

THE PAINTINGS OF GLENN A. RIDLER

Candidate: Glenn A. Ridler

A Project

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

California College of Arts and Crafts

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Fine Arts

Date: May 4, 1961

Exhibition Center

INTRODUCTION

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Clayton P. Smith
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John Schuman

Robert Bechtel

Elah H. Hays

Paul Schmidt
Director, Graduate Division

Date May 4, 1967

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of my project I think my painting has matured considerably. I do not use the word "changed" because it could mean that the paintings are now based upon different philosophical intentions or feelings. This is not the case. I think that having done more painting my intentions are now clearer. In my project description, I said I was interested in creating painting which brought poetic reactions to common occurrences. That is, I was trying to combine common objects in a way which would transform them into a state of speculative poetic expression. If an object or occurrence is common it seems to possess a logic by which we approach it. When this logic is disrupted or altered an entirely different reaction or set of feelings can be stirred based upon the disruption of the seemingly thorough, but very set preconceived logic of the happening. Looking back to my previous painting, it is apparent that I relied heavily on seeing the happening or object from unusual view points and that the logic of the painting did not differ radically from the logic of the event seen from this angle.

In the paintings which constitute my project the logic of the painting is of much more importance than the

"real life" event from which they have their basis. My canvases are now nearly square and what occurs on its surface relates to the square shape. Before, in order to relate the subject both in drawing and feeling to the shape of the canvas, I changed the shape of the canvas. In leaving the canvas square I have paid more attention to what goes on it and where it goes. The subject is still the common scene but are now landscapes instead of "in door" events and the configurations are highly abstracted both in shape and color. I found that the actual way the subject appeared to the eye was often too confusing to be recognized and also basically irrelevant to what was intended.

The abstraction of the objects which comprise the events of these landscapes is also an important growth in that it points directly to the shape of the objects which is often just as important to the meaning as the identity of the object. Such is true of the clouds or trees in all of these paintings which function both as images and as important plastic elements integral to the structural basis of the painting. The coming together of meaningful images with the form or structure of the paintings has been my greatest improvement.

I believe that the structure of the painting is of

great importance in setting the basic tone and intentions, as is true in completely abstract or non-objective works, but when the structure can be supported by equally important images the tone of the painting is echoed throughout.

I sometimes begin painting by structuring the space of a given canvas or drawing without any concern for what the drawing will be despite the fact that they always turn out to be recognizable.

Although the images contained in these paintings are particularly recognizable and direct in their relationship to each other and to their identity, the configurations of the images is probably best described as ambiguous, as is the space which they occupy. I do not use the word ambiguous to describe an optical shifting, but a shifting from pure shape to the shape's identity as an object. Yet, by using various perspectives and color the positions of the images do change and the viewer is faced with a variety of possible spacial view points, but primarily there is a shift of familiar experience into new forms. These paintings also differ from my previous painting in that they are much more contemplative because of the intensiveness of these ambiguities and the various feelings produced. Whereas, previously once the unusual viewpoint was discovered and the painting "read" there

seemed to be not as much left to re-examine. They seemed to provide a frustration almost without really establishing some sort of reasoning which could bring the view back to the normal logic to begin again. I feel able to speak of these landscapes generally, because they seem highly related to each other, both in method or style and in substance.

As far as what these paintings mean as a statement, I will not get specific because the paintings are not specific nor are they intended to be direct communications of an idea. They are poetic expressions of my feelings. In words, I can say I am concerned with man's relationship to nature, to the home, to what is our rapidly changing culture, and to what illusion and what is real. Painting for me is a means to deal with my problems and concerns, or better perhaps my psychic energies in visual terms where I can at least hope to see them clearly and to understand them. Painting is then for me problematic; a means to talk to myself. If they talk to others it is because I represent others. They are models or prototypes of common problems. As I have said, I want my painting to be direct and clear. I want the configuration of a house to be regarded as a house but not a specific house, but an image

which clearly states the feelings I have for a house in relationship to feelings I have for freedom, adventure, the future and to nature. As a result the drawing of the configurations must be reduced to a minimum of essentials which register "house" in my mind but still leave me with room to relate it to similarly reduced road, sky or group of trees.

I feel compelled to mention here also, a concern I have in my painting of which I have conscious awareness and which might be clarifying. That is, I try to keep my paintings flat or constantly to make reference in the painting to the flatness of a painting. I regard the flatness of a surface as a kind of grammar which should not be broken. I do not mean here that there is no depth, no illusion of space in my painting. There is, but it is important to me to use and use well only those illusions which can not be avoided. For instance, in using color there is a natural illusion of depth created which can be manipulated. Also when I have used almost parallel lines which are thought of as perspective, I always check or stop the functioning by some other device which in essence says, "No, this is not perspective, you only think it is." However, to modulate an area of color

to represent a three dimensional object would be out of order with the reality of the flatness of the painting surface and would destroy the graphic quality and directness of the painting.

In summation, I think of these paintings as a closely related group of works which are a poetic expression of my conscious and unconscious being which reflect my concerns for many things. They are personal images of common experiences and common problems synthesized in the logic and inherent qualities of painting.

O.C.A.C. Gallery, 1960-1967

BIOGRAPHY

Name: Glenn Arthur Ridler

Born: September 22, 1942

Education: Central High School, Paterson, New Jersey
Graduated: 1960

Montclair State College, Montclair, New Jersey
Degree: B.A. 1964 Major: Fine Arts

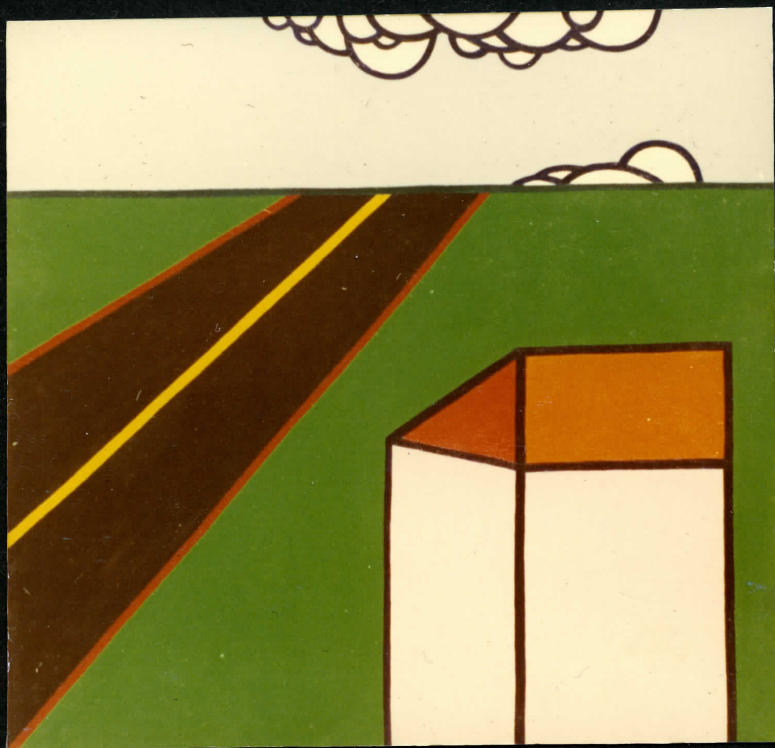
California College of Arts and Crafts, California
Degree: M.F.A. 1967 Major: Painting

Travel: Western Europe, United States, Canada, Mexico

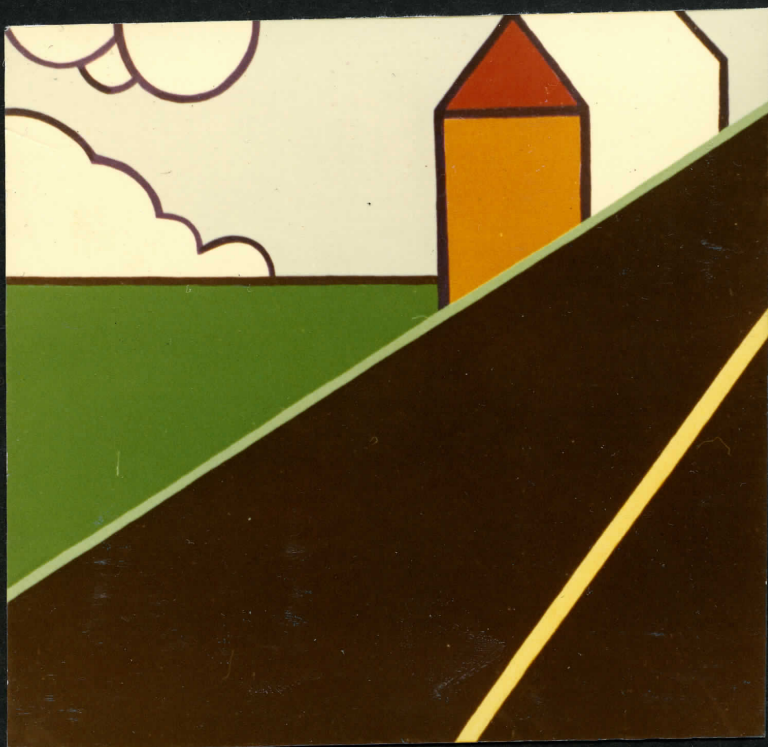
Showings: Permanent Print Collection, Montclair, N. J.
The Annual Short Hills Open, Short Hills,
New Jersey, 1965
C.C.A.C. Gallery, 1966-1967

CATALOGUE PROPER

1. LANDSCAPE I, January, 1967, acrylic, 38"x40".
2. LANDSCAPE II, January, 1967, acrylic, 38"x40".
3. LANDSCAPE III, February, 1967, acrylic, 42"x44".
4. LANDSCAPE IV, February, 1967, acrylic, 44"x46".
5. LANDSCAPE V, February, 1967, acrylic, 46"x48".
6. SEA AND LANDSCAPE, March, 1967, acrylic, 48"x50".



1. LANDSCAPE I.



2. LANDSCAPE II.



3. LANDSCAPE III.



4. LANDSCAPE IV.



5. LANDSCAPE V.



6. SEA AND LANDSCAPE

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