

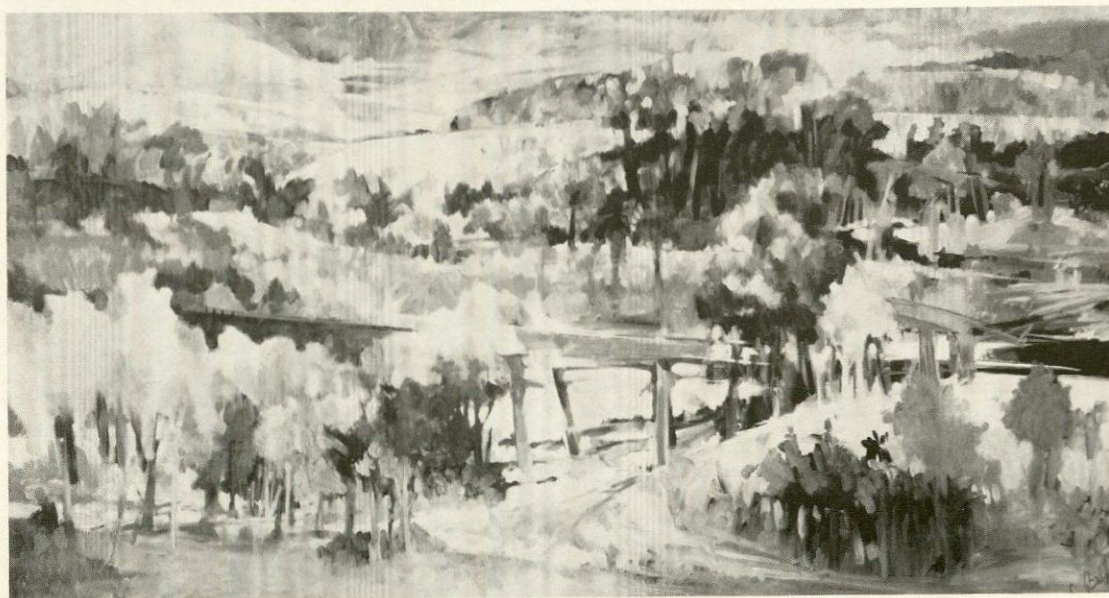
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BINGHAMTON, UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY



DON BELL



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Interstate: Red Bridge, oil, 48"x96"

## **PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS 1985**

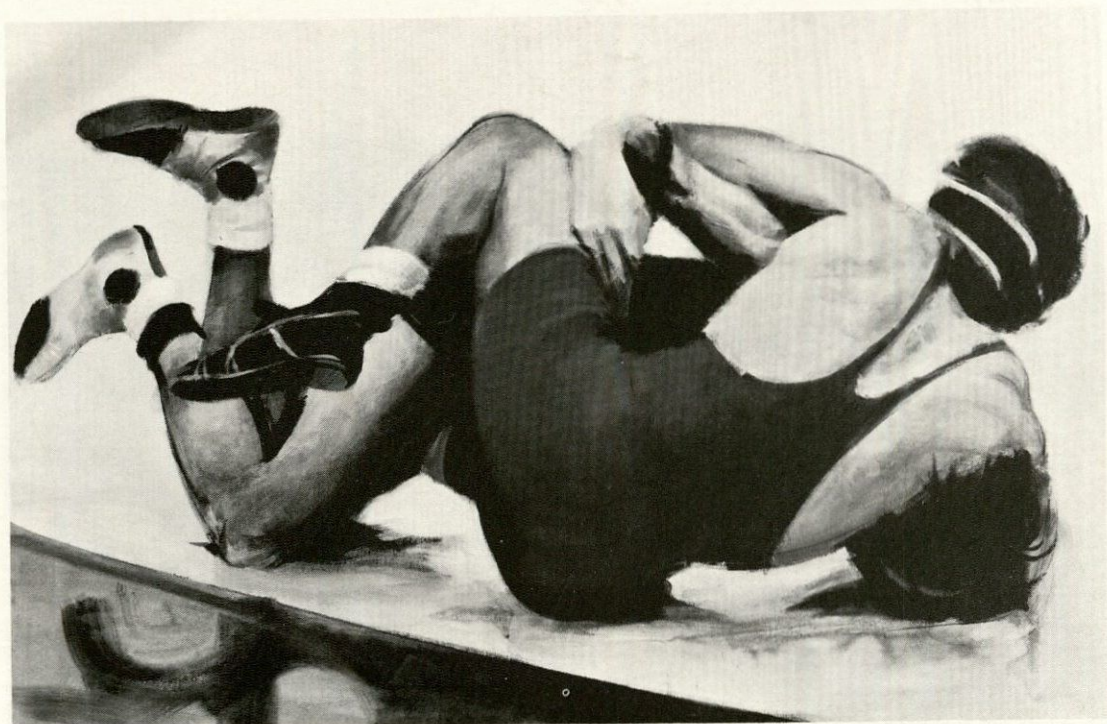
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JANUARY 18 TO FEBRUARY 15 UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

# DON BELL

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Wrestlers on Yellow Mat, oil, 34''x50''

Generally, the viewer of any work of art sees only the finished product. It is a rare opportunity indeed for the commentator on art to witness the creative process from start to finish.

I have had this unique opportunity. For the past two-and-one-half years, I have shared a studio space in downtown Binghamton with the artist Don Bell. I have therefore had the privilege of sharing first-hand the various traumas, highs and lows, the doubts, and, finally, the exhilaration attendant with the hard craft of creating a painting or drawing. The fruits of this struggle

are represented in this exhibit in three, often related parts: landscape paintings, paintings of wrestlers, and a series of drawings done mostly from life. These paintings and drawings demonstrate the artist's personal involvement with his subject matter and his unfolding knowledge of his medium.

Each piece of work in this exhibition reflects that rare combination of careful thought and physical response. The landscapes painted with loose, swift brushstrokes shimmer with light and color. The vitality of these paintings quickens the





Wrestlers in Red and Maroon, oil, 37-1/2"x57"

pulse and leaves the viewer feeling that he has hiked the trails, the hills, and the distant places depicted here. The paintings of wrestlers, restrained in color, appear to be about tensed energy and the elegance of the human form in motion. These paintings of wrestlers are rooted in antiquity, dating back to fifth-century Greek sculpture and vase painting, a celebration to Zeus and man's perseverance. This past re-emerges in our present history in the works of Thomas Eakins, George Luks, and Edward Muybridge, thus placing Bell in the tradition of

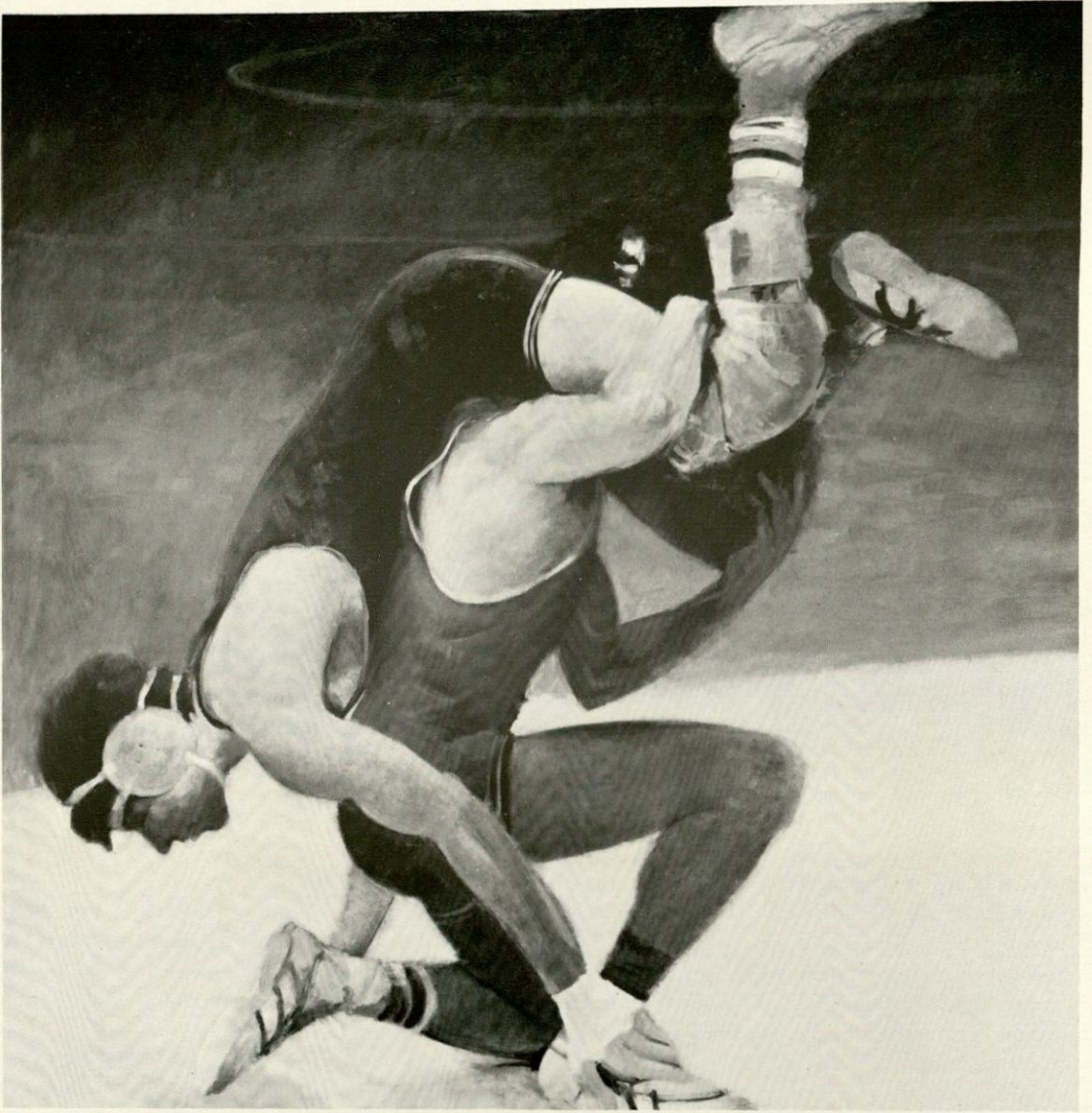
American realism.

Elegance too, is the hallmark of Don Bell's drawings from life. Life drawing has always embodied for us the numinous impulse of the artist's transformation of nature and the unknown into the magic of art.

In the words of John Berger: "To some extent all art derives its energy from the magical impulse—the impulse to master the world by means of words, rhythm, images, and signs."

Michael Tanzer





Wrestlers, oil, 54''x54''





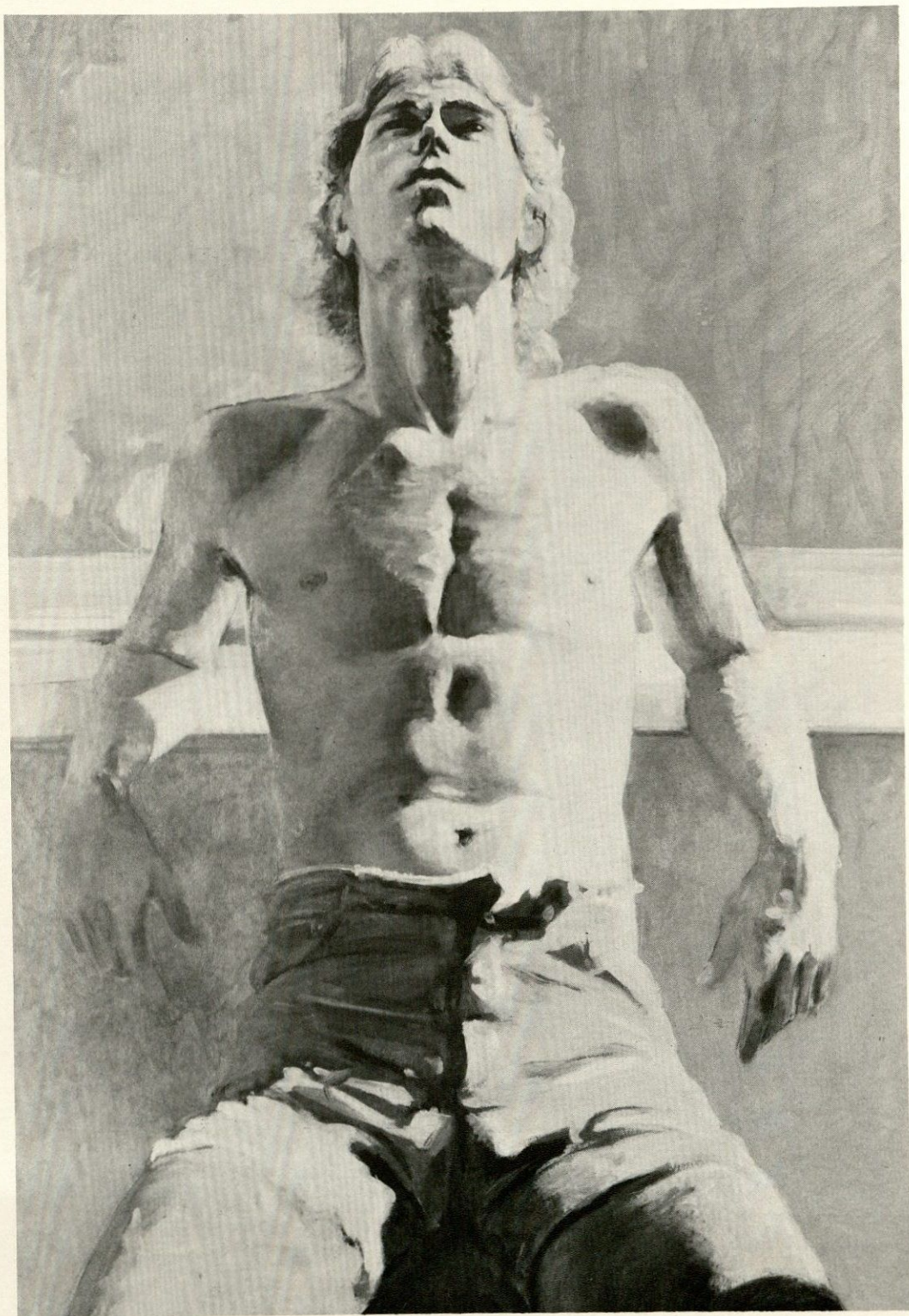
Wrestlers: Twisting, oil, 24''x36''





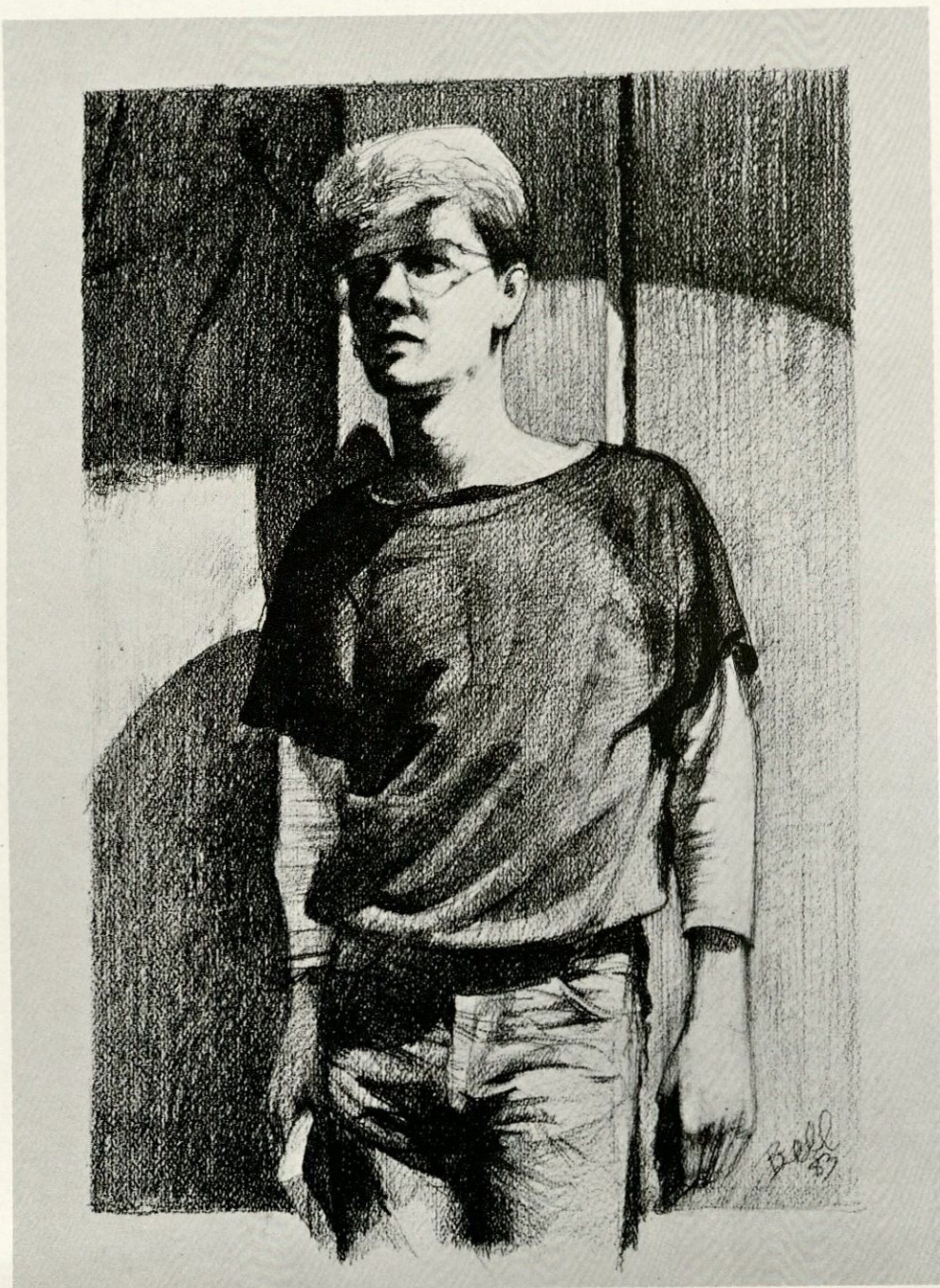
Wrestlers: Escape, oil, 24''x36''





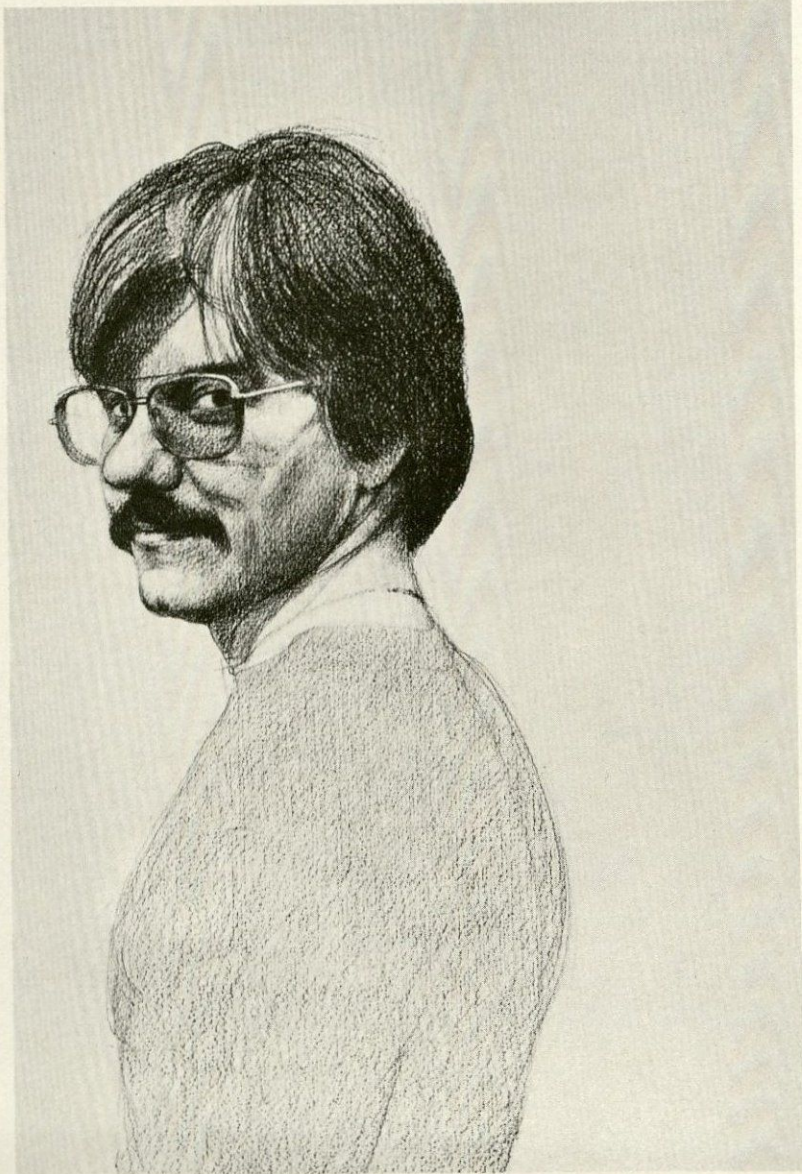
Boy in Cut-Offs, oil, 24''x36''





Portrait of Bruce, Summer 83, pencil, 26''x40''

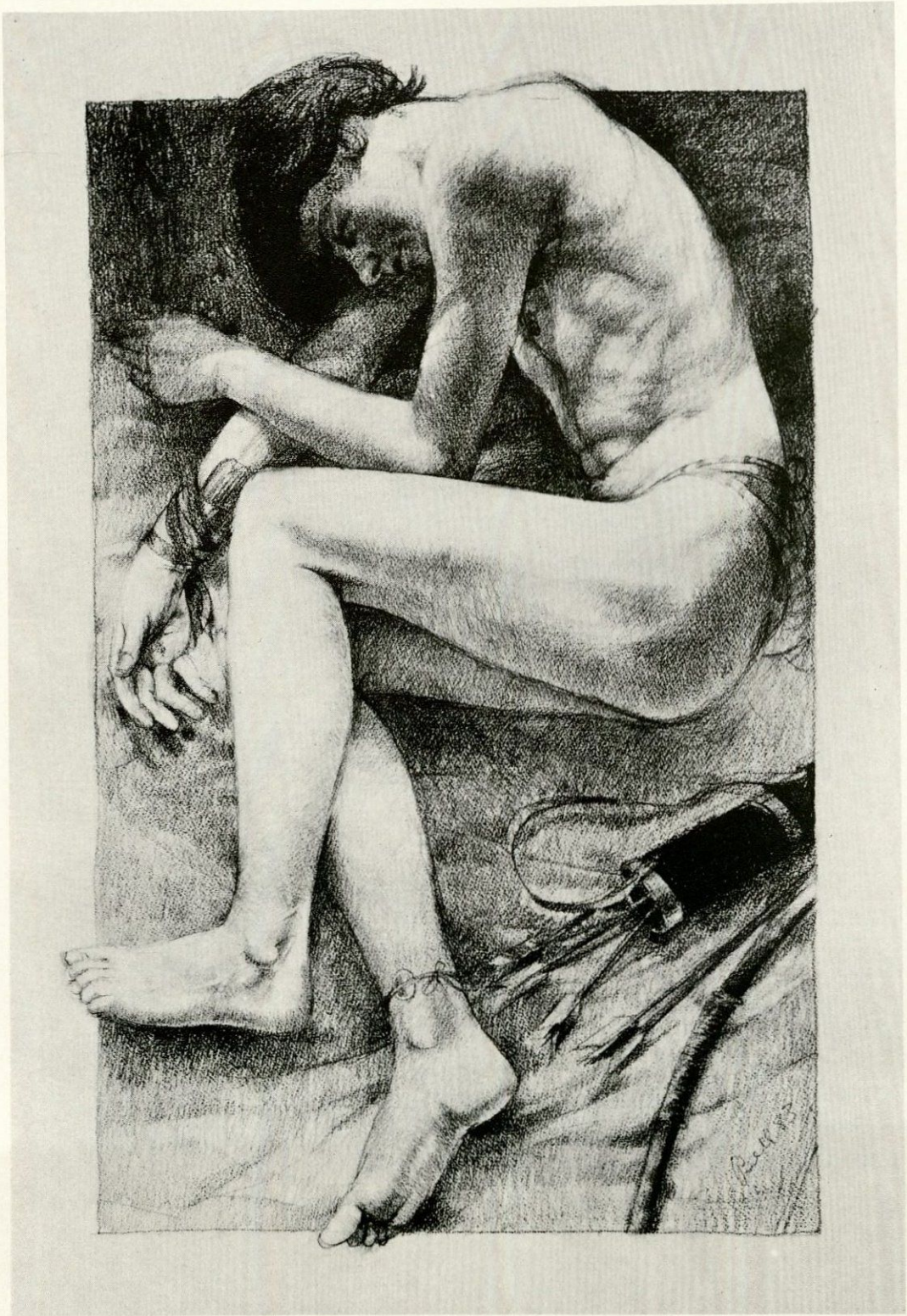




Portrait of Bob, pencil, 26''x40''

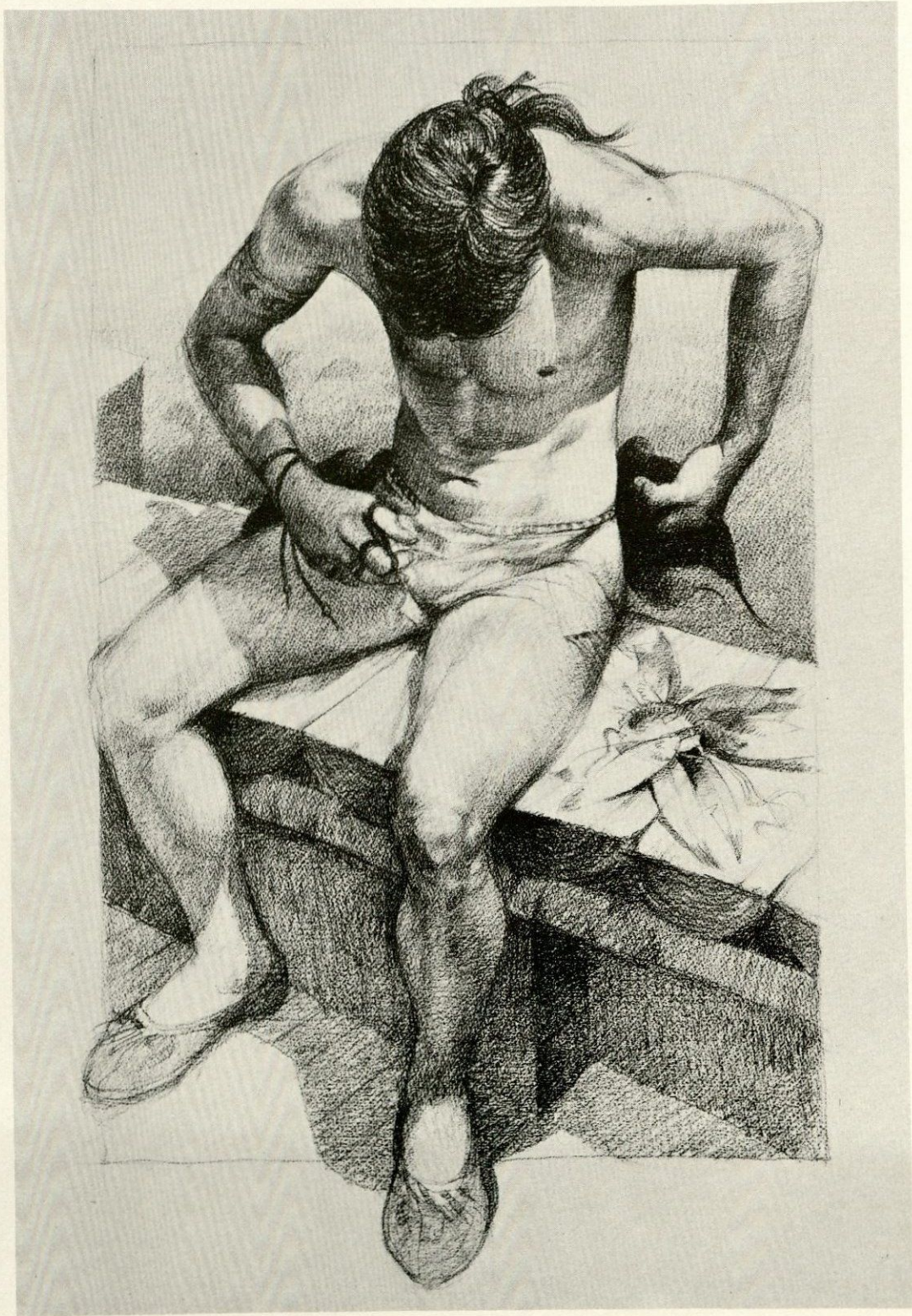


Sleeping Eros, pencil, 27''x40''

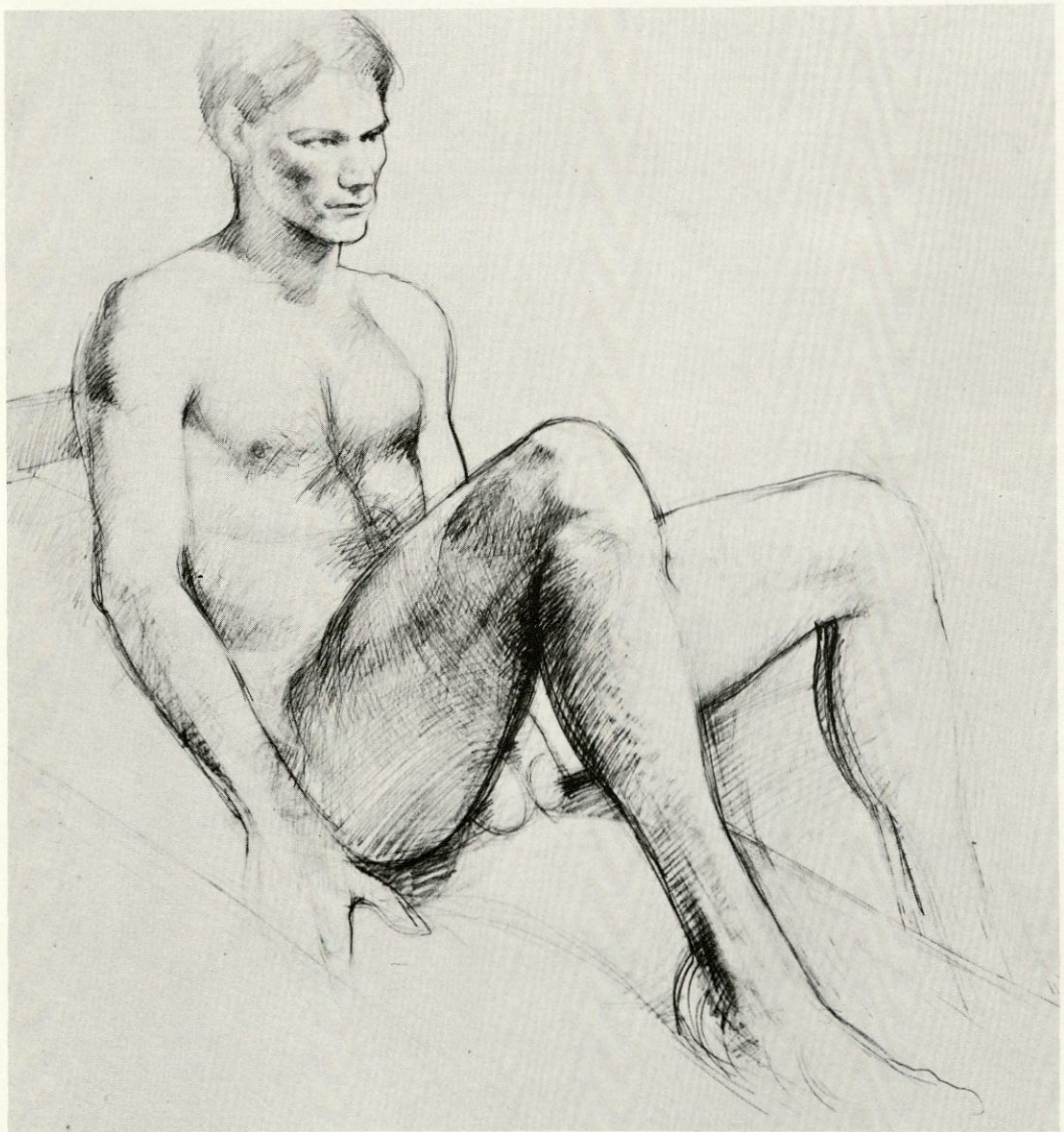




Ceremony, pencil, 26''x40''







Life Drawing, pencil 27''x40''

(Right) Life Drawing, pencil, 26''x32''



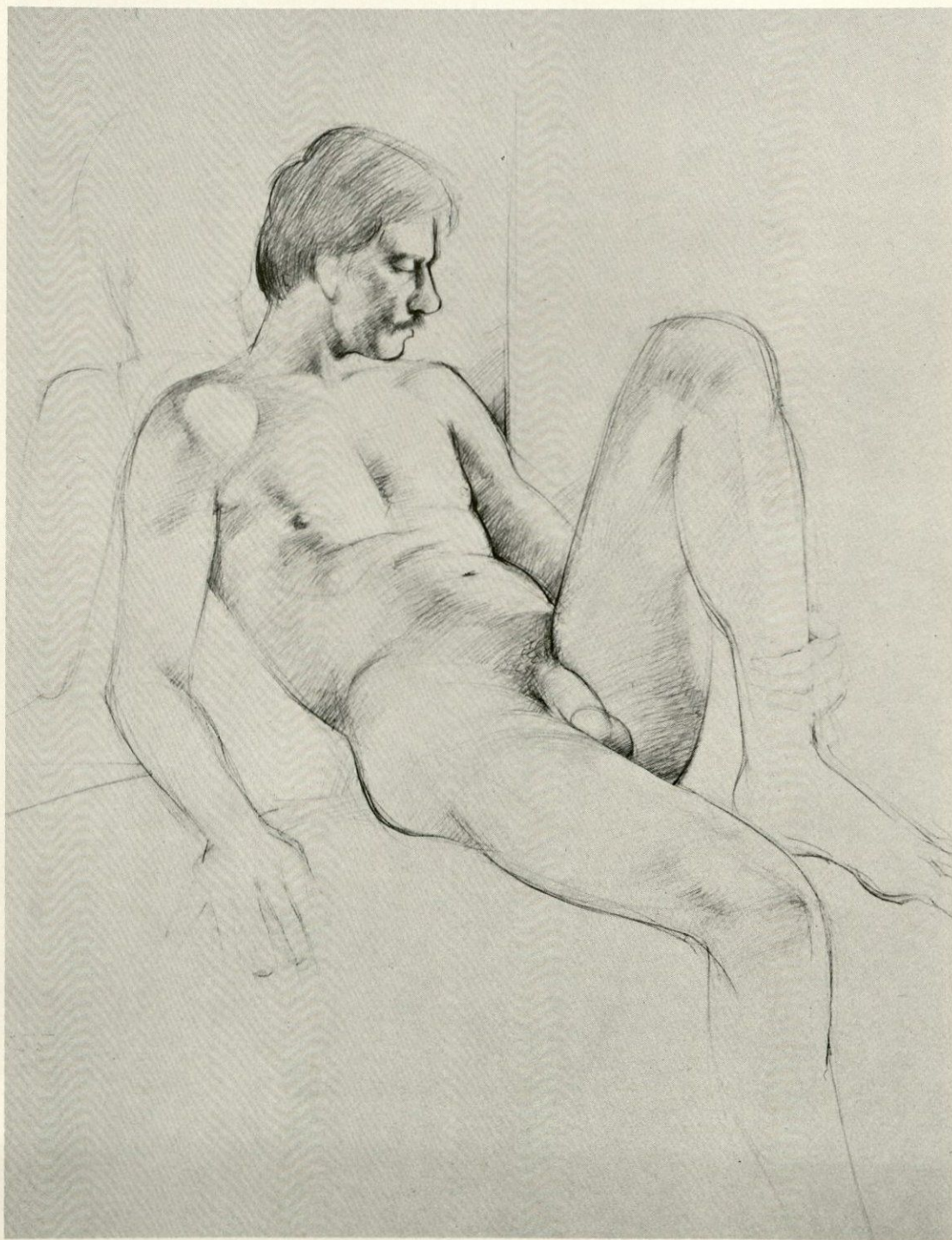






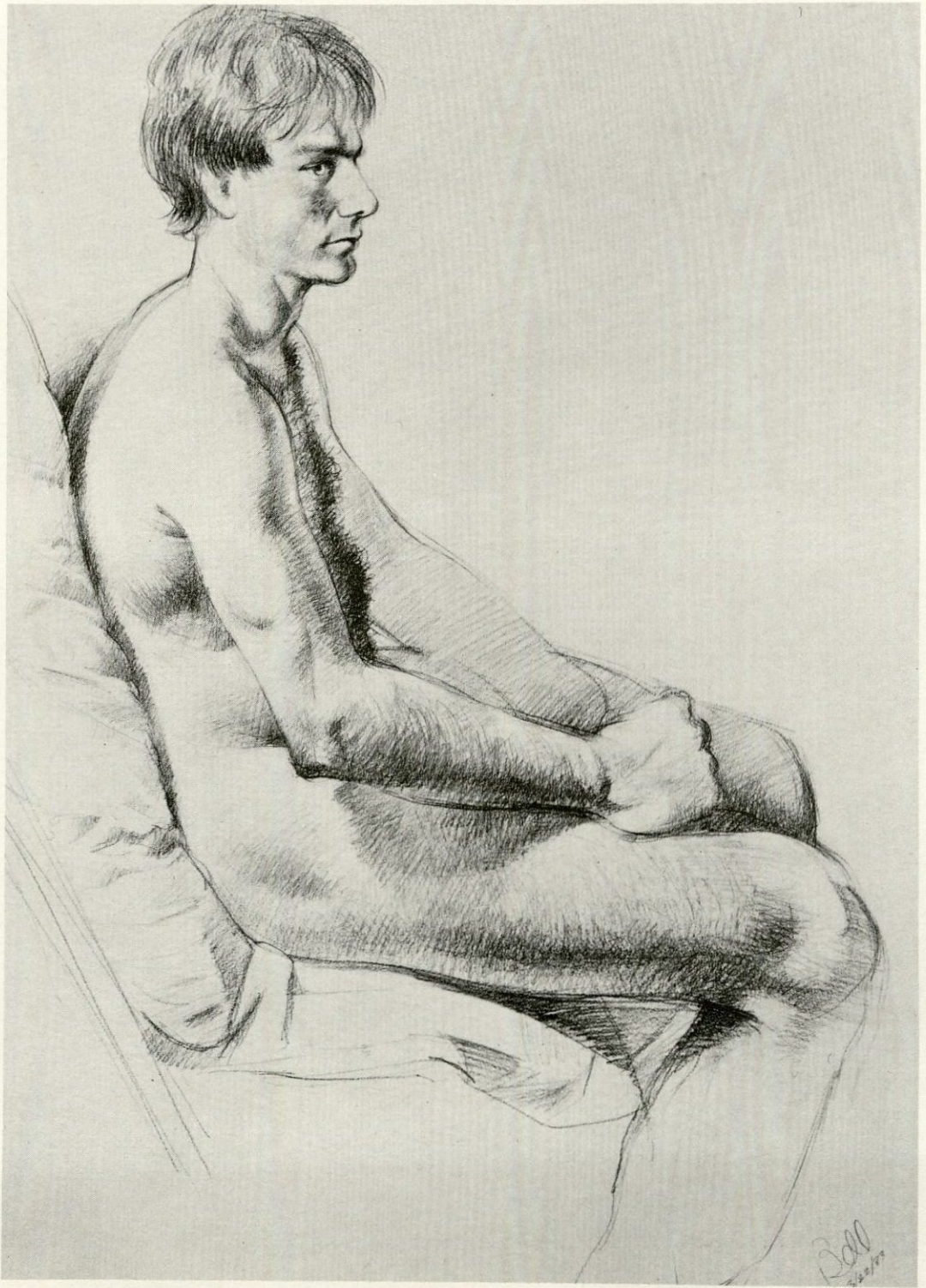
Life Drawing, pencil, 27''x40''





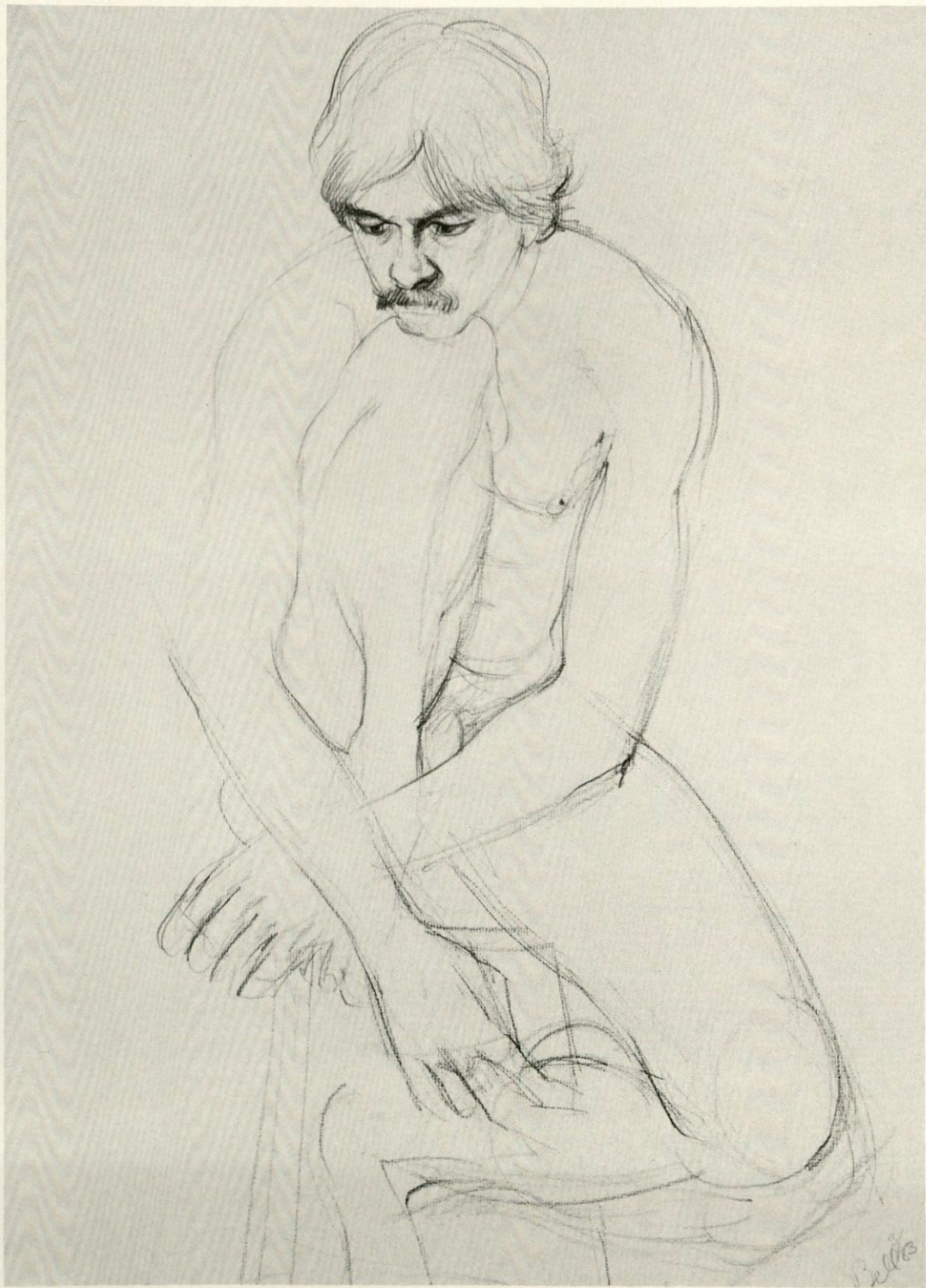
Life Drawing, pencil, 26''x32''





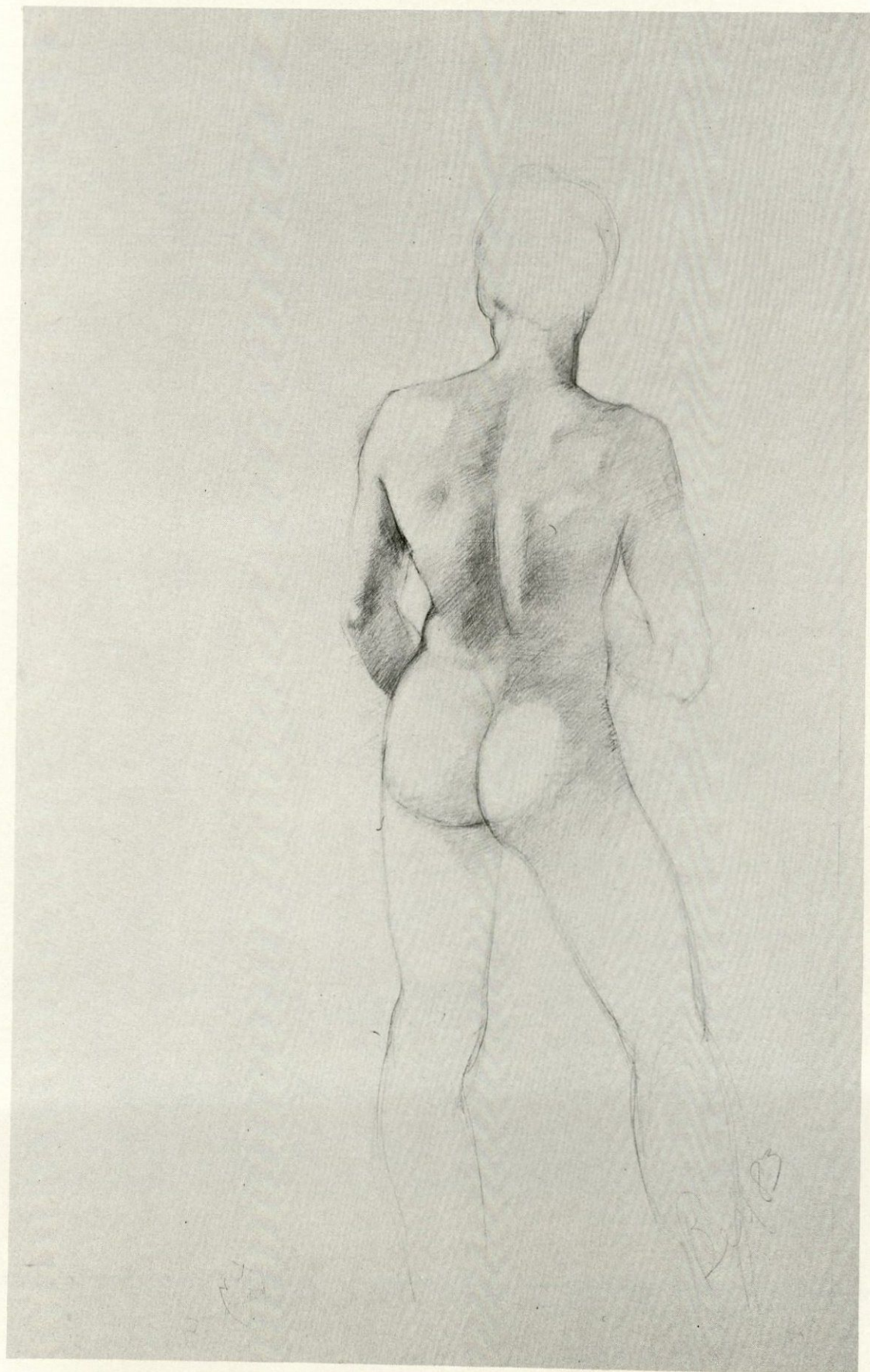
Life Drawing, pencil, 27''x40''





Life Drawing, pencil, 26''x32''









Hillside Landscape, oil, 50''x50''

*(Left)* Life Drawing, pencil, 27''x40''





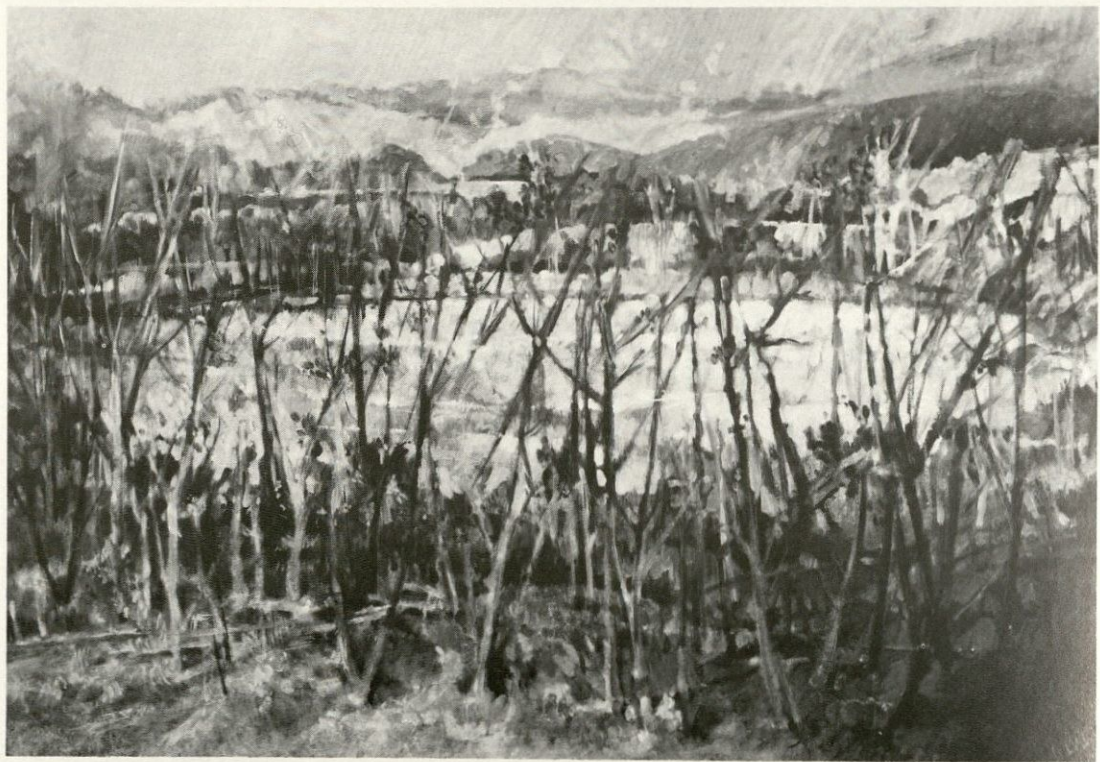
The Red Tree, oil, 34''x50''





Swimmers & Shadows, oil, 50"x56"





Ice Pond, oil, 34''x50''





Windsor Prospect, oil, 48-1/2''x78''



Crossings & Foundations, oil, 24''x24''





Winter Landscape, oil, 50''x56''

#### BIOGRAPHY

- Born in Albion, Indiana, 1935
- Raised in Dayton, Ohio, and rural Indiana
- Attended The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts in Chicago, Ill.
- Designer in art studio in Chicago
- Artist in Army Helicopter headquarters in Ludwigsburg, Germany
- Indiana University-BA and MFA degrees. Studied with George Sadek
- Artist for Educational Television, Indiana University
- Curator and designer, Indiana University Museum

- Teacher at the State University of New York at Binghamton
- Participant in numerous group and regional shows in New York State

#### GALLERY STAFF

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Cover: Wrestlers in Red and Blue, oil, 24''x36''