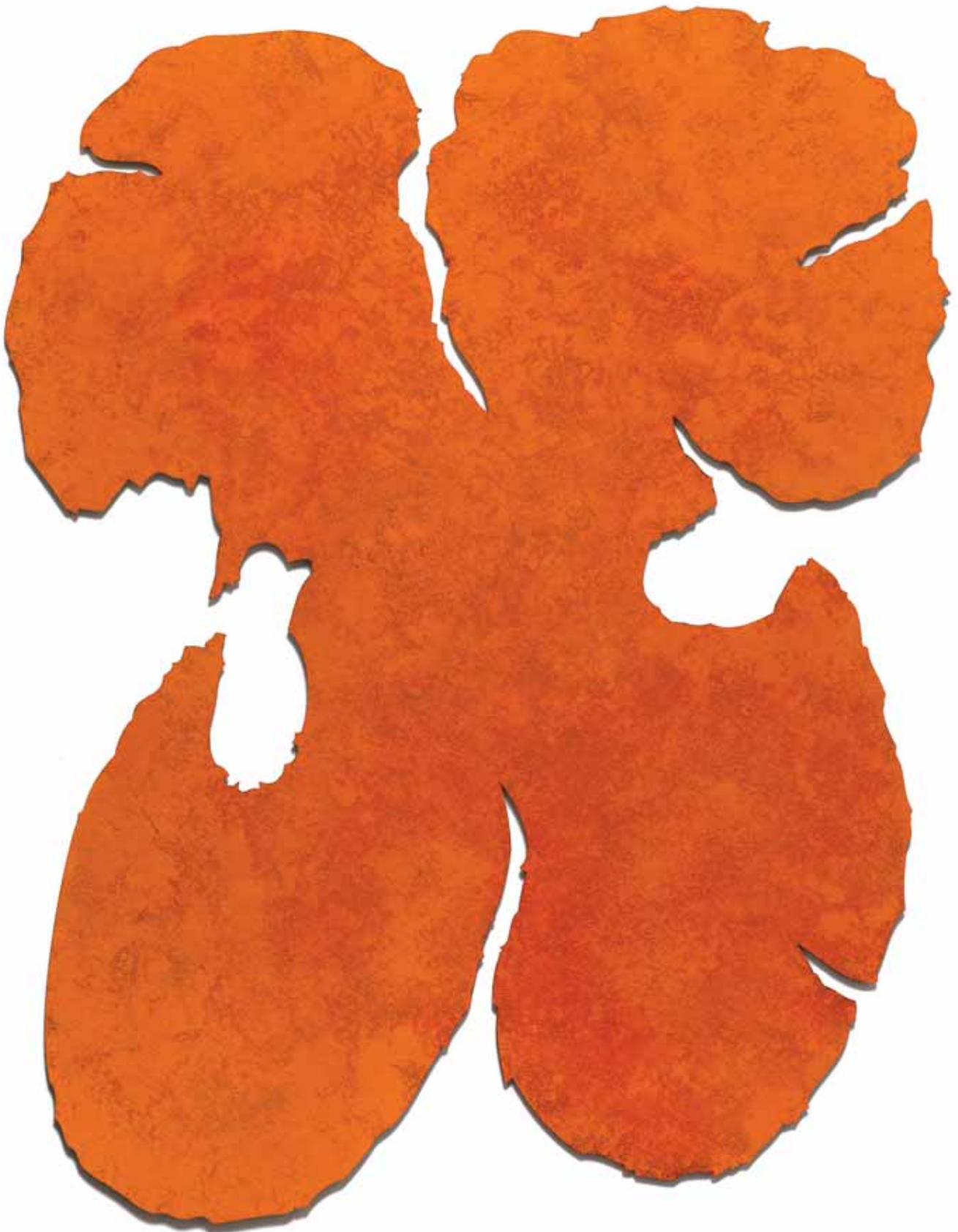


SCOTT REEDS









Widener Gallery

SCOTT REEDS

DUAL ACTION

Paintings and Prints

February 4 – March 7, 2010
Widener Gallery • Department of Fine Arts • Trinity College

DUAL ACTION

essay by Anney Bonney



studio

In a storefront studio in Brooklyn, Scott Reeds ardently coaxes images onto canvas, metal and paper. His idiomorphic figures playfully defy non-figuration and speak in idioms of renewed abstraction.

The title, “Dual Action: Painting and Prints” refers to Reeds’ ongoing collaboration between drawing, painting, sculpture and print-making. Within each piece he renegotiates composed and improvised techniques. The recombinant old master traditions become innovative and oddly subversive. From his dual process singular images emerge.

Take for instance *Canopy* (intaglio, 60 in. x 40 in., 2009), a print that began as a modest sketch, bluntly penciled in a small notebook. Rather than transferring the image onto the usual rectangular etching plate, he made the plate itself the shape of the drawing. A laser then cut the aluminum sheet according to the rescaled digital file.

Reeds etched the contoured plate in corrosive salt, inked it and rubbed it with oil paint – a procedure as tactile and sculptural as it is painterly. Multiple runs under the immense pressure of his printing press embedded the image in the oversized watercolor paper he prefers. It is preserved in a one-of-a-kind intaglio, although the medium was invented for reproduction.

Reeds’ art relies on subtle contradictions. His isolated iconic figures struggle against the

surface that made them, searching for a chance intersection between form and articulation. The etymology of “figure” may provide contextual clues. *Figura* extends equally to reality and its shadow, to body and spirit. As a container, *figura* can mean both the stand alone outline and the area within it. *Golden Gate* (intaglio, 60 in. x 40 in., 2009) deftly traces just such a borderline along its fiery edges. Interior and exterior space project equal presence while figure and ground dissolve to reanimate one another.

Sometimes Reeds’ figures unintentionally stray towards the concrete. *Canopy*’s plate settled on the paper like an imaginary island seen from an aerial perspective. Surrounded by the expanse of a white paper sea, the image reaches out with its curving arms to embrace but never to enclose the emptiness. The modulation of its saturated green prompts an inadvertent topography. Mountains, valleys, shorelines and shaded foliage are just the most literal of its lyrical associations.

Reeds did not work from a drawing or paint with a brush when he made *Thermostat* (oil painting on linen, 60 in. x 48 in., 2009). He applied titanium white with a joint knife, directing his strokes outward from the center of the canvas. The broad blade of the knife (normally used for smooth mudding of dry-wall compound), left flat skims of paint in its wake, like layers of riverbed silt in tidal pools. When dried, the white pigment highlighted the irregularities of the surface. Reeds let the



etching press



graphite on paper

natural terminations of his strokes define the form. He then rubbed monochromatic oil paint over the newly revealed shape as he would an etching plate.

Color deposited in recessed veins is deepest, while higher plateaus, essentially burnished, remain the more luminous interior. For Reeds, process dictates form and form seems to select its own hue.

What prescribed *Thermostat's* tawny, copper sheen? Returning to possible origins, color may have come from *calor*, meaning heat, specifically the sun and its light according to Isidore of Seville, the 7th century saint and author of "*Etymologiae*." The bond between color, temperature and self-regulation entered the painting's name as a contemporary metaphor.

Unlike the figures in the prints that suggest geological or calligraphic ciphers, *Thermostat's* image invokes an animal presence now absent but signified in a totemic shield. Contemplate the weathered radiance of its eerie green glow turning to gold. What is at stake in this composition? The awkwardly elegant form is placed so close to its edge. Just a few inches larger in all directions and this shape would overtake its orange ground and disappear into a pure field of energy.

Instead the shape hovers at the canvas boundary and resembles a tortoise shell whose ancient patterns have worn away. It conveys

at once the fragile and enduring nature of its referent and its medium. Painting is a body revealed as a skin that becomes a shell. Holding the tension between the threshold of form and formlessness belies this painting's conceptual weight.

Over the years Reeds' work has evolved intuitively in response to making paintings and prints in the same studio. His image forms have migrated between media but retained their source codes, something like painterly DNA. His recent pigmented plates neatly converge painting, printmaking and sculpture.

Reeds used to retire his plates after printing them. Lately, however, he has started rewarding certain laser-cut shapes with an afterlife. For *Empire* (pigmented plate, 35 in. x 24 in., 2010) Reeds dusted a plate with two closely related red hues. Alizarin crimson tempers the warmth of cadmium. They fuse into a charged plane of pulsating color. Encased under glass in a simple frame, the transfigured plate then becomes what art historian George Kubler might have called "a prime object" of art, meaning it is as irreducible as a prime number.

This is the simultaneous reduction and exaltation of image and process at the heart of Reeds' sensuous, minimal aesthetic.



laser cut plate

Michael Taussig, *What Color is the Sacred?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 5.

PAINTINGS

Rescue Orange
oil on linen
18" × 16"

7.



Nugget
oil on linen
18" × 16"



Thermostat
oil on panel
60" x 48"

II.



Azo
oil on linen
46" x 42"



Citron
oil on panel
38" × 36"



Points
oil on panel
60" × 48"





PRINTS

Golden Gate
intaglio
on 60" × 40" paper



Canopy
intaglio
on 60" × 40" paper



Winter Garden
intaglio
on 60" × 40" paper





PIGMENTED PLATES



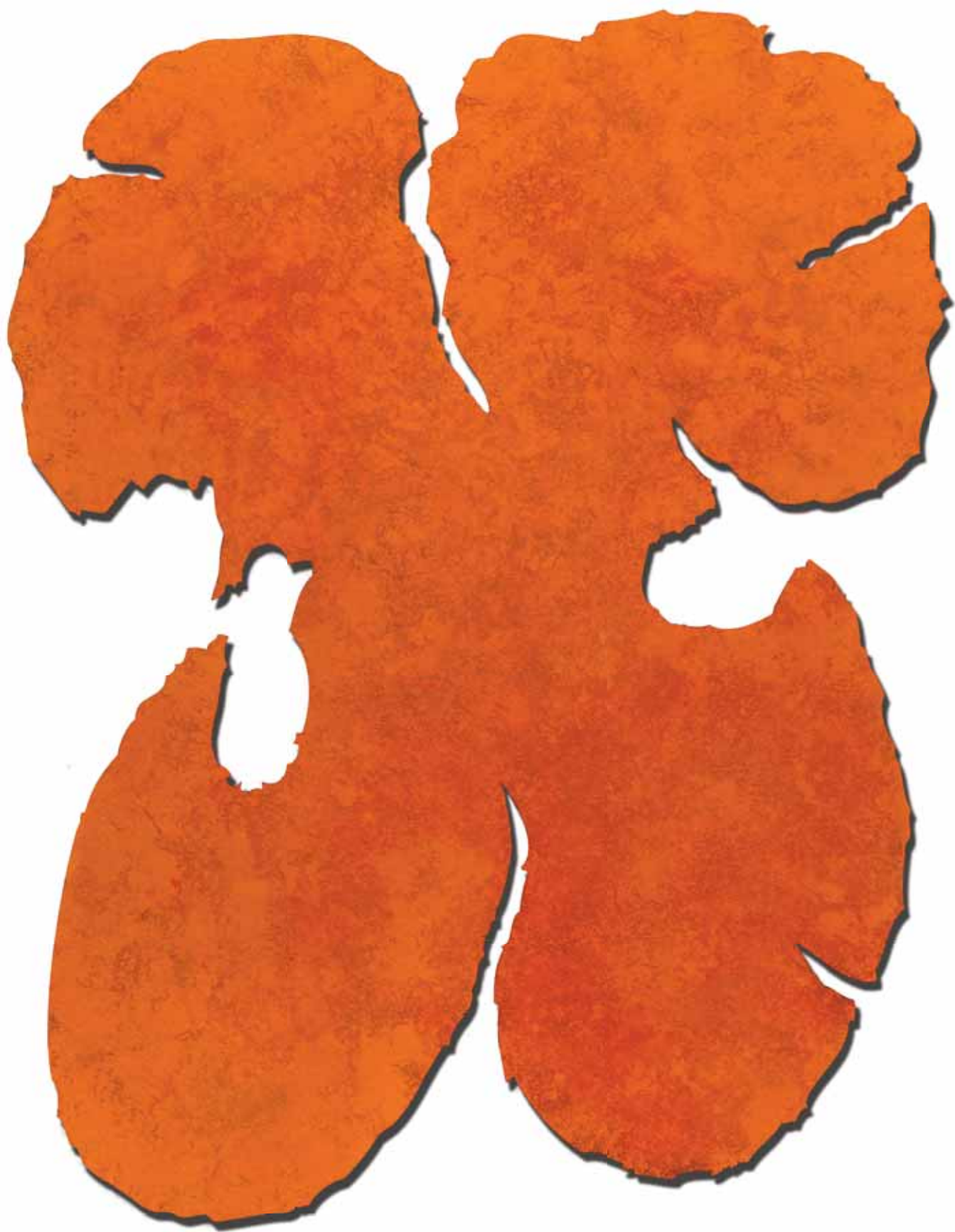
Empire
dry pigment on aluminum
34" × 24"



Village Green
dry pigment on aluminum
37" × 24"



Poppy
dry pigment on aluminum
37" × 25"



SCOTT REEDS

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Education

Yale School of Art, MFA Printmaking, 1979

University of California at Berkeley, BFA, Honors Program in Sculpture, 1976

Teaching

2005-11 Visiting Professor, Printmaking, Trinity College, Hartford, CT.

2003-08 Adjunct and Full Time Visiting Professor, Drawing and Painting,
Hampshire College, Amherst, MA.

2001 Visiting Lecturer, Printmaking, Colby College, Waterville, ME.

2000-01 Visiting Professor, Printmaking, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

1999 Visiting Lecturer, Printmaking, Santa Monica College, CA.

1997 Printmaking Instructor, Monotype Workshop, "All About Frank"
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN.

1995-96 Visiting Artist, Printmaking, Adelphi University, Long Island, NY.

1995 Visiting Lecturer, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA.

1992 Visiting Lecturer, Printmaking, Amherst College, Amherst, MA.

1991 Visiting Lecturer, Printmaking, Hartwick College, Oneonta, NY.

1981-83 Printmaking Instructor, Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, CA.

Awards

New York Foundation for the Arts, Individual Artist, Printmaking, 1991

NEA Visual Artist Fellowship, Printmaking, 1983

Ford Foundation Special Projects Grant, Yale University, 1979

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2010 Melville House, Brooklyn, *Primary Objects*.

2010 Trinity College, Widener Gallery, Hartford, CT. *Dual Action*.

2004 Kristen Frederickson Contemporary Art, NYC, *Plate to Print*.

2002 Kristen Frederickson Contemporary Art, NYC, *Saw Blade Series*.

2000 Dartmouth College, Lower Jewitt Corridor, Hanover, NH, *Prints*.

1996 Adelphi University Manhattan Center and Garden City, Galleries, NY.

1984 Santa Monica College Art Gallery, Santa Monica, CA.

1983 Kirk De Gooyer Gallery, Los Angeles, CA.

1982 Kirk De Gooyer Gallery, Los Angeles, CA.

Selected Group Exhibitions

2009 *Fully Saturated* Hampshire College Art Gallery, Amherst, MA.

2003 *17th National Exhibition* Armory Center for the Arts,
Pasadena, CA. Curated by Dr. Kevin Salatino, LACMA.

2001 *New Directions 01* Barrrrett Art Center, Poughkeepsie, curated by Charlotta Kotic.

Selected Group Exhibitions Cont.

- 2001 *Drawing as Abstraction* Whittier College, Whittier, CA.
- 2001 *Drawing an Intimate Dialogue* Soil Gallery, Seattle, WA.
- 2001 *45th National Print Exhibition* Hunterdon Museum, Clinton, NJ.
- 1997 *Art in the Metroplex* TCU, Fort Worth, Texas juried by Roland Reiss
John L. Clardy Memorial Award.
- 1997 *Print Work 97* Barrett Art Center, curated by Roberta Waddell.
- 1996 *The lyrical, the expressionist and the poetic* Denise Bibro Fine Art, NYC.
- 1994 *ab strak'shen* William Turner Gallery, Venice, CA.
- 1993 *Signs of Life* The Police Building, NYC.
- 1989 *Currents in Abstraction* Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY.
- 1987 *Major Marks* Traveling exhibition; Printmaking Council of New Jersey
Sommerville, AT&T Hopewell, Altos de Chavon, Dominican Republic.
- 1986 *Peter Plagens, Kim Abeles, Scott Reeds* OCCA, Santa Ana, CA.
- 1986 *The Peterdi Years* Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT.
- 1984 *Eighth Annual Los Angeles Printmaking Society National*
Frederick S. Wright Art Gallery, UCLA.
- 1983 *Printed Images* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV.
- 1983 *Color and Constructivism* Downey Museum of Art, Downey, CA.
- 1982 *All Media 82* Laguna Museum of Art, Laguna Beach, CA.
- 1982 *Unique Prints* Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA.
- 1981 *Four Downtown Artists* LACE Gallery, Los Angeles, CA.
- 1981 *Philadelphia Print Club 56th Annual* Philadelphia, PA.
- 1980 *Boston Printmakers* De Cordova Museum, Boston, MA.
- 1979 *21st National Print Show* Brooklyn Museum, NY.
- 1978 *Works on Paper* The Victorian College of Art, Melbourne, Australia.

Selected Bibliography

- 2003 Salitino, Kevin, "17th National Exhibition" LAPS, Armory Center for the Arts
- 2000 Woodard, Josef, "A Spot in the Mind at I-5 Gallery" Artweek, March, p.21
- 1996 Pagel, David, "Contemplative" Los Angeles Times, August 22, p. F12
- 1988 Moss, Karen, "LACE: 10 Years Documented" LACE Publications p.36
- 1984 Morrison, Phil, Art Section, Santa Monica Evening Outlook, Nov. p.16
- 1983 Wilson, William, Exhibition Review, Los Angeles Times, Nov. 18, View p.12
- 1982 Pincus, Robert, "Galleries" Los Angeles Times, June 4, IV, p.4
- 1978 Baro, Gene, "21st National" Brooklyn Museum, pp.133-134

Collections

New York Public Library - Library of Congress, Washington D.C. - Brooklyn Museum
Yale University Art Gallery - NYU Hospital- Laguna Museum of Art -
Chapman University, Santa Ana, CA. - Los Angeles Redevelopment Agency





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