Catalog of the Cook Library Art Gallery Permanent Collection

Jan Siesling

Follow this and additional works at: http://aquila.usm.edu/cookartgallery_pubs

Recommended Citation
http://aquila.usm.edu/cookartgallery_pubs/1

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Cook Library Art Gallery - Selections from the University of Southern Mississippi Art Museum at The Aquila Digital Community. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cook Library Art Gallery Catalogs by an authorized administrator of The Aquila Digital Community. For more information, please contact Joshua.Cromwell@usm.edu.
COOK LIBRARY ART GALLERY

Highlights
from the
Permanent Collection
of the
University of Southern Mississippi
Museum of Art

Catalogue written by Jan Siesling

September 2011
Walter Inglis Anderson (American, 1903 - 1965) will be remembered as one of the most extraordinary American artists of the twentieth century. He was born in New Orleans in 1903, the second of three sons (Peter, Bob and Mac) to grain broker George Walter Anderson and his wife, Annette McConnell Anderson. Annette, a former student at the Newcomb Art College, made sure that arts and crafts dominated life in the family. In the 1920’s they moved to Ocean Springs, Mississippi, where they opened the Shearwater Pottery. Walter participated in the ceramics production of his brothers all his life, but his foremost passion was for painting. Well trained at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, he settled in Ocean Springs as a potter and painter. He married Agnes Grinstead and they had four children. His career was basically successful, but occasionally interrupted by intervals of mental disorder. A perilous equilibrium, however, was a strong part of his personal approach to life and related to his artistic output.

A great observer of all earthly things, he did not search for a place on the art market, but sought to exalt the overwhelming power and creative truth of nature. Long periods of his life were passed in mental or physical loneliness, often on the little Horn Island off the coast of Mississippi. There, he would have no other shelter than his turned over rowing boat, surrounded by birds and reptiles, by the wind and the ocean. Here he created thousands of works in watercolor and in writing, humble in size, but awesome in number and force of expression.


Four (out of twelve) water color drawings the university possesses from the hand of the now almost legendary master of Ocean Springs are shown here together. Their quality of execution and conservation, their variety of subject matter, their well observed and inspired liveliness in color and line, their dense, sure and sharp brushwork, create a moving and coherent ensemble; it is one of the veritable treasures of the university’s art collection.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/55/rec/13
Watercolor on type writer paper 8½ x 11
Not signed, not dated, authenticated by the legal studio stamp.
LOK 1995.2.10
Donated to the University of Southern Mississippi by John Dryden Davenport in 1995.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/149/rec/1
Watercolor on type writer paper 8½ x 11
Not signed, not dated,
Authenticated by the legal studio stamp, bottom right
LOK 1995.2.11
Donated to the University of Southern Mississippi by John Dryden Davenport in 1995.

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/53/rec/12
Watercolor on type writer paper 8½ x 11
Not signed, not dated, authenticated by the legal studio stamp.
LOK 1995.2.13
Donated to the University of Southern Mississippi by John Dryden Davenport in 1995.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/129/rec/2
Watercolor on type writer paper 8½ x 11
Not signed, not dated, authenticated by the legal studio stamp.
LOK 1995.2.12
Donated to the University of Southern Mississippi by John Dryden Davenport in 1995.
Richmond Barthé (American, 1901 - 1989) has his place in the history of art as the first and one of the foremost African-American modernist sculptors. He was born in 1901 at the beginning of the century in Bay St Louis, on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and spent his adolescent years in New Orleans. He received thorough academic training as a painter in Chicago and New York. He was “discovered” as a sculptor by critics, galleries, and even museums as soon as he left school. Towards the end of the 1920’s he was recognized as a prominent artist in the Harlem Renaissance movement. Though he always had admirers, it proved difficult for Barthé to have a regular career in sculpting since it did not always provide the necessary funds for a living. His quite solitary character, the feeling of being misunderstood, his homosexuality, and the search for his deepest roots made him leave New York and live in Europe (not Africa!), Haiti, Jamaica and finally settle in California. He suffered from serious depression. He died in 1989 in Pasadena, California, surrounded by James Garner and other friends who helped him financially through his old age. Both Pasadena and Bay St Louis have streets named in his honor. Barthé was recognized as a black artist, but his ultimate goal was to be recognized as an artist, period. His style searches for ideals in the great European tradition from the Greeks to Michelangelo and Rodin. He was a deeply religious man as amember of the Catholic Church. We must understand his art as a means to express the Christian mystique as well as modernist forms. Southern Miss is fortunate to possess two of his most compelling pieces.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/61/rec/18
Bronze 15 x 27 x 11½ inches
Signed on cast: BARTHE, not dated (plaster model 1959, cast 1976)
The personification of Africa is a nude black man, lying on the ground, getting up on his hands, raising his head and torso with strength, determination and even anger. The image inscribes itself in a venerable classical tradition, to which Richmond Barthé gives a personal twist. The original pose would be the Greek archetype of the fallen hero. Usually it is applied to the noble dying soldier in a battle scene, for instance the *Dying Warrior* from the tympanum of the temple of Aphaia, Aegina, 480 BCE, followed by many examples in Hellenistic and Roman art. Barthé inverts its iconography and shows the warrior, not as a beaten passive victim, but redressing up his heroic body, courageously defying the future. The beautifully modeled and perfectly proportioned young body can’t help but recall further the *Slaves* by Michelangelo, freeing their bodies from the resisting earth, as a symbol for the spirit liberating itself from matter. The torsion of Barthé’s *Africa*, (Africa meaning here, rather than the continent, the black race), translates perfectly the hardship as well as the determination in the process of standing up. It might well represent the difficulties of an African culture to rise in the middle of the Anglo-Saxon dominated Occident, as Barthé experienced it in his own career as an artist, with its troubling ups and downs.

The creation of the clay or plaster model in 1959, places it not only at the artist’s personal emerging from a long depression, but also exactly at the beginning of the liberation of African countries from European colonization and at the dawn of the Civil Rights movement in the USA. Borrowing the figure and its style from the classical and academic tradition, and not from African art, has symbolic value. The unique bronze (Barthé destroyed the plaster model to prevent other copies from being cast) from the collection of the University of Southern Mississippi is therefore the foremost icon of the rebirth of the black populations of America, Africa and Europe. Chosen by Harry Ward, professor of painting, approved by Aubrey Lucas, president of USM and financed by Bobby Chain, benefactor of the city of Hattiesburg, it was the first art work acquired by this university. A Black subject par excellence, by an excellent Black artist: rarely an art work has been chosen with greater clairvoyance and courage, and rarely an artwork has found a more appropriate destination to be seen. It is the crown jewel of the USM collection.
Richmond Barthé’s capacity to reinterpret ancient forms as they have passed down to us and have been integrated in the Western art tradition; to liberate them from their academic implications; and to become himself a classic artist, again strikes the attentive student. The more-than-life-size heads belongs to Rome and its princes, princesses, its senators, its philosophers. In Europe we encounter them in the Italian Renaissance or in nineteenth century France; they honor the past of great nations. Barthé places his African man in this great line of civilization, turning the Negro to the future.

Candid observation of the bust denies the immediate and uniquely male gender of the persona representing here the black race. The head has qualities of both sexes. With this in mind, it may bring us to another great artistic ancestor of Barthé, the portraits of Egyptian rulers. We especially think of the 18th dynasty of the 14th century BC, namely Akhenaton (with his pronounced Negroid traits!), his mother, queen Tiy, his wife, queen Nefertiti, and the boy king Tutankhamen, we know so well from his tomb portrait.

Dusti Bongé was born as Eustice Swetman in Biloxi, Mississippi, in 1903 and died there in 1993. She occupies a special place in Mississippi’s art as its first woman abstract painter. But she is more than a Mississippi hero. She counts as an original creator in the company of major Abstract Expressionists, most of them showing with her in Betty Parsons’ gallery, 57th Street, New York. She had regular solo shows there between 1950 and 1980. Willem de Kooning thought very highly of her and Mark
Rothko was a friend. She started her artistic career in New York, in the theatre, but she met the artist Arch Bongé, who discovered her talent as a painter. They married, had a son, returned to Biloxi, and when Arch died and Dusti continued to paint. Her career shows a very consistent evolution from modernist landscape and still-life to Surrealist composition and finally the free handling of color, line and even volume. Her contribution to American art waits to be studied in greater detail.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/208/rec/24
Ink on paper, 34 x 28 inches
Signed lower right *Dusti Bongé*
LOK 2003.78.2

It is not documented how the three ink drawings by Dusti Bongé were acquired by the university. They are good examples of the artist’s manner of action painting, with free brush strokes responding immediately to subconscious inspiration.
8. **Richard Booth**  *Untitled (Seated Woman)*, ca. 1970

Oil pastel on Bristol paper 23 x 17½ inches  
Not signed, not dated.  
LOK 2010.6.1

The little known artist, Richard Booth, is identified by a sticker on the back of the worn original silver grey wooden frame. It displays a surprisingly able and vigorous hand, reminding us of German Expressionists and of the earlier William de Kooning. Booth sketches the bust of a fire haired woman, nude, sitting in bed, protecting her breasts with her arm in a twentieth century variation on the Venus Anadyomene. In the tradition of both pre-World War I Berlin, and New York just after World War II, we recognize here the lover, prostitute and model, both venerated and feared, as a symbol of vitality and vanity, danger and emotion, in one word the pinnacle of artistic inspiration.

Richard Booth from Water Valley and an alumnus of Hinds Community College received his BFA from Southern Miss, to which he is presumed to have donated the drawing in question. Later he received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Georgia. Much of his prolific production stayed hidden during his lifetime until after his death in 1999.

**Bernard Buffet** (Paris 1928 – Tourtour, France 1999) counts as one of the most typical artists of the Paris school after World War II. His name is not familiar anymore to the younger generation but at the age of only twenty he arrived on the art scene like a meteorite, and when he was thirty his fame in the world was only matched by that of Picasso. His name was a paradigm of financial artistic success, and all commercial art galleries asked for his favors, though he had an exclusive contract with only one. This was a strong post-war financial strategy, where the gallery promoted the artist and kept all the rights. When Buffet was 45, a museum was opened in Japan, now tripled in size, entirely devoted to his work. His very graphic style, with its sharp, almost aggressive hatchings, like a calligraphy born from the rapid writing of his own name, was so easily recognizable that it spread over the globe like (today) a new I-phone. The
rampant success was also the cause of the artist’s downfall. Producing prolifically, working speedily to meet worldwide demand, his inspiration suffered, and only his melancholy seemed to remain. His never changing style exasperated the critics and enchanted the forgers. After having been the flag on the Paris school, he became symbol of its lack of renewal. After 1970 new art was definitely American.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/225/rec/18
Lithograph on Arches paper, 28½" x 20½"
Signed in ink bottom left Bernard Buffet
not dated, ed. 45/120
LOK 2003.98.1

The *Clown* was once a most popular composition by Buffet and the 120 copies of the strong design against the simple red background were immediately sold by the Parisian *Galerie* Maurice Garnier. Clowns were a common subject in the twentieth century, after Seurat, Toulouse Lautrec and Picasso had introduced the circus into painting. In Buffet’s work the red nosed clumsy comedian is rarely funny, almost always sad or at least mysteriously pensive about his role in face of the public. One wonders if it is not a disguised self-portrait of the painter who comments in this way on the role of the artist in modern society. In these years the artist changes from being considered a prophet to an entertainer.
10. **Tommie Bush-Rogers** *Untitled (Church in a Landscape)*, ca. 1990

![Untitled (Church in a Landscape)](http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/388/rec/187)

Charcoal on newsprint 34 x 24 inches
Not signed, not dated
LOK 1990.1.1

A well known artist in Mississippi, Tommie Bush, now Rodgers, started her career as a student at the USM art department, where she received a BFA in 1990. Now known for her impressionistic work on the junction between carefully observed nature and uniquely personal invention, her student work shows a rather expressionistic reach and a lot of character. This remarkable drawing in stark white and black contrast makes us think of a grand size wood cut by *Die Brücke* artists, of the beginning of the century, like Emil Nolde or Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

11. **Obie Clark** *Woman in black dress*, ca. 1975

![Woman in black dress](image)

Oil on canvas, 72 x 36 inches
Not signed, not dated
After his BFA in painting at the Art Department, Obie Clark has started a (successful) career as a potter. The imposing *Woman in Black*, American poetic realism done by a graduating student, makes us regret the loss of a promising painter.

12. **Warren Dennis**  

*Rowe*, 1994

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/146/rec/97
Oil on canvas 33½ x 40½ inches
Signed and dated in lower right corner: W. Dennis 1994
LOK 1996.7.2

The artist, a USM student in the late forties and early fifties, is well known in all the Southern States, represented by many galleries and museums. He served on the faculty of Appalachian State University’s Art Department for many years, and now lives and works in Boone (N.C.). He has shown with Bill Dunlap and Larry Edwards, to name two other major Southern artists faithful to a figurative approach in painting. In February 1996, Warren Dennis had a show in the USM Woods Gallery (now Museum of Art). The *Rowe* illustrated the invitation card and was probably when he offered the painting to the museum’s permanent collection. Free from complexities and solidly constructed, the rower stands in the composition as simply as he sits in his boat. Sturdy in style and in subject, with its high horizon and high tonal values, the painting has the qualities of a sincere aggrandized wood cut.
Rita DeWitt  

*She tried not to think of how many times they had stood in rows with their skin bare, saluting*, 1981

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/6/rec/106
Collage of oils, acrylics and photocopies on paper 22 x 29½ inches.
Signed and dated bottom center: Rita DeWitt 1981.
Hand written text on the work reads: *She tried not to think of how many times they had stood in rows, with their skin bare, saluting.*
LOK 1981.1.1

Rita DeWitt earned BFA and MFA degrees at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. She taught at the University of Southern Mississippi, Smith College, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago before taking her current teaching position at the Rhode Island School of Design.

DeWitt uses digital technology and photography to produce works that explore history, memory, and self. She has won several awards, including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. Her work is held in the collections of the Fogg Museum of Art, the San Francisco Museum of Art, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth. The USM Museum of Art holds three works of this very personal artist.

*She tried not to think of how...* was acquired by the USM Department of Art and Design at the 4th Annual Mississippi Artists’ Juried Exhibition, 1981.
Anthony DiFatta is a native of Hattiesburg, who grew up in the swamps of Southern Louisiana. After being stationed in Southern California with the U.S. Navy and two tours at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, he returned to Southern Miss to study painting and sculpture.

In 2000 he left his job as a graphic designer at MCI WorldCom to pursue painting full-time. He is involved with charity organizations (HeArts against Aids, Habitat for Humanity...) and uses his talent to teach art to adults with mental illnesses. DiFatta’s paintings have been seen throughout Mississippi and in New York, Memphis, Santa Clara and Baton Rouge.

The Empty Chair was probably a donation of the artist to the art department when he received his BFA. It reminds us of a similar subject by Vincent van Gogh; DiFatta’s vigorous brushwork and quite thick impasto equally suggest sustained interest in the Post-Impressionist artist, so well known for his passionate and profound humanity. In his later works, DiFatta seems to have been loyal to this inspiration, both in style and iconography, not the least when he analyzes his own features chromatically and psychologically.

Thomas Downing (American, 1928 - 1985), one of the critical figures of the Washington Color School of painting, was born in Suffolk, Virginia. The contribution of this movement to American art is to have broken the fascination of Abstract Expressionism, and to have developed a less personality based art. Befriended with Kenneth Noland and Gene Davis, they turned to the Constructivist theories as had been developed by De Stijl, Bauhaus and the artists of the Revolution era in Russia and, until 1922, the Soviet Union. Joseph Albers promoted their development in the U.S.A after
WW II, and Kenneth Noland, Barnett Newman, Ellsworth Kelly, Frank Stella, Tom Downing, Gene Davis, Howard Mehring, Morris Louis, to name a few, gave to America one of the most typical styles of the second half of the century. Clement Greenberg included Tom Downing in 1964 in his epoch making exhibit “Post-Painterly Abstraction” in Los Angeles.

Since the fifties, Downing had developed his concentric circle paintings, researching the “expressive potential of pure color and the necessity of a form simple and direct.” Its aim was to develop an impersonal system or method capable to reveal objective and infinite beauty. Towards the end of his life Downing experimented with the endless repetition of relatively small dots that would “isolate instants of pure color, repeat it over a broad field, and give it the equivalent of an electrical charge...” The paintings $V, B, V, B, V, B, V, B$ and $V, C, V, C, V, C, V, C$ are objective, serial, and quasi scientific, and even in the very title, are remarkable examples of the pulsing effect of his color mediated space. The two works were the central piece of a generous gift of Robert Lennon to the Museum of Art in 1993; they still dominate its permanent collection by their beauty and value.

Thomas Downing taught in several universities and at the Corcoran School of Art. As such, he influenced many prominent artists, such as Sam Gilliam from Mississippi. Represented by major American galleries and museums, he died in 1985, in the same year as his friend and close colleague Gene Davis, during a solo exhibit in the Phillips Collection, Washington.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/51/rec/195
Acrylic on unprimed canvas 83½ x 43½ inches
Signed, dated and named on back: Th. Downing 07.05.79, V,B,V,B,V,B,V,B
LOK 1993.1.2
Donated to the USM Museum of Art by Robert Lennon, 1993
*V, C, V, C, V, C, V*  
1979

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/245/rec/196

Acrylic on unprimed canvas 86 x 45½ inches

Signed, dated and named on back: *Th. Downing 07.18.79, V,c,V,c,V,c,V,c*

LOK 1993.1.1

Donated to the USM Museum of Art by Robert Lennon, 1993

17. **Richard Ferguson**  
*Woman sitting in an interior*, ca.1972

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/267/rec/203

Diluted oils on canvas 48 x 36

Not signed, not dated.

LOK 2003.75.1

*An artist, illustrator, designer, sculptor and photographer*, this is how Ferguson presented himself at the 100 Alumni Show in 2010. Richard Ferguson earned his BFA at USM in 1983, having studied painting with Professors Harry Ward and Jim Meade. In this ambitious painting of a woman in a chair the young artist shows talent and great application. Using transparent paint, like watercolor, over a carefully prepared though sketchy drawing on the canvas, the composition is as
simple as solid, and the firmly planted model on her chair gives us almost a feeling of Cézanne. The modest concentration on the face, becoming part of the general color scheme, honors the psychological aspects of the sitter, but at the same time lifts the painting above the limits of the portrait.

18. **Linda Finnell** (1948-1999)  
*Self-portrait as Orlando*, ca. 1980

![Image of Linda Finnell as Orlando](http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/253/rec/103)  
Silver gelatin black and white photo-print, 16 x 20 inches  
Signed and named in pencil at bottom left and right  
LOK 2003.62.1

The artist Linda Finnell has been able in her short career to express her discrete and refined personality in a number of media; she was at ease in painting and sculpting, printmaking, photography and writing. She became well-known in Dallas, TX as one of the *Two Women Boxing*, a company she founded with Julie Cohn after they received their MFA at the Southern Methodist University in 1983. In this studio of paper creation, the artists applied themselves to the preservation of the craft of fine bookbinding and box making.

Since her childhood and during all her life, Linda Finnell produced diaries, a choice of which was shown at the memorial exhibit in the SMU Pollock Gallery in 2000 ("Sometimes my hand has a mind of its own"). Together they form a remarkable and moving memory of a lifetime. Such a personal and subtle reflection on her epoch is beautifully expressed in her double self-portrait as two genders. The title “Self-portrait as Orlando” may well refer to Virginia Woolf’s influential novel “Orlando” (1928); the book is the classic (and humorous) study of women’s art and writing related to questions of gender in Western history.
19. **Brian Goe**  

*Hattiesburg Street Scene #3*, 1993

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/275/rec/53  
Oil on masonite 36 x 24 inches  
Signed and dated bottom left *GOE 93*.  
LOK 2003.55.1

Brian Goe, who earned his BFA in the early nineties at USM, continued his studies at the University of Florida where he received his Masters in Architecture, and made his home. He participates in many shows, as an artist and designer. His diving and daring aerial view of the street taken from the back of the America Building (or Ross Building) on Front Street, one of the highest in Hattiesburg, where art students used to have studios, announces definitely Brian’s future interests in art and architecture.

In 2010, at the occasion of the 100 Alumni Show organized by the USM Museum of Art, the artist expressed his creative engagement in this simple formula:  
*Through the expression of paint, the landscape serves as an inspiration that transcends the imagination.*

Oil on canvas panel 20 x 24 inches
Signed at bottom right *Jennie Lee Gorton*
Signed and dated on the back: *Jennie Lee Gorton 1981*
LOK 2010.7.1
Donated by the artist to Southern Miss, ca. 1985

This vivid colorful piece painted in a most accomplished naïve folk style and presented in its rough cypress wood frame (26 x 30 inches) was originally given by the artist to the Oral History Program of the University of Southern Mississippi. The back of the piece is almost entirely filled with an explanation of the scene and the scenery. Jennie Lee, born Wharton in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, wife of a traveling salesman Doy Gorton, saw her work as an ethnographic document about the African-American population in the Mississippi Delta, as much as the artistic achievement of joyful fictional character. The Museum of Art joins a consistent group of museums in Mississippi and Arkansas to possess a work by this artist, as well as the White House and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.
21. **Sara Ivy**  *New World System*, ca. 1985

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/301/rec/73
Oil on canvas 30 x 20 inches
Signed in lower right corner: S. Ivy, not dated.
LOK 2003.90.1

This adroit landscape, as fresh as it is thoughtfully composed, combined with a title that sounds like a program make us think of the early *Blaue Reiter*, when Vassili Kandinsky and Alexei von Jawlensky forged the traditional landscape into a spiritual meditation. The simplification of forms, leaving just a few essentials, the priority of color, the abandoning of realistic representation, show that Ivy has understood the rules of the New System.

Some twenty years ago the painting was reproduced (in black and white) on the invitation card of the summer show of the Woods Gallery (now Museum of Art): *Selections from the Permanent Collection, May 16 – August 12, 1988*. There one can read the official title, so much more telling than *Landscape*. Two questions remain: who was Sara Ivy? And what happened to the three other reproduced pieces featured on the postcard?
22.  Rick Malchow  *Grass Bed Shrimp*, 1985

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/317/rec/51
Watercolor and collage on paper 7¼ x 9¼ inches
Signed bottom right: *Malchow  85*
LOK 2003.38.1

24.  Lisa Millet  *After the Storm*, ca. 1985

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/360/rec/4
Oil pastel on paper 14¾ x 11 inches
Name spelled in capital letters on back of frame, no date.
LOK 2003.16.1

The gifted fine arts student earned her BFA at USM before starting an art gallery she runs now in Jacksonville, Florida. Her *After the Storm* pastel, remarked and purchased at an annual student show has a dramatic literary intensity that we rarely find in our days. Two people, no doubt a mother and child come in our direction, escaping from a dark disaster that swallows them into darkness. At the high horizon in their back the lightning goes on, a house stands in ruin, it is
hinted at in a few strokes. With the human survivors, anguish sweeps over the earth. We are reminded of such artists as Käthe Kollwitz, Gustave Doré, and Goya. Art for one moment is pure content and pure form; a rare combination in modern times. The artist must have been young, and innocent and very mature. But in the hurricane ridden South, is there yet a Katrina art work to equal her empathy?

**Joan Miró** (Spain-Catalonia 1893 -1983), the great Surrealist painter, sculptor and ceramist, was also one of the greatest printmakers of the twentieth century. In 1954 he was given the Venice Biennale print making prize. His total oeuvre counts more than a thousand lithographs and etchings. For lithography he worked in the studio of his friend Fernand Mourlot, for etching in the Atelier Lacourière. The Museum of Art owns an example of each technique.

During the twentieth century reproduction techniques had multiplied in quantity and quality. The demand of the public for art prints had grown. Usually these were simple reproductions, but the great printer studios gave artists the chance to create original works in print form. Paris was the capital of the typical production of the time, and the most important artists in this field belong to the school of Paris: Picasso, Dali, Chagall, Buffet, Calder and Miró.

In his earlier years Joan Miró pursues a naïve figurative style full of narrative detail, so admired by his neighbor in Paris, Ernest Hemingway. Later his brush becomes broad and his forms seem abstract, though his titles always open up to a story with multiple layers. Whatever his techniques or media, Miró is serious and joyful at the same time, simple and enigmatic and as profound as a child. That is how he explores the relation of man with his origins in time and cosmos, body and psyche.

25. **Joan Miró**  
**Chemin de Ronde III**, 1966
26. Joan Miró  

*Les Essences de la Terre*, 1968

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/321/rec/15
Etching and Aquatint on paper, 17½" x 13"
Signed in pencil bottom right Miró, ed. 3/50
Donated to the USM Museum of Art by Barbara and Mark Workman, 2003

27. Muller  

*Male Nude in the Pose of a Wrestler*, 1909

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/325/rec/70
Crayon on paper 23½ x 15¾ inches
Signed and dated bottom left: Muller 09
LOK.2003.23.1
Max Papart (France 1911 - 1994), though trained as a painter, he became a master engraver when he discovered the art of printing in 1936. He became a great expert in the use of carborundum on paper, combined with etching techniques on well chosen, often embossed paper types. His forms are outspoken Cubist as his visual vocabulary develops the principles of Picasso, Braque and Gris. He adds to them the singular quality of the printing press with its subtle play with texture and depth. His colors, bright and contrasting, remind us of the Mediterranean, where he was born (Marseille). His compositions, always worked out with the greatest technical care, are offered to the spectator’s feeling and emotions without a specific message from the artist apart from its artistic impact.

Papart’s success in America equals that in France, his works are to be found in many private collections. He had one man shows in New Orleans and New York. The Southern Miss Museum of Art possesses two major prints donated by the Paris artist himself and brought to Hattiesburg by his temporary student and friend William Baggett, professor of printing and graphic design and later chair of the Department of Art and Design at USM. Into the Future is an Épreuve d’Artiste (Artist’s Proof) reserved for the close circle of the artist, which gives it exceptional prestige and enhanced market value.


http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/396/rec/59
Etching, Aquatint, and Carborundum with Collage
on embossed paper, 24” x 31”
Printer Robert Dutrou, Atelier Morsang
Signed in pencil bottom right, E.A. 3/12.
LOK 2003.63.2
Donation by the artist, ca. 1987
Pablo Picasso (Spain 1881 – France 1973) changed not only the art of painting but also that of the lithograph. His collaboration from 1945 on with Fernand Mourlot in Paris, in whose studio he had a private corner that became almost a second home for him, was not only the beginning of a production of hundreds of works by his hand. By giving to the new multi-colored technique its lettres de noblesse, he opened the way for many other artists to express themselves as lithographers and so offered a relatively cheap art form to the public. Paris was then the city with dozens of highly specialized studios in this new technology that combined photography and printmaking. From the start it was used for the production of exhibit posters, though many artists created litho prints for their own merits. The second step in their popularity was set in the US by Andy Warhol. Today they occupy a large part of the art market. The original masters’ pieces are not cheap anymore. The prices depend on their intrinsic quality and on the numbers the works are pulled in, but also heavily on “details” like signature or provenance. However, today it is still possible for modest wallets to purchase lithographs to start a collection of original art.

29. Pablo Picasso  
*Portrait of Jacqueline Roque in profile*, 1956-57

Lithograph on paper, 14 x 20 inches  
Printer Atelier Mourlot  
Signed and dated on stone, Picasso Picasso 30.3.56 5.2.57, ed. 159/350  
LOK 2005.8.1

Picasso met Jacqueline Roque in 1953, when he was 72 and she 25. The beautiful young woman would become his model, his mistress and, in 1961 his second wife. As his muse she was destined to be the subject of hundreds of portraits; as his last wife she was not only the jealous chaperon of the aging artist (isolating him from the children he had with his former partner, Françoise Gilot), she also played a significant role in the intricate progress of the artist’s legacy. It proved to be such a weight on her shoulders that she committed suicide in 1989.
This lithograph, after a painting, portrays her with a yellow head dress seen from the left, a very typical pose for the painter. So typical that it is not always easy to identify his models, going in these years from Françoise via Sylvette to Jacqueline. In terms of style this confirms the descriptions of Pablo’s volatile loyalty to women, which contributed to the success of Gilot’s bestselling book *A Life with Picasso*, 1964 (and ruined for good her relation with the painter). A study for the present work identifying the sitter was used for the poster of a show in the same year. Perhaps this lithograph was proposed for the same event.

30. **Erliss Pung-Jörgenson**  
**She**, 1982

http://digilib.usm.edu/edm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/167/rec/105
Acrylic on canvas 58 x 46 inches
Signed on back, top: *Erliss Pung.*
LOK 1982.5.1

An excellent, though dark, highly expressive picture, that was purchased for the museum in 1982 when it won the award in the spring senior show (according to the little ticket on the back, it cost a hundred dollar). What does “*She*” mean? As usual “abstract” expressionist works are figurative, which figure is submitted to extreme freedom of treatment by the artist, in order to express sentiment, emotion, empathy or understanding. De Kooning’s *Women* are exemplary of this attitude, and we think of them in front of Pung’s work. *She* must be such a woman, possibly with a dark skin in a wide red dress. The paint is posed with vigor, almost with rudeness and conveys a subconscious emotion. Is *She* alone and does *She* move, whirling? Or does *She* sit and carries a child in her lap? Is *She* a Night Club Dancer or a Madonna, to use the extremes? The eye hesitates, and suddenly the mind too. Would this ambiguity be one of the interesting, the essential features of the work? Would we ask the artist? No! She has spoken: with female ambiguity about female ambiguity. And we have to find out for ourselves, with our own ambiguities.
Erliss Pung-Jörgenson *Untitled (Abstract landscape)*, ca. 1980

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/372/rec/178
Acrylic on canvas 43 x 34 inches
Not signed, not dated.
LOK 2003.61.1

The drawing was one of the most appreciated entries at the Umpteenth Annual Student Exhibition, 1980, and won the purchase award for the permanent collection.

Georges Rouault (French 1871-1958) rose to immediate and lasting fame when he was associated to the group around Matisse, Derain, De Vlaminck, Van Dongen and others in a memorable Parisian exhibit, *Le Salon d'Automne*, 1905. Their style seemed so outrageous that a critic compared them to wild animals in the zoo: *Fauves*. The sobriquet would cling to them for the rest of their lives.

Rouault’s character, however, was anything but wild, rather shy and thoughtful. His search was for a monumental style, a deserving successor to the grand and serious tradition, menaced by the pretty but shallow academic practice of his day. This style, reminding one of medieval stained glass, was to serve gigantic subject matter, responding to the suffering of the populations during the European wars. As a devout Catholic, he used biblical subjects to make his point. Though he was a very pure colorist and painter, engravings were his favorite technical means, in black and white, as well as color.

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/384/rec/69
Color aquatint on paper 12 x 8 inches
Monogram and date on the plate *GR 1934*
LOK 2005.6.1

Our example of Rouault’s art is a page from a rather happy suite, dealing with the famous French circus “The Shooting Star,” which has provided inspiration to other artists too. Rouault’s vision of it is that of a series of clowns and acrobats boldly facing the public almost like saints in a gothic church. He worked on it for many years, before it was published by the well-known art dealer Ambroise Vollard in 1938, an edition of 250. Master Arthur is a magician of immense grace and gravity. It is signed on the plate, as the suite would be signed by hand. Vollard expected the suite to be sold as a whole, but our Master Arthur made its way to Southern Miss alone.

33. **Ken Weathersby** *Untitled*, 1986

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/534/rec/173
Acrylic on canvas 49½ x 56 inches
Ken Weathersby is now an established artist in New York where he settled soon after he graduated from Southern Miss. His attention actually goes to formal problems he attacks via the concept of the maze. This organized approach of questions of vision and orientation were already notable in his student years when he prepared his BFA in Hattiesburg. Our painting is a research about the visibility of color, the effect of juxtaposition, the vibration and absorption exerted by the field. The little kaleidoscopic circles, built with or towards values of hardly definable greens, swim in the overwhelming presence of rose: a hallucinatory effect. He achieves with color what Lucy Webb (see number 34) achieves with line. Ken treats the problem not without a surprising sense of beauty.

34. Lucy A. Webb  
*Untitled*, ca 1980

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/556/rec/177  
Acrylic on canvas 48 x 72 inches  
Signed lower right corner *L. A. Webb*  
LOK 2003.13.1

The Dean of the College of the Arts, Raymond Mannoni, bought this painting for the permanent collection of the Museum of Art in the beginning of the 1980’s. It was strikingly modern. Executed as cold linear geometry, horizontal bands meeting vertical ones, the variations in warm red tone on the black background provoke an illusion of depth that can fool the eye. It is a combination of Constructivism and Op-Art, like Vasarely had made it spectacularly popular in France. But Lucy Webb is simpler, more serious, more authentic in her research.
Thornton Willis  

*Osceola*, 1984

http://digilib.usm.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/art/id/558/rec/81

Oil stick on Arches cover stock 100% rag, 22 x 30 inches

Signed, named and dated on back: *Osceola Thornton Willis '84*

Dedication on back: *Best wishes to my friend Harry Gaugh  TW '88.*

LOK 2003.17.1

Donated by the artist.

In 1985, when Bill Baggett was Chairman of the Art Department and E. G. Licka director of the Woods Gallery (now the Southern Miss Museum of Art), at the time when the University was celebrating its 75th anniversary, Thornton Willis was invited as the artist of the celebration show. Willis was a nationally known artist and an alumnus from USM. In 1962 he had left Hattiesburg with a B.S. in his pocket. Now he came back and lent recent work to his old school for a remarkable exhibition. It was a memorable moment for the future museum. Licka had a catalogue published, in which he wrote a long and thorough article on the artist. Twelve photos make it a major document on Willis in the eighties. *Osceola* was part of the exhibition, as one of the *Lightning of Mississippi* variations, seen like one who closes his eyes in the thunderstorm and looks with his inner eye at the dark blue ‘M’ against an orange sky.

Did Willis promise to donate the work after the show? Probably not. The work traveled back to New York and stayed in Willis’ studio until 1988, when the artist dedicated it (and we presume offered it) to his dear friend Harry Gaugh, the eminent art critic, known for being the expert on Franz Kline, and an artist himself. Gaugh died prematurely in 1992.

How *Osceola* finally came to Hattiesburg is not clear. Circumstances have made what was a work of friendship between a great artist and a great art historian is now a treasure of the Southern Miss Museum of Art.
From: *Thornton Willis, Recent Work: Paintings and Drawings*, C. W. Woods Gallery, Department of Art, University of Southern Mississippi, 1985, with an introduction by Dr. C. E. Licka, color-plate page 21.

Exhibition: *Thornton Willis, Recent Work: Paintings and Drawings*, C. W. Woods Gallery, Department of Art, University of Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Miss. September 1 – October 13, 1985.