

EXHIBITION

MFA

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JANUARY 22 - FEBRUARY 22, 1997

UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY  
STALLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT STONY BROOK

## INTRODUCTION

This exhibition is the ninth in what is now a tradition of shows by students graduating from the Stony Brook Art Department's Master of Fine Arts Program. Only in its eleventh year, the program has already attracted top students from across the country and around the world. Of course, the location near the excitement of New York City is one factor in this early success. That proximity (and a direct train connection), without the daily pressures of study in the City, make Long Island's North Shore the best of all geographical worlds for artists. Our outstanding, internationally-known faculty has undoubtedly been attracted by similar features, as well as by the opportunity to teach highly qualified and motivated advanced students. Any graduate program is a partnership of professionals – some younger and less experienced who have come to learn, and others, older and more practiced, who engage them in a dialogue from which all emerge strengthened.

Any MFA curriculum combines rigor with freedom, but Stony Brook's is unique in several ways. First, it is connected with the Art Department's slightly older and also unique program in the history of art, theory and criticism. Nowhere else are advanced studio and art history and criticism students able to benefit from each others' courses and ideas. Second, proximity to New York City makes it possible for our students to do internships in practically any area of the art world and to immerse themselves in it during their course of study. Finally, Stony Brook's MFA offers opportunities for students themselves to be teachers. That experience requires a level of articulateness and sharing that can only sharpen communicative skills which by definition underlie the artistic enterprise.

The students in this year's exhibit exemplify the range and quality of the Stony Brook MFA program. They are from different backgrounds and different parts of the country. Their artistic concerns differ just as widely. They have succeeded in a rigorous program, yet each presents a clear direction and a strong personal consistency and presence. It is almost hard to imagine that they all pursued the same course of study. Yet the point is precisely that Stony Brook's MFA can foster and strengthen remarkably diverse and distinct individuals. Within its framework, students are able to grow to a level of maturity, and their work reaches toward a quality that poises them on the threshold of the professional art world. It is here that they develop the coherence and resilience so necessary to compete in that world, qualities they build upon the talent and interests that are their own. The purpose of an MFA program is thus no better embodied than by the first success an exhibition such as this one reveals. For where else can an ambitious young artist be both challenged by demanding teachers, discussion, and projects, and yet obtain the extended period (two to three

years) for the intellectual concentration and protracted artistic effort necessary to pursue one's own artistic path effectively? Thus, while congratulating our students who are graduating, we may also take pride in Stony Brook's contribution. The success of that partnership can be witnessed in this year's show. May it prosper!

*James Rubin  
Chairman  
Department of Art*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

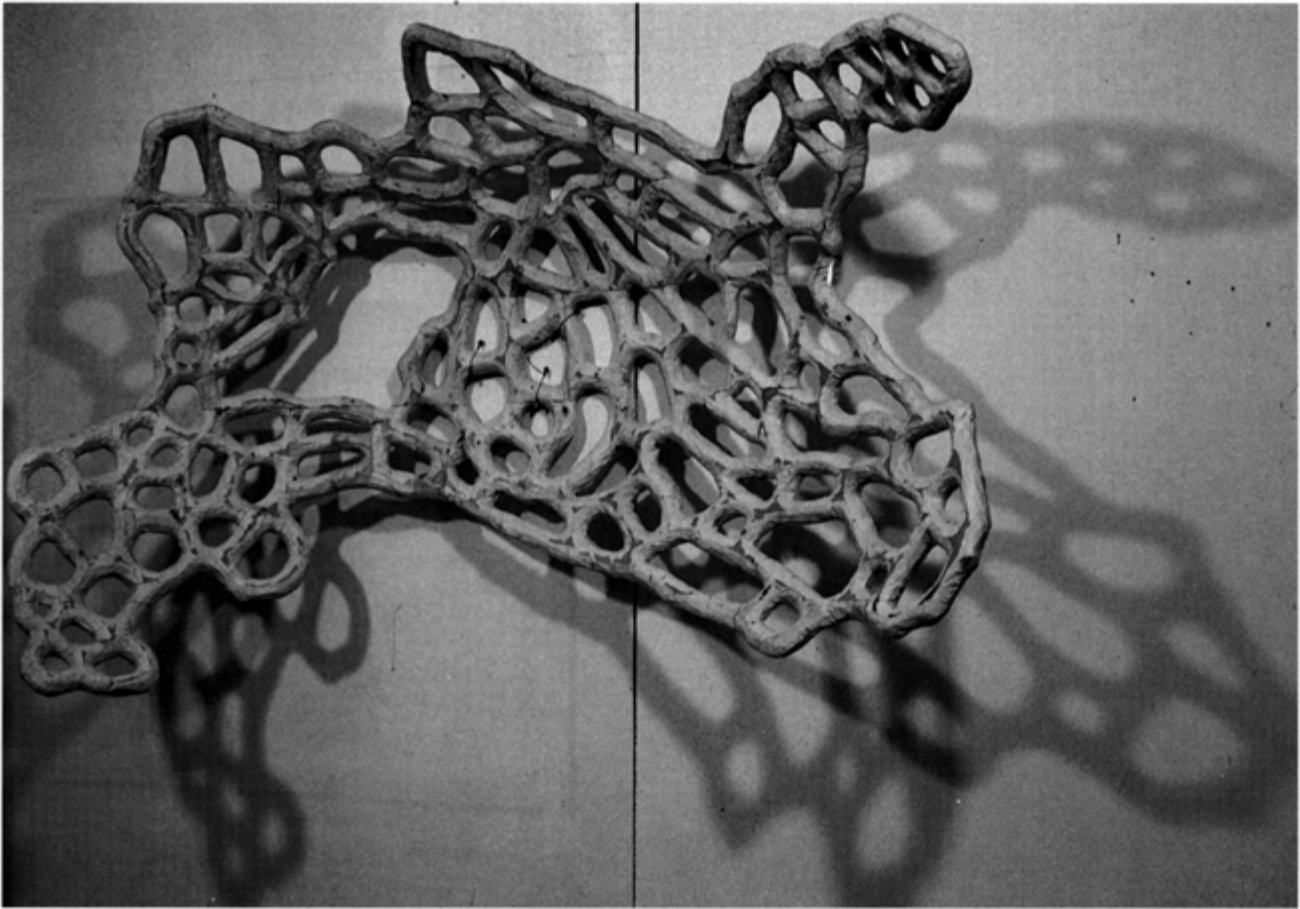
I wish to thank Professor James Rubin, Chairman of the Department of Art, and Professor Michele Bogart, Director of Graduate Studies, for their assistance with this exhibition.

Special thanks are also extended to members of the Staller Center for the Arts staff: Mei Huang, Jamie Lin, and Mimi Ng, Gallery Assistants; Rosa Maria Eisler, Allyson Hoelzl, Hideki Kawahara, Lauren Poulos, and Yumiko Saito, Gallery Interns; Patrick Kelly, Production Manager, Liz Silver, Technical Director, and the Technical Crew, Staller Center, for exhibition lighting; and Mary Balduf, Gallery Secretary.

Most of all, I wish to thank Greg Bryson, Kelley Dean, Jason Nickel, and William Oberst for an inspiring MFA exhibition.

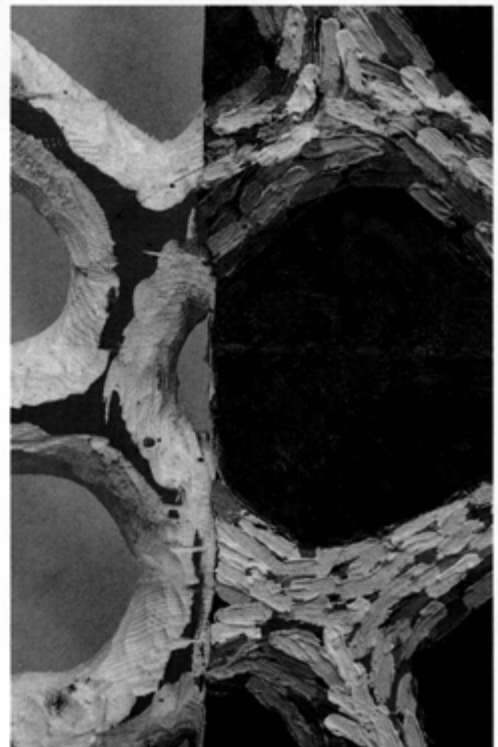
*Rhonda Cooper  
Gallery Director*

*Cover design: Jason Nickel and William Oberst*



(above) **Shriving Husk, Flying Shadows**, 1996, wood, 48 x 71 x 25"  
(right) **Stretching**, 1996, wood, oil with alkyd and wax, 84 x 73" (detail)

My artwork will always be heavily influenced by my love of the natural world. The recent work explores organic forms and textures growing, decaying, existing within geometric structures. The juxtapositions of painting and sculpture allude to process, perception, and modes of representation. They are symbolic of my search for a harmony between wilderness and the modern world.





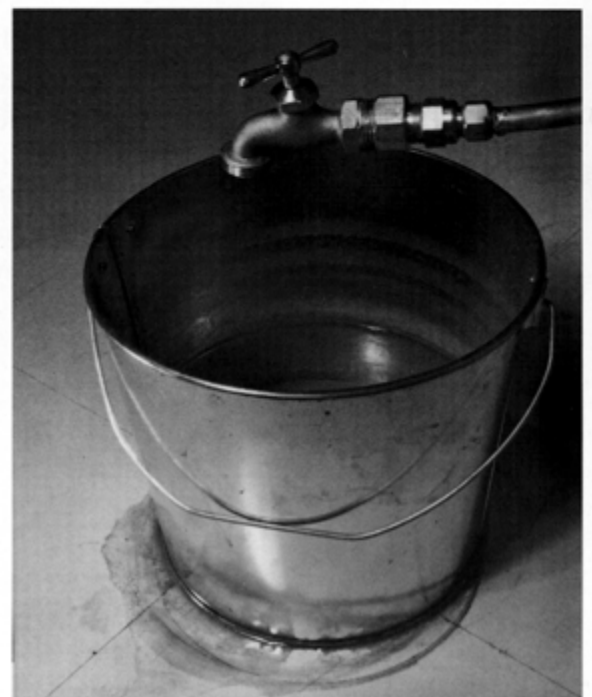


**Pillow Column**, 1996  
Mixed media, 7' high

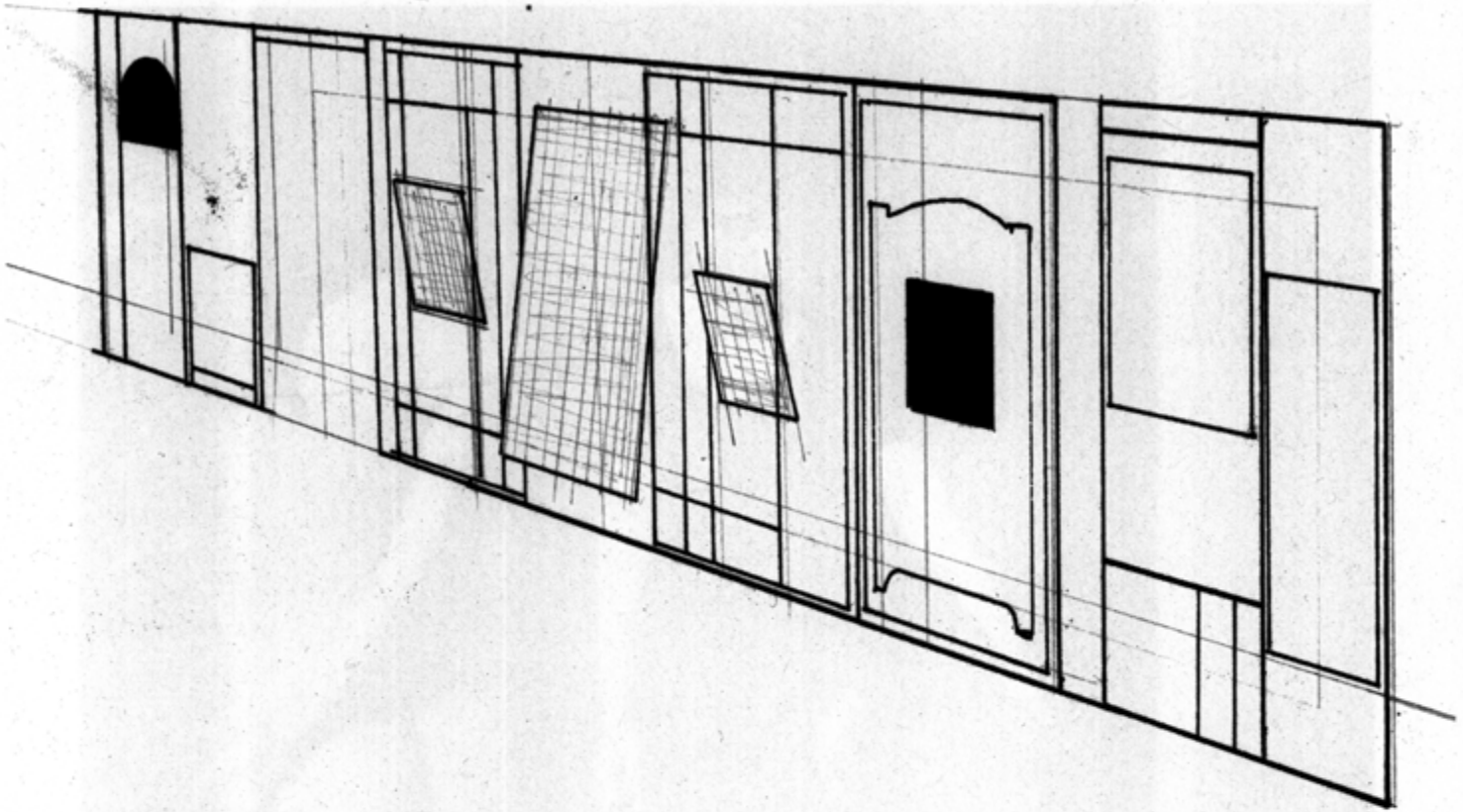
We cannot contend with objects around us, only relate to them. Their presence marks our presence. Through this idea, I can see a relation between the design of functional objects to the human body. The body is what we know best and is the easiest tool of communication.

There is a quality of perceiving an object when our vision takes us out of our physical bodies and into the object of our perception. We understand its reality by becoming it, and it in turn, temporarily becomes our "new body."

Using this metaphoric quality, my sculpture literally constructs this process. The objects themselves have particular meaning, and this series focuses on those that relate to comfort, such as pillows, beds, sinks, running water, windows, doors, full containers, and light.



**Pillow Column**  
(detail)



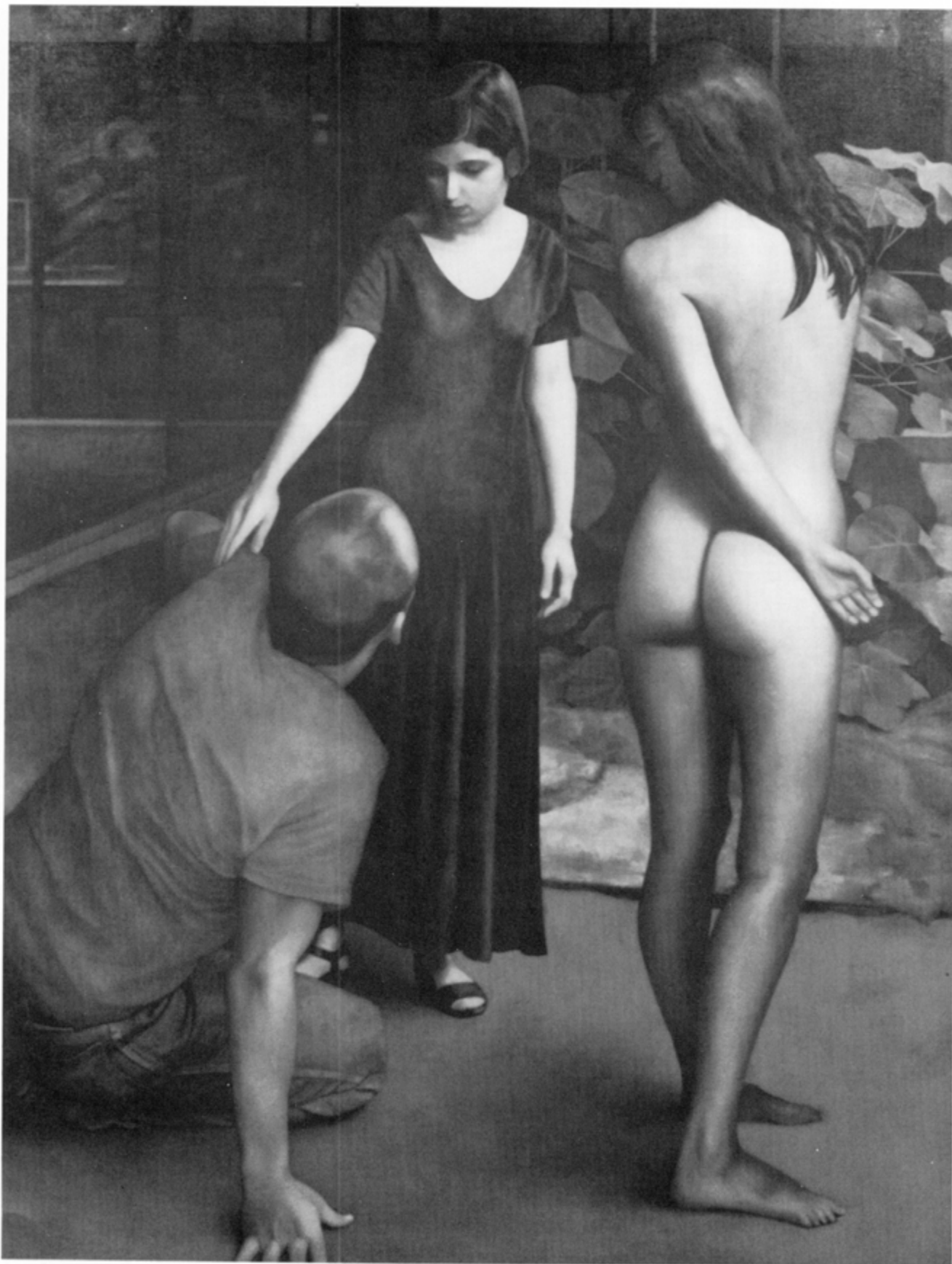
Preliminary drawing for Temple Wall, 1996

As an artist, I am concerned with the skeleton of things, the armature of the universe. I see my work as being a series of experiments with form, these forms being symbolic of something inexplicable and outside of mundane experience.

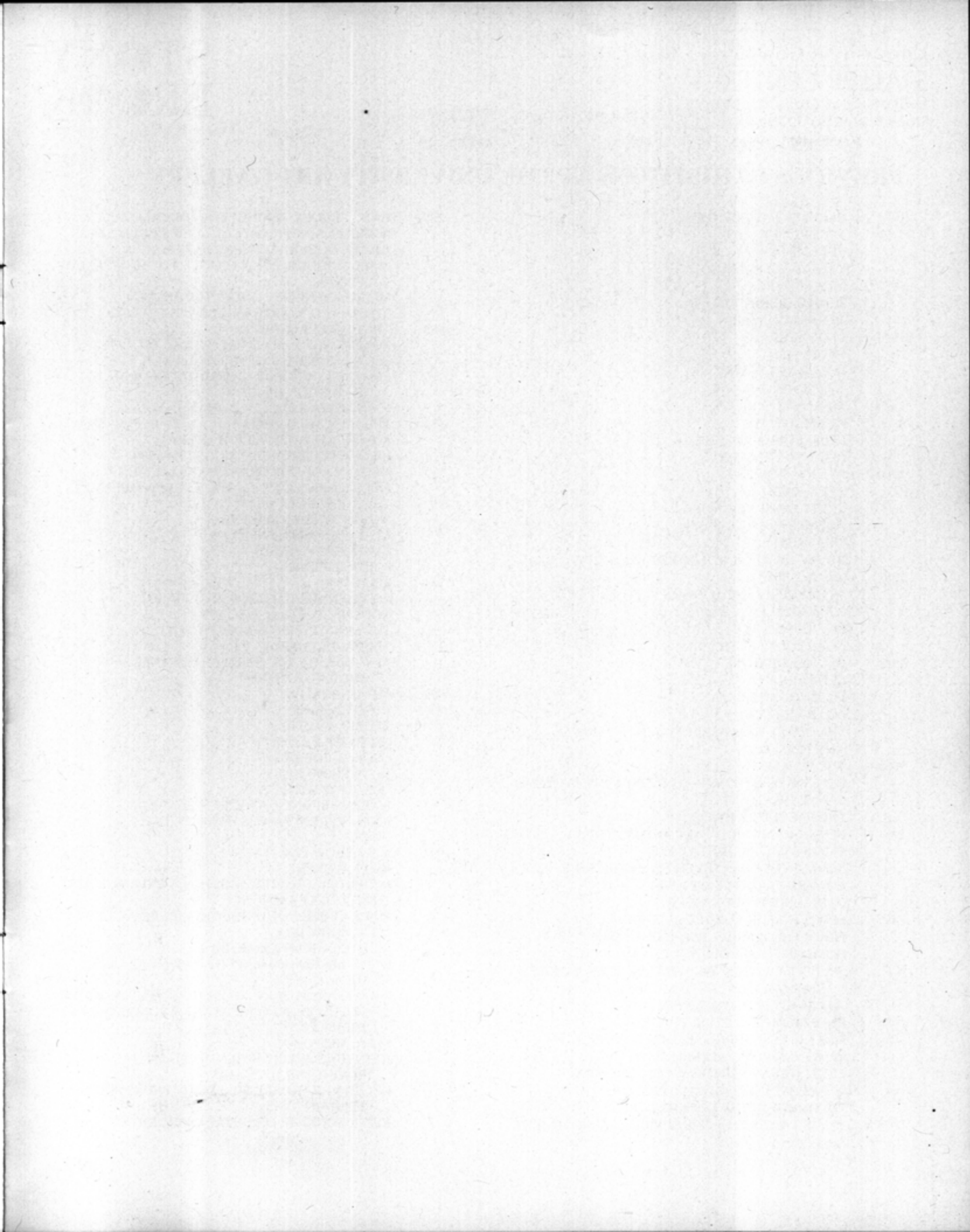
“Application. He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself only.

Conclusion. If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic character the Philosophic and Experimental would soon be at the ratio of all things, and stand still unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again.”

*W. Blake*



*Three Figures*, 1996  
Oil on linen, 54" x 72"





## PREVIOUS EXHIBITIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1975 | FACULTY EXHIBITION   | 1987 | HANS BREDER: ARCHETYPAL DIAGRAMS<br>MICHAEL SINGER: RITUAL SERIES RETELLINGS<br>JUDITH DOLNICK/ROBERT NATKIN<br>MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE: THE HUMANITARIAN VISION<br>MEL ALEXENBERG: COMPUTER ANGELS<br>STEINA AND WOODY VASULKA: THE WEST   |
| 1976 | MICHELE STUART<br>RECENT DRAWINGS<br>SALVATORE ROMANO  | 1988 | THE FACULTY SHOW '88<br>ROBERT WHITE: SELECTED WORKS 1947-1988<br>LEE KRASNER: PAINTINGS 1956-1984<br>EDGAR BUONAGURIO: PERMUTATION AND EVOLUTION 1974-1988   |
| 1977 | MEL PEKARSKY<br>JUDITH BERNSTEIN<br>HERBERT BAYER  | 1989 | JOAN SNYDER COLLECTS JOAN SNYDER<br>THE M.F.A. SHOW '89<br>ROBERT KUSHNER: SILENT OPERAS<br>HERMAN CHERRY: PAINTINGS 1984-1989<br>HAITIAN ART: THE GRAHAM COLLECTION<br>FIBER EXPLORATIONS: NEW WORK IN FIBER ART   |
| 1978 | LEON GOLUB<br>JANET FISH<br>ROSEMARY MAYER<br>THE SISTER CHAPEL  | 1990 | THE M.F.A. SHOW '90<br>PRINTS BY PRINTMAKERS<br>KIT-YIN SNYDER: ENRICO IV<br>FANTASTIC VOYAGES<br>POETIC LICENSE  |
| 1979 | SHIRLEY GORELICK<br>ALAN SONFIST<br>HOWARDENA PINDELL<br>ROY LICHTENSTEIN  | 1991 | M.F.A. 1991<br>FREDERIC AMAT and ROBERTO JUAREZ<br>ADOLPH GOTTLIEB: EPIC ART<br>THE MONOTYPES OF ADOLPH GOTTLIEB<br>THE FACULTY SHOW '91<br>NEW TRADITIONS: THIRTEEN HISPANIC PHOTOGRAPHERS   |
| 1980 | BENNY ANDREWS<br>ALEX KATZ<br>EIGHT FROM NEW YORK<br>ARTISTS FROM QUEENS<br>OTTO PIENE<br>STONY BROOK II, THE STUDIO FACULTY   | 1992 | M.F.A. SHOW 1992<br>JULIUS TOBIAS<br>REUBEN KADISH<br>CITY VIEWS<br>GEORGE KORAS<br>M.F.A. SHOW 1993<br>CONCEPTS WITH NEON<br>WARREN BRANDT: A RETROSPECTIVE<br>JOHN FERREN: IMAGES FROM NATURE<br>WOOD   |
| 1981 | ALICE NEEL<br>55 MERCER: 10 SCULPTORS<br>JOHN LITTLE<br>IRA JOEL HABER<br>LEON POLK SMITH  | 1993 | M.F.A. SHOW 1994<br>PAPER WORKS<br>ROBERT RICHENBURG: ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST<br>THE FACULTY SHOW '94<br>MAURA SHEEHAN: DORA: BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY<br>M.F.A. SHOW 1995<br>EIGHTEEN SUFFOLK ARTISTS<br>PAT HAMMERMAN and BURT HASEN<br><i>art AND technology</i><br>PRIVATE ART/PUBLIC ART: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF CITIBANK AND JOHNSON & JOHNSON |
| 1982 | FOUR SCULPTORS<br>CECIL ABISH<br>JACK YOUNGERMAN<br>ALAN SHIELDS<br>THE STONY BROOK ALUMNI INVITATIONAL<br>ANN McCOY   | 1994 | M.F.A. SHOW 1996<br>JOHN HULTBERG, VINCENT PEPI, and EDVINS STRAUTMANIS<br>ROGER ARRANDALE WILLIAMS: THE AMERICAN TERRAIN<br>KEITH SONNIER: ORIENTAL-OCCIDENTAL   |
| 1983 | THE WAR SHOW<br>CERAMIC DIRECTIONS: A CONTEMPORARY OVERVIEW<br>CINDY SHERMAN<br>THE FACULTY SHOW   |      |   |
| 1984 | BERNARD APTEKAR: ART AND POLITICS<br>ERIC STALLER: LIGHT YEARS<br>NORMAN BLUHM: SEVEN FROM THE SEVENTIES<br>EDWARD COUNTEY 1921-1984<br>CARL ANDRE: SCULPTURE  |      |   |
| 1985 | LEWIS HINE IN EUROPE: 1918-1919<br>FRANCESC TORRES: PATHS OF GLORY<br>HOMAGE TO BOLOTOWSKY: 1935-1981<br>FREEDOM WITHIN: PAINTING BY JUAN SANCHEZ/<br>INSTALLATION BY ALFREDO JAAR<br>ABSTRACT PAINTINGS REDEFINED                             |      |   |
| 1986 | KLEEGER: METAL SCULPTURE<br>TOBY BUONAGURIO: SELECTED WORKS<br>YANG YAN-PING and ZENG SHAN-QING<br>EIGHT URBAN PAINTERS: CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS OF THE EAST VILLAGE<br>TV: THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS<br>WOMEN ARTISTS OF THE SURREALIST MOVEMENT |      |   |