



Lost and Found: Visions of the Davis Art Center

Permanent Collection 1967-1992
October 8 – November 19, 2010

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Lost and Found: Visions of the Davis Art Center

In the fall of 2008, as the Davis Art Center began preparing for its 50th anniversary, a few curious board members began to research the history of a permanent collection dating back to the founding of the Davis Art Center in the 1960s. They quickly recognized that this collection, which had been hidden away for decades, was a veritable treasure trove of late 20th century Northern California art. It's been 27 years since the permanent collection was last exhibited to the public. *Lost and Found: Visions of the Davis Art Center* brings these treasures to light.

Between 1967 and 1992 the Davis Art Center assembled a collection of 148 artworks by 92 artists. Included in the collection are ceramics, paintings, drawings, lithographs, photographs, mixed media, woodblocks, and textiles. Many of the artists represented in the collection were on the cutting edge of their time and several have become legends of the art world.

Lost and Found: Visions of the Davis Art Center consists of 54 works by 34 artists ranging from the funky and figurative to the quiet and conceptual. This exhibit showcases the artistic legacy of Northern California and the prescient vision of the Davis Art Center's original permanent collection committee, a group of volunteers who shared a passion for art and a sharp eye for artistic talent. Through their tireless efforts acquiring works by artists who were relatively unknown at the time, the committee created what would become an impressive collection that reveals Davis' role as a major player in a significant art historical period. The exhibition celebrates the foresight, vision, and chutzpah of the Davis Art Center, its members, and the community it has served for fifty years.

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Special Collections Committee

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History of the Permanent Collection

The Permanent Collection Committee

In November of 1967 a small group of passionate art enthusiasts formed a permanent collection committee made up of Davis Art Center board members and volunteers. The goal of the committee was to acquire artworks representative of the region. Their initial approach was centered on teachers, members, and students directly connected with the Davis Art Center, including artists from the Davis and university communities. But, as committee members witnessed the bold artistic movements taking place in Northern California, the project expanded to include developing artists who were exploring Bay Area Figurative, Funk Art, and Surrealist concepts and techniques. Many of these artists went on to become prominent sculptors, painters, and photographers.

The committee members immersed themselves in the regional art scene, soliciting works from visiting artists and UC Davis students and faculty. They attended gallery openings, promoted new artists, and studied various artistic media while seeking pieces for the collection. The works they collected are mostly representative of Northern California, but the collection has a national and global reach as well, including artists from Chicago, New York, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Mexico, and the Netherlands.

The original vision for the collection was to develop a museum for Davis and enhance the Davis Art Center's standing within Northern California's art community. While the Davis Art Center has since evolved into an organization with a strong emphasis on studio art education and practice, it has remained committed to celebrating, promoting, and exhibiting the art of our region. Over the years, the committee worked to create a permanent collection that could be enjoyed and appreciated by the community, the same community that often inspired the art. Now the collection also is an artistic documentation of cultural history.

Permanent Collection Committee

Board Advisors: Roland Sanchez

Artistic Advisors: Ruth Horsting

Jane Lemert Witkin (67-69)

Norman Jones (67-81)

Lois Jones (67-81)

Hazel Pence Aurdal (69-70)

Edelgard Brunelle (80s)

Merry Burns (80s)

James Cook (80s)

James Estey (68-69)

Ellie Glassburner (68-69)

Marion Hamilton (78-81)

Audrey Socher (80-81)



Norman Jones of Art Center
Receives Regional Arts Award

Johnson (78)

Marinka Phaff (67-81)

Patricia Sanchez (67-69)

Barbara Stebbins (67-78)

Chris Kidd (91)

Terry Lyon (80s)

Marion Miller (68)

Jacque Moore (91)

Faye Nelson (80s)

Flo Olmstead (69-70)

Barbara Pearl Phillips (70s)

Makenzee Tapp (78)

History of the Permanent Collection

Legacy of the Permanent Collection Committee

Among the many dedicated members of the permanent collection committee, there are a few who stand out as intrepid champions of the cause. Barbara Stebbins, who spent 11 years on the committee, donated some of the first works to the collection. Taking a different approach, Norman and Lois Jones established the “Christmas Arts and Crafts Show and Sale” in 1967. The sale netted enough money for the committee’s first purchase, a large figurative untitled oil painting by UC Davis student Michael Heizer. Incidentally, the Christmas show lives on as the annual Holiday Sale, featuring the arts and crafts of over 70 artisans each holiday season.

Norman Jones was honored early on for his work with the Visual Arts program at the Davis Art Center with the first Sacramento Regional Arts Council Award of 1967-68. He ultimately spent 15 years on the Davis Art Center permanent collection committee and would become instrumental in the formation of the collection. In a 1982 article by Davis Enterprise art editor Del McColm, Jones was recognized for his perseverance, innovation, and support of the collection and the Davis Art Center. For McColm, the collection is an “impressive feat” and “the miracle is that it exists at all.”

A new committee was formed in 1981 under the guidance of Makepeace Tsao, a professor of Biochemistry at UC Davis and art gallery owner. Tsao and his wife, Annette, owned Art Works Gallery in Fair Oaks and Slat Gallery in Sacramento. They collaborated with artists and introduced them to the Davis Art Center. The Tsaos were constantly looking for pieces that might round out the collection. Under Tsao’s guidance, the Davis Art Center flourished with a growing collection and a newly constructed building. In 1998, the Tsao estate donated a large collection of artworks; most were auctioned off as a fundraiser for the Davis Art Center, but many remain in the permanent collection. Dedicated in his honor, the Tsao Gallery commemorates Tsao’s 13-year devotion to the Davis Art Center.

These individuals and many other members of the committee helped to establish and then solidify the Davis Art Center’s place as a vital part of the city and as an important cultural institution in the region. At the same time, they managed to assemble an impressive permanent collection, which they intended “[to] be displayed for the benefit of the whole community.”¹

History of the Permanent Collection

Permanent Collection Exhibitions

The first exhibit of seven works from the permanent collection took place in July, 1969. In the exhibition press release Norman Jones wrote, "We believe the Davis Art Center is assembling a collection of major proportions. It is our intention to have acquisitions of art representative of the west coast influence and we feel fortunate in being able to center our activities on the vibrant work coming from this area."²

In subsequent years, the committee searched for creative ways to showcase the collection. Through a public rental program designed to promote local artists and collaboration with the business community, much of the art in the permanent collection was displayed outside of the Davis Art Center, from the walls of committee members' homes to public buildings in Davis and Woodland. Notably, Roland Peterson's *Blue Vase with Flowers* hung in the newly built Woodland Hospital in 1969.

The committee exhibited the entire collection in 1972, and again in 1974 when it was loaned to the City of Davis for the opening of the Veterans Memorial Building. By 1978, the Davis Art Center board recommended a new direction for acquisitions, limiting the scope to Davis, Sacramento, and Davis Art Center faculty. Under this new plan, between 1978-1982, the collection grew to include many artists from the Davis area. In 1982 and 83 the collection was shown again at the Davis Art Center. This was the last time the permanent collection was exhibited—until now.

Bay Area Figurative Art

The first nationally recognized artistic movement on the west coast was the Bay Area Figurative movement, which consisted of a group of artists from the San Francisco Bay Area who applied the spontaneity and physicality of Abstract Expressionism to representational works. Art historians divide this movement into three categories: "First Generation," followed by the "Bridge Generation," and, finally, the "Second Generation." First Generation artists were very closely aligned with Abstract Expressionism and still deeply valued most of its tenets. However, many felt frustrated, sensing on some level that the movement had run its course or become formulaic, so they turned to the figure to relieve their discontent. The Bridge Generation applied the aesthetic techniques of Abstract Expressionism without feeling the pressures of its potent ideology; they felt free to use any precedent, stylistic or otherwise, and they created works that were often more personal and autobiographical than those of the First Generation. The Second Generation added dynamism, wit, and coarseness (in both texture and attitude) to the mix, and has been regarded as a predecessor to Funk Art.³

Lost and Found: Permanent Collection Artists

Artists Converge in Davis

In the 1960s and early 1970s, Davis became a hub for artists who were experimenting with new conceptual ideas. In various ways, works by these artists entered the Davis Art Center's permanent collection. Several important pieces in the collection reflect the turbulent atmosphere of cultural transformation that was erupting in Northern California during this tumultuous period in our nation's history.

Artists in Davis as well as Sacramento explored the growing counterculture together. They worked closely and collaboratively as they shared studio space, gallery shows, and ideas. They wove autobiography and themes from everyday life into their artistic process. They influenced each other through powerful imagery and experimentation. One overarching result was the replacement of Abstract Expressionist anti-formalism with an open-minded spirit, where various styles (such as figurative art, Funk Art, and Surrealism) and techniques (such as the use of found objects and heavy impasto) could overlap and intermingle. Like the Abstract Expressionist pioneers before them, these artists challenged cultural attitudes by breaking the bonds of convention.

Several leading Bay Area Figurative artists, such as Robert Bechtle, William Theophilus Brown, and Paul Wonner came to Davis for a variety of reasons. Other distinguished artists associated with this movement, such as Wayne Thiebaud, Richard Nelson, Ralph Johnson, and Roland Petersen, became UC Davis faculty. Before long, Funk Art emerged in a similar vein, taking inspiration from Abstract Expressionism, but with heavy doses of quirky wit and often biting humor. Ceramic artists at UC Davis became especially important to the Funk Art movement. The TB-9 (Temporary Building 9) at UC Davis brought together ceramic artists including Robert Arneson, Robert Brady, Roy De Forest, David Gilhooly, Manuel Neri, William T. Wiley, Tony Natsoulas, Kurt Fishback, and others.

This energetic blend of artists converged in Davis and brought the city into the national artistic spotlight. Many of these artists were actively involved with the Davis Art Center's development; a few even volunteered as board members. Through their work and their involvement in the Davis community at a pivotal historical moment, these artists ultimately helped to shape the future of the Davis Art Center. In celebration of its 50th anniversary, the Davis Art Center is pleased to present their work in *Lost and Found: Visions of the Davis Art Center*.

Lost and Found: Permanent Collection Artists

| | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gary Antonio | Charles Forsman | Roland Petersen |
| Robert Arneson | Lynda Frese | Barbara Pearl Phillips* |
| Fred Ball | Pat Frey | Irene Pijoan |
| Robert Bechtle | Geoff Fricker | Davis Poster |
| Mary Foley Benson | Ann Frick- Vernon | Krishna Reddy |
| Donna Bllick | David Gilhooly | David Robertson |
| Robert Brady | Goodridge | Johnny Rolf |
| Jeffrey Briggs | Marga A Gottwals | Karen Roughton |
| Stephan Bristow | Gurst | Rob Saecker |
| William Theo Brown** | Monica Hannasch | Dan Schilling |
| John Buck | Michael Heizer | Karla Holland Scholer |
| Bruce Burris | J. Hooper | William L. Scholer |
| Brookes Byrd | Ruth Horsting* | Cornelia Schulz |
| Castillo | Lee Hudin | Daniel Shapiro** |
| John Connell | Ralph Johnson** | V. Shaver |
| Pat Conway | Zena Kavin | Larry Snyder |
| L. Corbone | Koi | Maggi Spahr |
| Richard L. Crozier | Lois Kojola | Daphne Stammer |
| Jarnett De | James Yeh Jau Liu | Jimmie (James) Suzuki |
| Olga Dees | Luigi Lucioni | Margaret Warner Swan |
| John Doerper | Mexiac | Jim Sylva |
| Cosette Dudley | Gita Haj-Moin | Kathryn Sylva |
| Helene Dyke | Tony Natsoulas | Patricia Syzmanouishi |
| Dwight Eberly | Maurine Morse Nelson | Yoshio Taylor |
| Robert Else | Richard L. Nelson | Wayne Thiebaud** |
| James Estey* | Gladys Nilsson | Harry Troughton Jr. |
| Hal Faulkner | Chiura Obata (Attributed to) | Makepeace Tsao |
| Lloyd Fergus | Jack Ogden | Marjorie Vasey |
| Kurt E. Fishback | Maija Peebles | Thelma Weatherford |
| Alice Fong | Ann Petersen | Genieve Watts |
| | | Paul Wonner** |
| | | Zorn |

* Permanent Collection Member. Phillips was also a founding member of the DAC.

** Artist taught at the DAC prior to 1967.

Featured Artists

Robert Arneson (1930 - 1992)

Robert Arneson is an internationally recognized legend of the art world. He broke the boundaries of traditional ceramic instruction and design largely with his poignant and irreverent sense of humor. Arneson is especially revered in Davis, where his art and his legacy continue to enrich the community in profound ways. The Davis Art Center is proud to have a little piece of that legacy with three of his works in the permanent collection.

Born in Benicia, California, Arneson obtained a BA from the California College of Arts and Crafts (now CCA) and received his MFA in Ceramics from Mills College in 1958. He taught at UC Davis for 29 years starting in 1962. He was a pioneer in the ceramic Funk Art Movement and a founding artist at TB-9 Sculpture Lab at UC Davis. As a teacher, Arneson emphasized attitude and not necessarily style and was known for encouraging experimentation in his students' work. Many of his students, including some Davis Art Center teachers, are still living in and around Davis.

Arneson's house on Alice Street in Davis appears in much of his early work. A highlight of the Davis Art Center's permanent collection is a rare Arneson collage entitled, *Where It's At 1303 Alice Street*. Using drawings, stencils and photographs, the artist explores his own home as subject through cartographic and architectural imagery.

Arneson would continue to create self-referential works throughout his career. Donated in the 1990s by the Makepeace and Annette Tsao Collection, Arneson's *Self Portrait (Trophy Bust)* is one example of the artist's lifetime exploration of different aspects of his own identity to reveal universal themes and emotions.

Arneson was a generous supporter of the Davis Art Center. He donated the collage in 1969, and seventy-five lithographs of his *House on Alice Street* in 1987. The lithographs were donated as auction items to raise money for the Davis Art Center's current building at Covell Boulevard and F Street. In acknowledgement of his generous donation, the Davis Art Center Studio A bears his name.



*Self Portrait
(Trophy Bust)*
Glazed Ceramic, 1984
5/8"x4 1/4"x2 2/3

6



Where It's At 1303 Alice Street
Collage/Drawing on Photo Paper,
1967-1968. 26"x20"



The House on Alice Street,
Lithograph, 74/75. 1987. 30"x38"

9

Robert Bechtle (b. 1932)



'60 T-Bird, Graphite on Paper, 1966. 14"x22"

Robert Bechtle is a San Francisco native who received both a BA and MFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts. He was drawn to realism in the early 1960s as a way of rejecting the Bay Area Figurative influences dominating the San Francisco art scene. One of the founding masters of the Photorealist style, Bechtle strives to minimize artistic style so the viewer may have a direct connection to the subject matter. Bechtle uses his own snapshots of ordinary life to create extraordinary paintings and drawings that are rendered with such detailed accuracy that they appear, at first glance, to be photographs.

Bechtle's '60 T-Bird drawing illustrates the artist's brother standing at the open driver side door of his car. This drawing is a remarkable precursor to the artist's iconic '60 T-Bird oil painting (1968, UC Berkeley Art Museum collection), which reiterates the exact imagery of the car and figure, but with different background scenery.

This drawing was purchased from the artist during his brief teaching position at UC Davis in 1967. It has been loaned for retrospective exhibitions to several museums including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C.; The Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas; and the Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, California. His paintings are in numerous collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Library of Congress.

Robert David Brady (b. 1946)

Robert David Brady received his MFA from UC Davis in 1975 and worked in TB-9 next door to his mentor, Robert Arneson. Brady did not adopt the Funk and Figurative styles established by Arneson and other UC Davis faculty. Instead, he preferred experimenting with firing and glazing techniques to create ceramic vessels and abstract structures. In the late 1970s, after a series of misfortunes prompted him to explore themes of death and immortality, the abstract and elongated human form began to appear in his work. Since 1989, when Brady began to concentrate on wood and mixed media sculpture, elongated totemic figures are prevalent in his oeuvre.

Representative of the early period in Brady's career, *Untitled (Lattice)* was probably produced at TB-9 in the mid 1970s. Its geometric repetition evokes Minimalist art, but its woven joints and subdued irregularity suggest a primeval design that is at odds with the refined, hard-edged polish of archetypal Minimalist works. Meredith Burns, who served as a permanent collection committee member during the 1980s, and her husband Dr. Victor Burns, donated this piece to the Davis Art Center in 1983.

Brady has lived and worked locally throughout his career as a professor at the California State University, Sacramento since 1975 and as Professor Emeritus since 2005. His works are in numerous private collections throughout the world and in museums, such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Stedelijk Museum in Holland. He currently lives in Berkeley.



Untitled (Lattice), Ceramic Sculpture, n.d. 18"x22"x7"

Jeffrey Briggs (b. 1954)



Untitled, Silver Gelatin Print, 1984, 16"x20"

Raised in Stockton, California, Briggs studied Photography at UC Davis and graduated in 1984 with a BA in Art Studio. Briggs went on to study Theology in a Colorado monastery.

For a short period during the early 1980s the permanent collection committee expanded the collection with several photographs, including Briggs' *Untitled* print. With its repetition of the frame and self-reference to photographic media, this print exemplifies the photographic style emerging in the 1980s, which focused on composition and conceptualism.

In November 1984, the Davis Art Center mounted an exhibition of photographs showcasing prints from the permanent collection together with the works of several UC Davis graduating photographers. Briggs' photographs were included in the show and subsequently purchased for the permanent collection.

William Theo Brown (b. 1919)

Born in Illinois, William Theo Brown studied piano at Yale University and graduated in 1941 with a BA in music. After serving in World War II, Brown lived in Paris and then New York. In both cities he studied painting and, often by mere chance, met numerous luminaries, including Pablo Picasso, Mark Rothko, Igor Stravinsky and Willem de Kooning. Brown moved to California in 1952 to join the graduate program at UC Berkeley.

While studying Abstract Expressionism at UC Berkeley, Brown became close friends with Richard Diebenkorn and developed a lifelong relationship with his partner, Paul Wonner. It was during this time that Brown's work began to apply Abstract Expressionist elements to the human figure, and he established himself within the Bay Area Figurative movement.

During the early 1960s Brown taught painting at the Davis Art Center and was actively involved in the local art community before moving to Malibu, California. After his departure, the art studio he once shared with Paul Wonner was used for classes by the Davis Art Center for many years. In the mid-1970s he returned to teach at UC Davis.

In response to a request from his friend and permanent collection committee member, Marinka Phaff, Brown donated *Man in Green, Reading* to the collection in 1968. Hazel Pence Aurdal, another committee member, donated *Still Life* in 1979.

Brown continues to paint at his home in Malibu, focusing on color abstraction.



Still Life,
Acrylic and Pencil on Board, 1968.
15 7/8"x19"



Man in Green, Reading, Oil on Board, 1968.
14½"x12"

John Buck (b. 1946)

Born in Iowa and educated at the Kansas City Art Institute and School of Design, John Buck attended graduate school at UC Davis where he received his MFA in 1972 and met his wife, sculptor Deborah Butterfield. In 1976 he moved to Montana and taught sculpture at Montana State University until he retired in 1990.

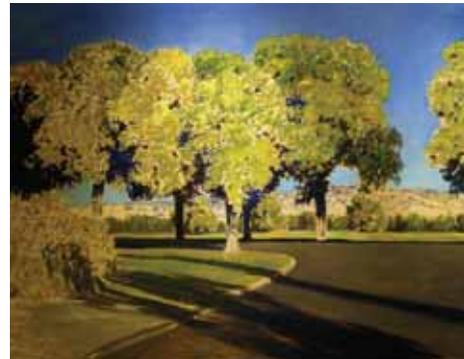
Buck is known for his ambitious life-size bronze and wood sculptures as well as his woodblock prints. His work often addresses religious and political upheaval in the world. Buck donated *Religious Appetite* to the Davis Art Center in the mid 1970s after Norman Jones wrote the artist a letter requesting one of his works. This rare ink on paper drawing shows an unusual image of a religious icon. Verging on total collapse, the crumbling Buddha statue recalls the Romantic notion of the sublime, which often exposes the ephemeral nature of human creations in relation to the eternal forces of nature.

Buck lives and works in Montana and has a studio in Hawaii. He continues to exhibit and produce new works, which can be found in several public buildings and museum collections including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, and the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco.



Religious Appetite,
Ink on Paper, 1972. 18½" x 25½"

Richard Crozier (b. 1944)



Coastal Range, '74, two panels. Oil on Canvas, 1974.
66 ¼" x 84"

UC Davis Alumni might recognize *Coast Range '74*, a large diptych that once hung in Mrak Hall at UC Davis. Norman Jones sought out Richard Crozier after viewing these on campus. They were purchased for the collection in 1978 but remained in Mrak Hall for several years, on loan from the Davis Art Center.

This diptych is not a representation of a specific landscape, but is the artists' invention, created by improvisation mixed with memory. When not depicting human figures within his landscapes, Crozier subtly indicates the destructive effect of civilization on the purity of the land. In *Coast Range '74*, Crozier obstructs the viewer from the natural world with audacious strips of black asphalt and manicured lawns.

Richard Crozier received his MFA from UC Davis in 1974, studying under Wayne Thiebaud. Crozier's paintings were greatly influenced by the Bay Area Figurative Painters. His artwork is in the American Embassy in Zaire and in numerous private and corporate collections throughout the United States.

John Doerper (b. 1949)

John Doerper received his BA from CSU Fullerton in 1968. While attending UC Davis as a graduate student in the early 1970s, he explored Surrealist painting in which a world of dream and fantasy emerges from the artist's conscious and unconscious experiences. Doerper's artworks focus on the figurative while creating a striking visual imagery without any logical comprehensibility.

Homo Erectus Arhustus is a surreal rendition of the traditional memento mori or vanitas, themes that intend to remind the viewer of his or her mortality. In the untitled painting, a large ungulate seems to emerge from the soil as blustery winds stir the trees. The Davis Art Center permanent collection committee purchased both works from the artist in the early 1970s.

Throughout the years, Doerper has worked as a farm worker, academic, artist, and writer; however, his literary endeavors have dominated his professional life. Doerper lives in Bellingham, Washington, where he is primarily known as a food and wine columnist for several publications including *Travel & Leisure*, *Pacific Northwest* magazine. In addition, he has authored Fodor's American Compass Guides and served as their Senior Editor.



Homo Erectus Arhustus,
Ink on Paper, n.d.
12½"x17"



Untitled,
Oil on Canvas, 1970.
40"x30"

Dwight Eberly (b. 1925)

Seekers,
Oil on Canvas,
1982. 24"x 30"



I Think I'll Be a Dove,
Oil on Canvas,
1975. 16"x20"

Upon retiring from active military after serving in World War II and the Korean War, Dwight Eberly received his BA and MA from California State University, Sacramento in 1955 and 1961, respectively. Eberly was the Art Director for Aerojet in Sacramento for 27 years, and has taught at various community colleges, art centers, and high schools in the Sacramento Valley. Makepeace Tsao took an interest in his artwork, purchasing several paintings in the 1980s and donating six of them to the permanent collection.

In *I Think I'll be a Dove*, sinuous lines seem to form a dove and an egg shape, both of which are suspended in Eberly's spare, monochrome environment. *Seekers* uses a similar fluidity of line to suggest simple organic shapes. For Eberly, the act of painting is an experience in which the canvas comes to life, leading him through a journey to an enlightened awareness of the subconscious.

Eberly resides in Sea Ranch, where he continues to paint. *Seekers* was donated by committee members Lyon, Stebbins, and Tsao in 1982. *I Think I'll be a Dove* was donated from the Tsao Collection in the late 1980s.

Robert Else (1918 – 2008)

A Columbia University graduate, Robert Else taught at several schools in New York after returning from World War II. In 1950, he became a Professor of Art at California State University, Sacramento, and retired in 1979 as a Professor Emeritus. In addition to teaching, Else served on the Board of Trustees of the Crocker Art Museum from 1972 to 1975.

In the early 1950s Else worked mainly with lithographs and received the 1950 Purchase Prize at the First International Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Color Lithography. Else went on to illustrate the *Herman Melville* biography by Leon Howard.

During the 1960s Else became interested in painting beach landscapes. *Dead Doll* was part of a series painted from black and white photographs taken at the beach. According to Else, "I was fascinated by the tide line where everything was deposited; in this case bits of wood, feathers, little jelly fish, plastic squeeze bottles, dead dogs, and abandoned dolls."⁴ In 1966 Else had a one-man show at the Candy Store Gallery in Fair Oaks, where he met many permanent collection committee members who frequented the gallery. After speaking with Norman Jones, Else donated *Dead Doll* to the collection in 1970. It was later lent to the Crocker Art Museum in 1977 for the exhibition, *Robert Else: A Retrospective*.

Sacramento State University honored his service and artistic talent by dedicating a gallery in his name, where faculty and student artworks are exhibited. Else died



Dead Doll,
Acrylic on Canvas,
1968. 48"x37"

Jim Estey (b. 1940)



Orchid in Monet's Dining Room, Ink on Paper, 1982. 8"x 6"

Born in El Dorado County, long-time Davis Art Center supporter Jim Estey was a permanent collection committee member in 1968. He sought out acquisitions for the collection and assisted with establishing the early collection policy. Estey had a one-man show at the Davis Art Center in 1982. In the early 1990s, Estey generously donated two works for a benefit auction at the Davis Art Center.

Estey donated *Orchids in Monet's Dining Room* to the permanent collection in 1983. Estey's expressive and fluid style is evident in this drawing, which illustrates impressionist master Claude Monet's bright yellow dining room at his home in Giverny, France. In addition to *Orchid in Monet's Dining Room*, the Davis Art Center has one other work by Estey in its collection, a painting called *Hibiscus on the Beach*.

Estey is a highly respected and well-known artist and teacher. He has taught art studio throughout his life and mentored several artists over the years as an adjunct professor at Folsom Lake College. Estey's paintings are in several permanent collections, including the Crocker Art Museum. Estey's current works are in watercolor.

Kurt Fishback (b. 1942)

Raised in California, Kurt Edward Fishback was surrounded by artists like Ansel Adams, Wynn Bullock, and his namesake, Edward Weston from a young age. Fishback earned his BFA in Ceramics from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1967. Talented in various media, he received his MFA in Ceramics, Photography, Sculpture, and Painting from UC Davis in 1970. Although Fishback's primary focus is photography, he originally studied sculpture under Arneson and worked alongside Gilhooly, DeForest, and other TB-9 artists. During this time, he began to photograph his fellow artists as a means of documenting his studies.

Portrait of Harvey Himelfarb is a playful example of Fishback's role as "chronider" of the artist. A photographer and professor emeritus at UC Davis, Himelfarb is simultaneously obscured and revealed by the enormous lens he holds on his lap. Collection members Meredith Burns and Makepeace Tsao purchased the photograph from Fishback in 1984. Incidentally, Fishback's portrait of Robert Arneson in his studio (private collection) was featured in the Davis Art Center's January 2010 exhibition, *A Seed Planted: A Tribute to Robert Arneson*.

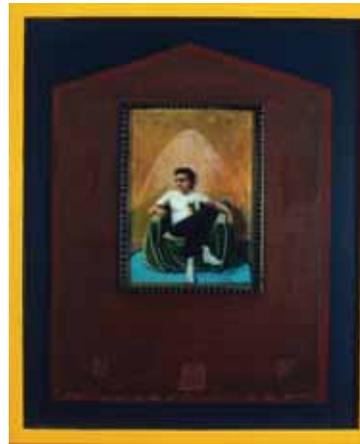
Fishback has taught at several schools, including his father's Glen Fishback School of Photography in Sacramento. He has spent 21 years at American River College, while also working as a commercial photographer, writer, and contributing editor for publications. In 2000, Fishback published *Art In Residence: West Coast Artists In Their Spaces*, featuring portraits of artists in their personal spaces. The book provides the viewer with an intimate look into the artistic community of photographers, sculptors and painters Fishback has been privy to throughout his life. Fishback's photographs are candid, direct, spiritual, and imaginative. He is both an observer and an artist, and, as Henry Hopkins, Professor of Art at UCLA, writes, "[Kurt] is an artist, he understands other artists' needs and has that rare capacity to enter unobtrusively into an artist's environment to capture the soul of the being..."⁵

Fishback's artwork has been exhibited throughout the world and is in collections at The International Center for Photography, NY, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Denver Museum of Art, and several other institutions. The Smithsonian National Museum has requested Fishback's negatives and papers.



Portrait of Harvey Himelfarb,
Silver Gelatin Print, 1979. 20"x24"

Ted Fontaine (b. 1952)



Self Portrait,
Oil with wood, raised
encaustic,
n.d. 14 ¼"x18"

Ted Fontaine is an artist, photographer, musician and teacher living in Davis. He teaches photography, yearbook, art, and video film at Davis Senior High School. He also is a bassist, who has played with the UC Davis Jazz band.

Donated in 1985 by former Davis Art Center Board President, Dorothy Clemente, Ted Fontaine's *Self Portrait* was one of the last pieces added to the permanent collection. The painting's iconic layout and use of encaustic calls to mind early Christian images. The red brick house echoes the gable of a Gothic panel painting, while the scene at center, with its attention to depth and volume, owes more to early Renaissance painting. The artist deviously illuminates himself and his cat with a nimbus of electric light.

In 1983, Fontaine exhibited his paintings and drawings at the Davis Art Center. Since then, his style has evolved, allowing a colorful palette to shape his composition. He explores subjects from imagination, memory, and impulse. His latest body of work was displayed in his solo exhibition, *Road Trip*, at the International House in Davis in 2009.

Chuck Forsman (b. 1944)



Telephone Lines, Acrylic on Panel Board,
1970. 28"x48"

Forsman attended UC Davis as an undergraduate and graduate student, receiving his MFA in 1971. Shortly thereafter, he left California to begin teaching at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

The Davis Art Center is pleased to have one of his early paintings, *Telephone Lines*, created while he was a graduate student at UC Davis. Norman Jones purchased the work from the artist in 1970. The painting reveals the honesty and beauty of an ordinary object that is often overlooked. It weaves together the mundane realities of modern life with a romantic vision of nature and spirituality by granting this urban, utilitarian fixture a monumental status as a symbol of Christian faith.

Forsman is a published author and continues to work, exhibit, and teach at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Collections of his work are in numerous university collections, including UC Davis, and several museums such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Denver Art Museum.

Geoffrey Fricker (b. 1947)

Geoffrey Fricker is a native Californian who obtained his MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1972. Fricker chairs the Photography Program at Butte College in Oroville, California where he has taught for over 30 years.

After a photographic exhibition at the Davis Art Center in 1984, Fricker donated *Sandee* to the permanent collection. This work reflects his interest in form, design, and light. In a 2009 interview, Fricker discusses his use of black and white during his early years of study. "I was more interested in content and form, the tonal separation qualities of light and the contemplative feeling that black and white elicits."⁶

Most of Fricker's current work reflects his interest in sustainable uses of water, particularly in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. The newly opened Gateway Science Museum in Chico exhibited his photography of the Sacramento River in May 2010. He also is currently working with the National Science Foundation on a dinosaur-mapping project.

Fricker's photographs have appeared in numerous publications including: *Capturing Light, Masterpieces of California Photography (1850 – Present)*, 2001; *High Performance*, 1993; and the *Camera Maininchi*, 1980.

His work also is in several permanent collections including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego, and the Hawaiian State Museum of Culture and Arts.



Sandee, Silver Gelatin Print, n. d. 16"x20"

David Gilhooly (b. 1943)

Born in Auburn, California, David Gilhooly graduated high school in Puerto Rico before moving back to California. He attended UC Davis as both an undergraduate and graduate student, earning his MA in 1967. Gilhooly was a major figure in the development of TB-9 during the late 1960s. He was a student in the first ceramic class taught by Arneson, and later became the artist's assistant. Gilhooly became a champion for his fellow TB-9 students by organizing shows of their work; his first was the celebrated *First Group Mess*, at Belmonte Gallery in 1966.

Gilhooly's playful ceramic animals represent the emphatically anti-functional emphasis of the Funk Art movement. Although his work is lighthearted, Gilhooly became a master of clay by experimenting with various clay techniques to create lively, mischievous, and well-crafted works of art.

Gilhooly's fascination with frogs led to his creation of what he refers to as "Frog World," several series of frog sculptures, often with anthropomorphic qualities. With its explicit title, *Rock of Fu*** is one hilarious example of Gilhooly's uninhibited sense of humor. *Warthog* and the two *Armadillo* pieces are examples of the artist's interest in animals of all shapes and sizes, and Gilhooly found pleasure in naming his pieces after friends and family, much to their dismay. A permanent collection committee member purchased these works from the artist in the late 1960s and 70s.

Gilhooly's creativity has led him to experiment with other media, including wood, cloth, fur, and plexiglass. He still occasionally produces ceramic pieces, however he is currently most interested in shadow boxes, aluminum plates for engravings, collages, and works on paper. The medium that made him famous still appeals to him, but evolution as an artist is more important to his personal growth than celebrity. His goal is to make art that speaks to the public. Gilhooly wrote, "Having arrived is boring. The journey is what makes life interesting and worth living."⁷ He continues his artistic travels, searching for fun, stimulation, and creative energy through his art.



*Rock of Fu***, Glazed Ceramics, 1979. 8"x7"x7"



Armadillo, Glazed Ceramics, n. d. (1970s) 5"x8"x15"



Armadillo, Glazed Ceramics, n. d. (1970s) 4"x7"x14"



Warthog, Glazed Ceramics n. d. (1970s) 12"x15"x 27"

Gity Haj-Moin (b. 1944)

Born in Iran, Gita Haj-Moin earned her MA in sculpture from UC Davis in 1970 and later taught at Yuba and American River Colleges. After meeting Norman Jones at TB-9 in 1968, she had her first solo exhibition at the Davis Art Center in 1971.

In the late 1960s Haj-Moin came across the story of Romeo and Juliet through an illustrated book. She was so enchanted by the romantic and tragic portrayal of these characters that Haj-Moin created *A Persian Story*, a thematic series of prints based on her own interpretation of the Shakespeare play.

Norman Jones purchased *A Persian Story* from the artist in 1970. The series was displayed in the Veterans Memorial Building from 1974 – 1978. Haj-Moin is an art collector still living in Davis.



A Persian Story (Romeo and Juliet), Collographs/Lithographs, 1968. Thematic Story - Scene 1 through 10, 50"x24"

Michael Heizer (b. 1944)

A Berkeley native, Michael Heizer studied sculpture and painting at the San Francisco Art Institute in the early 1960s. However, he is most famous for his Earth Art, large-scale works that often manipulate a remote landscape to create art that is intentionally inaccessible to the commercial art world. His best-known Earth Art includes *Effigy Tumuli* (Buffalo Rock State Park, Illinois), *Double Negative* (Overton, Nevada), and *City* (a large sculptural complex in the Nevada desert). Heizer lives and works near the *City* installation.

The permanent collection committee had the foresight to acquire Heizer's artwork during his transition from painter to earth artist, and while he was still relatively unknown. Purchased from the artist in 1968, *Untitled (Seated Figure)* is the first piece acquired for the Davis Art Center permanent collection by the committee. The painting is an example of Heizer's early influences from the Bay Area Figurative movement coming out of his hometown, Berkeley. The life-size figure is perched high above a California landscape with a deep blue strip of ocean meeting the sky at the horizon. The image is bold, with saturated hues, thick impasto, and large, sweeping brush strokes.



Untitled (Seated Figure), Oil on Canvas, late 1960s. 71" x 66"

Ralph Johnson (1925 - 1994)

Professor Emeritus Ralph Johnson was one of the influential early professors at UC Davis Department of Art. He taught alongside Richard Nelson and Roland Petersen when he joined the department in 1957 after graduating and teaching at UC Berkeley. In the early 1960s Johnson taught painting at the Davis Art Center and in 1979 he served as artistic advisor for the permanent collection committee.

Johnson spent his childhood exploring the rural landscape in Washington State, enjoying nature and the freedom it offered. Representative of his early work, *Low Tide* evokes the influence of his rustic childhood. The vibrant colors and animated brushwork suggest a seascape pulsating with energy. Annette Tsao donated *Low Tide* to the permanent collection in 1982.

Johnson moved away from watercolor painting as he became increasingly interested in pursuing wood sculpture. During his time at Berkeley, Johnson began incorporating Cubist techniques into his paintings; later, this same Cubist aesthetic infused his wood sculptures with organic shapes and angular abstract forms.



Luigi Lucioni (1900 – 1988)

Italian born Luigi Lucioni was educated in New York at the Cooper Union Art School and the National Academy of Design. Both schools emphasized the academic artistic teachings rooted in the European masters tradition. Reflecting his education and his preference for draftsmanship, Lucioni's finely detailed compositions and smooth brushwork rendered images with a crisp clarity that was at odds with dominant trends in art throughout his life.

Most famous for his landscape and still life paintings, Lucioni was also known for his etchings and lithographs of Vermont landscapes. *Untitled (Landscape with Trees)* showcases one of his most celebrated subjects, birch trees. Barbara Stebbins purchased this etching from the artist in 1946 and donated it to the Davis Art Center in 1967. It was the second piece added to the permanent collection.

Lucioni passed away in 1988, leaving a legacy of numerous awards and artwork displayed in prominent museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Carnegie Institute, Library of Congress, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.



Untitled (Landscape with Trees),
Etching, 1940. 15"x20"

Tony Natsoulas (b. 1959)

Tony Natsoulas grew up in Davis and received his MFA at UC Davis in 1985. He has been working in Davis ever since as a professional artist specializing in large-scale, figurative ceramic pieces. During his studies, Natsoulas found his way to TB-9 where he flourished as an artist. He studied with many celebrated artists including Robert Arneson, Robert Brady, Roy DeForest, and Wayne Thiebaud. He credits Arneson with changing his life by encouraging him to pursue art as a career.

Natsoulas is a playful man with a mischievous persona that resonates through his artwork. Like the work of his distinguished predecessors, Natsoulas' art is often funny, unconventional, and innovative.

Natsoulas' first solo exhibition was at the Davis Art Center, where he is an active member. He contributes pieces for various shows including the January 2010 Arneson tribute, and participates regularly in the annual Davis Art Center Holiday Sale. His most recent work was shown in April 2010 at the Solomon-Dubnick Gallery in Sacramento. Natsoulas continues to create several public and private works, and his pieces have been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world.

The Joggers is a study for the life-size sculpture in front of the Historic City Hall. The artist donated *The Joggers* to the permanent collection.



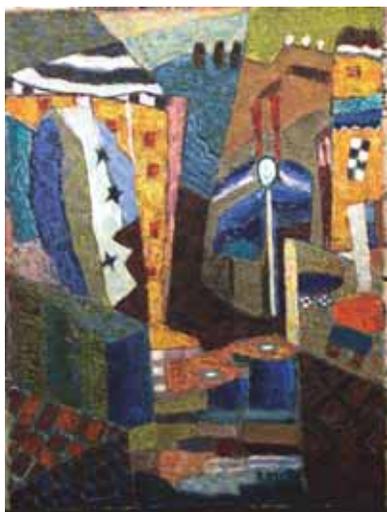
Joggers
Bronze, 2010

Richard Nelson (1901- 1972)

Richard L. Nelson is arguably the most influential person in creating the artistic landscape of the Davis community. Nelson was teaching art and art history at Washington State College in 1952 when Herbert Young, the Dean at UC Davis, presented him with an opportunity to establish an art department. Nelson persuaded Bay Area progressive artists such as William T. Wiley, Robert Arneson, Manuel Neri, Roy De Forest, and Wayne Thiebaud, to come teach at UC Davis. This decision changed the course of the art department and established Davis as a community for emerging artists during the 1960s. Four years after he died, the Nelson Gallery at UC Davis was named in his honor. Nelson was an active member of the Davis Art Center and several of his works are in the permanent collection.

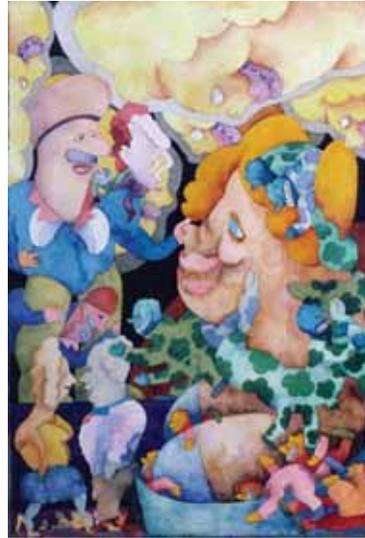
Nelson's *Untitled* oil painting embodies elements of geometric abstraction, but also hints at an urban environment, crowded with forms suggestive of buildings, roads, city lights, and perhaps even a distant body of water. Leonard G. Homann donated the painting to the collection in 1984.

Prior to his life in Davis, Nelson led a fascinating and varied life that took some surprising turns. After high school in Texas, Nelson trained as an engineer and worked as a draftsman. He then attended the Chicago Art Institute where he studied clarinet and violin. Later, he moved to Los Angeles and worked as an engineer for Shell Oil until World War II. During the war, Nelson joined the Army Engineer Corps, earning the rank of Captain. He remained in Europe after the war to study at the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris. In 1946, he returned to the United States and enrolled at Mills College before transferring to UC Berkeley where he studied under Chiura Obata and earned his BA and MA. Nelson's works have been included in hundreds of art exhibitions in the United States and Canada.



Untitled, Oil on Canvas, n.d. 19"x25"

Gladys Nilsson (b. 1940)



Cloude Burste,
Watercolor on Board,
late 1960s. 20¼"x15½"

A Chicago native, Nilsson graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago and is a founding member of the "Hairy Who," a group of artists associated with the Chicago Imagists from the late 1960s. This group was known for its surreal and often grotesque representational imagery, as well as for its relatively large faction of women artists.

Nilsson lived in Sacramento from 1968 until 1976, before returning to Chicago. The permanent collection committee was fortunate to acquire Nilsson's art a time when her work was sought after by reputable museums. A member of the permanent collection committee purchased *Cloude Burste* in 1969 from the Candy Store Gallery in Folsom, while Nilsson's artwork was exhibited in a group show. *Cloude Burste* hung in the Veterans Memorial Building from 1974-1978 on loan from the Davis Art Center.

Nilsson's work is in various collections around the world, including the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.; Whitney Museum of American Art; Museum Modern Kunst, Vienna, Austria; and the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth. A 2008 exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago entitled, *The Hairy Who? Ha!*, showcased art, books, comics, and interviews from the Hairy Who members and featured works by Nilsson.

Attributed to Chiura Obata (1885 – 1975)

Trained in traditional Japanese art from the age of seven, Chiura Obata left his native Japan for San Francisco in 1903. Obata found work there as a domestic servant, field worker, illustrator, designer, and decorator. As a young man, he traveled throughout California, sketching and painting scenic locations such as Yosemite and the Sierras. He later produced a portfolio of woodblock prints based on his California landscape paintings and sketches, which he published as *World Landscape Series – America*.

These seven untitled watercolor studies have been attributed to Obata. It is conceivable that they could be sketches of California landscapes. They demonstrate Obata's mastery of the *Nihonga* style, which follows the conventions of traditional Japanese *Kanō* line and *sumi-e* ink painting. Inspired by Zen Buddhist art, Obata would spend hours in solitude, attempting to understand the essential nature of the subject before painting. The natural world, particularly landscapes of California, was the principal subject matter of Obata's paintings, which he referred to as *dai-shizen*, or "Great Nature."

In 1932 Obata began teaching art at UC Berkeley. Ten years later, Obata and his family were relocated to internment camps for Japanese Americans. He spent over a year at the camps, where he organized art schools and taught over 1,200 fellow internees. After the war, Obata and his family settled in St. Louis, Missouri where he worked as a commercial artist until he was allowed to return to Berkeley in 1945. Both Roland Petersen and Richard Nelson studied under Obata at UC Berkeley during this period.

Obata retired from UC Berkeley as a Professor Emeritus in 1954, yet continued to travel throughout California lecturing, demonstrating Japanese brush painting, teaching students in his home, and exhibiting at galleries and museums. In 1965, the Japanese government awarded Obata with the Kungoto Zuiocho Medal, the highest Imperial award, for his endeavors to create understanding between Japan and the United States. Collections of Obata's work are in several museums throughout the United States such as the Smithsonian, San Diego Museum of Art, and the

Seven *Untitled*, Watercolors, n.d. 11"x12" and 11"x14"

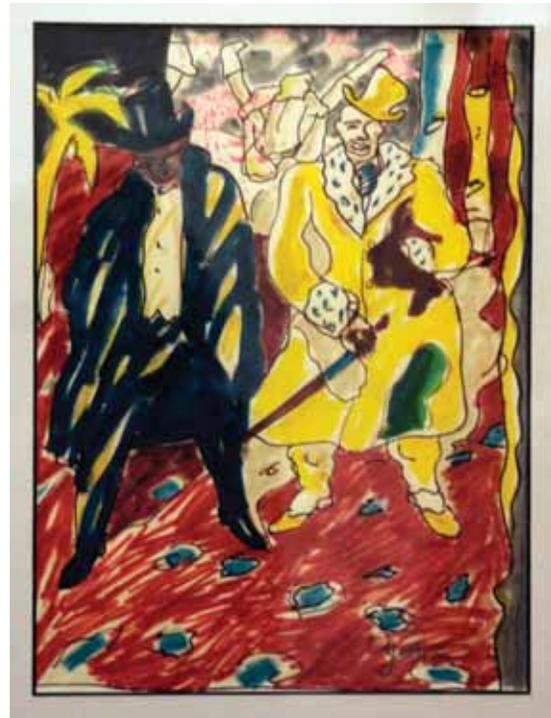


Jack Ogden (b. 1933)

Jack Ogden is a native Californian who graduated with a BA in 1960 and MA in 1962 from California State University, Sacramento. Ogden was a Professor of Art at California State University, Sacramento for more than thirty-five years and has been a Professor Emeritus since 1999.

Ogden was a frequent figure around the local art scene. He searched out new artists, viewed new works at various galleries, and connected artists to other artists. Ogden knew many UC Davis faculty, including Robert Arneson, and he introduced artists and gallery owners to Arneson and his "Funk Art crew." Through his friendships with Candy Store Gallery owner, Adeliza McHugh, and Belmonte Gallery owner, Sal Yniquez, Ogden facilitated the public exposure of many local artists' work. The Candy Store Gallery became a hot spot for local artists and collectors. Ogden himself had a solo exhibition at the Belmonte Gallery in 1963. In 1965 the Belmonte mounted the exhibition *UC Davis Sculpture*, providing the community with the first look at the Funk Art developing in TB-9. After Ogden introduced members of the permanent collection committee to various local galleries, the permanent collection expanded under new acquisitions. These galleries were crucial to the expansion of new Sacramento Valley artist communities; they showed contemporary works, and provided a place for artists to share ideas.

Vaudeville features two figures in stylish coats and top hats with a performance taking place in the background. Ogden fills his simple line drawings with bright colors and spontaneous pen strokes to create a vivid theatrical scene with at least a hint of bawdiness. *Vaudeville* was purchased from the artist in 1969 for the permanent collection.



Vaudeville,
Felt tip pen and Mixed Media on Paper,
n.d. 10" x 7 1/2"

Roland Petersen (b. 1926)

Roland Petersen is a founding member of the UC Davis Art Department where he taught painting and printmaking for 37 years. Petersen was among the first of the Sacramento Valley artists to gain a national reputation as one of the Bridge Generation artists of the Bay Area Figurative Movement. Because of his generosity and support of UC Davis and the Davis Art Center, Petersen has been instrumental in advancing arts education in the community. In honor of Petersen's contribution to the Davis Art Center, Studio C bears his name.

In *Blue Vase with Flowers*, Petersen's vigorous brushwork, heavily textured impasto, and bold swaths of color seem antithetical to the geometrical fragmentation and orderliness of the composition. This painting, donated by Petersen in 1968, was the fourth piece acquired for the permanent collection. It was on display in the newly built Woodland Memorial Hospital from 1968 – 1969.



Blue Vase with Flowers, Oil Canvas, 1964.
62"x48"



Carnation Picnic, Etching and Aquatint on Paper, 38/75, 1960s, 28"x35"

Petersen's last exhibition at the Davis Art Center was in 1981. In 1986 he wrote a letter to the Permanent Collection Committee offering to donate 75 limited edition lithographs of his drawing, *Carnation Picnic*. The lithographs were auctioned off to raise money for the current Davis Art Center building. *Carnation Picnic* and *Blue Vase with Flowers* both demonstrate Petersen's love of geometry as well as his obsession with picnics. He first became fascinated with picnics at UC Davis in the late 1950s while attending the annual Picnic Day festivities with fellow faculty members.

Petersen's works hang in over 30 museums worldwide including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Whitney Museum and the Philadelphia Museum. Large retrospectives of his works have been exhibited at numerous museums around the country.

Dan Schilling (b. 1946)



Yellow Submarine, Oil on Canvas,
1973. 29"x61"

Born in Munising, Michigan, Dan Schilling attended high school in Sacramento and earned degrees in architecture, fine arts, and physical geography at California State University, Sacramento. Schilling refers to some of his best work as Hypersurrealism, perhaps because his illogical dreamscapes are rendered with extreme clarity, photographic precision, and illusion of depth and volume. Schillings paintings go beyond the unconscious experiences of traditional Surrealism by creating fantasy worlds with objects and figures that are virtually tangible in space and time.

Yellow Submarine portrays a blazing yellow, sun-like orb submerged in the tranquil waters of a strange bay that is flanked by cat-mountains and a moon-walking astronaut. The painting has an exceptionally smooth surface that enhances its photorealist quality. Terry Lyon donated *Yellow Submarine* to the permanent collection in 1983.

Schilling lives and works in Incline Village, Nevada. His work is in numerous private collections and has been exhibited in museums and galleries throughout the United States as well as in Brazil and Europe.

Cornelia Schulz (b. 1936)

A Los Angeles native, Cornelia Schulz received her BFA and MFA from San Francisco Art Institute. In 1973, Schulz became the first woman teacher in the Art Department at UC Davis, where she later served twice as Chair of the Art Department. She was the ArtsBridge Director in 1999, and became a Professor Emeritus in 2002.

Schulz began studying art in the mid-1950s. In 1958, she attended the Los Angeles County Art Institute where she briefly studied under Richard Diebenkorn, and was influenced by the iconic Abstract Expressionists Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning.

In this untitled work, segmented color fields and layered dribbles of paint form a sophisticated composition in which negative space appears to be pushed into the foreground.

Throughout her teaching career, Schulz has exhibited her art at galleries and museums throughout the United States. She is currently represented by the Patricia Sweetow Gallery in San Francisco. Her most recent abstract paintings were on exhibit at the Project 4 Gallery in Washington, D.C. (2009-10).



Untitled
Mixed Media on Paper,
1977. 23"x 15"

Dan Shapiro (1920 – 1982)

A native New Yorker, Dan Shapiro received his BA in painting and design from the Cooper Union School of Art in 1941. After serving in the military, he returned to New York and attended Columbia University. During this time, Shapiro worked as a freelance designer, creating record album covers. He also became interested in printmaking, which dominated his work until the early 1960s. After teaching in the Art Department at Bennington College, Vermont for ten years, he returned to New York to lecture on printmaking at Columbia and New York Universities. Shapiro came to UC Davis in 1959, dividing his time between the Design and Art Departments. Shortly thereafter he began teaching art classes at the Davis Art Center. Despite becoming ill in 1973, Shapiro continued to be active in the Art Department until his death in 1982.

Much like the beat artists and jazz musicians of the 1960s, Shapiro described his work as "improvisational," and he explored art without rules or boundaries. This avant-garde approach is evident in *Flotation*, which combines elements of color field painting with arbitrary gestural forms. *Flotation* was donated anonymously to the permanent collection in 1982.

Shapiro's work has been exhibited at several museums including the San Francisco Museum of Art, the de Young Museum, and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Flotation, Acrylic and Mixed Media on plywood panel, 1962. 36"X48"

Daphne Stammer (b. 1941)



Still Life with Stripped Fabric, Oil on Canvas, n.d. 30"x40"

Born in New York, Daphne Stammer has made Rancho Cordova her home. She received her MA in Fine Arts from California State University, Sacramento in 1969. At the age of twenty-three, she began a 30 year career teaching art at Cordova High School. Stammer continues to paint in her Rancho Cordova studio and volunteers as a docent at the Crocker Art Museum, where she also teaches art classes to adults.

Stammer studied with Robert Else, Mel Ramos, and Jim Estey. She especially admires Wayne Thiebaud for his humility and talent. *Still Life with Stripped Fabric*, created in the early 1980s, is an early example of her exploration with color. She plays with light, using it to draw attention to the expressive lines formed by a vibrant color palette. Stammer feels that "color embodies a power which affects us all – a vibration of the human soul."⁸

Makepeace Tsao, whom Stammer knew from the Artworks Gallery in Fair Oaks, donated *Still Life with Stripped Fabric* to the collection in the 1980s.

James Suzuki (b. 1933)



Untitled, Mixed Media Collage, 1978.
14"x17"

James Suzuki was born in Yokohama, Japan, where he studied with Yoshio Markino. At age 19, Suzuki left Japan to study art in the United States. He attended the School of Fine Arts in Portland, Maine, followed by the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. During this time, he exhibited his works in New York galleries, particularly Graham Gallery. He taught at several universities including UC Davis in 1967-68. In 1972 he accepted a position in the Art Department at Sacramento State University and continued teaching there until 1999.

Suzuki's works during the 1950s were characterized as abstraction with influences from Impressionism. Critics praised the serene nature of his paintings, combined with the expressive Japanese influence.

Suzuki's untitled collage features a female figure seated in a landscape and playing a wind instrument as angular butterflies flutter about. Suzuki donated the collage to the Davis Art Center in 1978.

The Whitney Museum, Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, and the Toledo Museum of Art are among the many institutions housing Suzuki's works.

Wayne Thiebaud (b. 1920)

Raised in Long Beach, California, Wayne Thiebaud began drawing cartoons at a young age. In 1941, he joined the Air Force and was a cartoonist on the "Aleck" comic strip for Mather Air Force Base's newspaper, *Wing Tips*. After the war he worked on the comic strip "Ferbis," where he met artist Robert Mallory, who inspired him to paint seriously.

While attending CSU, Sacramento, where he received his BA and MA, he was given his first solo exhibition at the Crocker Art Museum in 1951. He taught at Sacramento City College and continued to exhibit, work on local theater designs, and produce art education films through his production company, Patrician Films. In 1960, he became assistant professor of art at UC Davis; he is now a Professor Emeritus.

Thiebaud studied many artistic styles, but came to favor the Bay Area Figurative brand of representational painting. He appreciated Diebenkorn's "...calculated effort to control and organize the compositions," which would later surface in Thiebaud's cityscapes.⁹ His artwork focused on post-war American abundance with subjects of store displays, trophies, and slot machines. By the early 1960s he was painting food and, although his techniques were different, Thiebaud is often credited as an influential figure in the "Pop Art" movement along with Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein.

By 1966, Thiebaud was painting cityscapes, first in rural Sacramento and later in San Francisco, and rarely included people. *Down 18th* is an excellent example of his famous San Francisco cityscapes series. Thiebaud was "fascinated by those plunging streets, where you get down to an intersection and all four streets take off in different directions...There was a sense of displacement [and] verticality. It's a very precarious state of tension."¹⁰



Thiebaud taught art classes at the Davis Art Center in the early 1960s. His prints were exhibited there in 1982, and *Down 18th* was donated anonymously to the permanent collection that same year. Thiebaud's works are in collections of many museums and he continues to exhibit throughout the world.

Down 18th, from Recent Etchings I. Color Etching/ Blue on Paper, 1979. Edition 13/50.

Makepeace Tsao (1918 - 2000)

Born in Shanghai, Makepeace Tsao began painting in traditional Chinese ink and brush at a young age. Tsao later studied acrylics, oils, photography, and sculpture. Although he was persuaded by his family to pursue a career in science, his love of art remained strong. Tsao immigrated to the United States in 1938 and, by 1944, he had earned his Ph.D. in Pharmacological Chemistry from the University of Michigan. In 1967, he accepted a teaching position at the UC Davis School of Medicine where he remained until his retirement in 1983 as Professor Emeritus.

Untitled (Koi Pond) demonstrates Tsao's talent as a painter. The oblique view frames the surface of the pond and focuses the viewer's attention on form, color, and the rippling effects of the water. In addition to being a skillful artist, Tsao was an enthusiastic art patron and collector who, with his wife Annette, owned two galleries, the Slant Gallery in Sacramento, which moved to Davis; and the Art Works Gallery in Fair Oaks. Through these galleries, the Tsao's showcased, promoted, and supported artists throughout the valley.

Makepeace Tsao volunteered countless hours to the Davis Art Center and was instrumental to the expansion of the permanent collection. In the 1980s, Tsao served on the board and on the permanent collection committee, organizing exhibits, soliciting works, and expanding the collection. He also was influential in the construction of the Davis Art Center building. In 1986, the Tsao's donated several works for auction, to support the construction of the Davis Art Center's new building and, in 1998, they donated hundreds of pieces to the permanent collection. The "Tsao Gallery" was named in Makepeace's honor, and exists to ensure a lasting relationship between artists and the community.



Untitled, Oil on Canvas, 1976,
31" x 25"

Paul Wonner (1920 - 2008)

Paul Wonner attended the California College of Arts and Crafts, receiving his BA in 1942. He went on to UC Berkeley where he received a second BA, an MA, and MLIS. At Berkeley, Paul Wonner shared a studio with his partner William Theophilus Brown. The studio was in the same building as that of Richard Diebenkorn and the three artists became close friends. Wonner embraced the Bay Area Figurative Movement and, by 1955, he had achieved success with a one-man show at the De Young Museum.

In essence, Wonner gave the Davis Art Center its first home. The Davis Art Center occupied Wonner's former studio on L Street for several years. Members often remarked that his paint was still visible on the floors. In the late 1950s, Wonner worked as a librarian at UC Davis. Between 1959-60, Wonner taught classes at the Davis Art Center before moving to Southern California, where he taught at the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles and UC Santa Barbara. Wonner also briefly taught at UC Davis in 1975-76.

At the request of former committee member Marinka Phaff, Wonner donated *Landscape* to the Davis Art Center in 1968. With its emphasis on fields of color, it is an exquisite example of Wonner's nearly abstract landscape paintings.

Wonner is renowned for his beautiful figurative paintings from the 1960s, which focused on the direct and expressive approach to painting from observation. He also is known for his still life paintings that take inspiration from the Dutch Baroque tradition to create tabletop scenes in a hard-edged, magical realism style that is particular to Wonner. His paintings are held in several museums including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Smithsonian Museum, and the Guggenheim in New York. Wonner continued to paint until his death in 2008.



Landscape,
Oil on Board,
1968-69.
9 1/4" x 11"

Footnotes

- ¹ Davis Art Center archives, "Summary of President's Permanent Collection Advisory Committee" (June 3, 1969).
- ² Ibid., "Permanent Collection Exhibition" (Davis Art Center Press Release: July 1969).
- ³ Caroline A Jones, *Bay Area Figurative Art: 1950-1965*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990.
- ⁴ *Robert Else: A Retrospective Exhibition*. (Sacramento: E.B. Crocker Art Gallery, 1977), 8
- ⁵ Kurt Fishback, *Art in Residence: West Coast Artists in Their Space* (Sacramento, CA: Solomon Dubnick Press; Portland: Blue Heron Publishing, 2000), 9
- ⁶ Kyra Gottesman, "Butte College's Coyote Gallery showcases Geoff Fricker's photography." *Chico Enterprise*, November 26, 2009, <http://www.allbusiness.com/humanities-social-science/photography/13464272-1.html>.
- ⁷ David Gilhooly, *David Gilhooly, Plexiglas*, <http://www.davidgilhooly.com/07plexi.htm>. November 2009.
- ⁸ Daphne Stammer, *Artist Statement*. <http://www.daphnestammer.com>. March 2010.
- ⁹ Karen Tsujimoto, *Wayne Thiebaud: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art* (Los Angeles: Perpetua Press, 1985) 32
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 125

A special thank you to Amber Hadley, Jena Petersen, volunteers and docents.

The Davis Art Center is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1959 "to promote the appreciation and execution of the visual and performing arts through classes, exhibits, performances and special events."

Membership with the Davis Art Center provides essential funding for our programs, exhibitions, outreach and special events. All memberships are tax deductible to the extent provided by law and are in effect for one year from the date of enrollment. To become a member through our Basic or Supporting membership levels, contact our office staff or sign up at our website.

Basic Membership Levels:

- Individual: \$30** \$10 discount on all classes, members-only online registration period, and class catalog mailed to your home.
- University Student/Senior: \$20** Same as individual.
- Family: \$50** Same as individual with privileges extended to all members of a household.
- Voting Member: \$75** Same as Family, participates and votes on pertinent issues, attendance at meetings may required.

Supporting Membership Levels: The generosity of supporting members helps sustain the vitality of Art Center programs for current and future generations of students, artists, performers and arts supporters. Family membership privileges are included at each level.

- Supporter: \$125** Same as Family, plus \$25 gift certificate, recognition in class catalog and on website.
- Patron: \$250** Same as Supporter, plus Art Center T-shirt, personal invitation to annual donor recognition event, gallery receptions, and other special events.
- Benefactor: \$500** Same as Patron, plus early entrance at first day of Holiday Sale.
- Center Circle: \$1000** Same as Benefactor, plus invitation to annual gathering with Executive Director and Artist.

MAKE A DONATION: Your tax-deductible donation of any amount will help us continue to provide opportunities for create expression for all ages.

BE A VOLUNTEER: The Davis Art Center staff relies on volunteers to help with many small and large tasks, from distributing course catalogs and data entry to event supervision and arts outreach. For more information, or to sign-up to be on our volunteer list, contact our office.

Davis Art Center

Celebrating 50 Years in the Community



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