Robert Schefman
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A Retrospective of Painting

written and curated by
Dick Goody

Meadow Brook Art Gallery
Oakland University
The finished work, İsimiz (English translation from the Turkish: the nameless ones) integrated the sculptured figures into the topography of the landscape. Of course, from his previous public Modernist commissions, Schefman was well attuned to the vital relationship between sculpture and place, and part of his reasoning for İsimiz was to explore narrative aspect of the figure in the context of one of the most historically charged sites on earth. It got him thinking about something that had preoccupied him for some time, that is, the nature and singularity of sculpture and about the objectness of sculpture in general. It struck him that his sculptured figures were no longer monolithic entities disconnected from one another. They had become fused into the storyline and geography of the landscape. He began to think about the expressive possibilities of narrative art while at the same time he perceived the limitations inherent in the once-removed nature of the sculptured figure/object. This was what set him essentially on a new trajectory where he started to consider the figurative and illusionist properties of painting.

Schefman did not have art instruction in high school; he worked at both drawing and sculpture on his own. He entered college no technical stone unturned. This is inevitably what happens when sculptors learn other forms of expression – they don't delve, no technical stone unturned. This is what gives Schefman's paintings their bite. As Schefman states: Often I choose to work in verbal terms. He is a verbal painter, mixing the visual with the linguistic and his approach is metonymic rather than symbolic. The chief signifiers are men and women. His work is a paradigm they customize, and this is what makes the game metaphorical rather than metaphorical. Paradoxically, in the context of language, Schefman’s figures appear silenced by a moment without words. They are, as James Joyce put it, in a state of “aesthetic arrest;” not speaking, they are suspended experiencing the moment.

Schefman's masterworks. The confluence of form, content and theme reaches perfection. In a sense they require no narrative parable is that the confluence of form, content and theme reaches perfection. In a sense they require no narrative.

Sculptors and painters are different animals after all. Painters learn to paint in the painterly, technically laid back, conceptually charged, atmosphere of the art school painting studio. Sculptors necessarily always have to learn more technical aptitude – they have to ensure their objects won't fly apart – process and engineering are emphasized. When Schefman first picked up a brush (as a sculptor thinking about making oil paintings) a diligent technical approach was inevitable. Does this make him a painter, or is he a sculptor doing 3D narratives on a 2D surface? Undeniably he is master of his craft, which is another way of saying he can paint maestriously perfectly. One of the reasons his fauves work seems alienated from the zeitgeist of contemporary painting is that he works in a sort of non-painting style – or rather something we might call the generic impeccable. Approaching painting with sculptural acumen, his meticulous technique is chiefly concerned with volume and structure, particularly the structure of anatomy, but generally he is concerned with the way these structures are affected by light. This structural approach also influences the architectural manner in which he composes his pictures; his interiors are nothing if not scrupulously engineered spaces built to contain the anatomical structures therein. This technically heavy method is not painterly. In Schefman's work you don't see the paint, you see only the masterful illusion.

In the art world, curators and artists talk about the civilians – the folks that don't know much about art but know what they like. It's safe to assume that the civilians would admire Schefman's work because he paints maestriously. On the other hand they would undoubtedly be disturbed by the darkness of his narratives – all that nakedness and pain – for them, flowers bathed in saturated light would be so much more palatable. Regarding his technique, other than approving of it, the civilians would probably not even notice the exacting skillfulness, however, so they see the narrative interpenetration.

Conversely, traditional, though Schefman's work may appear superficially, collectors of contemporary art support his work precisely because of its narrative thrust. His technique is the structural engine driving his work, but the formalistic aspect is not what lies at the conceptual heart of his paintings. The narrative supposition with Schefman's work is of an impending deterioration of circumstances. It is partly the formalistic mannerism of the forms, meaning their sculptural weight, but it is also the chiaroscuro: lighted figures strike passive poses in the black treacle of the surrounding gloom lit by the selectively clever, seductive glow-worm spotlight of calamity (that's not real light by the way, it's celestial light – aka a pastiche of the light of God). All of this works to some extent in the technical, formalistic realm, but Schefman isn't painting formalistic stilllifes. The subjects are mortal beings. Conceptually his figures operate as vessels of tragedy. This is what gives Schefman's paintings their bite.
the three entities which comprise the visual dynamic of these works; there is person viewing the drama, i.e., you or me, the object of desire (the female) and the supporting dramatic personae. Curiously the object of desire is invariably surrounded by indifference. The other figures in these paintings are simply too preoccupied to apprehend/comprehend the target – they too have their subjective position to consider and it does not allow for targeting desire. We, the voyeurs, look on with frustration wanting some engagement, to see a denouement or at least some action. Since we invariably cannot see the face of the target – and this is incidentally very Lacanian – this creates a fracture between the onlooker and subject. We stand outside the frame with our Freudian scopophilia frustrated. As Freud put it: “The progressive concealment of the body which goes along with exhibition keeps sexual curiosity awake. This curiosity seeks to complete the sexual object by revealing its hidden parts.” Helping to keep this repressive regime intact, Schefman appears to conduct the affairs of these paintings effortlessly with his virtuoso technique and that is perhaps their chief strength. They stay on target and their eccentric sense of sexual repression is always poised and facilities in its execution.

When Schefman paints men, the narrative becomes more ambiguous, but generally the men are doing what men do when not satiating desire: they are fighting or dying or performing absurd acts of heroism, i.e., his men are either struggling with their repression or seeking sainthood. Schefman is asserting that men are definitely not from Venus. He laughs at the pathos of men, but never at the women.

What is outside the frame of Schefman’s paintings – literally beyond the edge of the pictures – is germane both literally and psychologically. His crops, edits and frames his imagery with a severe cinematic eye. His dioramas are so scrupulously assembled that everything beyond the frame must be chaos. His painting, Vermeer in Bosnia, is a prime example. Outside rapes interminable warfare, but in the frame the insured girl plays on mellifluously. Only within the rectangle is Schefman’s eccentric logic preserved. Outside people are crashing their cars, gate-crashing parties and getting divorces. In film, the fictional world of the narrative – everything known that is not seen on the screen – is called the diegesis – it’s the stuff we don’t see but know implicitly. Schefman’s compositions are so articulate, so idealized, so hyper-real that the diegesis necessary to get these disparate characters to operate together implies considerable convoluted cunning. One almost wonders if this painted rarified world must exist somewhere holographically or in some parallel universe because the codes of reality used to simulate hyper-reality have little reference in the real world. This disconnects them from us further, but this is the point because Schefman is paradoxically more interested in art than reality. This is particularly true of the Artist Apprentice Series; the hyper-reality annexes the activity within the frame as if it is taking place within a hermetically sealed vitrine, not unlike a Damien Hirst diorama.

The codes in Schefman’s paintings are also his leitmotifs. Always central in his more grandiose paintings, is the object of desire – or simply the object – the Lacanian nude female, partially obscured. Sticking with Jacques Lacan a moment longer, or rather his psychoanalytic theory of vision, we should remember that before looking at the object we too are being looked at, the way we look and the way we are looked at is part of the dynamic of looks. The viewer, so intrinsic to Schefman’s paintings, exists as a code outside the painting. Therefore the dynamic is thus inevitably shifts between the viewer, the object being viewed and a theatrical third party watching the viewer.

Beyond viewer and object are other leitmotifs. There is the implied or literal artistic facade; figure, sometimes the back of a canvas is enough to suggest his fatalistic masculine presence. There is the wench facilitator sidelined in impotency, perhaps fussing with a curtain or pulling on a rope. Lastly, if somewhat infrequently, there is the feuding girl musician; she’s pretty but strictly there for the soundtrack and she also raises the tone. Decode these signs and the message(s) will be unlocked. Is that the point of these paintings? If Schefman’s tongue is pressing against his cheek, then what is behind the deception? Perhaps the bigger question is whether Schefman is being earnest or contemptuous? He will not say. Included in the exhibition is a self-portrait by the artist with tape over his mouth, which he says is about censorship, but it could equally be about the artist scaring us with his arch inscension.

To accept these paintings one has to learn to appreciate them within and without the context of contemporary art. In some ways the confines of contemporary art are too narrow to accommodate Robert Schefman’s variant proclivities. However, there are very few contemporary artists who can paint like this. On the other hand, Schefman is more contemporary than one might think. His exacting realism could be regarded as a lure because the power of his paintings lies more in their psychological subversion and irony, both of which are very much at the heart of contemporary art. However, his technical focus is also refreshing; the art world has for some time been awash in a plethora of digitalization, but it is now turning its attention back to figurative painting. Schefman is a master slightly out of sync with his time, but his time is not past and he stands at the threshold of the future of painting.

Dick Goody, August 2005
Through myth, I am able to explore the constancy of human values, an unchanging connection between past and present.
M-M-My Charona, 1989, watercolor/paper, 58” x 48” From the Collection of Frank and Shirley Piku

Cassandra, 1992, watercolor/paper, 58” x 40” From the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Art Freedman
MYTHS

To Hades House, 1994, oil/canvas, 60" x 38," from the Collection of Harvey and Lynn Rubin

Song of the Siren, 1994, watercolor/paper, 72" x 56," from the Collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts
Antigone, 1999, oil on canvas, 102” x 184”

Masquerade, 1995, oil on canvas, 42” x 72”, Private Collection
Machiavelli, 1993, oil/canvas, 83" x 107," From the Collection of Robert and Linda Schmier

A Responsibility To Each Other, 1997, oil/mural, 168" x 576," 19th District Court, Dearborn, MI
CENSORSHIP SERIES

Consider censorship; prohibition, double standard, fear, ignorance and compromise.

Personal experience forced the issue and the paintings became a way to exorcise the most insidious of these; self censorship.
CENSORSHIP

Censor Strategy, 1997, oil on canvas, 48" x 38"

CENSORSHIP

Nothing By Mouth, 1997, oil on canvas, 32" x 32" From the Collection of Amy and Mark Haimann
CENSORSHIP

**Personal Baggage**, 1997, oil/canvas, 72” x 56.” From the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Rick DeRoven

**Without Conviction**, 1993, watercolor/paper, 60” x 40.” Private Collection
DREAM SERIES

Jung spoke of “archetypal dreams,”
dreams that seem to be carried in our genes.
We continue to experience flying dreams as unfettered soaring,
though we clearly understand
the mechanical requirements and realities of flight.
DREAMS

*Dreams in the Big Chair*, 2001, oil/canvas, 16" x 20", from the Collection of Daniel J. Flaggman

DREAMS

*Spilled Milk*, 2001, oil/canvas, 56" x 48", from the Collection of Michael A. Leibowitz
DREAMS

Gothic Dream, 2001, oil/canvas, 44" x 56" from the Collection of Mark and Lois Shevinsky

Dreams Of Flight, 2001, oil/canvas, 56" x 42"
DREAMS

Robert’s Nightmare, 2001, oil/canvas, 56” x 54”

DREAMS

Dreaming Tree, 2002, oil/canvas, 72” x 48”, From the Collection of Edward and Judith Berne
DINNER WITH GAIA, 2002, oil/canvas, 52” x 52,” Private Collection

DREAMS

OFFER OF HELP, 2004, oil/canvas, 48” x 64,” from the Collection of Michael A. Leibowitz

DINNER WITH GAIA, 2002, oil/canvas, 52” x 52,” Private Collection
THE ARTIST’S APPRENTICE

In the Apprentice Series I wanted to focus on perspective, to take the familiar and turn it inside out.
Verse, 2004, oil/canvas, 20” x 16.” Private Collection

Vermeer in Bosnia, 2004, oil/canvas, 42” x 36.” From the Collection of Michael A. Lebowitz
Birth of Venus, 2004, oil/canvas, 54" x 72"

Studio Musician, 2004, oil/canvas, 20" x 16"

THE ARTIST’S APPRENTICE

THE ARTIST’S APPRENTICE
Apprentice at Urbino (II), 2004, oil/canvas, 54" x 66"
Robert Schefman Interview

Why do you paint nudes?
I am fascinated with the human machine, with the structure of our bodies, our physical and emotional reality. Life, death, sex and the infinite remain big, inexhaustible issues. More specifically, I always had interest in two careers, medicine and art, and was fortunate to be exposed to both growing up through family and friends. I entered college as pre-med, and spent the summer before college attending surgery and performing autopsies. I was trained as a diener (laboratory assistant who does the actual cutting and dissection). These were intense experiences in my life. This tie to the body and curiosity about the body has never left, and eventually manifested itself in my work.

Can you talk about how you begin to think about a new painting in terms of the theme?
Often I choose to work in verbal terms, listing concerns and goals for an idea. In the extreme, I have let the tail wag the dog, working from a title and creating an image to fit, but my work can develop in any number of ways. Sometimes it begins with a pose from a drawing, or a corner of another painting. The impetus might come from reading or a single word. My sketchbook is a journal for notating ideas and raw information to be processed at another time. Occasionally, idea and image seem to come all at once. No matter how the idea begins, I like to develop variations of the idea as sketches to see as many possibilities as possible.

You trained at the University of Iowa as a sculptor and had a successful career as a Modernist sculptor in New York, yet in 1982 you quit sculpture to become a painter, why?
I was doing non-objective, large-scale, minimalist work, which grew to explore city squares, plazas, and other public space. I also collaborated with dance companies in NYC where my sets (sculptures) defined the space and form for the dance, using the vocabulary I developed. The works defined language and concepts as a metaphor, but I wanted to be more specific. I needed a change in vocabulary. So I went directly to the most content-loaded form, the figure, approaching it as a modular form. My desire was to create illusion as completely as possible while relating it to a specific site, for example, the project for the front plaza of the Jewish Museum. I needed to create illusion as completely and efficiently as possible, given the rigor of illusionist painting. Coming from watercolor, it is only natural that I would use transparent colors and techniques in my work. I love the light effects of transparent colors – I’m interested in the color of the light; it can intensify the atmosphere. My standard practice is to paint the first layer opaquely, and in a manner that is as close to the finished color as possible – a strange kind of “alla prima for the manipulative camera.” Of course, it is rarely the final layer, but usually it comes close 75%, or so. A couple layers of opaque or scumbled paint get it close enough to finish off with final glazing layers that adjust values, temperatures, and intensify the richness of colors. This is, however, a far cry from grisaille technique of the past. This is a much simpler approach, using contemporary materials and the available technology in both film and digital imaging.

Can you talk about your use of photography?
These paintings are fantasy. They use photo, but are not about photography or the photopisopic image. I love the results obtained by the traditional painting process, but take a faster, modern approach to materials and methods. Photography helps speed the process, helps with model costs, and fixes a 2D image facilitating the translation to painting. The early paintings were done from a combination of life models and photographs – I learned early on how difficult it was to keep models scheduled, paid and entertained during the long process of making a painting. The photos were always done in black and white so they would act as reference drawings. I wanted the colors to develop along with the work. Also, my paintings have a harder edge, a different approach to focus than the camera. Canvases have a depth of field that requires focus on foreground, middle or background. But the eye focuses quickly; it almost never stops on one depth of field, it jumps constantly. I wanted images more akin to seeing, rather than the focus/fuzz phenomena of photo replication.

What do you think of Balthus’s work? There are parallels. Balthus rejected modernism and refused to be in sync with his time.
I never really considered his work in relation to Balthus, possibly because he was just never a big favorite of mine. His handling of imagery and figure is somewhat stylized, and the otherworldly character of his work a product of a pretty specific surrealist critical agenda. I never spent much time on his history either. But I can see the connection you make. My paintings, though not formal surrealist, do share the notions of fantasy and illusion. We were both self-taught, though I think my art training, technically, takes me out of the outsider/self-taught category. It move a change of media and format for me. A fascination with the figure, the sexual nature of the body, and other subjects are common as well. Am I really so outside of the mainstream? Again, that is hard for me to consider, because it is precisely contemporary value systems that I am exploring or poking fun at. I think my analogies or juxtapositions would be lost outside of this modern context.
Why are you interested in Greek Tragedy?

Greek Tragedy is a fascinating form. We (the audience) are made conscious of many points of view, and yet, left wondering whether the actors can deviate from the script to change the outcome. Each character has one perspective and they make decisions, like so many of us, without considering the many voices acting in every set of circumstances. Also, for Americans, the Greek myths don't have the baggage inherent in active religions. I can take liberties with stories and characters. I don't want to illustrate the myth. I want the core concept or human issue, but I can put a different face on it to make new connections. I can tell the stories with different characters, but use the same plots and personalities.

We can put little robots on mars, yet we still struggle with the same issues psychologically as the ancient Greeks. Machiavel wrote that these might be inherent values that make us human, and we must take care, hate, suspicion and jealousy along with the better side of man as a kind of inescapable package.

Your paintings use realism but are set in rarified places: exotic studios, boudoirs, restaurants. What kind of sense of place are you creating?

My idea is to put a contemporary face on the myths I'm exploring, so that they might not be dismissed so easily. The places and settings reflect my desire to explore painting's ability to create a world, rather than just replicate. They often begin by me asking "What if...?", and the result is a personal vision. The paintings challenge me to create images that convey content or narrative as completely as possible in a single frame.

In the painting Song of the Siren, the multiple portraits of Odysseus reference different parts of the psyche, the ship becomes a metaphor, a vessel for self. Work like this is fantasy made real. I do my homework — I try to figure what this world would look like if it existed. In MMMY Charon, I studied Atlantic rescue craft as the basis for the ferryman's vessel. Some works have explored the notion of a painting-cycle, an old device that suspends time, where characters appear in multiple events in a single canvas. In "Casandria," I wanted to convey shock — the amazing power the body has to shut down during extreme stress. Casandria refuses to react to the fall of the world around her. I chose to place her in a demolished interior; an ethereal obsession to prepare herself at her dressing table though her world is obviously collapsing — it isn't Troy because the environment and objects are my experiences in my time.

Sometimes there's a sense of gallows humor in your work, why is that?

Humor, even very black humor or irony, immediately suggests that there is a second reality, a second point of view in any situation. For example, when Roman victors were honored by parade, they rode a chariot accompanied by a servant holding a swan overhead. Even as the crowds cheered, the servant repeated: "We are all mortal, and fame fleeting."

How much do people have to know about the narratives in your paintings?

I don't expect every person to know the narratives, the myth or the references I use. In the final analysis information is collected, sorted and defined as images that are then assembled into paintings.

It's a work that explores the tradition of double standard, as does X and Y from the censorship series. Antigone is the original independent woman. I have competed on equal footing with women my entire life and hope that I have raised the double standard question in a thoughtful, sensitive manner. There is a place to use body image without the idea of objectification? Again, as a male it is difficult to be objective, only sensitive to the issue in the work without dying away from dealing with these issues.

What are you currently painting figures in niches?

I have always found something strong and very appealing in the niche — they imply alters and apses, memorials and crypts, again, spaces of special purpose, set aside, places of honor or special distinction. They have the implication of opening up a special space, an alternate room within the room. It designates a separate reality in a similar psychological way as do frames for three-dimensional works. They are not quite a room, they are spaces once removed. I find this alternate reality fascinating and have begun to explore the possibilities of the niche in a series of paintings. I have no idea where it is going, but I am attracted to exploring the purpose and possibility of a 3D equivalent to the picture frame.

What parallels do you see between your work and Caravaggio in terms of space, light and composition?

Caravaggio interests me greatly now as I use more of the theatrical, mysterious darkness he does so well. His work never fails to suck the viewer into theater. They have such drama and intensity; great narrative, and dynamic poses, but I always want him to include more of the world around the figure. What is going on just outside of the light? They become tableaux, figures emerge and disappear into the darkness like a stage — I like the stage, it has a front where the audience has the best seat in the house. I would like to explore a more dynamo narrative view, with no front or back. You might have to squeeze your view between two of the subject figures. I like to make the viewer self-conscious, aware of their perspective.

What's happening in your historical paintings?

In the Artistic Apprentice Series I wanted to reference established historical works from a different perspective to explore how subjective our perceptions are. The viewer is invited into the work with art historical references; a pose that seems vaguely familiar, dramatic studio lighting (like Caravaggio), the colors and props beg the audience to play a memory game. Also, let me mention the notion of changing the context in narrative, that is to say re-contextualization. I began to see this over and over again in early European painting. Why were characters in ancient or religious narratives in contemporary dress? Was the artist unaware of antiquities? I began to consider the purposeful change in context, to move past into present. Depictions of Christ on the cross covered by plague reinforced the idea that deliberate mixing of images can be used to bring purpose and poignancy to the narrative.

Do you ever think about kitsch in the context of your work? I ask because there's this literal earnestness sometimes where it looks very serious, almost melodramatic and yet one thinks there's something tongue in cheek in your approach. The reference to familiar art history, or Jung's archetypal dreams might come close to kitsch. I like the idea of great cultural icons reduced to reality, like Dorothy discovering "the man behind the curtain" in Oz. Here again, I am caught with my tongue firmly planted in my cheek when I think of the overwhelming grandeur and pompousness of historic art coupled with the realization that your new lover chews with her mouth open.

There is a juxtaposition of seriousness and humor in the work. I am not always consistent here to earnesty sometimes where it looks very serious, almost melodramatic and yet one thinks there's something tongue in cheek in your approach.

What's your idea of putting a contemporary face on myths?
Robert Schefman

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2005 Meadow Brook Art Gallery, Oakland University, Rochester, MI
2004 Krael Art Center, Saint Joseph, MI
Robert Kidd Gallery, Birmingham, MI
2002 Midland Center for the Arts, Midland, MI
2001 Robert Kidd Gallery, Birmingham, MI
2000 Birmingham/Bloomfield Art Center, Bloomfield, MI
1997 Lemberg Gallery, Birmingham, MI
1995 Charach/Epitphen Museum Gallery, West Bloomfield, MI
1994 Lemberg Gallery, Birmingham, MI
1991 Lemberg Gallery, Birmingham, MI
1984 Aesthetic Arrest, New York, NY
1983 Turkish Mission to the United Nations, UN Plaza, New York, NY
1982 Sculpture for the Ancient Gates of Troy, Troy, Turkey
1979 Art in Public Places, Saginaw Art Museum, Saginaw, MI
1976 Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, IA

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2005 Group Exhibition, Robert Kidd Gallery, Birmingham, MI
2004 Variations on a Violin, Paszynski Gallery, Dearborn, MI
New Realism II, Robert Kidd Gallery, Birmingham, MI
2003 Senses of Reality, Starkweather Art and Cultural Center, Romeo, MI
2002 Robert Berman Gallery, Santa Monica, CA
Celebrate, Charach/Epitphen Museum Gallery, West Bloomfield, MI
2001 In Our Midst, Paszynski Gallery, Ford Arts Center, Dearborn, MI
Made in Michigan, Paint Creek Center for the Arts, Rochester, MI
2000 See, Detroit Contemporary, Detroit, MI
Really Big Show, Charach/Epitphen Museum Gallery, West Bloomfield, MI
Exhibition 2000, BBAC, Birmingham, MI
1999 Body and Soul, Paint Creek Center for the Arts, Rochester, MI
National Society of Mural Painters, Art Students League, New York, NY
1997 Michigan Council for the Arts Exhibition Project, Lansing, MI
Lemberg Gallery, Birmingham, MI

1996 Michigan Fine Arts Competition, BBAC, Birmingham, MI
1995 Interventions, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI
Carbonaro, Michigan Gallery, Detroit, MI
1995 Romanic Allegroy, Detroit Artists Market, Detroit, MI
1994 Michigan Fine Art Exhibition, BBAC, Birmingham, MI
Wills Gallery, Detroit, MI
1993 Friends for Focus, Benefit Exhibition, Farmington Hills, MI
1992 First Night Exhibition, Birmingham, MI
Figurative/Narrative, Stowe Gallery, Chicago, IL
1990 Art for Life, CantorLemberg Gallery, Birmingham, MI
1989 CantonLemberg Gallery, Birmingham, MI
1988 Figurative Painting in the 80s, RuggaroNennis Gallery, New York, NY
1984 The Dead Blimpie Show, New York, NY
1983 Modern Mythology, Fondham University, Bronx, New York, NY
1982 Terminal New York, Brooklyn Army Terminal, Brooklyn, NY
1980 On Mars Island, O.A., New York, NY

EDUCATION

1976 University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, M.A.
1974 Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, B.F.A

GRANTS

2004 Bernard L. Maas Prize, Bernard L. Maas Foundation, Detroit, MI
2001 Artists In The Schools Grant, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, MI
1999 ArtServe Michigan, Creative-Artist Grant, State of MI
1996 Arts Foundation of Michigan, Detroit, MI
1995 Polack-Kramer Foundation, New York, NY
1979 Sculpture Space Inc., Utica, NY
1976 Graduate Senate Research Grant, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA (Recipient of the first U of I GSR Grant for a graduate art student)