

[object labels that do not have extended labels]

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
See the Burning City, ca. 1943
Oil on board
Collection of Sylvia Fein

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Life of the Cabbage, 1944
Oil on Masonite panel
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of William Monroe
White and artist by exchange

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Peggy, 1946
Oil on panel
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of
Thomas Sheridan Hyland

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Night Tournament, 1947
Oil on canvas
Collection of Mary Gilson Feay

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
*John Steuart Curry and the University of Wisconsin
Bull-Breeding Machine*, 1948
Oil on Masonite panel
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of Gimbel Brothers

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
A Winter Adventure, 1948
Oil on Masonite panel
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Johan Bjorksten, ca. 1951–1952
Oil on Masonite panel
Collection of John Roth and Cathleen Corbett

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
*Self-Portrait in Chinese Armor with Philomel as a
Doll*, 1955
Oil on canvas
Binghamton University Art Museum

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Carmelita and the Upright Wippen, 1938
Oil on panel, 18 1/2 x 24 inches
Collection of John and Shirley Wilde

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Study of Crow, 1941
Graphite on paper
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Tree with a View, 1942
Oil on Masonite panel
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Pregnant woman in a landscape, 1942
Graphite on paper
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Mullein, 1943
Oil on hardboard
Gift of Velma Mekeel Stauffer, 2002.54.1

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Soldier's Return, 1945
Pencil on paper
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Madison
Art Center Purchase Fund

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Portrait of Dudley Huppler, 1948
Ink and watercolor on paper
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of Paul
and Mary Hibbard

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
*Myself as Acteon Surprised by Diana while
Exploring the Oregon Coast*, 1952
Pencil on paper
Collection of Sylvia Fein

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988

Lazarus Unraveling, 1955
Oil on canvas
Collection of Elinor Randall

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Self-Portrait, 1964
Ink wash on paper
Collection of Elinor Randall

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Tree at Aledo, 1938
Oil on canvas
Elmhurst College, Gift of Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
The Past and The Present (Weinstein Interior), ca. 1946
Oil on Masonite
Art Institute of Chicago, Estate of Gertrude Abercrombie

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Reverie, 1947
Oil on Masonite
Illinois State Museum

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
My Second Best Box, 1957
Assemblage, painted wood box with glass door and objects
Illinois State Museum

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Return to Living, 1941
Oil on canvas
Collection of Susan and Michael Weininger

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Gertrude Carrying Dinah (Young Mother #2), 1942
Oil on Masonite
Collection of Charles and Camille Baum

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Where or When (Things Past), 1948

Oil on canvas
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of the Abercrombie Trust

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Split Personality, 1950
Oil on Masonite
Collection of Isabelle Polacheck

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
Witches' Switches, 1952
Oil on Masonite
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Gertrude Abercrombie
American, 1909–1977
The Magician, 1964
Oil on linen
University Galleries, Illinois State University, Normal

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Portrait of Sylvia Fein, ca. 1940
Casein on paperboard
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Gift of Ms. S. Gertrude Mulaney in memory of Sister Catherine C. Mulaney

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Saint Sebastian, 1941
Casein on paper
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Untitled Portrait of Edward Heth, 1942
Casein on paperboard
General Endowment Fund purchase, 2004.35

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
The Eclipse, 1942
Casein on cardboard
Milwaukee Art Museum, purchase

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976

The Ornithologist, 1946
Casein and oil on paperboard
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
The Hummingbird, 1947
Casein on board
Collection of John and Shirley Wilde

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
The Socialite, 1948
Casein, gouache, ink and pastel on board
Michael Rosenfeld Gallery

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Late Afternoon Arrangement, 1950
Casein on paperboard
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art,
Marquette University, Gift of Gimbel Brothers

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Untitled, 1951–52
Casein on cardboard
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Gertrude Abercrombie, 1939
Casein on cardboard
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
D. H., 1944
Pencil, chalk and casein on cardboard
Collection of Sylvia Fein

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Portrait of Victor W., 1951
Casein on paperboard
Patrick and Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art,
Marquette University, Gift of Victor J. Williams

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Sassafras Tree, ca. 1958
Ink and casein on paper

Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment Fund
purchase, 2002.76.5

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
The Friends of the Artist Karl Priebe by One of Them: A Tribute Piece, 1944
Ink, graphite, and casein on paper
Gift of John and Shirley Wilde, 2002.58

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
St. Catherine Reliquary, 1945
Ink on paper
Gift of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari, 2002.88.2

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Night Moth, 1946
Ink and pencil on paper
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
XIV Century English Cup, 1948
Ink on illustration board
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Cocozelle Squash (or Vegetable Marrow Squash),
1948
Ink on illustration board
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Gertrude Abercrombie, 1949
Ink and graphite on illustration board
Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment Fund
purchase, 2002.76.8

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Guinea Hen: The Tragedy of Incomplete Beauty,
1949
Ink on illustration board
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Canes, 1950

Ink on illustration board Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment Fund purchase, 2002.76.7	Egg tempera and oil on Masonite panel Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Dudley Huppler American, 1917–1988 <i>Dixie Queen Melon</i> , 1950 Ink on cardboard Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment Fund purchase, 2002.76.6	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Lady with Her Baby</i> , 1947 Egg tempera and oil on panel Collection of Sylvia Fein
Dudley Huppler American, 1917–1988 <i>Satyrs Bathing (Homage to Geo. Plat Lynes)</i> , 1951 Ink on paper Gift of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari, 2002.88.4	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Mama's Music Class</i> , 1947–49 Egg tempera and oil on panel Collection of Sylvia Fein
Dudley Huppler American, 1917–1988 Untitled, ca. 1953 Ink on paper Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment Fund purchase, 2002.76.3	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Lady Writing a Love Letter in a Landscape</i> , 1954 Egg tempera on panel Collection of Sylvia Fein
Dudley Huppler American, 1917–1988 Untitled, ca. 1953 Ink on paper Harry and Margaret P. Glicksman Endowment Fund purchase, 2002.76.10	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>The Lady in the Cage</i> , 1943 Egg tempera and oil on Masonite panel, 25 7/8 x 20 inches Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari
Dudley Huppler American, 1917–1988 <i>Homage to John Wilde</i> , ca. 1960 Ink and casein on illustration board Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Lady Looking for Her Lover</i> , 1943–1944 Ink on paper Collection of Sylvia Fein
Sylvia Fein and Marshall Glasier American, b. 1919 and American, 1902–1988 <i>Portrait of Sylvia</i> , ca. 1942 Egg tempera and oil on panel Collection of Sylvia Fein	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Nina de Ajijic con Mayate</i> , 1944 Pencil on paper Collection of Sylvia Fein
Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Ladies with Many Faces</i> , 1942 Egg tempera on board Wisconsin Union Purchase Prize, 1942 (Wisconsin Union Art Collection), 42.1.5	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Insects that inhabit my studio in Ajijic</i> , 1944 Pencil on paper Collection of Sylvia Fein
Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>The Lady with the White Knight</i> , 1942–43	Sylvia Fein American, b. 1919 <i>Saint Sebastian</i> , 1944 Pencil on paper Collection of Sylvia Fein

Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919
Market Basket, 1948
Pencil on paper
Collection of Sylvia Fein

Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919
Self-Portrait, 1949
Pencil on paper
Collection of Sylvia Fein
Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919
The Lady Magician, 1954
Egg tempera on panel
Collection of Sylvia Fein

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
An Autumnal Still Life, ca. 1940
Oil on panel
Collection of John and Shirley Wilde

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Mother and Sick Child, 1946
Oil on panel
Collection of Sally A. Colussy

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Nightshade, 1956
Oil on canvas
Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of
Nebraska, Lincoln

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
The Mirror, 1958
Oil on board
Mongerson Galleries

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Where To?, 1960
Oil on panel
Private collection

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
*Karl Priebe, Gertrude Abercrombie, Dudley Huppler,
Marshall Glasier, Sylvia Fein, a Friend, Arnold
Dadian, and Myself*, 1966

Oil on panel
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of the Gertrude
Abercrombie Trust

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Myself in the War, 1943
Pencil on paper
Richard E. Stockwell Endowment Fund purchase,
2001.19

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Portrait of HDPRAW, 1944
Pencil with touches of wash on paper
Gift of John Wilde, 1972.2

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Love Murders the Artist, 1947
Pencil on tan paper
Arkansas Arts Center Foundation Purchase: Tabriz
Fund, 1986

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
The Painter M. Glasier with a Reed Drawing Pen,
1949
Silverpoint on toned paper
Collection of Warren Enters

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Downstairs, The Red Cat, 1955
Oil on panel
Private collection

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
*Here, AE 36, I am Partially Within the Object
Looking Out to Find Reality*, 1956
Pencil on paper, 19 x 16 3/8 inches
Collection of James

Extended labels:

Gertrude Abercrombie

American, 1909–1977

The Courtship, 1949

Oil on Masonite

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Abercrombie, like Fein and Wilde, frequently depicted herself in her art. Using a shifting sequence of theatrical stages, she explored her identity and life events as though composing a dense multilayered visual autobiography. This painting dramatizes her 1948 marriage to exconvict and writer Frank Sandiford. He is shown as a burglar, pointing his finger at Abercrombie, who raises her arms as if to surrender to his mysterious charm.

Gertrude Abercrombie

American, 1909–1977

Search for Rest (Nile River), 1951

Oil on Masonite

Collection of Bram and Sandra Dijkstra

In this painting Abercrombie meditates on the mysterious nature of inspiration and the role it plays in daily life. The artist strolls into an imagined landscape as though willfully transforming her surroundings. Is she in a trance? Is this a dream? Or is she daydreaming so she can reorder her personal experience and change her surroundings? Abercrombie extends her left arm, hand slightly cupped and palm up as though asking for an answer to the mystery before her.

Gertrude Abercrombie

American, 1909–1977

Self Portrait of My Sister, 1941

Oil on canvas

Collection of Powell and Barbara Bridges

All six artists featured in this exhibition turned to their personal experiences as a starting point for their drawings and paintings. Much of their work is autobiographical, yet its relationship to reality is often filtered through the imagination. Abercrombie's deliberately quirky title (she was an only child) draws attention to the degree of role-playing in her art. Throughout the exhibition the artists appear in allegorical compositions and imaginary roles that explore their inner as well as their physical worlds.

Gertrude Abercrombie

American, 1909–1977

Design for Death (Charlie Parker's Favorite Painting), 1946

Oil on Masonite

Ackland Art Museum, Gift of the Gertrude Abercrombie Trust

Karl Priebe and Gertrude Abercrombie were great connoisseurs of jazz and blues music. Not mere enthusiasts, they were close to the most influential musicians of the postwar period, including Dizzy Gillespie and Billie Holiday. The title of Abercrombie's painting commemorates her friendship with legendary bebop saxophonist Charlie Parker. It also contains the hallmarks of Abercrombie's style: a 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) relates to contemporary antilynching imagery and underscores a commitment to civil rights that was shared by the group.

Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919

Left:

Lilith, 1943

Egg tempera on panel

Collection of Sylvia Fein

Right:

Eve, 1943–1944

Egg tempera and oil on panel

Collection of Sylvia Fein

Like John Wilde, Sylvia Fein had an intensely emotional reaction to the Second World War that surfaced in her art. In many works from this period she inhabits the roles and bodies of such mythic heroines as Persephonê. In the Greek myth, Hades (or Pluto), the god of 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, Persephonê was doomed to return to the underworld for a third of the year. Fein saw wartime parallels in Persephonê's abduction into the realm of death. The sense of loss and uncertainty that she felt when her husband and many friends were drafted made her feel transported into a barren world, devoid of life. The mournful tone of these paintings reflects her anxiety over their fate and her longing for the prewar environment that flourished in Madison.

Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919

Muchacha de Ajijic, 1944

Egg tempera on panel

Collection of Sylvia Fein

Fein spent 1944 to 1946 in Mexico where the change of environment helped her achieve a focus that was hard to maintain in wartime Milwaukee. After meeting up with her mother in Mexico City, she joined an old friend in the small village of Ajijic on Lake Chapala. There she set up a studio and delighted in the new colors, sounds, and tastes of her adopted village. Surrounded by willing and fascinating models, she reveled in transcribing local fashions no matter how complex their forms or patterns.

Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919
The Tea Party, 1943

Egg tempera on Masonite panel

Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

During World War II both John Wilde and Sylvia Fein tapped into subjects that reveal a direct link between war trauma and the shattering of childhood innocence. Fein turned to childhood to explore the emotional effects of the war. In *The Tea Party* 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, serving in the Pacific.

Sylvia Fein
American, b. 1919
Lady Looking for Her Lover, 1943–1944
Ink on paper
Collection of Sylvia Fein

Fein depicted herself on a magic carpet surveying a strange land in search for her husband, Bill Scheuber, who served in the Pacific theater during World War II. Fein navigates with an atlas of Australia, hoping to locate her lover and presumably bring him out of harm's way. Her daring method of working directly with ink on a white ground reveals the influence of Marshall Glasier, who was well known as a master of reed-pen and ink drawing.

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Philoctetes and the Second World War, 1943
Oil on canvas
Binghamton University Art Museum

Dudley Huppler was a favorite model of Marshall Glasier. He spent several weeks posing for the figure of Philoctetes in this, one of Glasier's most important war paintings. Glasier frequently set ancient myths in the Wisconsin landscape and freely associated the wartime situation with their moral and philosophical lessons. This painting shows the Greek hero, Philoctetes, banished to the isle of Lemnos during the Trojan war. Glasier believed the tale was a hopeful talisman for 1943. He noted that Philoctetes, "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."

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
John Stuart Curry and the University of Wisconsin Bull-Breeding Machine, 1948
Oil on Masonite panel
Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of Gimbel Brothers

Well-known American regionalist, John Stuart Curry (1897–1946) came to Madison in December 1936 as artist in residence at the UW College of Agriculture. In the 1940s, Curry became a prime target of Marshall Glasier's growing frustration with the art world. Glasier thought that Curry's work was commercial and dull, and he scorned him an outsider from Kansas presuming to interpret the Wisconsin landscape. This painting satirizes Curry's persona, academic post, subject matter, and intelligence in a single blow. Glasier based the portrait on two contemporary photographs including one in which Curry wears overalls and poses with fellow artist Grant Wood (1892–1942). Glasier's Curry is a naïve country yokel mystified by the grotesque, headless surrogate cow before him. Puzzling with brushes in hand, he is literally unable to make heads or tails of the beast.

Marshall Glasier
American, 1902–1988
Portrait of Harry Partch, 1947
Ink on paper
Edward Blake Blair Fund purchase, 2004.2

Glasier made several sensitive studies of respected friends throughout his career. This drawing captures the world-weary yet boyish features of the American maverick composer Harry Partch (1901–1974) done near the end of his stay in Madison. Partch and Glasier were kindred spirits, both trying to make art on their own terms, both with wandering pasts. Like Glasier or Fein, Partch found contemporary meaning in myths of origin, rebirth, and struggle. Partch adopted his own harmonic theory, based on a forty-three-note tonal structure and built unique instruments in order to give it voice.

Dudley Huppler
American, 1917–1988
Homage to Dosso Dossi, ca. 1954

Pencil, ink, and wash on paper
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

During the 1950s, Huppler made a series of drawings depicting lithe, wild satyrs in search of lovers. He based a small group of these on photographs of his own arms and legs, taken by the photographer Otto Fenn. These suggestive drawings often call to mind ballet costumes, underscoring Huppler's friendship with Lincoln Kirstein (1907–1996) and his circle. Kirstein, a curator, critic, and art collector founded the New York City Ballet in 1948.

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
Charles Sebree with a Hooded Falcon, 1942
Casein on cardboard
Collection of John M. Huppler

Karl Priebe consistently depicted black men and women as self-made, elegant, worldly individuals. 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 portrayed blacks as individuals. This painting depicts the African-American artist Charles Sebree (1914–1985), who was a close friend of both Priebe and Gertrude Abercrombie. Priebe and Abercrombie are present in the white chalk drawing that lies beneath Sebree's elbow and right hand. Sebree adopts overlapping personas as bohemian artist, elite man of refinement, and curious intellectual.

Karl Priebe
American, 1914–1976
The Poet—Homage to Edith S., 1944
Casein and oil on cardboard
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

In addition to numerous homages and portraits of close friends, the group often paid tribute to contemporary writers, artists, and historical figures they had never met. This is Priebe's tribute to English poet, critic, and biographer Edith Sitwell (1887–1964). She gained a reputation for often shocking satirical verse and eccentric behavior. Her skillful writing and personal independence made her a natural target of Priebe's admiration.

Huppler's fantastical drawing, *Nightmoth* (1946), also on view, is an homage to the writer Djuna Barnes (1892–1982), whose 1936 novel *Nightwood* was among Huppler's favorite books.

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Sketchbook, 1942–1946
Various media on paper
Collection of John and Shirley Wilde

John Wilde spent 1942 to 1946 in the army where he worked in the medical corps, drew venereal disease prevention propaganda, and 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 this 275-page sketchbook with drawings and text, 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 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.

John Wilde
American, b. 1919

The Sons of Worse Than Bitches Have Put a Hole in My Head!!, 1944

Pencil and ink on paper

Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Gift of the artist

Wilde was drafted into the army during World War II and 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. He poured racing thoughts and visions into desperate, often confrontational drawings that were the most technically accomplished he had yet made. Many, like this monstrous self-portrait, include cathartic stream-of-consciousness texts. Wilde is shown 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" 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.

John Wilde

American, b. 1919

Wildeworld (Provincia, Naturlica, Classicum), 1953–1955

Oil on canvas

Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Fitzhugh Scott through Northwoods Foundation

Wilde considered *Wildeworld* to be the most ambitious painting he had yet attempted and a visual manifesto. In a 1998 interview he said, "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." Wilde faces the landscape clothed in a harlequin outfit and gestures with a silverpoint at the expansive vista before him. A row of houses from his Evansville neighborhood delineates the edge of the external world; 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 animals and a tiny version of the artist, busy drawing.

John Wilde

American, b. 1919

Memorabilia, 1952

Oil on wood

Collection of Florence Ely Nelson

John Wilde has painted many tributes to friends and historical influences. *Memorabilia* shows paraphernalia related to several close friends spread out upon and pinned to a wood surface. A few objects are straightforward, such as Gertrude Abercrombie's Edwin Hewitt Gallery exhibition announcement or Sylvia Fein's faded snapshot. Others require group intimacy: The stuffed scarlet tanager represents Karl Priebe and the love of birding he shared with Wilde. Dudley 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. Wilde's arrangement seems casual, but the placement of particular artifacts reinforces close bonds among pairs and the role of individuals within the group. *Memorabilia* is both a group portrait and a tribute to the importance of friends in his life and art.

John Wilde

American, b. 1919

The Painter K.P. as an Adventurous Oologist, 1950

Pencil on paper

Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Peter Gardetto

Karl Priebe and John Wilde shared a love of bird watching. They often addressed one another in letters after the names of two obscure eighteenth-century ornithologists. When not out spying birds (and drawing them) in the Wisconsin landscape, they sent postcards to one another listing the impressive number of birds they spotted each week. This drawing imagines Priebe scaling cliffs in search of exotic eggs. An “oologist” specializes in the study of bird’s eggs. Eggs, nests, and antique ornithology prints coexisted with delicately rendered, mystic bird paintings by Morris Graves (1910–2001) in Priebe’s personal collection.

John Wilde
American, b. 1919
Peeling, 1961
Oil on panel
Collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

In 1950, John Wilde 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 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.

Peeling contains the sensuality, magic, and clarity with which Wilde paints nature. 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.

This alluring painting was one of Dudley Huppler’s favorites. Like the others lent from the collection of Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari, it was once part of his personal collection.

[Archival vitrine label]

This case contains letters sent to Sylvia Fein from Marshall Glasier and John Wilde and a photo album assembled by Dudley Huppler.

Lent by Sylvia Fein and Thea Tenenbaum-Malferrari

Vitrine Labels

1. Letter from John Wilde to Sylvia Fein, April 18, 1943. Collection Sylvia of Fein
2. Letter from John Wilde to Sylvia Fein, February 27, 1944. Collection of Sylvia Fein
3. Postcard from John Wilde to Dudley Huppler with note in rebus format, November 14, 1962. Collection of Sylvia Fein
4. Photograph of Sylvia Fein, 1946. Collection of Sylvia Fein
- 5, 6, 7. Three drawings by Marshall Glasier in letters sent to Sylvia Fein: woman with a concert program, Giuseppe Arcimboldi-style landscape, and a study for *Philoctetes and the Second World War*, all 1943. Collection of Sylvia Fein
8. Scrapbook assembled by Dudley Huppler. Shown are pictures from Karl Priebe's 1946 solo exhibition at the Perls Galleries, New York, with Billie Holiday in attendance. Collection of Thea Tennebaum-Malferrari