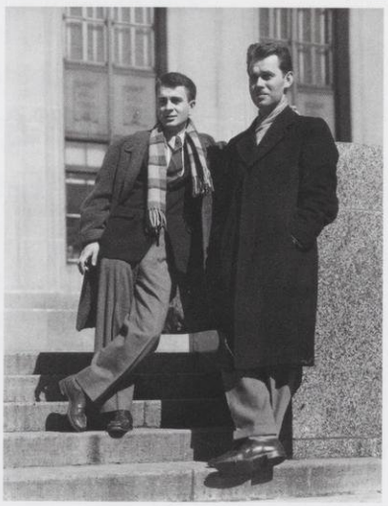


Figure 1. Dudley Huppler with Karl Priebe on the steps of Layton School of Art. Karl Priebe Papers, Marquette University Archives, Milwaukee.

1946 Spring: teaches English at Grinnell College, Iowa.

Publishes first book of prose, *The Lesson Book.*

Summer: returns to Madison.

1947 Develops his dot technique and abandons painting to work in black ink.

1948 Begins corresponding with Marianne Moore.

1949 Begins corresponding with George Platt Lynes.

1950 Huppler stays in New York City frequently throughout the year, meeting Lynes and his circle, including Paul Cadmus, Jared French, Lincoln Kirstein, Bernard Perlin, Glenway Wescott, and Monroe Wheeler.

Between 1950 and 1960 Huppler frequently spends whole summers or makes extended trips to New York City where he stays with friends, visits museums and galleries. He often reports to Abercrombie, Fein, Glasier, Priebe, and Wilde on their exhibitions when they do not travel.

Three of Huppler's drawings are featured in an advertisement for Henri Bendel [10 West 57th St., NY] photographed by George Platt Lynes. The ad appears prominently in *Vogue* (April 15, 1950): 3.

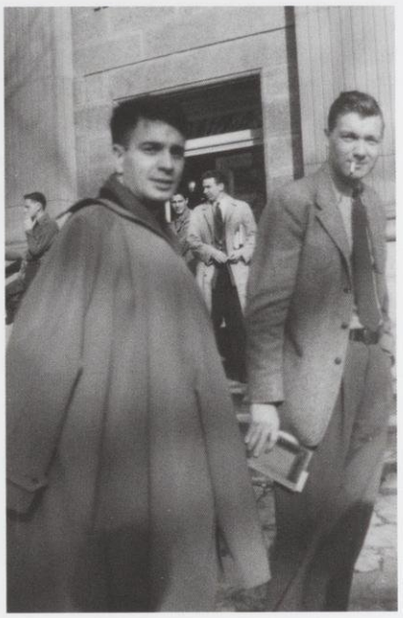


Figure 2. Dudley Huppler and James Watrous in Madison, 1948. Courtesy of John Wilde.

Fall: lives in Philadelphia.

Begins corresponding with Katherine Anne Porter.

1951 Makes first trip to Europe. Visits Florence, Naples, Assisi, and Rome. Also visits the south of France, Salzburg, and London. Makes numerous drawings throughout his trip.

Does drawing of a rabbit and pen for use by Parker Pen Co. in national advertisement.

Figure 3. George Platt Lynes's 1950 photograph as advertisement for Henry Bendel featuring three of Huppler's drawings. Courtesy Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari.

1953 Travels to Italy to stay with musician and composer Lee Hoiby who is in Rome on a Fulbright award. Huppler subsequently travels around the region.

1954 Through photographer Otto Fenn begins a friendship with Andy Warhol.

1955 Spring: awarded a Yaddo Residence grant, Saratoga Springs, NY. While at Yaddo Huppler makes color ink drawings and experiments with splashing water at them before they dry. While there befriends Ralph Pomeroy and Tobias Schneebaum.

September: decorates windows for Bonwit Teller, New York City.

Makes drawings for the Pippin Press, New York, which are used for silkscreened wallpaper known as Pippin's Roman Trees.

1957 Begins spending summer months in Boulder.

September: decorates windows for Delmar's, New York City.

1957–58 Travels to Italy for last time.

1959 Makes drawing of an owl for *Art in America,* which is used by the magazine in promotions and advertisements as a logo.

1960–61	Awarded two consecutive Huntington Hartford Foundation residence grants, Santa Monica, Calif.
	Around this time [through the mid-1970s] begins going to Palm Beach, Florida for part of the year at the invitation of friend and patroness Alice Delamar. Has several exhibitions in Palm Beach.
1961	Publishes second book of prose, *The New Joker.*
	Illustrates *Murdoch* by Hubbell Pierce under the pseudonym DH.
1961–65	Teaches English at the University of Colorado, Boulder.
1966	January: begins teaching English full time at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh.
1970s	Gradually abandons his dot technique during the early part of the decade in favor of a traditional drawing method. Works increasingly in colored pencils on prepared, textured, patterned, and colored paper.
1971–72	Is visiting instructor of drawing in Department of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he fills in for Wilde, who is on leave.
1980	Participates on panel as librettist ["Something New for the Zoo" Lee Hoiby, composer, DH librettist] in the Third Annual O'Neill Composer/Librettist Conference Connecticut College, Groton, Connecticut, July, 6–20.
1985	June: Huppler retires from teaching at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh.
1988	August 11: dies in Boulder. Huppler's body is cremated and his ashes scattered over a secret lake in Colorado by his sister and brother-in-law.

Sylvia Fein Chronology

1919	Born November 20 in Milwaukee to Elizabeth and Alfred Fein. Her mother was a graduate of the Milwaukee Conservatory of Music and father was an attorney and graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School.
1925–37	Attends public schools in Milwaukee. During high school she takes art classes and develops a love of drawing.
1938–42	Attends the University of Wisconsin in Madison focusing on art and art history. Receives a National Youth Administration work/study grant for which she reads to visually impaired students (1938-40). Professor James Watrous later has Fein reassigned to work in the art history techniques laboratory (1940–42).
	During her second semester she begins studying drawing with Roland Stebbins and makes art her primary area. From John Van Koert she learns design and commercial art techniques. Fein excels in Watrous's historical techniques courses where she works with a wide variety of paint recipes. While she takes a wide-range of art history courses, she is most attracted by sixteenth-century century German art, as well as Persian and Mughal miniature and manuscript painting. Philosophy professor Eliseo Vivas urges her to read John Dewey's *Art and Experience,* a book that has a greater affect later in her career.
1939	Meets John Wilde in the art studios where they spend more time working than their peers. Soon afterward she meets Helen Ashman, Marshall Glasier, and then Dudley Huppler and Karl Priebe.
1940	With Ashman, designs costumes for dancers in *Orchesis,* the University of Wisconsin dance department's festival.
	Attends evening concerts at Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin with Glasier, Huppler, Wilde, and others. Moved by Wright's designs, she "harbored secret thoughts on becoming an architect" for a time.
1940–41	Joins the University of Wisconsin Union Art Committee through which she helps schedule, install, and publicize exhibitions. She also meets the nationally known figures from the art world who serve as jurors for the annual Salon of Art.
1941	November: Awarded the Joseph E. Davies Purchase Prize for *Landscape with Bird* (1941) at the *Eighth Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art,* Wisconsin Memorial Union, University of

Wisconsin, Madison. The painting causes much controversy among students and with the Madison art community.

1942 Awarded scholarship from Pan-Hellenic, through the University of Wisconsin Office of Dean of Women.

Graduates from the University of Wisconsin, Madison with a Bachelor of Science degree in applied art.

Awarded Purchase Prize for *Ladies with Many Faces* (1942; color plate 30) at the *Ninth Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art,* Wisconsin Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

May 30: Fein marries William Scheuber in Blue River, Wisconsin while on a sketching trip along the Wisconsin River with Helen Ashman, Huppler, Glasier, Wilde, and other friends. Soon afterward Scheuber leaves for service in the South Pacific theater.

Fall: Works a factory war job at Cutler-Hammer in Milwaukee testing switches for naval planes.

Figure 1. Sylvia Fein in Madison, 1942. Courtesy of John Wilde.

1943 Spring: Works for her uncle as a commercial advertising artist and window trimmer at Routts, his Milwaukee dress shop.

Glasier and Priebe begin showing Fein's work to New York dealers. After Priebe shows her paintings to Klaus G. Perls, he contacts her about a possible show. Fein begins sending paintings to Perls, he starts showing them to clients and together they plan a solo show.

Summer: Travels to New York.

Figure 2. Marshall Glasier and Sylvia Fein in Madison, ca. 1941/42. Courtesy of John Wilde.

1944 March: Joins her mother in Mexico City where she unexpectedly encounters an old high school friend, Charmin Schlossman who lives in Ajijic, a village on Lake Chapala near Guadalajara. Fein accompanies Schlossman to Ajijic. In Ajijic sets up a studio and produces much of the work included in her only solo show at Perls Galleries (1946).

Teaches English to villagers preparing for jobs in Mexico City; they reciprocate by helping her improve her Spanish. Travels throughout the area including trips to precolumbian sites. Fein collects "Historias," drawings and paintings done by villagers on hand-made paper that vividly depict celebrations, weddings, and funerals. In 2003 she gives her collection to the Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Meets many American and European expatriates and Mexican artists in Ajijic; psychologist Karen Horney stays there while completing her book, *Our Inner Conflicts, A Constructive Theory of Neurosis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1945); Rufino Tamayo stays in the village for a time. Fein attends a party in Frida Kahlo's studio hosted by dealer Inés Amor.

1946 After Scheuber is released from the army he joins Fein in Mexico and they live there for another year.

1947 Fein and her husband move to northern California.

Daughter, Heidi is born.

1948 With Heidi, visits her mother in Mexico City.

1949 Fein barters with college friend and landscape architect Larry Halprin for a landscape plan for her family's new home. In exchange, she paints a portrait of Halprin and his wife, the dancer Ann Halprin.

Fein meets professor Henry Schaefer-Simmern after reading his *The Unfolding of Artistic Activity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948) and begins a close friendship with him.

1951 January: Receives her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of California, Berkeley. Later destroys all of her graduate work.

Through composer friend Lee Hoiby, Fein meets Harry Partch. Partch is a frequent house-guest during this period as he prepares for the premiere performance of *King Oedipus* at Mills College in Oakland (1952). Partch builds musical instruments in Fein's studio, and she later donates one of Partch's instruments (a double canon) to Mills College. Partch helps Fein make frames for her paintings.

Figure 3. John Wilde, Marshall Glasier and Sylvia Fein in Madison, 1942. Courtesy of John Wilde

Glasier stays with Fein for a month and makes collaborative drawings with Heidi.

1951–54 Works on a large series of "ladies" engaged in various activities or in peril.

1955 Fein changes the direction of her art; the majority of her works from this point on are highly detailed landscapes and seascapes, often miniature in scale. She sketches from her boat in California and during river and canal trips in Europe. She later works these sketches into paintings in her studio.

1960 Wins first and second prizes at the *Fifth Annual Diablo Pageant of Arts,* Walnut Creek, California.

1970–2000 Fein is active in the community of Pleasant Hill, California as an appointed member and chair of several architectural, urban planning, and art commissions.

1973 May: *Little Umber Landscape* is featured on the cover of *Poetry* magazine.

Takes a break from painting and the art world.

1976 Publishes *Heidi's Horse* (Pleasant Hill, CA: Exelrod Press, 1976) which is the first known chronology and analysis of artistic development in childhood. The drawings are by her daughter Heidi, which Fein had preserved and dated.

1988 With her husband, designs and builds a small stone cottage with vineyard in the hills of Napa County, where she writes *First Drawings: Genesis of Visual Thinking* (Pleasant Hill, CA: Exelrod Press, 1993).

1994 With her husband, buys six acres of land in Martinez, California, builds a home, and plants over 300 olive trees. Eventually produces and bottles her own certified olive oil under the Alhambra Valley Ranch label.

2003 Resumes painting.

John Wilde Chronology

1919 Born December 12 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Mathilda and Emil Wilde, a housewife and a dentist. John is the youngest of three sons; Leslie, born 1909, and Robert, born 1914. The Wildes live a few doors apart from the Priebe family. Karl and Robert, the same age, are playmates.

1925–37 Attends public schools in Milwaukee. Towards the end of his high school years he has an apprenticeship with painter Paul Clemens with from whom he has lessons in drawing and learns studio practices. Visits the studios of other Milwaukee artists, including Alfred Sessler and Santos Zingale.

1938–42 Attends University of Wisconsin, Madison where he majors in art. He takes many courses in the humanities and later cites experiences with Frederick Burkhardt, Harold Taylor, and Eliseo Vivas in philosophy, and John Kienitz and James Watrous as especially influential on his thinking.

1938/39 Meets fellow art students Helen Ashman and Sylvia Fein. Shortly afterward, meets Marshall Glasier. With Ashman and Fein frequents Glasier's salon and informal drawing sessions. Through Glasier learns about the art world and has access to a large collection of artbooks and contemporary periodicals.

1939–41 Joins the University of Wisconsin Union Art Committee through which he helps schedule, install, and publicize exhibitions. He also meets the nationally known figures from the art world who serve as jurors for the annual Salon of Art.

1940 Takes a car trip to New York with his mother, brother, and Priebe, stopping first in DC. While in New York, sees Billie Holiday perform at the Village Vanguard and is introduced to her afterwards by Priebe.

Awarded the Joseph E. Davies Purchase Prize for *Portrait of Helen,* a painting in the *Seventh Salon of Art,* Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1941 Conscripted into the US army but is granted a waiver while he completes his senior year.

1942 Spring: graduates from the university.

Fall: receives basic training with the infantry at Camp Livingston in Louisiana. Begins notebook which he fills with drawing and writing inspired by his military experience.

Transferred to the medical corps; participates in field rescue drills, receives training for front line aid station casualty duties. Also trained to perform quick inspections to identify soldiers suffering from venereal diseases. Makes drawings for venereal disease prevention propaganda.

1943 Transferred to the air force where he designs and paints camouflage and instructs pilots on the subject.

June: marries Helen Ashman.

1944 Transferred to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a precursor of the CIA and is stationed in Washington, DC. Makes two- and three- dimensional strategic maps for army intelligence.

1945 Wins prize for *Exhibiting the Weapon* at the *Twelfth Wisconsin Salon of Art,* Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1946 Discharged from the army. Does graduate work in art history and art at University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Figure 1. James Watrous, John Wilde, Marshall Glasier, and Dudley Huppler in University of Wisconsin Memorial Union Gallery, about 1946. Courtesy of John Wilde.

1947 Wins award for drawing, *Study for Head of Sick Child,* in *First Biennial Exhibition of Paintings and Prints,* Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

Writes his master's thesis in art history: "A Survey of the Development of Surrealism in Painting and Its Chief Innovations with Especial Emphasis on the Life and Work of Max Ernst."

Abandons art history to concentrate on his studies in studio art.

1948 Graduates from the University of Wisconsin, Madison with a master's degree from the education department, as there is no formal art degree. His thesis exhibition consists

largely of drawings done during the war and paintings made since.

Joins faculty of University of Wisconsin, Madison. Teaches drawing for most of his career. Has summers free to paint and generally follows a pattern of teaching many classes one full semester and teaching one graduate seminar the second in order to concentrate on his own work.

Son, Jonathan, is born.

Wins prize at the *Wisconsin State Centennial Exhibition of Contemporary Wisconsin Art* at the Layton Art Gallery for *Myself with Revolver.*

Figure 2. Dudley Huppler and John Wilde, about 1949. Courtesy of John Wilde.

1950s Writes a series of guest articles of art criticism for the *Wisconsin State Journal.*

1951 Daughter, Phoebe, is born.

Wins award for *Still Life with a Basket of Currants,* at *5th Old Northwest Territory Art Exhibit,* Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield.

1952 May: buys and moves into nineteenth-century house in Evansville, Wisconsin where he sets up a studio.

Commissioned by *Mademoiselle* to illustrate a new diet, featured on the cover of their June issue.

Awarded a prize for *Still Life with Diana,* in the *38th Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors Inc. Exhibition of Wisconsin Art* at the Milwaukee Art Institute.

1954 Commissioned by the De Beers jewelry company to make a painting (*On the Wings of Love*) for use in advertising campaigns.

1958 Awarded the Lambert Prize, *153rd Annual Exhibition of American Painting and Sculpture,* Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

1959 Commissioned to illustrate covers for *The Progressive,* September and October.

1960–62 Serves as chairman of the Department of Art, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1962 Acquires fifteen acres of land in Cooksville, near Evansville, Wisconsin and builds a new home and studio. Also establishes a private arboretum there.

Illustrates cover of *The Progressive,* December.

1964 Wins the Child Hassam Award, National Academy of Design, NY. Receives it again in 1968 and 1980.

1966 Helen Wilde dies, December 21.

1969 August: marries Shirley Gene Miller.

Named Alfred Sessler Professor of Art, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

The Lady and the Shoeshine Boy awarded purchase prize in the *34th Annual Mid-Year Show,* Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH.

1971 Suffers a heart attack. After a recovery period and physical therapy resumes painting and drawing.

Begins collaborations with Walter Hamady and the Perishable Press, Limited, Mt. Horeb, WI. Between 1971 and 2001 collaborates on nine hand-made books with the press.

1982 Retires from teaching and becomes professor emeritus.

Elected fellow of Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters.

1987 Awarded purchase prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York.

1993 Elected Associate of the National Academy of Design; the following year he is elected full Academician (NA).

1998 Commissioned with Warrington Colescott to make a poster in honor of the Wisconsin State Sesquicentennial.

Selected Exhibition History

This exhibition history documents major individual achievements while emphasizing group activity during the period 1938–1965. Only major solo exhibitions and thematically relevant group shows are listed for the period after 1965. These six artists often showed in the same large competitive exhibitions; in these cases, the exhibition receives one entry, with names listed together. The artists exhibited in far more shows than could be included; this list suggests the diversity of their professional activities. Abercrombie, Huppler, and Wilde's exhibition activities are treated in detail by authors of their retrospective catalogues listed in the bibliography.

Solo and Two-person Exhibitions

1937

Exhibition of Paintings by Marshall Glasier, Milwaukee Art Institute, November 8–30.

Marshall Glasier, Main Gallery, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1940

Marshall Glasier, Paintings, Julien Levy Gallery, New York, NY, January 9–22.

Exhibition of Paintings by Karl Priebe and Hans Kotilainen, Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee, January 11-February 12.

1941

Paintings by Sylvia Fein and John Wilde, Main Gallery, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, October 10-November 3.

1942

Exhibition of Paintings by Karl Priebe and Charles Sebree, Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee, March 1-April 1.

Marshall Glasier, Main Gallery, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

1943

Karl Priebe, Perls Galleries, New York, NY, January 4–30.

An Exhibition of Recent Paintings by Karl Priebe, David Porter Gallery, Washington, DC, July 25-August 29.

Glasier: Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings, Associated American Artists, New York, NY, September 20-October 2.

1944

Karl Priebe: Recent Paintings, Perls Galleries, New York, NY, September 11-October 7.

1946

First Exhibition of Paintings by Gertrude Abercrombie, Associated American Artists Galleries, New York, NY, January 24-February 6.

Karl Priebe: Recent Paintings, Perls Galleries, New York, NY, February 25-March 23.

Sylvia Fein: Paintings, Perls Galleries, New York, NY, September 9-October 5.

Karl Priebe, James Vigeveno Galleries, Westwood Hills, AZ, September 29-October 20.

Paintings and Drawings by Dudley Huppler, Gallery of Chubb Library, Ohio University, Athens, December 1–15.

1947

John Wilde, Dudley Huppler, An Exhibition of Artwork, Wisconsin Memorial Union Gallery, University of Wisconsin, Madison, January 30-February 19, 1947; Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee, March 1–18.

1948

Recent Paintings by Karl Priebe, Perls Galleries, New York, NY, January 5–31.

Exhibition of Paintings by John Wilde and Dudley Huppler, The Gallery Studio, Chicago, May 29-June 25.

Karl Priebe and Ivan L[e Lorraine]. *Albright,* E. H. Bresler Gallery, Milwaukee, December 5–25.

1949 *John Wilde—Wisconsin Artist,* Milwaukee Art Institute, May 13–29.

Priebe: Birds of Wisconsin, Perls Galleries, New York, NY, October 3–29.

1950 *Dudley Huppler,* Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, May 1–13.

Drawings by John Wilde, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, May 15–June 3.

Exhibition of Paintings by Karl Priebe, E. H. Bresler Gallery, Milwaukee, December 9–30.

1951 *Paintings by John Wilde,* Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, January 30–February 17.

Paintings and Drawings by John Wilde, E. H. Bresler Gallery, Milwaukee, December 1–29.

1952 *Gertrude Abercrombie Paintings,* Stevens-Gross Galleries, Chicago, March 7–April 4.

Paintings, Gertrude Abercrombie, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, April 7–26.

Recent Paintings in Oil by Gertrude Abercrombie, Newman Brown Gallery, Chicago, September 6–October 3.

Marshall Glasier: Paintings and Drawings, 1947–1952, Faculty Lounge Gallery, Reed College, Portland, OR, September 21-October 15.

Bella Italia (Drawings by Dudley Huppler), Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, October 13–November 1.

1953 *John Wilde,* Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, January 12–31.

An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by John Wilde, Newman Brown Gallery, Chicago, February 28–March 20.

Paintings by Gertrude Abercrombie, The Contemporary Arts Gallery, Evanston, IL, March 1–31.

Recent Paintings by Gertrude Abercrombie, Newman Brown Gallery, Chicago, September 5–24.

Priebe: Recent Paintings and Drawings, Newman Brown Gallery, Chicago, October 17–November 14.

1954 *Marshall Glasier, Paintings and Drawings,* University of Wisconsin Memorial Library, Madison, January.

Exhibition of Paintings by Gertrude Abercrombie, Irv Benjamin's Restaurant, Chicago, May 5–30.

Huppler, Maynard Walker Gallery, New York, NY, October–November.

1955 *Exhibit of Paintings by Mr. Karl Priebe,* Milwaukee Branch American Association of University Women, College Women's Club, Milwaukee, April 1–8.

Recent Paintings: Priebe, Hammer Galleries, New York, NY, October 2–20.

An Exhibition of Paintings by John Wilde, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, October 17–November 5.

1956 *An Exhibition of Paintings by John Wilde,* University of Wisconsin Memorial Library, Madison, April 9–27; Lawrence University, Appleton, WI, May 7–26.

Mice and Bugs, Shells and Paperweights: A New Group of Small Drawings by Dudley Huppler, The Wakefield Gallery, Wakefield-Young Books, New York, NY, May 21–June 9.

Priebe: Recent Paintings, Hammer Galleries, New York, NY, October 2–20.

1957 *Drawings on Colored Paper by Dudley Huppler,* Riccardo Restaurant and Gallery, Chicago, January.

Priebe: Recent Paintings and Drawings, E. H. Bresler Gallery, Milwaukee, February.

[Sylvia Fein] *Fifty-Seven Small Paintings of the San Fransisco Bay Region* [actually 59], Feingarten Galleries, San Francisco, CA, September 16–October 4.

Marshall Glasier: Paintings and Drawings, Vera Lazuk Country Life Art Centre, Long Island, NY, September 22–October 19.

1958

Marshall Glasier: 15 Years of Painting, Berryman Gallery, New York, NY, November 3–22.

An Exhibition of Paintings by John Wilde, E. H. Bresler Gallery, Milwaukee, December 5–31.

Sylvia Fein, Sagitarius Gallery, New York, NY, December 10, 1958-January 4, 1959.

1959

John Wilde, Robert Isaacson Gallery (formerly Edwin Hewitt Gallery), New York, NY, January 27-February 21.

An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Marshall Glasier, Park House Gallery, Harpur College, Endicott, NY, April 17-May 17.

Wilde, The Lane Galleries, Los Angeles, May 25-June 13.

Karl Priebe, Library Theater Gallery, Wisconsin State College, Stevens Point, October 12-November 13.

Sylvia Fein, Feingarten Galleries, Caramel, CA, December 9–31.

Monkeys and Owls: New Drawings by Dudley Huppler, including Three New Series of Postcards: Owls in Trees, Monkeys, Kids in Dress-Up, The Wakefield Gallery, Wakefield-Young Books, New York, NY, April 8–30.

1960

Paul Crosthwaite and Dudley Huppler, Worth Avenue Gallery, Palm Beach, FL, January.

The Magic Eye of John Wilde, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, SC, September 4-October 2.

Gertrude Abercrombie: Paintings, Devorah Sherman Gallery, Chicago, October 4–31.

Marshall Glasier Drawings, Vera Lazuk Gallery, Gold Spring Harbor, Long Island, NY, October 23-November 12.

Paintings by John Wilde, Robert Isaacson Gallery, New York, NY, November 22-December 10.

Sylvia Fein, St. Mary's College, Moraga, CA.

1961

Sylvia Fein, Feingarten Gallery, New York, NY, January 3–28.

1962

Sylvia Fein, Mills College Art Gallery, Oakland, CA, January 14-February 18.

Karl Priebe: Recent Paintings, Henri Gallery, Alexandria, VA, April 3–30.

Marshall Glasier, Graham Gallery, New York, NY, May 1–19.

1963

An Exhibition of Recent Brush Drawings by Marshall Glasier, Art Gallery of Harpur College, State University of New York, Binghamton, March 24-April 14.

John Wilde Drawings, Durlacher Brothers, New York, NY, May 21-June 14.

Sylvia Fein, Maxwell Galleries, San Francisco, CA, November 18-December 7.

Recent Drawings and Pastels/Mexico: Karl Priebe, Irving Galleries, Milwaukee, December.

1964

Gertrude Abercrombie, Gilman Galleries, Chicago, September.

1965

John Wilde, Drawings and Paintings, The Lane Galleries, Los Angeles, May 25-June 13.

John Wilde, Durlacher Brothers, New York, NY, October 5–30.

Paintings by Sylvia Fein: "The Shape of the Sea," Nicole of Berkeley [CA], mezzanine art gallery, November 18-December 25.

1966

Karl Priebe, John Nelson Bergstrom Art Center, Neenah, WI, January 12-February 6.

An Exhibition of Drawings by Dudley Huppler, Ripon [WI] College Art Gallery, September 25-October 7.

1967

Wilde, Milwaukee Art Center, February 10- March 5.

Dudley Huppler, Marquette University, Milwaukee, February 19-March 5; traveled to the John Nelson Bergstrom Art Center, Neenah, WI and the Paine Art Center and Arboretum, Oshkosh, WI.

1968 *Retrospective Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Karl Priebe,* Charles Allis Art Library, Milwaukee, October 27-November 30.

1972 Glasier retrospective, *Wisconsin, Oregon, New York,* Peale House, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, March 22-April 30.

1976 *Karl Priebe: Milwaukee Collections, Thirty-Five Years of Painting,* Marquette University, February 15–28.

Priebe/Wilde, John Nelson Bergstrom Art Center and Museum, Neenah, WI, September 15-October 17.

1977 *Gertrude Abercrombie: A Retrospective Exhibition,* Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, January 28-March 5.

1979 *Karl Priebe and Friends,* [solo] Charles Allis Art Museum, Milwaukee, August 11-September 6.

1982 *Leaders in Wisconsin Art,* 1936–1981 [John Steuart Curry, Aaron Bohrod, and John Wilde], Milwaukee Art Museum, April 4-May 23.

The Red Room: An Environment by Marshall Glasier, The Automation House, New York, NY, April 6–15.

Karl Priebe, Charles Allis Art Museum, Milwaukee, June 13-July 4.

1984 *John Wilde: Drawings* 1940–1984, Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, November 17, 1984-January 6, 1985.

1988 *Marshall Glasier:* 30 *Years of Drawing,* The Art Students League of New York, NY, September 25-October 7.

1991 *Karl Priebe: A Look at African Americans,* Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee, July 26-Septemeber 23.

Gertrude Abercrombie, State of Illinois Art Gallery, Chicago, March 18-May 17; Illinois State Museum, Springfield, July 28-October 25.

1999 *Wildeworld: The Art of John Wilde,* Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, November 13, 1999–January 9, 2000.

2002 *Dudley Huppler: Drawings,* Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, July 13-September 22.

Group Exhibitions

1939 Gertrude Abercrombie and Karl Priebe, *43rd Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity,* The Art Institute of Chicago, February 9-March 12.

Priebe and John Wilde, *Sixth Salon of Art,* Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 22-December 10.

1940 Abercrombie and Priebe, *44th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity,* The Art Institute of Chicago, March 14-April 14.

Abercrombie, Priebe, and Wilde, *19th International Watercolor Exhibition,* The Art Institute of Chicago, March 23-May 14.

Priebe, *51st Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture,* The Art Institute of Chicago, November 11, 1940-January 5, 1941.

Priebe and Wilde, *Seventh Wisconsin Salon of Art,* Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 20-December 12.

Glasier, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 27, 1940-January 8, 1941.

1941

Wilde, 136*th Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture*, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, January 26-March 2.

Glasier, *Annual Exhibition of Sculpture, Watercolors, Drawings and Prints*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, January 15-February 19.

Abercrombie, Priebe, and Wilde, 45*th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago, March 11-April 1.

Fein, Glasier, and Priebe, *The* 28*th Annual Exhibition of Wisconsin Art*, Milwaukee Art Institute, April 2–29.

Fein, Priebe, and Wilde, *Eighth Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 5-December 4.

Abercrombie and Priebe, 52*nd Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture*, The Art Institute of Chicago, October 30, 1941-January 4, 1942.

Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1942

Priebe, 9 *American Artists*, The Arts Club of Chicago, February 3–28.

Abercrombie, Priebe and Wilde, 46*th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago, March 12-April 26.

Abercrombie and Priebe, 53*rd Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture*, The Art Institute of Chicago, October 29-December 10.

Fein, Priebe, and Wilde, *Ninth Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 4-December 3.

Glasier, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Art*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 24, 1942-January 6, 1943.

1943

Glasier, 138*th Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture*, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, January 24-February 28.

Abercrombie, Fein, and Priebe, 47*th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago, March 11-April 25.

Fein, Priebe, and Wilde, *Thirtieth Annual Exhibition of Wisconsin Art*, Milwaukee Art Institute, April 7-May 9.

Fein, Glasier, and Priebe, 22*nd International Watercolor Exhibition*, The Art Institute of Chicago, May 13-August 22.

Abercrombie and Glasier, 54*th Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture*, The Art Institute of Chicago, October 28-December 12.

Priebe, *Annual Exhibition for Michigan Artists*, Detroit Institute of Arts, November 16-December 19.

Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1944

Drawings by Darrel Austin, Marshall Glasier, John Wilde, M. Dobujinsky, and Picasso, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, MI, January 9–29.

Priebe, 139*th Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture*, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, January 23-February 27.

Abercrombie, Fein, and Priebe, 48*th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago, January 27-March 5.

Glasier, 54*th Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, March 5–April 2.

Abercrombie and Fein, *Fourth Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Paintings*, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, March 19-April 16

Abercrombie, *Drawings by Contemporary Artists*, Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, May 20-June 10.

Abercrombie and Priebe, *55th Annual American Exhibition, Watercolors and Drawings*, The Art Institute of Chicago, June 8-August 20.

Glasier, Tenth Anniversary Exhibition, Associated American Artists, New York, NY, August.

Huppler and Wilde, *Eleventh Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 11–27.

Fein and Priebe, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 14-December 12.

Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

Fein, Annual Spring purchase exhibition, Springfield Museum, Springfield, MA.

1945

Fein, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors, and Drawings*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, January 3-February 8.

Glasier, *19th Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings*, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, March 18-April 29.

Abercrombie, *The Women, Exhibition of Paintings by Contemporary American Women*, Alumnae Hall Gallery, Western College, Oxford, OH, March 24-April 15.

Huppler, *Thirty-Second Annual Exhibition of Wisconsin Art*, Milwaukee Art Institute, March 31-April 29.

Abercrombie, *Painting and Sculpture by Chicago Artists*, Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, May 12-June 6.

Priebe, *1st Summer Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, Iowa Union and Art Building, University of Iowa, Iowa City, June 24-July 31.

Abercrombie and Glasier, *56th Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture*, The Art Institute of Chicago, October 25, 1945-January 1, 1946.

Glasier, Huppler, Priebe, and Wilde, *Twelfth Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 8-December 3.

Priebe, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 27, 1945-January 10, 1946.

Glasier and Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1946

Wilde, *141st Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture*, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, January 26-March 3.

Glasier, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors, and Drawings*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, February 5- March 13.

Glasier, *56th Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, March 3–31.

Abercrombie, *50th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago, March 28-May 12.

Huppler, *Thirty-Third Exhibition of Wisconsin Art*, Milwaukee Art Institute, April 18-May 19.

Glasier, *57th Annual American Exhibition, Watercolors and Drawings*, The Art Institute of Chicago, June 6–August 18.

Huppler, *Thirteenth Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 7-December 1.

Fein, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, December 10, 1946-January 16, 1947.

Glasier and Priebe, Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1947

Fein and Priebe, *57th Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, March 2–30.

Glasier and Priebe, *20th Biennial Exhibition*, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, March 30-May 11.

Glasier, Huppler, and Wilde, *Fifty-Eighth Annual Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture: Abstract and Surrealist American Art*, The Art Institute of Chicago, November 6, 1947-January 11, 1948.

Huppler, *Pictures for Young Collectors*, Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, November 20-December 17.

Glasier and Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1948

Priebe, *143rd Annual Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture*, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, January 25-February 29.

Wilde, *University of Illinois Competitive Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, College of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Illinois, Urbana, February 29-March 28.

Priebe, *122nd Annual Exhibition*, National Academy of Design, New York, NY, March 25-April 14.

Fein, Glasier, Huppler, Priebe, and Wilde, *Wisconsin State Centennial Exhibition, Contemporary Wisconsin Art*, Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee Art Institute, April 2-May 3; sections shown at Wisconsin State Fair Park Centennial Exposition, June 1-December 31.

Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1949

Abercrombie and Priebe, *53rd Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity*, The Art Institute of Chicago, February 10-March 20.

Priebe, *University of Illinois Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, College of Fine and Applied Arts, Urbana, February 27-April 3.

Priebe, *21st Biennial Exhibition*, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, March 30–May 8.

Huppler, *Fifteenth Annual Wisconsin Salon of Art*, Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 3-December 4.

Priebe and Wilde, *59th Annual American Exhibition, Watercolors and Drawings*, The Art Institute of Chicago, November 4, 1949-January 2, 1950.

Huppler and Wilde, *Second Biennial Exhibition of Paintings and Prints*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, November 13, 1949-January 22, 1950.

Priebe, *Carnegie International*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1950

Wilde, *Critics Discover New Talent*, The Artist's Gallery, New York, NY, January 3–26.

Wilde, *Paintings*, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, January 11–28.

Priebe and Wilde, *145th Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Painting and Sculpture*, Pennsylvania of the Fine Arts, January 22-February 26.

Abercrombie, Fein, Glasier, Priebe, and Wilde, *An Exhibit of Contemporary Artists for the Benefit of The Waukesha Symphony Association*, Carrier Memorial Library, Carrol College, Waukesha, WI, January 29–31.

Wilde, *The Tradition of Trompe L'oeil*, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, February 8-March 4.

Priebe, *University of Illinois Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting*, College of Fine and Applied Arts, Urbana, February 26-April 2.

Wilde, *Symbolic Realism*, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, April 3–22.

Wilde, *48th Annual Exhibition of Watercolors and Prints and the 49th Annual Exhibition of Miniatures*, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, October 28-November 26.

Wilde, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 10-December 31.

Wilde, *American Painting Today*—1950, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, December 8, 1950-February 25, 1951.

1951 Abercrombie, *University of Illinois Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting,* College of Fine and Applied Arts, Architecture Building, University of Illinois, Urbana, March 4-April 15.

Wilde, *37th Annual Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors Inc., Exhibition of Wisconsin Art,* Milwaukee Art Institute, March 30-April 29.

Gertrude Abercrombie, *55th Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity,* The Art Institute of Chicago, May 31-July 8.

Abercrombie, Huppler, and Wilde, *The New Reality,* Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, October 29-November 17.

Abercrombie, Huppler, Priebe, and Wilde, Holiday Show, Layton Art Gallery, Milwaukee, December 4, 1951-January 7, 1952.

1952 Wilde, *Annual Exhibition: Sculpture, Watercolors, and Drawings,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, March 13-May 4.

Abercrombie, *Twelfth Annual Spring Purchase Exhibition, 30 paintings by 30 Contemporary American Artists,* Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, MA, April 20-May 25.

Huppler and Wilde, *Contemporary Drawings from 12 Countries* 1945–1952, The Art Institute of Chicago, October 23-December 14 .

Wilde, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 6, 1952-January 4, 1953.

1953 Wilde and Huppler, *Nebraska Art Association Sixty-Third Annual Exhibition,* University Galleries, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, March.

Wilde, *23rd Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Oil Paintings,* Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, March 15-May 3.

Wilde, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Painting,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, October 15-December 6.

1954 Wilde, *Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors, and Drawings,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, March 17-April 18.

Glasier and Wilde, *Reality and Fantasy* 1900–1954, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, May 23-July 2.

Wilde, *Spirit of Summer,* Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, Summer.

Wilde, *52 Americans under 35,* The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.

1955 Wilde, University of Wisconsin Faculty Group Exhibition, The Forum Gallery, New York, NY, November 17-December 8.

1956 Wilde, group exhibition, Edwin Hewitt Gallery, New York, NY, October 8–27.

Wilde, *Annual Exhibition: Sculpture, Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 14, 1956-January 6, 1957.

1957 Wilde, *Annual Exhibition: Sculpture, Paintings, Watercolors,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, November 20, 1957-January 12, 1958.

1958 Wilde, *Carnegie International,* Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA.

1959 Fein, *Young Collectors: California Showing,* Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX.

1960 Abercrombie, *63rd Annual Exhibition of Works by Artists of Chicago and Vicinity,* The Art Institute of Chicago, June 8-August 14.

Wilde, *Annual Exhibition: Contemporary Sculpture and Drawings,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, December 7, 1960-January 22, 1961.

1961 Fein, Priebe, and Wilde, *The Brotherhood of Man* [Alfred A. Strelsin Invitational Purchase Award Art Exhibit], Jewish Community Center, Milwaukee, November 5–30.

1962 Wilde, *Annual Exhibition: Contemporary Sculpture and Drawings,* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY, December 12, 1962-February 3.

1964 Fein, *5th Annual Invitational Exhibition,* Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco.

1965 Abercrombie and Wilde, *An Artist Collects: Paintings and Drawings from the Collection of Karl Priebe,* Art History Gallery, Mitchell Hall, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, September.

Priebe and Wilde, *4th Annual Alfred A. Strelsin Invitational Purchase Award Art Exhibit, The Brotherhood of Man,* Jewish Community Center, Milwaukee, November 8- December 31.

1968 Sylvia Fein, *Realism-Surrealism Magic and Fantastic,* Valley Art Center at the Walnut Creek [CA] Library, November 2–30.

1969 Priebe, *International Fantasism,* Shimomura Gallery, Suwada, Ichikawa City, Chiba Prefecture, Japan, August 4–9.

1971 Huppler, *Drawings,* Bergman Gallery, University of Chicago, May 4-June 5.

1975 Huppler, *Drawing America,* Albrecht Art Museum, Saint Joseph, MO, December 16, 1975-January 4, 1976.

1976 Abercrombie, *The Emergence of Modernism in Illinois:* 1914–1940, Illinois State Museum, Springfield, January 10-February 8.

Wilde, *American Master Drawings and Watercolors: Works on Paper from Colonial Times to Present,* Whitney Museum of American Art, November 23, 1976-January 23, 1977.

1980 Wilde, *American Portrait Drawings,* National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC, May 1-August 3.

1982 Abercrombie and Wilde, *Realism and Realities: The Other Side of American Painting,* 1940–1960, Rutgers University Art Gallery, New Brunswick, NJ, January 17-March 26.

1983 Abercrombie, Huppler, and Priebe, *Gertrude Abercrombie and Friends,* Illinois State Museum, Springfield, February 6-March 27.

1990 Wilde, *Surrealism and Magical Realism in American Art,* Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York, NY, April 1-June 1.

1996 Abercrombie, *Art in Chicago:* 1945–1995, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, November 16, 1996 -March 23, 1997.

1998 Wilde, *Making Marks: Drawing in the 20th Century from Picasso to Kiefer,* Milwaukee Art Museum, June 12-August 23.

Abercrombie, Glasier, Huppler, Priebe, and Wilde, *Surreal Wisconsin: Surrealism and Its Legacy in Wisconsin Art,* Madison Art Center, WI, August 23-November 15.

Priebe, *Surrealism in America During the 1930s and 1940s: Selections from the Penny and Elton Yasuna Collection,* Salvador Dalí Museum, Saint Petersburg, FL, November 7, 1998-February 21, 1999; The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, November 19, 1999-January 9, 2000; Cape Museum of Fine Arts, Dennis, MA, July 19-September, 2000.

1999 Wilde, *Magic Realism: An American Response to Surrealism,* Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, Loretto, PA, June 12-September 6.

2005 Abercrombie and Wilde, *Surrealism U.S.A.*, National Academy of Design, New York, NY, February 10-May 8.

Bibliography

This is a bibliography of primary and selected secondary materials consulted in preparation of this catalogue and exhibition. Monographs on Abercrombie (Weininger, 1991), Huppler (Cozzolino, 2002), and Wilde (Panczenko, 1999) contain bibliographies pertaining to each artists' entire career; the listings below emphasize the period covered in this book. Many of the archival collections include material on four or more of the subjects of this study; collections relevant to a single artist are indicated with the artist's name in brackets. There is significant overlap in the secondary sources listed in each section; a review, article or monograph may include more than one of the artists. Placement is based on primary subject. The "general" section includes relevant cultural studies of the 1940s and 1950s as well as pertinent studies of "magic realism" and surrealism, their influence, practice, and reception in the United States.

Unpublished and Archival Sources

Gertrude Abercrombie Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

The Art Institute of Chicago Archives.

The Art Students League of New York Archives (Glasier).

Sylvia Fein Personal Papers, Martinez, CA.

Charles Henri Ford Papers, The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven (Huppler).

Marshall Glasier Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Marshall Glasier Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

George Grosz Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (Glasier).

Dudley Huppler Personal Papers, Longmont, CO.

Rudolf Kolisch Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (Glasier).

Kenneth C. Lindsay Research Material on Marshall Glasier, Vestal, NY.

Marianne Moore Papers, Rosenbach Library and Museum, Philadelphia, PA (Huppler).

Harry Partch Archive, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana (Glasier).

Charlotte Russell Partridge and Miriam Frink Papers, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee Archives.

Papers of Katherine Anne Porter, Archives and Manuscripts Department, University of Maryland Libraries, College Park (Huppler).

Karl J. Priebe Papers, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University, Milwaukee.

University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives.

Andy Warhol Archives, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA (Huppler).

Glenway Wescott Papers, The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven (Huppler).

John Wilde Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

General

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Lenders To The Exhibition

Ackland Art Museum, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Anonymous private collector
Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock
The Art Institute of Chicago
Charles and Camille Baum
Binghamton University Art Museum
Powell and Barbara Bridges
Sally A. Colussy
Bram and Sandra Dijkstra
Elmhurst College Art Collection, Elmhurst, IL
Warren Enters
Mary Gilson Feay
Sylvia Fein
Dr. and Mrs. Peter Gardetto
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee
Illinois State Museum, Springfield
John M. Huppler
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art
Milwaukee Art Museum
Mongerson Galleries, Chicago
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
Florence Ely Nelson
Isabelle Polacheck
Elinor Randall
James M. Ray
Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York, NY
John Roth and Cathleen Corbett
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
University Galleries, Illinois State University, Normal
Susan and Michael Weininger
John and Shirley Wilde

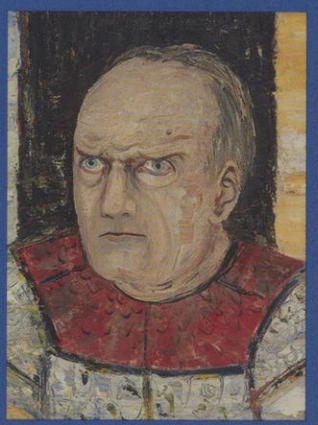
Index

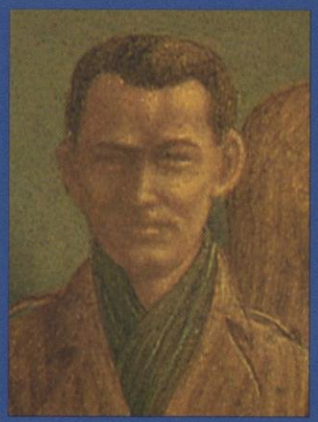
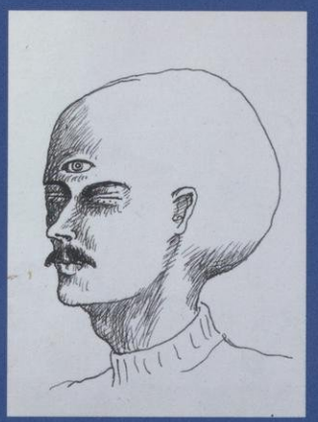
EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

Six Artists, Six Friends

Gertrude Abercrombie, Sylvia Fein, Marshall Glasier Dudley Huppler, Karl Priebe, John Wilde





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