



Marshall Glasier



George Grosz and Marshall Glasier, ca. 1956.

Courtesy of the Glasier Archives
State University of New York at Binghamton

Recent Works
by
Marshall Glasier

September 29 — October 27, 1974

**University Art Gallery
State University of New York at Binghamton**

FOREWORD

The present exhibition of *Recent Works* by Marshall Glasier illustrates another step in the development of his style. The last exhibition of his works was organized here in 1963 and the changes in this span of eleven years is well recorded in the incorporated reprint of that catalogue; also reprinted is the catalogue of the first exhibition of Glasier on our old campus in 1959.

When Professor Kenneth C. Lindsay proposed this exhibition it seemed to me to be a logical extension of our previous shows to enable our University community and the public at large to witness the artist's continuing development. There are many paintings and drawings of Marshall Glasier in our community and the University Art Gallery is the proud possessor of fourteen works.

We all extend our gratitude to Marshall Glasier for his most enthusiastic and generous assistance in organizing this exhibition from his collection. Kenneth C. Lindsay, our Professor of Art History, is responsible for the selection of the exhibition and the catalogue and we owe him our appreciation for this accomplishment. With pleasure we acknowledge the assistance of Donna Stilwell who is responsible for the preparation of the interview and diary text. Our thanks go also to our student Carol Volter for her help. As always, our Gallery staff, particularly Walter Luckert, helped in many aspects of this exhibition and I extend them our gratitude.

Michael Milkovich
Director

GLASIER, THEN AND NOW

To maintain the ideal of objectivity, a critic is not supposed to have a personal relationship with the artist about whom he writes. The same principle holds true for the art historian if he moves even one step into the area of criticism. If followed, this puristic principle would keep critics isolated from artists, and historians involved only with those who are safely dead. As a young art historian some years back I rejected this ideal of historical necrophilia and set about with archival impulse to gather information on several living artists whom I knew as friends, and to venture critical judgments along the way.

My report here will be admittedly personal and partisan. I first heard of Marshall Glasier around 1937 when the Milwaukee Art Institute gave him a show. His return to his native state of Wisconsin caused a good deal of flutter, for he had been in New York City studying with the famous German artist, George Grosz. But the people of Wisconsin who embraced Regionism and their art hero, John Steuart Curry, found Glasier's art taking an un-American direction. His tree roots convoluted with too much obsession. His plants loomed up in landscapes like Oldenberg's current monuments, out of proportion and irrational. His Wisconsin River landscapes were infused with a moody atmosphere that recalled 16th century German and Flemish painting. When Glasier introduced New York social realism into the regional setting by showing himself as a battered artist-mendicant selling artist's brushes on a field, with the State Capital behind (Fig. 11, 1959 catalogue), the midwestern stomach turned sour and the alienation of this Native Son was on its way.

He has lived the "outsider syndrome" ever since. To be sure, the acknowledgment the Art Students League made of his superb gifts as drawing teacher in 1957 softened his rage. (During the past few years he has also been a teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts). To be recognized at the age of 55 is, after all, some consolation. These positions in unaccredited schools gave him for the first time in his life resources to buy canvas, paint, pipe tobacco, books, and records on a regular basis.

I am not quite certain whether Glasier's casual attitude towards money, marketing and manipulation—the 3 "M's" of success—is a result of indifference or ineptitude. Perhaps both factors are present. In any event his works are not collected by persons named Mellon or Scull or by those who boast of their Renoirs and Rauschenbergs. He is not "in" and never has been. Harold Rosenberg told him some years ago that history passed him by, meaning that he missed his proper moment of entry. Quite true. But Glasier passed through history on time and in a curiously independent way.

During the 1940's artists of the New York School probed for a new mythology to accommodate what Irving Sandler called, "The Imagination of Disaster." Think of Gottlieb with his pictographs and Pollock with his totems. In Madison, Wisconsin, Glasier created his own mythic world by situating ancient heroes on Wisconsin hilltops. Later on while in Oregon he discovered the Pacific Ocean. He rendered the horizontal stripes of the receding tide lines with a loaded palette

knife stroked across the canvas with motions half brute, half caress. His seascapes are abstract essays in expressionism (Fig. 14, 1959 catalogue). At times figures entered this vision: falling crowds, floating dead, phantoms passing on to nowhere. In some works he threw rose-colored sand at the wet paint. With others he impregnated the wet pigment with sea shells and twigs, mating thereby illusion and reality. The impulse here was environmental: not the old electric shock of dada incongruity or the purr of cubist esthetics, but a sentiment which harkened back to Arthur Dove's collages of the 1920's.

Glasier's work of the 1960's included works of pop imagery, social realism, portraits, and of course figure drawing. Finally around 1970, out of Greek vases, Japanese painting, and the New York street scene, the hanging scrolls emerged.

Most of them are based upon quick sketches made of people riding on the bus or wandering through Central Park. Extravagantly bedecked hippies, Afro-types, wandering musicians, students: all are translated into solo figures isolated from any environment. They project their colorful presence with harsh insistence. They look like oversized icons, figures which simply "hang out" and remain cool, standing apart from the traffic and business hum of Manhattan.

Some drawings reveal that the artist has taken his subjects into the studio so he can manipulate them with the fantasy of decoration and history. Park girls are placed on elaborate pedestals, or they are given the stance and costume of ancient priestesses. Perhaps Glasier implies in this surrealistic amalgam some private meaning.

A few of the drawings depict couples. Like people everywhere they sit in communion, argue, embrace. At times the artist gets his body into the act. There he is, pen in seventy-year-old hand, with the eternal-feminine by his side (No. 40). There he is again, hag-ridden by the object of his long-term dream, maintaining the motif of *Weiberherrschaft* (No. 39 and 49). Esther Vilar and Eduard Fuchs would respond to this old theme as much as the Women's Lib would turn from it.

Glasier's technique will confuse many people. He owns a big "telling" line that can swing out a breast with surety or reduce the mushy surfaces of a face to algebraic trenchancy. At the same time, he will lapse into formulas for toes and risk a line that doesn't work. The result is a bittersweet mixture, reminding one in some ways of Marsden Hartley.

One thing is certain: he will never solicit our affection with European elegance, either in concept or style. If we understand the violence of the American scene perhaps we should be attentive to the way Glasier joins this spirit with what is left of academic drawing.

Kenneth Lindsay

EXCERPTS FROM A RECENT DIARY:

Alive no one is watching and I'm here at the same bench writing—wanting—wondering if I should go through it all—there's that pigeon again begging and a cripple lost in himself—burdened up and hanging onto his crutch in crouch—head sinks in—shoulder blades—and the riff raff passing him—looking like Coney Island—tops of swimming suits and flowered skirts—jeans and bra-less tops and soft ice cream and hot dogs—the bells sound—wheelchair passes—matronly—second-hand clothes—sharing my dreams.

There's a man scratching his balls—cleaning his ears out—and picks his teeth as he talks to his skinny girlfriend—there's a fat kid chasing the pigeons—his mother stands there with a broad grin looking—the pigeons don't like it—there's a kind of TV violence in his movements as if propelled by remote control—a little colored kid watches—if he had a gun he would shoot it off but all he shows is a mixed expression—if he did shoot he wouldn't know why—the summer shows all the scars of city life—I think of my own survival—Stravinsky; "Old age is the best time to be a student"—why didn't he stay put and compose instead of running around conducting.

What counts is what doesn't count—the master said not to comprehend—once you understand that's the end—it ends there—not to know—in order to suppose—the secret came afterwards—through bombs, profiles—little explosions—I put down the names of stores up Broadway.

She is nervous and explains to us that she asked 2 kids to leave her cellar (her lock broke)—result—tires slashed paint spread on the front porch—the police—the gang is after you—so they are going to the beach this weekend to get away from it all—she talks about ladies making paintings to sell and other things—gallery treatment of lady painters who bring their work in—innocent problems but shouldn't happen to a dog.

Death of Wayne Morse (U. of Wisc.—73—look out!) I always admired him—my old man a Republican—thought he was a "Communist"—one of the liberals—when I go it won't be my friends I will miss—but Aknaton, Marcus Aurelius, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Beethoven, Flaubert, Kafka, Stendhal. Remember the artists—the lives of great men—Plutarque's Lives—the guys that left something behind—the painters that sent me back to history—Proust—and my old friend Kolish & Girth. A painter who had to "find things out by himself"—the lone man that lends himself out as a teacher—I'm in it for learning and there's still not enough time.

I keep reading, wondering how long before I become blind.

The real truth in art comes from inside the self through experience and development. Had to wrangle with a student—Socratic dialogue—is it so—do you not waste your time—by doodling and not looking at the model—he says—oh yeah—and walks away—come back and work it out—don't run away from your problem—he says yea see you're a father figure and I couldn't take it—I say

could you cut out the medical crap—and let's work it out—you're not paying attention—if it's occupational therapy forget the whole thing—I'm not just talking to you but through you—for any who may be listening—every student has the same problem—as any student but he has to work it out for himself. (The impressions—the older you get the harder it is to wipe your ass.) Everytime I go to that stinking can in Penn Station—I think of Louis Kahn the great architect who died there all by himself—alone in that everyman's can.

In the meantime you're the drawing master to the guy who smiles as he went by—the anti-hero—no man—think of Grosz's little yes and a big no.

Thought—If I was black and I could start all over again.

I can't even professionalize—must get my slides around but when it comes to promoting myself I am lazy—obscurity is a good thing—then the phone doesn't ring—and the dream is still there—at times you want to run away—just call it quits—run back.

We need the sun—I feel as if I'd done my work—why didn't I follow the rules—they're plain enough—it just wasn't in me—I had to go my own way—I've paid the penalty—life is too much and art is even more—making demands—getting in your hair—completed to see it through—My God—the bone man follows me around—I need at least 5 more years—my head—but the body sends me little warnings now and then.

Duchamp says he quit painting because he didn't like filling in background—I'm not smart—American—we are more naive so as a punishment to hard work I fill in the background mostly to study negative space.

FROM A RECENT INTERVIEW, AUGUST 16, 1974

Old age is the best time to be a student.

You die and are born many times.

The school of Picasso and the cubists broke up everything; we have to put it back together again.

Art is where it takes you.

The problem with the art world is that some who leave it once find it hard to get back.

Just your friends matter.

SEVEN EXCERPTS FROM NOTES FOR THE STUDENT ON DRAWING FROM THE MODEL

THE PAPER IS THE BATTLEGROUND. See the whole sheet at once and visualize the figure. Sense the white spaces outside the figure. Grasp the concept of the model centered. Accept in your mind's eye the impossible problem of getting it down at once.

YOU MAKE A WRONG LINE TO MAKE A RIGHT ONE. Keep the line you first put down, for even if it is wrong, it makes the right line possible. When your pencil experiences a shoulder, it is a discovery for all your following shoulders. Even as you work on the detail of the foot you have not lost the experience of the shoulder. When you go back to the shoulder to check it, you have the memory of the former moment and your hand can correct it in relationship to the whole.

DRAWING IS A CEREMONY, A PERFORMANCE, A RITUAL. It shall be the best thing you can do at a given moment. It is the sustained emotion of the whole self at work, in work. Again, the mind will tyrannize at the start unless the awareness of the impossibility of the proposed act, the suggested relationship, unbuttons the straitjacket of intellect and frees the hand to begin the ceremony which will envelop the whole self and not the mind alone.

YOU HAVE TO COME CLOSE TO NATURE IN ORDER TO GO AWAY FROM IT. See how close you can come to nature as you discipline the hand. You have to see how close you can get so that you can leave it later on. It takes both you and the model to make a good drawing.

DRAWING AND CALLIGRAPHY ARE NOT TO BE CONFUSED. In drawing, you use the wrist and arm. When writing one employs the wrist and the finger but not the arm.

ALWAYS REFER TO THE REAL MASTERS OF DRAWING. Keep in mind the best art and identify yourself with the masterpieces of the past. Your hopes and aspirations must be high. Art springs from art like Minerva from Zeus's head. Your mind's eye and your unconscious are forever working for you. Practice seeing with your eyes closed. Learn to appreciate your own work. Do not lose the sense of that which is great, nor lose that part of you which is a child (the curious quest for discovery in a world of wonder). Remember, every artist lives every artist's life—only in his own way.

CATALOGUE

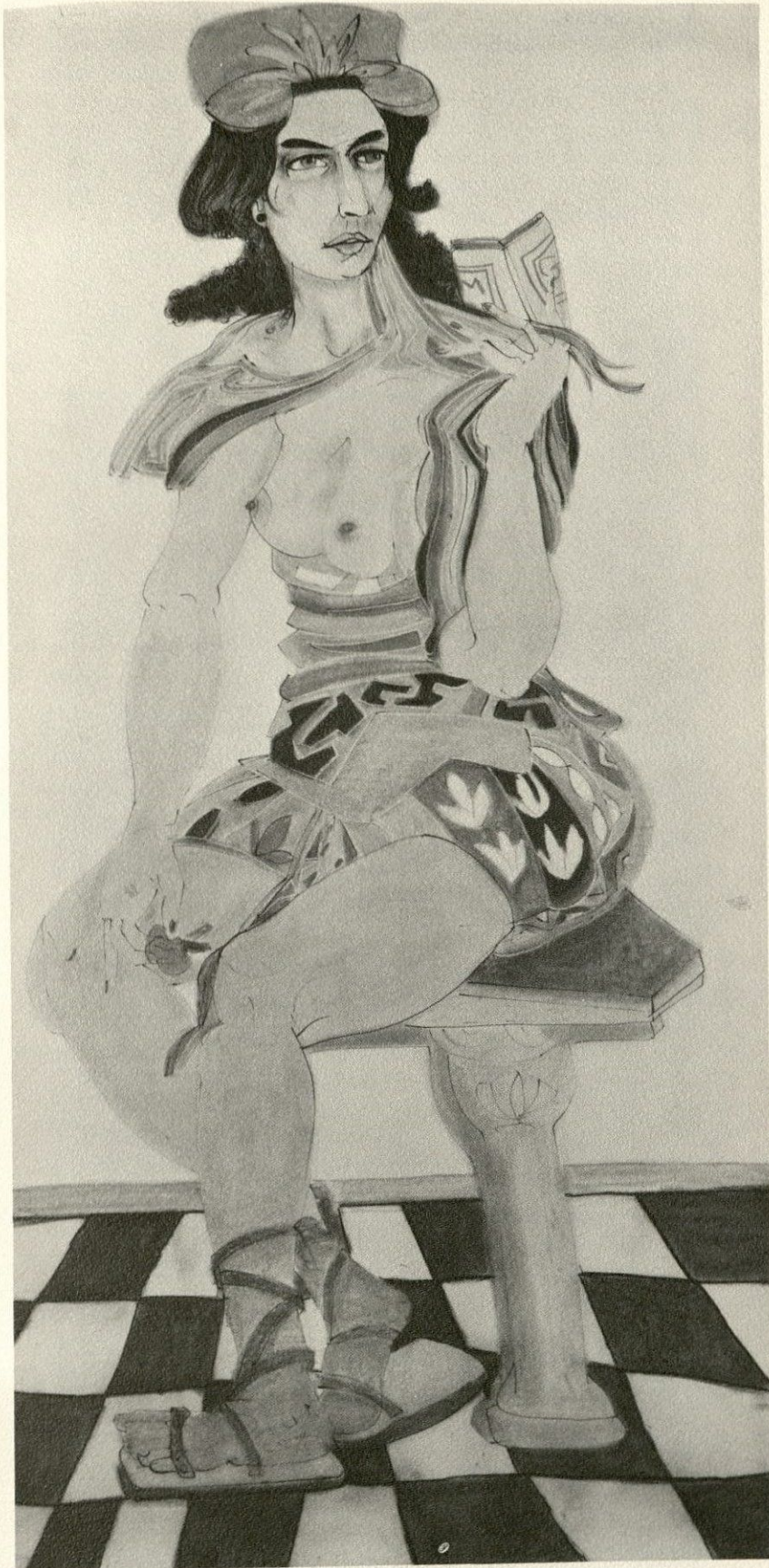
1. SELF PORTRAIT, 97 x 42 *
2. BLACK WOMAN HOLDING WHITE FLOWER, 88 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
3. GREEN COUPLE, 95 x 42
4. STANDING MALE, 93 x 36
5. SEATED MALE, 100 x 36
6. SEATED FEMALE, 88 x 42
7. STRIDING FEMALE, 97 x 42
8. SEATED MALE WITH GOLD BACKGROUND, 81 x 36
9. SEATED FEMALE NUDE, 78 x 36
10. SEATED FEMALE HOLDING A ROSE, 85 x 32
11. SEATED HALF-NUDE, 89 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
12. YOUNG WOMAN HOLDING ROSE, 100 x 36
13. HOMAGE TO DURER, Reed pen and ink, Signed and dated, 1971
14. GRINNING FIGURE, 87 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
15. STRIDING PRIESTESS, 83 x 36
16. LONG LEGGED MALE, 94 x 36
17. HIPPIE WITH FOLDED ARMS, Signed and dated, 1970
18. "B," SEATED, 90 x 42
19. STRIDING MUSICIAN, 92 x 42
20. FLOWER-BEARING PRIESTESS, 94 x 36
21. GIRL IN GREEN, 101 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
22. CENTRAL PARK FIGURE, 96 x 42
23. JOE NAMATH, 90 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
24. STANDING FIGURE IN RED, 93 x 41
25. FIGURE WITH GREEN BACKGROUND, 83 x 36
26. SEATED WOMAN WITH PATTERNED CLOTHES, 92 x 42
27. LUTE PLAYER, 86 x 42
28. MEDITATION IN RED, 91 x 36
29. YELLOW MALE NUDE, 89 x 36
30. FEMALE FOLLOWER OF PAN, 88 x 36
31. SEATED WOMAN WITH RED HAT, 104 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
32. HAVERFORD STUDENT, 90 x 42
33. THE BEGGAR UPDATED, 83 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
34. PEACE, 86 x 36, Signed and dated, 1971
35. SEATED PRIESTESS, 90 x 36
36. BOSCHIAN EMBRACE, 85 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970

*All drawings are with pen and rubbed pastel unless marked differently; all measurements are in inches.

- 37. STRIDING HIPPIE, 75 x 36
- 38. GIRL WITH MULTICOLORED SUIT, 94 x 36, Signed and dated, 1970
- 39. WEIBERHERRSCHAFT, 113 x 42, Charcoal, Signed and dated, 1971
- 40. ARTIST WITH MODEL, 93 x 36
- 41. LIGHT RED COUPLE, 86 x 36
- 42. DISPUTATION, 87 x 36
- 43. WHITE AND BLACK, 92 x 36
- 44. NUDE FRIENDS, 95 x 36
- 45. TWO CENTRAL PARK HIPPIES, 86 x 42
- 46. DISPUTATION NO. 2, 95 x 48
- 47. HOMAGE TO SAPPHO, 88 x 42
- 48. BLUE PRIEST, 91 x 36
- 49. PHYLLIS AND ARISTOTLE, 57 x 48 (cover illustration)
- 50. SEATED PRIESTESS, 93 x 36, Signed and dated, 1971
- 51-54. CUT-OUT FIGURES
- 55-70. TOMB FIGURES



3. GREEN COUPLE



10. SEATED FEMALE HOLDING A ROSE



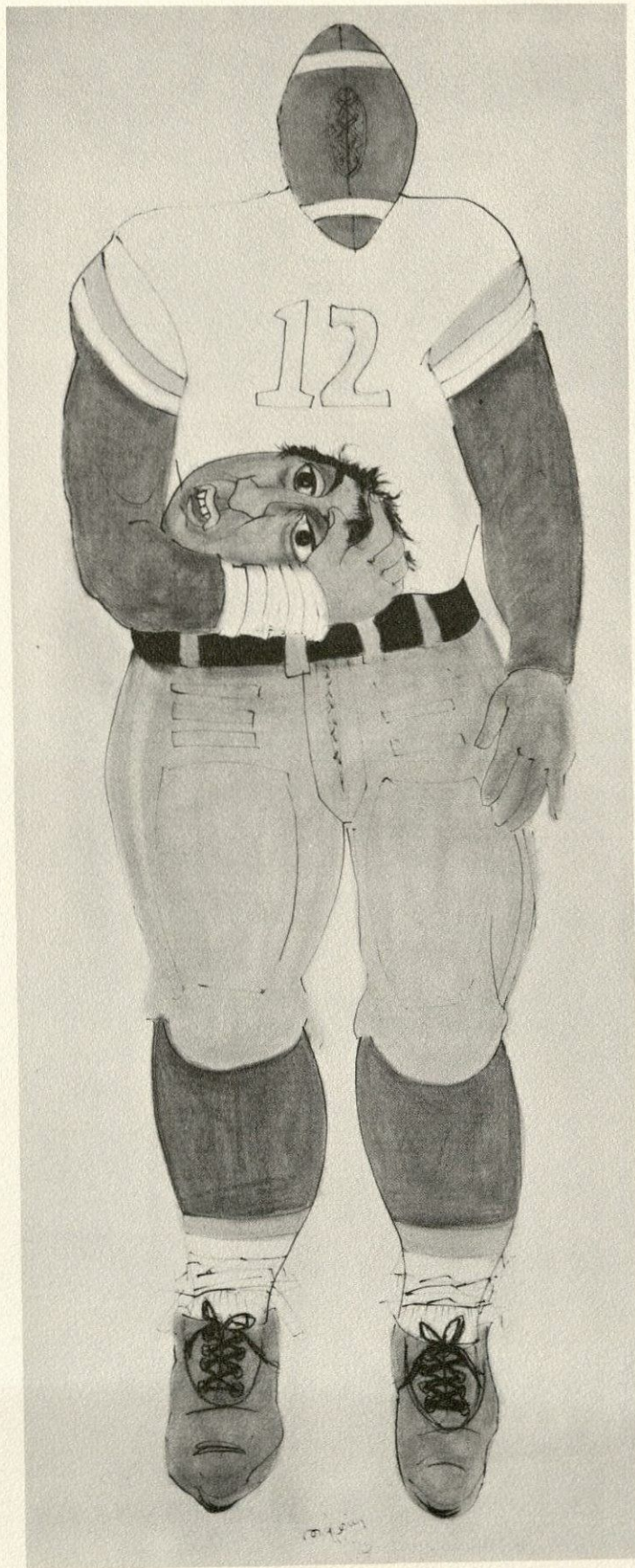
13. HOMAGE TO DURER



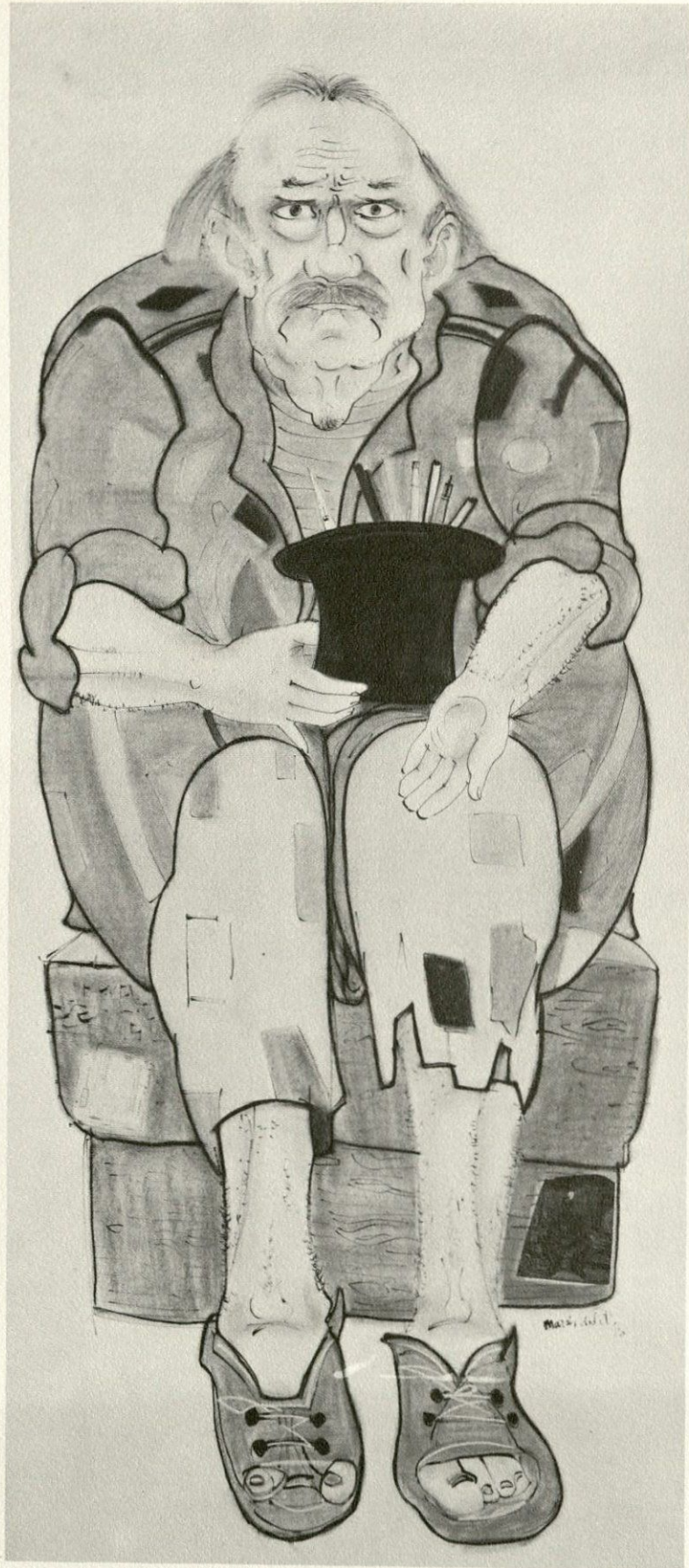
11. SEATED HALF-NUDE



18. "B," SEATED



23. JOE NAMATH



33. THE BEGGAR UPDATED



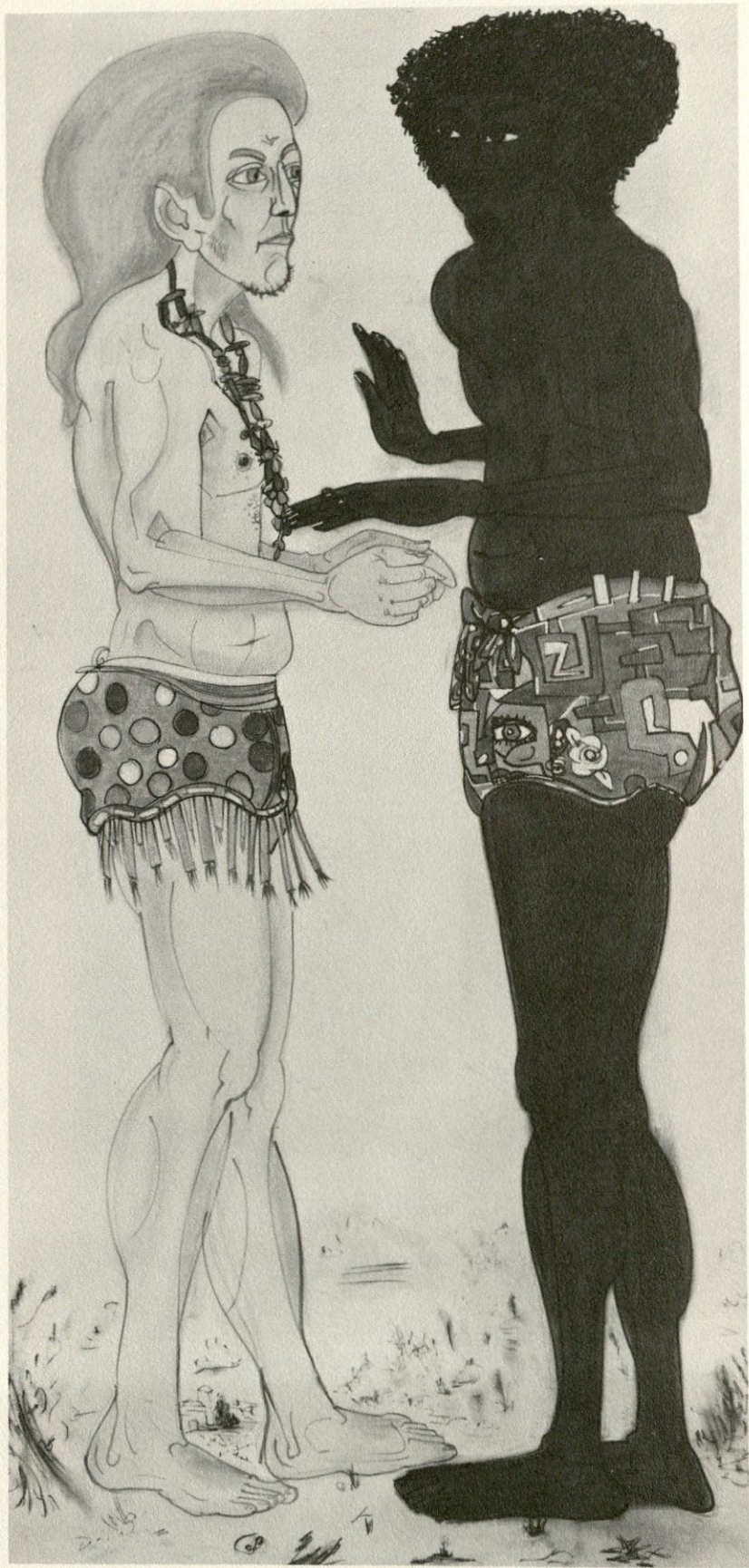
36. BOSCHIAN EMBRACE



39. WEIBERHERRSCHAFT



40. ARTIST WITH MODEL



45. TWO CENTRAL PARK HIPPIES

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The Gallery Committee of Harpur College presents an Exhibition of recent brush drawings by

MARSHALL GLASIER

at the Art Gallery of Harpur College, State
University of New York, Binghamton, N. Y.

MARCH 28 TO APRIL 14, 1963

The brush drawings in this exhibition are unnamed and of the same size. Therefore this catalog does not list the works in the usual fashion but shows a reproduction of each drawing with a catalog number.

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Marshall Glasier was born in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, in 1902. He came to New York in 1930, where he met George Grosz and studied with him for five years at the Art Student's League. He then worked on the WPA Federal Art Project. In 1945 Esquire published an article about his life and work. During 1951-52, Glasier painted in Wisconsin on a grant-in-aid from Bjorksten Research Laboratories. For the years 1952-53 he was artist in residence at Reed College. Since 1957 he has taught at the Art Student's League.

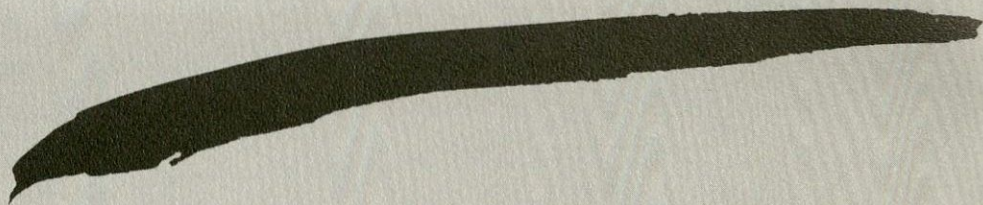
This is the second exhibition of works of Marshall Glasier at the Harpur College Art Gallery. The first exhibition was held in 1959 as part of the Fourth Fine Arts Festival.

Credits:

Chairman of Gallery Committee: Charles Eldred
Selection of works exhibited: Kenneth C. Lindsay
Design of Catalog: Norbert Adler
Printing of Catalog: Niles & Phipps, Binghamton, N. Y.



glasier



The Gallery Committee of Harpur College

presents

An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by

MARSHALL GLASIER

for the

FOURTH FINE ARTS FESTIVAL

1959

Opening - April 17, 8:00 p. m.

Closing - May 17

in the Park House Gallery, Endicott, New York

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C A T A L O G U E

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| 2. The Temptation of St. Anthony | 1950 | Fig. 10 |
| 3. Lazarus Unwinding | 1955 | Fig. 15 |
| 4. Irradiations | 1955 | Fig. 21 |
| 5. Mother and Child | 1956 | Fig. 23 |
| Collection of Marion H. Cullen | | |
| 6. Egyptian Book of the Dead | 1956 | |
| 7. Look Daddy, No Arms (Self Portrait) | 1956 | Fig. 13 |
| 8. Brown Seascape | 1957 | |
| 9. Little Pink Seascape | 1958 | |
| 10. Girl With Plaid Skirt | 1958 | Fig. 25 |
| Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Lindsay | | |
| 11. The Guardian | 1958 | Fig. 17 |
| 12. An American in Japan | 1958 | Fig. 22 |
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D r a w i n g s

- | | | |
|---|------|--------|
| 17. Gate of Hell (oil on paper) | 1956 | |
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| 18. Figure | 1956 | |
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| 19. Figure | 1956 | |
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| 20. Girl Drawing (oil on paper). | 1955 | |
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| 27. Nadine | 1958 | |
| 28. The Dreamer | 1959 | |

Prices upon request. Terms may be arranged.

It gives me great pleasure to write a few words of appreciation of the work of Mr. Marshall Glasier.

Look at his drawings and you are aware that you are in the presence of a great draftsman. This is particularly satisfactory in a period where drawing after the model is hardly practised anymore.

Everything is easily labeled today. ART becomes something like a fabricated commercial product on the shelves of the Art Supermarkets. There, of course, Mr. Glasier does not fit in; for he belongs to the few iconoclasts which defy a too easy identification. Look at his work and you discover "human values" . . . there is humor, there is the human figure, there is the sea, shells, twigs and stones . . . you behold a cosmos. His paintings are sometimes like those shells you put to your ear and hear all kinds of rhythms and music. To sum it up, he is in the tradition of the great Fantasists in art.

With these words George Grosz has described the art of Marshall Glasier, an artist who is being presented at Harpur College this month in an exhibition of some thirty works. Since there are few who remember the profile written about him in Esquire (1945), a brief recounting of his formative years is in order.

Like many people of his generation, Glasier "lost" most of the 1920's. His stay at the University of Wisconsin was distinguished only by the few illustrations he made for the 1919 Wisconsin Octopus. He then tried sales work in a Chicago book store. This career was terminated by an ill-starred love affair, the repercussions of which left him an easy prey for a Marine press gang; when he "came up for breath" he was in Haiti wearing the colors. His military stint was then followed by several inconsequential years in Washington, D.C., where he worked in retail layout and advertising. Not much to show for thirty years of life; and there was little which one might call promise.

Contact with George Grosz - who arrived in New York in 1932 - changed the situation. One of his first students at the Art Students League was Marshall Glasier. Who could anticipate the deep friendship which was to develop

between the ex-dadaist and the ex-Marine? Though Grosz was a knowledgeable European gentleman in the midst of a distinguished career, and Glasier was a rough backwoods giant and neophyte, their relationship was fruitful for both participants. It continues to this day. From the German master Glasier discovered line. Though his draftsmanship does not have the trenchancy or facility of his master, it does possess a bluntness capable of lyric as well as forceful expression. Above all Grosz taught his student what it meant to be an artist.

Sometime during the late 1930's Glasier felt the tug of his native state, Wisconsin, and returned to Madison for a long apprentice period. He returned not quite a prodigal because he had an idea. The "smart guys" in Wisconsin who had stroked the fur of their early successes the right way, considered this slow ripener half as a joke and half as a thorn. That a grown man would "idle" away his time in his father's attic caused the great middle-class brow to arch angrily. While the machinery of vituperation spun, Glasier whittled away on his dream and learned that you can't go home again.

For friends he gravitated toward what one prim faculty secretary called, the "freaks" of the University of Wisconsin: people like Rudolph Kolisch of the Pro Arte Quartet; Hans Gerth, sociologist and translator of Max Weber; Warren Gilson, M.D. and electronic inventor; Harry Partch, composer in the 43 tone scale; and Gunnar Johansen, pianist and composer in residence. With devastating insight he took up the cudgel for real causes, and a curious host of devoted students gathered around this big-stomached Falstaff of a man. Concerning this period, Glasier says: "When I started to teach myself to paint, the Italian primitives showed me the way -- the Wisconsin River landscape was also there -- so I put the two together -- Regionalism never interested me -- I wondered at the eternality of the myth -- one paints one's own background nevertheless -- and I wanted to tell stories, old stories in a new fashion." Meanwhile his dream began to unroll in a series of strange drawings and fantastic mythological paintings.



Fig. 1 - Man and Wife, 1957



Fig. 2 - Black Eurasian Hag, 1956



Fig. 3 - Seated Figure, 1956

Fig. 4 - The Tartar Coat, 1956



Fig. 5 - Drawing, 1956



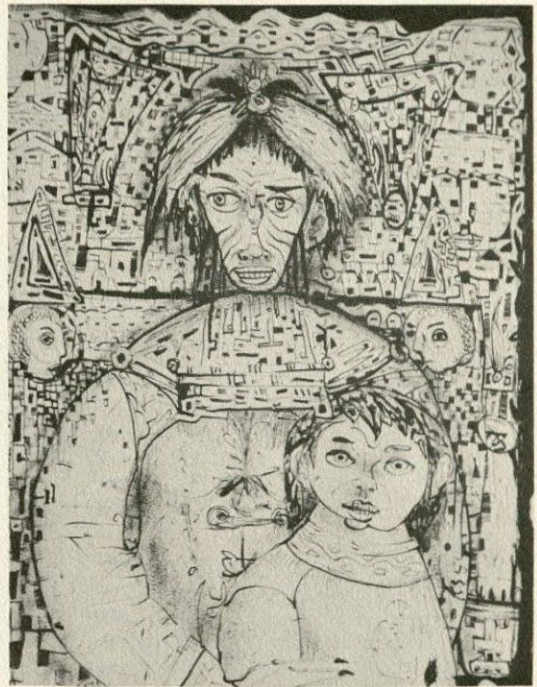


Fig. 6a, 6 - Recumbent Nude, 1956, Private Collection
 Fig. 7 - Mother and Child, detail, 1956
 Fig. 8 - Sea Floor II, 1957
 Fig. 9 - Arabesque, 1949

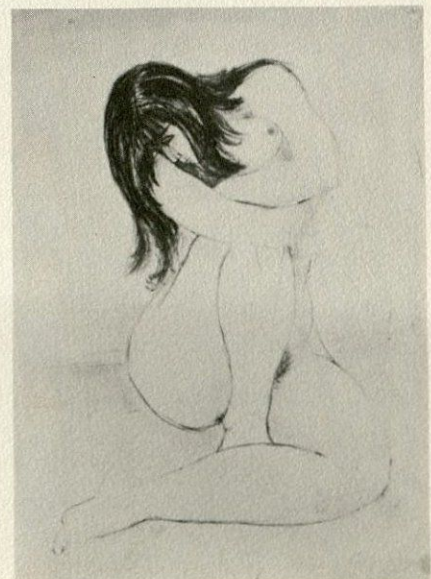




Fig. 10 - Temptation of St. Anthony, 1950

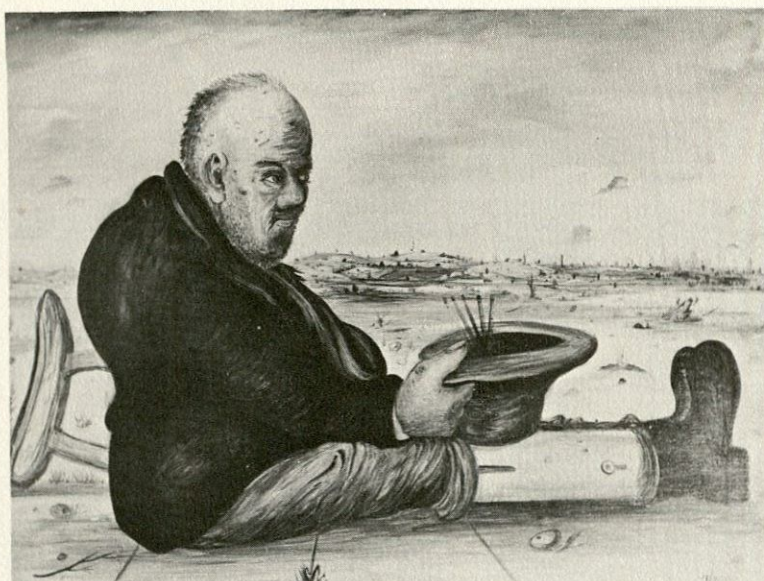


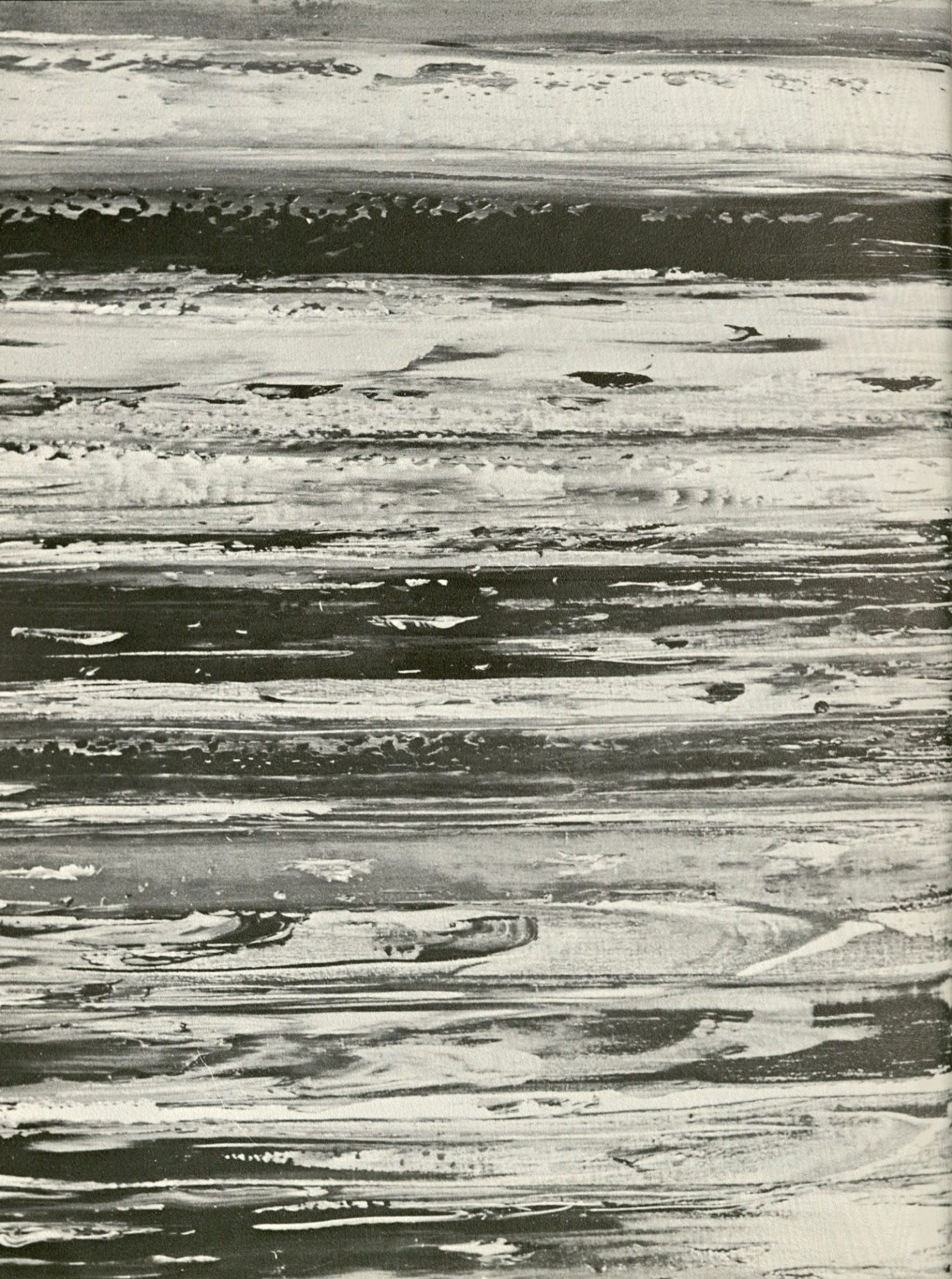
Fig. 11 - The Beggar, 1940
Collection of Mrs. R. Keeney



Fig. 12 - St. John the Baptist, 1950
Collection of Brina Gordon



Fig. 13 - Look Daddy, No Hands (Self Portrait), 1956



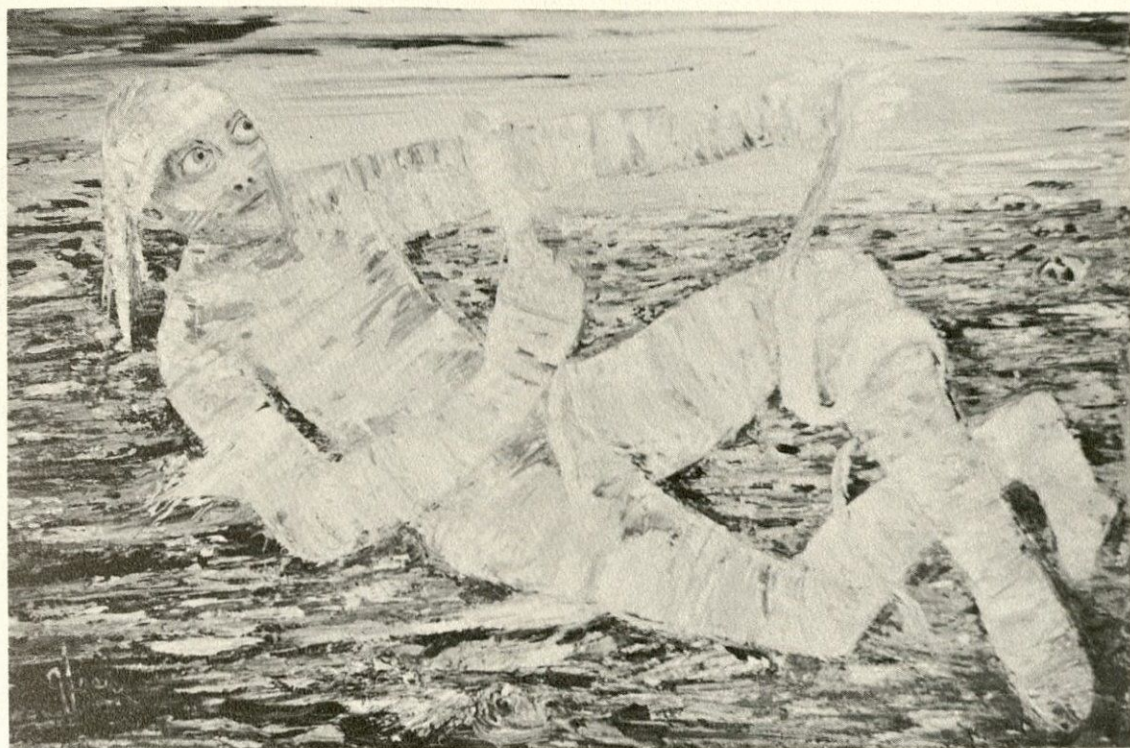


Fig. 15 - Lazarus Unwinding, 1955



Fig. 16 - On the Beach, 1955

: Fig. 14 - Seascape, 1958



Fig. 17 - The Guardian, 1958



Fig. 18 - The Pile Up, 1958

Fig. 19 - Shale Pocket, 1959

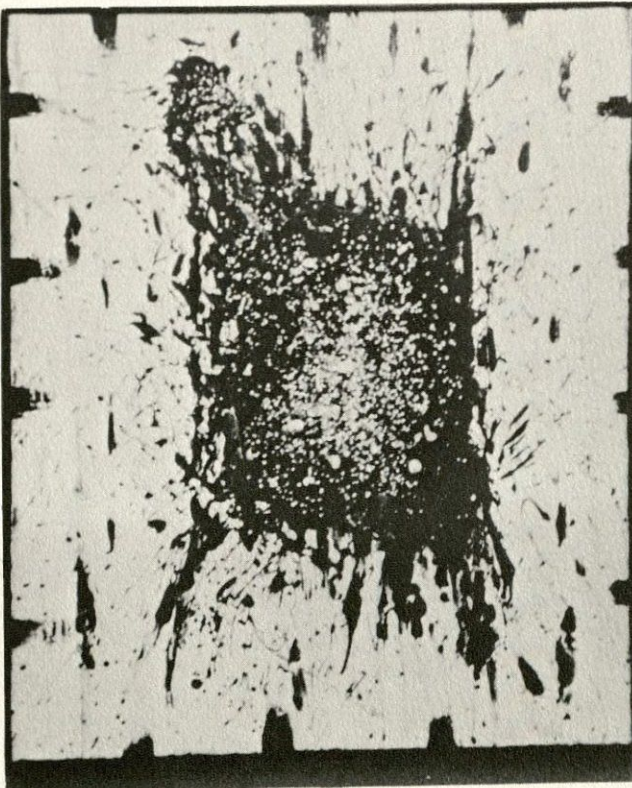


Fig. 20 - Microcosm and Macrocosm, 1959

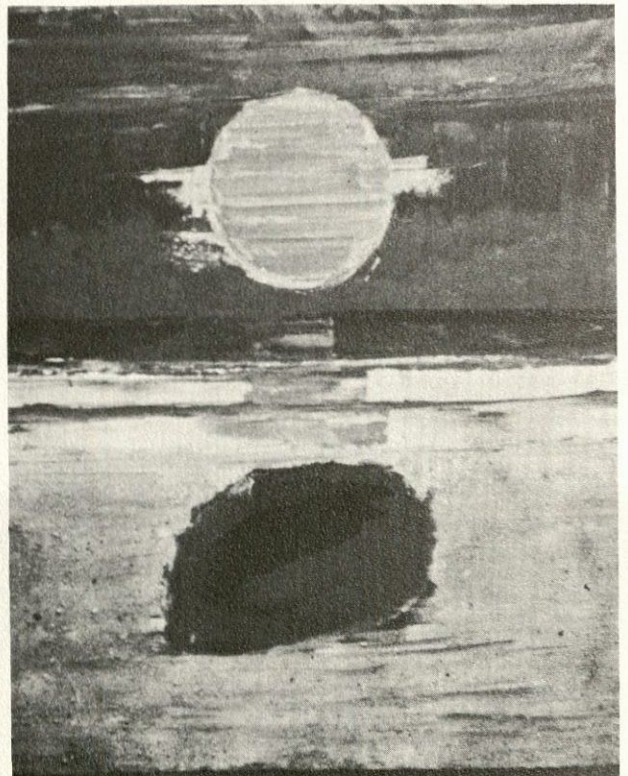




Fig. 21 - Irradiations, 1955



Fig. 22 - An American in Japan, 1958



Fig. 23 - Mother and Child, 1956
Collection of Marion H. Cullen

Fig. 24 - Others are Watching Us, No. 2, 1953, Collection of Rudolf Kolish





Fig. 25 - Girl With Plaid Skirt, 1958, Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Lindsay



Fig. 26 - The Bride, 1957, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Karli Frucht

In his Temptation of St. Anthony (Fig. 10) a fat-headed business man is uneasily situated upon the grass in front of a decorated wall. A painting of Lake Mendota with the Wisconsin State Capitol hangs on the wall. St. Anthony holds a dollar bill in one hand. With the other hand he makes a fool's gesture that mocks the upward-directed anguish of his eyes. Of the three female temptresses, the one behind him is the most horrible. With her wicked mask and poisonously pointed breasts she tempts him with an apple, all the while disconcerting his shoulder with a Chinese back-scratcher. Upon her G-string patch one sees a dollar sign. Mythology is not fashionable today and certainly not this kind of hinterland sur-realism. Many of the cognoscenti prefer artists who invent new ways of painting nothing with a sponge. But for Glasier, as for Allston, Thoreau or Ryder before him, mythologizing was a means of exploring the geography of his interior life, and a way of preserving and explaining his integrity.

During the following few years spent in Oregon he discovered the ocean and his second, or "Pacific" period began. To deal pictorially with the endlessness and the many moods of the ocean necessitated a new style -- one of greater breadth, vigor and abstraction. Large bold overdrags of paint in horizontal strips enabled him to paint "at once" the stratified movement of the sea. The flat surface quality became evocative, somewhat in the manner of the Oriental art in the Portland Museum which he admired. (Fig. 14).

His Pacific manner still bears fruit today. Often it is refreshed by new design and conceptual problems which are awakened by his explorative draftsmanship. Among the drawings one sees a vital range of expression and technique. In the faces of the three drawings, The Tartar Coat (Fig. 4), Recumbant Nude (Fig. 6), and the Mother and Child (Fig. 7) there is respectively, proud grandeur, classic beauty, and "ugliness", the line varying according to the mood.

After a year as artist in residence at Reed College, Glasier returned to Wisconsin. He was divorced and his beloved daughter went to the mother.

Now Madison was no longer possible. He spent a lonely winter in a wretched New York hotel room and renewed his contact with Grosz. The Pacific seascapes were turned into an Egyptian book of the dead (Cat. No. 6). Figures became splintered and were knitted together with thongs (Fig. 1). In his many family paintings nostalgia and wistfulness alternate with horror and self-flagellation. He began embalming his figures in mummy cloth, as if to wrap up his dreams and put them away.

Glasier, like Caravaggio, monumentized his feelings of persecution. The Beggar of 1940, (Fig. 11), which had turned into a St. Christopher and John the Baptist (Fig. 12) during the Madison period, now became the forgotten artist working in a cave, a demented satyr carrying a screaming child (Fig. 13), or a turtle crawling at the feet of a mother and child (Fig. 23). He became a nameless face, lost in an ugly sea of faces -- graduation pictures of a humanity which had received diplomas from the school of indecency (Fig. 21). Significantly, one of his recent paintings depicts a tangle of shattered figures falling toward a brink (Fig. 18).

These apocalyptic paintings contrast strongly with other recent figure paintings, such as the Girl with a Plaid Skirt (Fig. 25). In this particular painting a young woman is seated by the gaunt post of a pier; behind, the sky, beach and ocean spread out. The blunt unfinished quality of the figure and hands emphasizes the pattern, which in turn brings out the personality of the pose. Above, the lovely head presides as a positive note of certainty -- a redeeming vision.

As one observes the development of Glasier's mythology, it becomes increasingly clear that the war and peace of his figurative confessionism ramifies our own condition, both as single creatures and as a people. The art has begun to surpass the man as a personality. However, to understand this, one has to be able to discern the formidable content which resides within his rough and at times uneven forms.

Marshall Glasier's art is prompted by inner necessity rather than by ex-

ternal factors. Neither the man nor his art is broadly known today since they do not fit gracefully into the delicate inter-locking machinery of the fashionable art world. Like Elshemius, he is not adept in playing the game of self-promotional footsie. His audience consists chiefly of small clusters of friends here and there who keep his paintings on indefinite loan. These friends seem to understand better than an art critic who recently could only say, "You should change your signature", or a gallery director who exclaimed, "But nobody is painting that way today."

True, nobody is. Many talents become submerged in technical problems; others court an easy fame by re-issuing the latest fad; and still others strangle in their first success. As has always been the case, there are few who are willing to explore the consequences of the authentic statement. Glasier has been willing to do so, and in abundance. He is a latter-day romantic whose art contains something of Burne-Jones and Arnold Schoenberg, and yet still remains fundamentally American in spirit.

Kenneth Lindsay

Marshall Glasier was born in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, in 1902. He came to New York in 1930, where he met George Grosz and studied with him for five years at the Art Student's League. He then worked on the WPA Federal Art Project. In 1945 Esquire published an article about his life and work. During 1951-52, Glasier painted in Wisconsin on a grant-in-aid from Bjorksten Research Laboratories. For the years 1952-53 he was artist in residence at Reed College. Since 1957 he has taught at the Art Student's League.

One-man shows:

Milwaukee Art Institute, 1939
Julien Levy Gallery, 1940
University of Wisconsin, 1942
Associated American Artists, 1943
Kalamazoo Art Institute, 1944
Reed College, 1952
University of Wisconsin, 1955
Vera Lazuk Gallery, 1957
Berryman Gallery, New York City, 1958

Group shows:

Whitney Museum, New York
Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C.
Albright Gallery, Buffalo, N.Y.
Chicago Art Institute, Chicago, Ill.
Cincinnati Art Museum
Pittsburgh Art Museum

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