ZOLTAN SEPESHY
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by
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An exhibition of paintings and drawings executed during the period 1926-1966, organized jointly by the
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and
THE CRANBROOK ACADEMY OF ART

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Lawrence Schmeckebier
THE CHIEF PUEBLO | 1927

HUNGARIAN PEASANTS | 1928

PLANT NO. II | 1929
"The artist is a gambler," concluded Zoltan Sepeshy in an address to a Cranbrook graduating class some years ago. "He is betting his very life on the day when nations and peoples will cherish art as they now are interested in wars, land, oil and amassing riches. The arrival of that day will mark the enhancement of those possibilities within which the artist’s dignity will flower and his dream will come true. . . ." For Sepeshy this was not a gamble but a dedication to a way of life which combined the creative enterprise of the artist with that of the educator and the practical responsibilities of the administrator. His achievement over the past forty years is a major factor in the establishment of the Cranbrook Academy’s international reputation as one of the foremost educational centers for artists in the United States.

Zoltan Sepeshy was born in 1898 in the old medieval city of Kassa, Hungary, now Kosice, in Czechoslovakia some 136 miles northeast of Budapest. His father had been a respected government official under the Hapsburg before the first World War and some years after the revolution of 1918 continued as an official in the Czechoslovak local government. The stern discipline and devotion to duty characteristic of the old regime,
perhaps more Hapsburg than Bismarckian, had been an essential part of the family tradition which carried through the tribulations of war, revolution and the social as well as political upheavals of the immediate postwar period. It provided the background which had much to do with the subsequent career of the young artist.

On graduation from the local gymnasium, Sepeshy attended the Royal Academy of Art in Budapest studying under the aegis of Sáriyai Márta Pál, known among Hungarian painters as a precursor of French Impressionism, Edu污水 Aladár, a romantic interpreter of nature and animals, Aligasy, a strict disciplinarian and superb draftsman who had been an intimate friend of Rodin, and Kernstock Karoly, then foremost among the Hungarian Expressionists. On completion of the state examinations for the Master’s degrees in Art and Art Education, he continued his studies in Vienna and Paris and through travel in Germany, Italy and France.

In 1921 he migrated to the United States, coming first to New York, then to an uncle living in Detroit. After a series of odd jobs in a lumber yard, painting walls, and sweeping floors in a barbershop, he worked with an advertising agency and an outdoor sign company where his skill as an artist was put to good use. He spoke no English. He had few friends outside of the Hungarian countrymen who took him in, but he continued to paint. It was through these friends that he managed to sell a few of his pictures by peddling small paintings from office to office which launched him on the precarious career of a young artist in the New World.

Through a generous benefactor, Sepeshy travelled west by bus to New Mexico. He likes to tell the story of a glamorous visit to Budapest while still a youngster to see Buffalo Bill and his Wild West Show and the magnanimous invitation of the fabulous frontiersman “to
come and visit us sometime." The experience had more meaning to him than youthful
romantic legend. By sheer chance he visited the Indian pueblo of Santa Clara and stayed
at the home of Vittoriano Sisnera, its Indian governor. Though he could speak little Eng­
lish he felt at home with his sketch pad and the Indian governor who spoke some
having served with the Army of Occupation after the first World War. These were
genuine people. For several months he lived in Taos and came to know such artists as
Walter Ufer, John Sloan, Ernest Blumenschein and others of that group. They liked his
work and "for the first time, I found myself with friends and sympathetic fellow artists.
They gave me the encouragement I needed." Sepeshy's first exhibition with Michigan
artists came in 1922. He won his first prize. In addition to the subjects reminiscent of his
native Hungary he continued to paint the new scenes from New Mexico. In a report
reviewing the Scarab Club's Exhibition in Detroit, published in the Christian Science
Monitor for February 18, 1924, Sepeshy's view of the Royal Palace of was
pointed out as revealing "in scintillating pastels the towering structure framed by the
bridge that spans the foreground; . . . boldly but effectively."

Beginning in 1924 Sepeshy worked on and off in the office of the distinguished Detroit
architect, Albert Kahn, doing architectural perspectives and renderings. During this period
he became acquainted with the great Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen, who was just
beginning his important work on the Booth projects. Since, as Sepeshy reminds us, the
Finns and the Hungarians are first cousins anyway, there developed a lifelong friendship
between the two artists.

Sepeshy's teaching career began in 1926 when he was appointed painting instructor in
the school of the newly founded Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts. It was at this time that
the famous publisher of the Detroit News, George G. Booth (1964-1949) and Ellen Scripps
Booth (1863-1948) had conceived Cranbrook as an educational center on their picturesque 300-acre estate in Bloomfield Hills, some 19 miles north of Detroit. There were six institutions involved: the Brookside, Kingswood and Cranbrook Schools, Christ Church, the Institute of Science and the Academy of Art, all supported by the Cranbrook Foundation established in 1927. In the development of their building program, the founders had employed Eliel Saarinen, Carl Milles, the great Swedish sculptor, and a host of practising artists and craftsmen to form what has since become one of the most ideal educational institutions for artists in America.

The idea of the Academy began in 1925 with Saarinen as head and the basis of its educational system was that of an informal group of artists who are actively at work on professional projects, varying in scope from monumental sculpture and architecture to the most intimate household objects. Each instructor was a practising artist whose continuing growth in his own art helped him stimulate and advise his students. Each student was therefore a member of a community of creative artists where he might attain superior skills in his own area of specialization as well as broaden his understanding through close contact with a variety of allied art activities and interests. This program was expanded and refined along professional educational lines in 1942 when it was chartered by the State of Michigan as an institution of higher learning with the privilege of granting degrees. In 1960 the Cranbrook Academy of Art was fully accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools as an institution of higher learning on the same academic status as other colleges and professional schools of the country. Sepeshy's participation in the Cranbrook enterprise began in 1930, first as instructor, then as head of the painting department. He became resident-artist in 1933 and on the death of Saarinen in 1947, he became director. He was appointed president in 1959 and is largely responsible for the full accreditation of the institution by the North Central Association.
It was out of this environment that the reputation of Sepeshy, the teacher, developed into a national institution of his own unique character. Though a young man of 23 when he arrived in this country, he was a fully trained, competent and mature artist. By nature a humanist, a deeply romantic personality, completely devoted to people as well as his own art, he saw the new world about him as a magnificent opportunity. Speaking of Detroit, he was quoted by Florence Davies in the Detroit News (February 23, 1932) as saying “I have found here not only a place in which to live and work freely, but the place in which I believe the foundations of a new creative art are being laid.”

Is it the artist, the teacher or the institution (system) which determines the education of the young artist? “I teach by not teaching!” Sepeshy has often said. The commencement address which he concluded with the suggestion of the artist as a was introduced by a quotation: “A criminal is one who within the existing socio-economic order has made other arrangements,” and with a characteristic shrug, “What more can we say of the artist? Perhaps we can say that: philosophies give us reasons for universal being; religions give purposes and visions of the unknown; the artist provides us with symbols of the fact that we are alive. He brings past and future into the present moment.

“The problem of the artist has existed from time immemorial. In order to be and remain creative, apparently, he has to be at odds with society. And yet he is completely dependent on society for channels of his creativity. . . .

“The physicist can afford to be like other physicists—the businessman like other businessmen. The artist cannot afford to be and dare not be a replica of other artists. The businessman who is not like other businessmen is insofar an artist. The artist who is like
other artists has become a businessman. On rare occasions, of course, a merger is possible, but then you have to be a Rubens!...

An article on "The Artist’s Legacy" published in the College Art Journal (Volume X, No. 4, p 412, 1951) described the little man who painted the caves of prehistoric times: "There is no evidence that he had a spoken language nor that he had a name, nor yet that he cared whether or not he had a name with which to sign his goods. He did not work for credits nor degrees because he didn’t go to school—let alone an art school. He did not read volumes of books and magazines on the psychology and social significance of art or the quintessence of form. He did not believe that the way he was doing whatever he was doing was the only way to do it, or that what he was doing was the greatest thing on earth. He had no art dealers and experts to explain to him the meaning of what he was doing. He did not keep one eye on the columns of reviewers and critics while keeping the other on his work. He did not send his wares to art museums to be scrutinized by objectionable juries and selected for exhibitions. He never won a prize. He had no idea of prizes, and he did not care. There was no conceit about him and he had profound respect and love for his tools and materials. There is abundant evidence that he was a very humble man. He did what he did because he felt an irrepressible need for doing it.

The relationship between his own work, his public and his teaching philosophy was expressed somewhat differently. In an article published by The Magazine of Art (May 1944) with the title "I Don’t Like Labels" he confessed his bewilderment at the variety of labels with which he and his work had been identified: Hungarian, Czechoslovak, even American; Realist, Romanticist, Naturalist; Cubist, Expressionist, Abstractionist or a "mere technician" because of his devoted love and unexcelled mastery of the tempera medium. His reply was simply that his tempera work was merely his road to a goal which he considered important in his development and that "...there is no surely ticketed road to artistic accomplishment. Art is a vital and growing experience. It heightens, revitalizes,
and makes secure the accidental perceptions and enjoyments that men find even in their ordinary activities... what more important functions can one fulfill than to point to experience and say, ‘This is the world that not all men can see. This is the realm that one must open to others.’”

Critical response to Sepeshy’s work over the years reveals the consistent impact and varied interpretation which mark the successive periods. He participated regularly in nearly all the competitive shows in the Detroit area. Describing an exhibition held in the Detroit Bonstelle Playhouse Gallery, the Detroit News in November 22, 1925 pointed out his “versatility in the choice of subject matter and great vigor of handling... He loves the outdoors, the moods of nature and his design comes instinctively from an outpouring of feeling rather than cold analysis.” Reviewing a Michigan artists exhibition at the Detroit Institute of Art in 1930, Ralph Holmes in the Detroit Sunday Times criticized the endless imitations of Robert Henri, Gifford Beal, William Glackens, Frederick Waugh and Leopold Seiffert but praised Zoltan Sepeshy as the rightful prize winner who “assuredly has a way of his own, a vitality that is individual.” Out of some 900 works submitted, 277 entries were accepted and Sepeshy won the first award.

Sepeshy’s national reputation as a painter began in 1932 with his first New York exhibition at the Newhouse Galleries. Actually this came about through the visit of the well-known New York Times critic Edward Alden Jewell who had come out to Cranbrook to interview Eliel Saarinen, had met the artist and was very much impressed with his work.

In the scholarly introduction to the catalog of that exhibition, Dr. Walter Heil, then Curator of European Art at the Detroit Institute of Art, characterized the development of modern art as a search for a new reality. “With Impressionism quite out of fashion, all
The really modern-minded creative artists of today are searching for a more final reality than that which appeared on the surface. Rather than please the eye, they try to address themselves to the imagination and emotion of their public. Following that trend of the modern movement instigated some forty years ago by Cézanne, Sepeshy purposely simplified the views of nature in order to enhance their intensity. He stabilizes and strengthens his composition by emphasizing the elementary, geometric patterns of his subjects, while by suppression of the accidental and momentary, he conveys a truer impression of form. The art of Zoltan Sepeshy is genuine and vital. He is altogether one of the most promising figures among the younger generation of American artists.

The New York critics in general echoed the comment on the Cézanne influence but praised this artist from the citadel of industrialism for his vigorous, free and individual point of view. Henry McBride quoted in the Art Digest for May 5, 1932 says "He goes his own way and as he is a sure and accomplished draughtsman, he continues to carry conviction where others less soundly equipped fail." Edward Alden Jewell in the New York Times (April 28, 1932) commented that "The salutary discipline of Cubism imposed on the gaiety and brightness of the native Hungarian tradition has made of Zoltan Sepeshy ... a fine painter. Unlike Picasso, and the orthodox Cubists generally, Sepeshy in his work never passes from the realm of representation into pure decoration; neither does he use (their) characteristic earthy palette."

Sepeshy's work continued to develop in his own way. Florence Davies in the Detroit News (January 2, 1936) praised Sepeshy's exhibition at the Cranbrook Museum for its new spirit, with power, a broader manner, a richer palette, and a greater feeling for the continuity of space. In New York that same year, however, the reaction recorded in the Art Digest (February 15, 1936) to his show at the Marie Sterner Galleries, stressed his
participation in the American scene with material taken from the Middle West "but no matter how accurately or sympathetically he records these scenes they are still lacking in American quality. Sepeshy's art is too sophisticated and highly accomplished to bear a native flavor..." Jewell, in the New York Times, (February 11, 1936) adds that Mr. Sepeshy's work "would never be mistaken for the work of a native American .... It is too highly accomplished and personal an expression." Emily Genauer in the Herald Tribune for February 15, 1936 compared his work with another Hungarian recently exhibited in New York, Aba-Novak, but calls his exhibition at the Marie Sterner Galleries an absolute "must."

Sepeshy's reaction to this type of criticism reveals both his confidence in his own objectives and accomplishment, and a profound understanding of the cultural changes at work during this period as reflected in the press. This appears in a review by Sibilla Skidelsky in the Washington Post (February 21, 1937). It described his Hungarian background but added that it was here in the United States that he grew up as an artist. America provided the opportunity, she quoted him as saying, "for self-expression, for growth in an environment that was still growing, for creation with a material that was still plastic." It is no wonder that in a way he should feel more American, perhaps, than the American-born, "more closely a part of this country than many whose sense and understanding have been dulled by use." His paintings are suggestive; when he paints a figure or an object, he wants them to suggest every possibility. "For this reason," she quoted Sepeshy, "my compositions have a somewhat geometricized (geometry in its suggestive rather than its finite aspect) architectonic structure. The object is much more than that which occupies space; it is one of many possibilities, and it is qualitatively suggestive of those possibilities. . . . The completely abstract or fully detailed concrete are only half-truths—a genuine experience involves the interplay of the two. Time, space and the object are relations,
not entities, and the experience is becoming. It is much more than what it is—it is full of what might have been.'"

From this time on, the reviews have been consistent in stressing the artist's creative eloquence, his clear-sighted technical excellence, his poetic imagination and individuality. Reacting to Sepeshy's first exhibition at New York's Midtown Galleries, the Art Digest (December 1, 1938) carried a review under the heading "Sepeshy Completes his Americanization." His older painting had been strong and starkly effective... now Sepeshy's pictures are open, redolent with form and color, mellow in their transitions, carefully woven in their color. Howard Devree in the New York Times for November 7, 1938 pointed out Sepeshy's exhibition as one of the best of some thirty through which he had wearily trudged. "Sepeshy's is individual work without ism's."

During these fateful years just before and during the second World War the question of "Americanization" was no idle issue. Sepeshy's definition in terms of his philosophy, his objectives, his own creative work and the public reaction to it as reflected in the press, provides one of the most positive statements of that character to be found in contemporary American art.

Nor was his situation unique. In announcing the opening of an exhibition of American Art at the Detroit Institute of Art, a list of fourteen invited artists was published in the Detroit Free Press (March 24, 1940). Comment was made about foreign-born artists, including Sepeshy and particularly George Grosz, "widely known German satirist, now an American citizen, who will show through his work the reaction of the foreign born artist to the land of his adoption... the same could be said of Kuniyoshi." Actually on this particular list no less than five were foreign-born, and if one were to review the roster of our nationally known artists of the time the proportion would probably be much the same.
American art therefore, to restate the obvious—which needs constantly to be restated—is not a matter of race or creed but one of aesthetic quality and character. Sepeshy’s recognition of the artist’s genuinely social and patriotic responsibility during the dark days of the war is best expressed in an article he wrote for the Art Digest (Aug. 1, 1943) as one of a series on the place of art in the post-war world:

“In this period of social transition and upheaval, new values will inevitably emerge in all the arts. What these values will be specifically is unpredictable. For the predictable, as Bergson said, can contain no genuine creative newness. However, we can see that new attitudes will develop for every period of crisis shocks us out of our complacent worship of the past into a new experimental direction.

“The last World War provides a lesser prototype of the cultural transvaluation occurring today. Out of that war a “new” art was born. It contained much that was vital—but also much that was superficial. It was too much conditioned by postwar cynicism and disillusionment. . . .

“. . . Our painters took many directions. . . . Each of us, without realizing that he had averted his face from the richness of the contemporary scene, believed that he was following the one true light. This war has welded peoples together. Out of their common crises has come a reawakened purpose almost religious in tone.

“Surrealism, abstractionism, visual realism, precisionism, romanticism, primitivism, American scenism—all are facets of one crystal. All will have to be cemented together under the impact of this new force which will give emotional unity and oneness of purpose to all these diverse purposes. . . .
"This belief—that art arises from the common needs and aspirations of all men and that compartmentalization is a hindrance to its growth—this philosophy has motivated my teaching... and in fact made teaching itself worthwhile."

What actually did happen in the postwar world and the cultural explosion that has projected American art into a position of world leadership, is now a matter of history. Indeed it is a history that is yet to be written but in the complex of personalities, institutions and influences this point of view expressed by Sepeshy nearly a generation ago will be recognized as a major factor in the new developments. Certainly he would be the last to claim this as a personal influence, but in his painting, teaching and writing he has served as the spokesman for a large segment of the best in American creative life.

Zoltan Sepeshy's own work since the war has continued steadily on the same high level and recognition has been equally consistent. He is represented in some thirty-five museum collections throughout the United States as well as the National in Budapest and the Museum of Tel Aviv, Israel. He has been honored by membership in the National Academy of Design and the National Institute of Arts and Letters and has maintained a consistent exhibition program with the Midtown Galleries of New York, as well as the major invitational exhibitions of national standing.

His ventures into the arena of public art through mural commissions have been significant but less prominent in his total production. Several decorative panels depicting various modes of transportation were executed for the General Motors Building in Detroit in 1927. Another series of six, also on the transportation theme, was painted for the Fordson High School in Dearborn, Michigan, the following year. Murals in the postoffices of Lincoln Park, Michigan and Nashville, Illinois, were executed under the Federal Art Program.
In 1933 Sepeshy was one of eight Michigan artists chosen to depict the one hundred-year history of his state in the Chicago Century of Progress exhibition. His gigantic (16' x 8') canvas represented Jean Nicolet, famous as the first white man to set foot on Michigan soil, who impressed the native Indians with his colorful Chinese Mandarin robe and "thunder in his hands."

A special project called "Michigan on Canvas" was sponsored by the J. L. Hudson Company of Detroit in 1946. Sepeshy and nine other nationally known painters were commissioned to portray artistically to the people of Michigan the assets of their great state... so that, as the sponsors said, "every resident who sees the collection will recognize localities and activities in which he has personal experience." The collection of over 100 paintings was exhibited in the state capital and circulated throughout the state.

Sepeshy's most significant venture into the illustration field was a commission for a series of paintings in gouache of the American Steel Industry based on studies of the Inland Steel Plant in Whiting, Indiana, and published in the October 1938 issue of Fortune.

Whether on the public platform or in personal conversation, a formal class critique or casual group discussion on the campus lawn, the written text of an article or letter, or indeed the magnificent panorama of work presented in this exhibition, Sepeshy's personality shines through with remarkable warmth and clarity. As he had said so many times, and as he works and lives, art is a way of life. He is interested in people, and whether they be students (whom he characteristically calls "my younger colleagues"), patrons, workers or colleagues, he is constantly searching for the spark of life and enthusiasm which is the special hallmark of the artist.
He has often confessed to being an incorrigible romanticist who "may have been born a half-century too late." From this point of view indeed the Magyar and the traditional American have much in common. But regardless of stylistic identification that character is tempered by the disciplined logic of the craftsman. His studio is always immaculate; his work habits are clear and systematic. That is why he has been so consistently devoted to the tempera medium; and from the initial glow of the luminous white gesso ground to the rich color and firm design of the completed work, the sense of order is inviolate.

In surveying the work—forty years of it—the human element seems to predominate whether there are figures or not. Some motifs, such as the cityscapes, are sheer design problems, yet the forms move as though they were human beings. The seagulls walk and talk like humans, but when they take flight they become, as he says, divine. For the most part the harbor and sand dune scenes come from the area of Frankfort, the Lake Michigan fishing town where he maintained a summer home for many years. Their atavistic character and monumental scale carry a spirit far beyond the specific time and place.

In our particular situations here at Syracuse University and the Cranbrook Academy, where the museums perform a dual function of serving the public as well as the education of young artists, this exhibition has a special significance. It provides an opportunity to survey an artist's work in one place which one would otherwise have to travel many miles to a score of cities to see. While it presents a kind of history through nearly two generations of contemporary American art, it demonstrates the quality of artistic growth and personal integrity necessary to the genuinely creative artist. Finally it provides a monumental tribute to another of America's great artists and teachers who upon official retirement as president of an important educational institution, now moves ahead to a new period of productive work.
AGAINST THE RAIN | 1940

FAINT SUNSHINE | 1940

WILD FLOWERS | 1940
Sepeshy is orderly and objective in his approach; and is an exponent of a meticulous technique, rather laborious in manipulation, resulting in a brilliantly painted picture of impeccable workmanship. A superb colorist, he has developed a method of tempera painting that extends the chromatic range beyond the limits set by more conventional techniques.

His pictures are built up with pure (unmixed) transparent colors stroked on with fine sable brushes, in a manner somewhat suggestive of etching or engraving. Translucent, these hues overlay one another or are juxtaposed. Colors are shaded or varied in intensity by the use of thousands of lines. If purple is desired, blue may be criss-crossed over red. The blue lines may be closely spaced to deepen their intensity, widely spaced to allow the red to dominate. This procedure is patiently followed in the rendering of every square inch of the picture and, as Sepeshy insists that the entire surface must be kept absolutely even, the difficulty of the method is apparent.

It is clear, too, that the artist must begin his work with a fairly definite idea of just what he wants to do. The method leaves no opening for impulsive splash work or for correction of mistakes by overpainting. Changes can, of course, be made but they require a fresh beginning where the pigment has been scraped off to the priming board. As a matter of fact, mistakes are less likely to occur in this rather elaborately planned projection of a design that is first developed in a series of preliminary studies.

* Reprinted in part from Ernest W. Watson's article on Sepeshy, American Artist, Vol. 8, No. 7, P. 8, September 1944.
It is in these studies that spontaneous creation operates. Yet, in spite of the seemingly
mechanical technique of the final painting (that consumes weeks of arduous work), the
creative process continues up to the last brush stroke. Great technical skill in manipulation
frees the artist for adventurous conception all along the way.

The artist describes his painting procedure as follows: “I usually paint on tempera
Presidwood or Masonite. Contrary to some authorities, I believe it is entirely safe, in fact
I know it is. For the largest pictures I use a 3/16th inch board; for the smaller ones, 1/8
inch is satisfactory.

“Ordinarily I prefer the coarser side of the board though on occasion the smooth side may
be selected. In either case, I roughen the surface with a fairly coarse steel file to give the
priming a sharp and good retention texture. Then the surface is sanded slightly.

“Two coats of a very thin gelatin solution are next applied to both sides of the board,
amounting to one ‘just the proper coat.’ This is where the ‘mystery’ enters—what the
precise solution is can be ascertained only by the ‘taste’ method, as in cookery. The
gelatin solution might be a 1 to 15 or a 1 to 20 proportion; that is, one cup of concen-
trated gelatin bulk to 15 or 20 cups of water.

“Next comes the priming—11 coats of priming on both sides and the edges of the panel.
For the priming solution I usually, though not always, employ the following: mixture of
slightly less than 1/2 whiting and the rest chemically pure oxide of zinc dissolved (to
light, creamy consistency) in a solution of 3/4 animal hide glue and 1/4 gelatin. Again
this recipe is checked by the ‘to taste’ test. It must feel right to the fingers—sometimes I
actually do taste the mixture. To this concoction I add, slowly, and in very small quantities,
with continuous and powerful stirring, a certain amount of a 50/50 mixture of stand oil
and Navy specification spar varnish or damar varnish. The proportion of oil varnish
solution to the rest of the aggregate varies from 1/10th to 1/23th. The variable factors
are the need for a more or less absorbent ground and the quality of technique to be used,
that is, a fine or much finer brushed painting. Experience alone can determine to a nicety
the exact recipe required for these varying conditions.

"After priming, the surface is sanded with coarse or fine sandpaper, or both. After that,
if an extremely smooth ground is wanted for fine brush work in the painting, the surface
is rubbed down with finely pulverized pumice stone.

"From a great number of preliminary pencil and color sketches of the subject I make a
precise line drawing, the exact size of the panel, on transparent (though not tracing)
paper. The back of the paper is then blackened by rubbing pulverized hard graphite over
it in preparation for the transfer of drawing to panel. Spraying lightly with fixatif will
prevent the graphite soiling the white ground but it will not interfere with transferring
the lines, which is done with an inverted needle driven into the end of a stick. As this
stylus traces the contours they are transferred to the ground in beautifully sharp—but
sufficiently faint—incisive lines that will not beat through the painting, no matter how
thickly the medium is applied.

"The next step is something foreign to most temperamentists; it is my own procedure
but anyone is, of course, welcome to use it. I coat the transferred drawing with an
extremely thin priming solution, the same as previously described but made slower-drying
by the addition of a very slight amount of oil of cloves. My first very thin underpainting is
executed right into this wet priming, laid on over as large an area as I intend to under­
paint in one sitting (one day).
In this first underpainting I use mostly casein emulsion for my medium, it being probably the strongest adherent. This underpainting must adhere completely. In the rest of the painting I use wax emulsion—emulsified egg with very little stand oil—if I don't want a high polish. Or egg emulsion consisting of one whole egg, damar varnish, plus distilled water—twice the amount of egg and varnish—combined, if I prefer a high polish.

In the former case, the polishing is done by merely rubbing the warmed surface of the finished painting with a very slightly waxed, soft pad. In the latter, by a discriminative use of the following mixture: venice turpentine, damar varnish—proportion depends on leanness or fatness of painting layers—all of turpentine and white beeswax. After the polish has dried down for a week it may seem advisable to dull it a bit by a little pure beeswax dissolved in essence of turpentine. In polishing, it is the operation itself that is important.

I build up my painting without the use of white pigment. My colors are dry powdered pigments (most of them lime proof) with no body-white in them. Some of the coarser colors I often re-grind and wash. On many occasions I have found, and still find in various regions of the country, good earth colors which I myself refine and use. The average number of colors used is about 15 to 18. If you want to know what it means to build up a tempera without a speck of white, see how many tempera paintings you can find without white, and then compare. The texture, the effulgence of the pigmentation is what I am after.

I haven't used white outside of in my priming for five years. In my notation and manipulation white is not a paint or a pigment, it is a source of light and its essence is an 'ab abs' suggestiveness and not an 'ab extra' usage. And I have the feeling that the success and beauty of the luminosity, tone and color (not pigment) depth, translucence of texture of
a tempera will mean something else if I do it in this sense, irrespective of absence of colossal and sensational subjects and cosmic messages to fellow humans.

"I keep my colors mixed (to a proper—thin currant jelly—consistency) with distilled water and a bit of egg damar emulsion, in open-mouthed jars, topped with distilled water to prevent drying. Thus I can keep many of the colors for a year or two, changing the distilled water on them about every two or three months. This preserves the colors clean and clear.

"I use long-haired, flat, sable brushes anywhere from 1/4" to 1" wide for finishing. Much wider up to 1-1/2" or 2" and somewhat coarser brushes for underpainting. Long-haired, round (1/16" thickness) sables for linear contour drawing and contour finishing. Also long-bristled (fine hog's hair) oil brushes, which I pluck to avoid watery density, to serve for the coarser under layers. Finally, a tooth-brush where an even spacing and width of line is required in sharply terminating strokes.

"My palette is a light tea-table-like contraption, easily movable on castors, with a plate glass top whose reverse side is painted white. This top is countersunk one inch. Out of the jars enough paint is put on this 'palette' to last two or three days. The paint on the palette is kept moist (overnight, or for a couple of nights) by means of a large, flat, wet sponge in the middle of the middle, and the whole thing covered with a piece of glass. The colors are mixed as the case demands, either on the palette or by cross-hatching on the painting.

"Apropos the individual 'scoops' of colors on the palette; they are put in small apertures spaced out in a U-shaped, one-sided tin channel whose vertical depth is that of the countersinking on the palette, horizontal depth about 1-1/2"—easily removable for washing. It is excellent for keeping the colors from inter-mixing accidentally. You can readily see why this medium is not an outdoor one."
LENDERS TO THE EXHIBITION

Akron Art Institute, Akron, Ohio
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York
Berkeley Public Library, Berkeley, Michigan
Mr. and Mrs. John W. Blanchard, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Booth, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
City Art Museum of St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri
Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Colby, Grosse Point Farms, Michigan
The Cradle Society, Evanston, Illinois
Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas, Texas
Davenport Municipal Art Gallery, Davenport, Iowa
Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, Michigan
Detroit Urban League, Detroit, Michigan
Flint Institute of Art, Flint, Michigan
Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan
Hackley Art Gallery, Muskegon, Michigan
International Business Machines Corporation, Gallery of Arts and Sciences, New York
Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, Michigan
Dr. and Mrs. James E. Lofstrom, Grosse Point, Michigan
MacGregor Public Library, Highland Park, Michigan
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Midtown Galleries, New York
National Academy of Design, New York
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art, Providence, Rhode Island
Dean and Mrs. Laurence Schmeckebier, Syracuse, New York
Sheldon Swope Art Gallery, Terre Haute, Indiana
Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York
Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio
University of Arizona Art Gallery, Tucson, Arizona
University of Michigan, Museum of Art, Ann Arbor, Michigan
University of Nebraska Art Galleries, Lincoln, Nebraska
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford B. West, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Wichita Art Museum, Wichita, Kansas
MARINE STILL LIFE | 1946

THEY WAIT | 1946
In addition to the museums listed among the lenders to this exhibition, Zoltan Sepeshy's work is included in the following public collections: Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio; Cass Technical High School, Detroit, Michigan; Chicago Art Institute, Chicago, Illinois; Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado; Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., New York; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; Howard University Collection, Washington, D.C.; Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Museum Tel Aviv, Israel; National Academy, Budapest, Hungary; San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, California; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California; Telfair Academy of Arts, Savannah, Georgia; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia.

The murals are to be found in the Fordson High School, Dearborn, Michigan; The Rackham Engineering Foundation Building, Detroit, Michigan; the Lincoln Park (Michigan) Post Office and the Nashville (Illinois) Post Office, as well as in a number of private homes.

Major one-man exhibitions have been held at the John Hanna Gallery in Detroit (1926), the Newhouse Gallery, New York (1932), the Marie Sterner Gallery, New York (1936) and the Midtown Galleries, New York, regularly since 1938. Previous to the present exhibition at Syracuse University and the Cranbrook Museum, institutional one-man
exhibitions have been held in the Akron Art Institute, Akron, Ohio; Atlanta Art Association Galleries, Atlanta, Georgia; Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio; Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado; Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; M. H. deYoung Memorial Museum, San Francisco, California; Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Kansas City Art Institute and School of Design, Kansas City, Missouri; Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois; Kreege Art Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan; Memphis Museum of Art, Memphis, Tennessee; Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Museum of Art, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences, Norfolk, Virginia; Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California; Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio; Topeka Museum of Art, Topeka, Kansas; Yale University Art Galleries, New Haven, Connecticut.

Along with the many private collections, Sepeshy's works are to be found in the collections of the J. L. Hudson Company, Detroit, the National Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, and the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C.

Since 1934 he has participated regularly by invitation in all national and international exhibitions including those of the Carnegie International, the Brooklyn International, the Chicago International, the Corcoran Biennial, the Richmond Biennial, and those of the Chicago Art Institute, the Pennsylvania Academy, the Metropolitan, Whitney, Toledo, Cleveland, Cincinnati, St. Louis, San Diego, San Francisco, Worcester, Boston, Kansas City, Colorado Springs, Detroit and other museums. He was represented in the World's Fair exhibitions of 1933 and 1939, as well as the Golden Gate Exhibition of 1939. He has served as a member of juries on many of these and other national and regional exhibitions throughout his public career.
Sepeshy has been a consistent prize winner in these competitions since his first award in Detroit in 1922. From the national point of view, the list of important awards includes the Patteran Great Lakes Exhibition Prize in Buffalo in 1939; the I.B.M. award at the Golden Gate International in San Francisco, 1940; the Portrait of America prize in New York, 1946; the Dana Watercolor Medal at the Pennsylvania Academy, 1946; the Carnegie Institute First Prize in 1947; the Salmagundi Club Award in New York, 1949; the Samuel F. B. Morse Gold Medal of the National Academy of Design, 1952; and the Award of the National Academy of Arts and Letters in New York in 1946.

CATALOG

CAMPUS MARTIUS (CADILLAC SQUARE) | 1947

SKYLINE (FROM WINDSOR) | 1947

ATMOSPHERE
Oil | 18 x 22 | 1925
Collection of William Suhr, New York City

NEW MEXICO INDIAN DANCE
Oil | 18 x 22 | 1926
Collection of William N. Miller, Detroit, Michigan

THE CHIEF PUEBLO
Oil | 35 x 38 | 1927
Collection of The Scarab Club, Detroit, Michigan

HUNGARIAN PEASANTS
Oil | 35 x 31 | 1928
Lent by MacGregor Public Library, Highland Park, Michigan

PLANT NO. II
Oil | 49 x 42 | 1929
Collection of Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

MICHIGAN WINTER
Oil | 22 x 27½ | 1930
Lent by Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan

OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOL
Oil | 25 x 30 | 1930
Collection of The Kingswood School, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

WOODWARD AVENUE
Oil | 31 x 33 | 1932
Collection of J.L. Hudson Company, Detroit, Michigan
**WOODWARD AVENUE NO. II.**
Oil  | 25 x 30  | 1934
Collection of Elden J. Bemis, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**VILLAGE**
Gouache  | 12 x 18  | 1934
Collection of George G. Booth, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**GOIN' HOME**
Watercolor  | 32½ x 24½  | 1934
Lent by Detroit Urban League, Detroit, Michigan

**AFT DECK**
Oil  | 20¼ x 25¼  | 1934
Lent by Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**SCRANTON COAL CHUTE**
Oil & gouache  | 25 x 30  | 1935
Lent by Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**CLERICS WALKING**
Gouache  | 22 x 28  | 1935
Collection of Edgar Kahn

**LANDING IN NEW YORK**
Gouache on canvas  | 25 x 30  | 1935
Collection of Eliel Saarinen

**ZOO**
Gouache on panel  | 24½ x 32  | 1935
Collection of Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**NEW ENGLAND SIESTA**
Tempera  | 25 x 35½  | 1936
Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Booth, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

**PORTRAIT OF DAVID FREDENTHAL**
Oil & gouache  | 20 x 23  | 1936
Collection of David Fredenthal

**YELLOW FARM**
Oil & gouache  | 30 x 36  | 1936
Collection of E. W. Osborne, Birmingham, Michigan

**YOUNG MOTHER**
Tempera  | 30 x 36  | 1937
Lent by Akron Art Institute, Akron, Ohio

**FOREIGN MARKET**
Watercolor  | 16 x 20  | 1937
Lent by Flint Institute of Art, Flint, Michigan

**STILL LIFE**
Tempera  | 22 x 32  | 1938
Collection of Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
AFTERNOON SKIING
Tempera | 20 x 25 | 1938
F. M. Hall Collection, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

FARMLAND
Watercolor | 18 x 22 | 1938
Lent by Wichita Art Museum, Roland P. Murdock Collection, Wichita, Kansas

MORNING CHORE
Tempera | 30 x 36 | 1938
Lent by International Business Machines Corporation, Gallery of Arts and Sciences, New York City

MORNING BLIND
Tempera | 30 x 36 | 1938
Lent by National Academy of Design, New York City

JANUARY
Tempera | 22½ x 27 | 1939
Collection of Chicago Art Institute, Chicago, Illinois

MORNING
Tempera | 25 x 30 | 1939
Lent by City Art Museum of St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri

SAND DUNES
Tempera | 25 x 30 | 1939
Collection of Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio

JANUARY MICHIGAN FARM
Watercolor | 29 x 39½ | 1939
Lent by Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan

END OF THE DAY
Tempera | 20 x 22½ | 1940
Lent by University of Arizona Art Gallery, Tucson, Arizona

AGAINST THE RAIN
Tempera | 18 x 28 | 1940
Lent by Sheldon Swope Art Gallery, Terre Haute, Indiana

POD GATHERER
Tempera | 25 x 30 | 1940
Lent by The Cradle Society, Evanston, Illinois

FISHERMAN'S MORNING
Tempera | 28 x 36 | 1940
Private Collection, New York City

WILD FLOWERS
Tempera | 25 x 32 | 1940
Lent by Sheldon Swope Art Gallery, Terre Haute, Indiana

FAINT SUNSHINE
Watercolor | 20 x 28 | 1940
Lent by Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exhibit Title</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Lender</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE ARTIST (Self Portrait, upper left)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DETAIL FROM RACKHAM BUILDING MURAL</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td></td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Lafayette Schmeckebier, Syracuse, New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRIFTWOOD</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>28 x 35%</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. Clifford B. West, Birmingham, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUNTAN</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>14½ x 19</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Dean and Mrs. Lawrence Schmeckebier, Detroit, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SKETCH FOR DRIFTWOOD</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>20 x 24¾</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Colby, Grosse Point Farms, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>MENDING ROW</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>18 x 26</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Hackley Art Gallery, Muskegon, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SANDLAND</td>
<td>Watercolor</td>
<td>23 x 28</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Collection Lou Maxon, Detroit, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PORTRAIT OF ELIEL SAARINEN</td>
<td>Gouache on canvas</td>
<td>25 x 30</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>National Academy of Design, New York City</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIGHTHOUSE ON LAKE MICHIGAN</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>30 x 41</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Art Center, Kalamazoo, Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATURDAY AFTERNOON</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>26 x 34</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA GULLS</td>
<td>Watercolor</td>
<td>22 x 30</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Collection of International Business Machine Corporation, Gallery of Arts and Sciences, New York City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAND DUNE VEGETATION</td>
<td>Tempera</td>
<td>23 x 20</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Berkeley Public Library, Berkeley, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATTERNS</td>
<td>Oil &amp; tempera</td>
<td>30 x 36</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Flint Institute of Arts, Flint, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER WATERS</td>
<td>Oil &amp; gouache</td>
<td>27% x 35</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Mr. and Mrs. John W. Blanchard, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan</td>
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</table>
PIGEON
Tempera | 21 x 28 | 1944
Collection of J. L. Hudson Company, Detroit, Michigan

BUSINESS CENTER
Oil & gouache | 32 x 40 | 1944
Collection of The High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia

SUNBURST
Oil & gouache | 16 x 20 | 1945
Collection of Frederick March, New Milford, Connecticut

SUN AND WATER
Gouache on canvas | 26 x 32 | 1945
Lent by Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, Michigan

SELF PORTRAIT
Oil & gouache | 20 x 24 | 1946
Lent by National Academy of Design, New York City

THE WHOLE TOWN
Tempera | 24 x 32 | 1946
Lent by Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas, Texas

OLEN'S MEN
Tempera | 33 x 45 | 1946
Lent by Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THEY WAIT
Tempera | 20 x 30 | 1946
Lent by William Rockhill Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri

PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY
Tempera | 16 x 20 | 1945
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Colby, Groce Pointe Farms, Michigan

MARINE STILL LIFE
Tempera | 30 x 38 | 1946
Lent by Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan. Gift of Mrs. Charles D. Bair

CAR FERRY HARBOR
Tempera | 24 x 34 | 1945
Lent by Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York

VICTIMES
Watercolor | 24 x 30 | 1945
Collection of The Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

OLSEN'S MEN
Tempera | 33 x 45 | 1946
Lent by Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THEY WAIT
Tempera | 20 x 30 | 1946
Lent by William Rockhill Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City, Missouri

MARINE STILL LIFE
Tempera | 30 x 38 | 1946
Lent by Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan. Gift of Mrs. Charles D. Bair
RED SCOW
Tempera | 24 x 46 | 1946
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City

SIESTA
Tempera | 18 x 20 | 1947
Collection of P. J. Selberling, New York City

SKYLINE (FROM WINDSOR)
Oil & gouache | 11½ x 18¼ | 1947
Collection of Fred Sanders Company, Detroit, Michigan

CAMPUS MARTIUS (CADILLAC SQUARE)
Oil & gouache | 18 x 27 | 1947
Collection of Fred Sanders Company, Detroit, Michigan

AMBASSADOR BRIDGE (TO WINDSOR, CANADA)
Oil & gouache | 24 x 36½ | 1947
Collection of Fred Sanders Company, Detroit, Michigan

NORTH OF CONGRESS
Oil & gouache | 24 x 32 | 1947
Collection of Fred Sanders Company, Detroit, Michigan

CITY CANYON (GRISWOLD SOUTHWARD)
Oil & gouache | 18 x 24 | 1947
Collection of Fred Sanders Company, Detroit, Michigan

AT SEA
Oil & gouache | 20 x 32 | 1949
Lent by Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Gilbert M. Walker Fund Acquisition.

INVARiABLES
Tempera | 24 x 34 | 1949
Lent by University of Michigan Museum of Art,
Ann Arbor, Michigan

SUNDAY AFTERNOON
Tempera | 23 x 45½ | 1950
Lent by Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art,
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE I KNEW
Oil & tempera | 33 x 44½ | 1950
Lent by Museum of the Cranbrook Academy of Art,
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

ON DECK
Tempera | 39 x 45 | 1951
Collection of the University of Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia

DEPARTING BOAT
Tempera | 20 x 30 | 1951
Lent by Davenport Municipal Art Gallery.
E. P. Adler Memorial Fund Purchase 1951
SOMEONE'S HAT  Watercolor  |  1952  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

WORKSHOP  
Tempera  |  30 x 36  |  1953  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

TOWN ON THE RIVER  
Oil & Gouache  |  30½ x 34½  |  1953  
Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Frederick L. Colby,  
Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan  

VISITORS TO YESTERDAY  
Oil & Gouache  |  53 x 45  |  1956  
Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City,  
Hugo Kastor Fund, 1957  

CAVE OF MIRACLES  
Oil & Gouache  |  31 x 44  |  1956  
Lent by Dr. and Mrs. James E. Lofstrom,  
Grosse Pointe, Michigan  

SKETCH FOR CAVE OF MIRACLES  
Watercolor  |  7½ x 9½  |  1956  
Lent by Dr. and Mrs. James E. Lofstrom,  
Grosse Pointe, Michigan  

FOLK STILL LIFE  
Gouache  |  19½ x 28½  |  1960  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

EVENING OVER OLD TWIN CITIES  
Tempera  |  32 x 44  |  1962  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

HEAT ON THE BEACH  
Oil & Gouache  |  32 x 32  |  1962  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

REMEMBER NO. 2  
Tempera  |  18 x 36  |  1964  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

EVENING OVER OLD TWIN CITIES  |  1962  

SKETCH FOR CAVE OF MIRACLES  
Watercolor  |  7½ x 9½  |  1956  
Lent by Dr. and Mrs. James E. Lofstrom,  
Grosse Pointe, Michigan  

FOLK STILL LIFE  
Gouache  |  19½ x 28½  |  1960  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

EVENING OVER OLD TWIN CITIES  
Tempera  |  32 x 44  |  1962  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

HEAT ON THE BEACH  
Oil & Gouache  |  32 x 32  |  1962  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City  

REMEMBER NO. 2  
Tempera  |  18 x 36  |  1964  
Lent by Midtown Galleries, New York City