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A SENSE OF PLACE

Cover:
Original Screenprint, *Titlepage* for *Empty/empty (empty centers)*
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A SENSE OF PLACE

FOUR SOUTHERN PRINTMAKERS IDENTIFY AMERICA

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SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

Forward

In mastering his subject, each artist in a *Sense of Place* has carved a garden out of a personal wilderness and at the same time, revealed something essential about America. The residual of this catharsis-as-art process is an intimate description of the emotional ties each has with a particular place and time. It then follows that this exhibit's ability to identify America comes as a result of a deceptively simple definition of sense instead of a complex, sociological, geographical definition of place.

Proclaiming an obvious allegiance to the narrative strength and symbolic power of traditional storytelling, this exhibit presents many visual equivalents of literary forms and devices - prose, poetry, drama, grammar, metaphor, plot, denouement, psychic distance as well as setting - the evocation of place. It is not coincidence that these artists claim a large debt to storytellers like William Faulkner, Edgar Lee Masters, older family members, and local historians. These visual storytellers, (not illustrators), provide for us an array of information and emotions connected with the place to which they so strongly belong.

For Lebby, the place might be as small and defined as the circle drawn on the barren ground by a child with a stick. The resulting emotion is absolute delight. His descriptions use sound, formal logic to show us examples of the human condition, the human spirit, and ultimately, human dignity.

For Hunter, place is as monumental as the bridges, airports, rocket launching towers (that are the hallmarks of engineering and technology) and as expansive as the continental United States. He gains control over these intimidating places by abstracting them so they become simplified horizontal and vertical blocks and lines. The results are visual statements about the grandeur of the American landscape, filled with edifices of the American Dream.

Seawell describes a no-place. He uses the city's complexity and ambiguity and travel's way of suspending time and place to symbolize the intricacies of the human psyche. Place appears layered, complex, fleeting, and uncertain. Reality and memory become mutual distractions. To be able to focus on and understand a location would be tantamount to understanding one's own psyche. (The Trail of Tears, alluded to in Lebby's work, *Odell,* refers to the same kind of emotional upheaval when one has no identification with place.)

In contrast, Saunder's work is pure familiarity, Romance and pathos. He describes a simpler time and place with the skill of a truly great storyteller. He divides his trilogy into twenty-one ''chapters'' and through this literary structure weaves an extensive system of symbols, archetypes, and allusions. By means of this network, the simple is made complex, and the complex is made clear - images are manipulated, combined, and layered to reveal the reality of a place, inhabited and enriched by memory.

All of these artists manage to achieve one of the greatest feats of the storyteller - descriptive style. They have discovered the truth found in illusion. Many of the works in *A Sense of Place* are about illusions. With America as a backdrop, the artists describe sensation as reality and reality as sensation. Many places within this ''story of America'' exist strictly as emotions - places of the heart. What you conclude from seeing this exhibit and learning so many new ''stories'' no doubt will influence the way you will, in the future, identify America.

— Richard Fisher

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

The Wedding Party

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

Boyd Saunders

Southern Cross/A Trilogy 1976-1984

Three suites of intaglio prints

Comments from Boyd Saunders

The Orchard ... on an old abandoned farm I found this windmill. A storm had blown the top part of the windmill down and it lay moldering in the weeds like a great bird or Phoenix that had fallen. The peach and dogwood trees had started to bloom -- out of death life was coming forth.

The Bedroom ... when I saw this empty room in the abandoned farmhouse, I imagined the parents that had probably inhabited the room and what their life must have been like. This empty feeling of lost loved ones is another theme that runs through the suite of prints.

The Dog Trot ... a circus poster hangs on the left of the little breezeway where farm folks sit in the cool of the evening. Imagine the contrast between working six and a half days a week in the cotton fields and then going to town and seeing the circus ... the circus poster, which is a remembrance, is all fake and illusion but it's wonderful, dramatic, and colorful. And it's a picture.

The Stable ... this print forms a triptych, reminiscent of three-panelled altar paintings, and as such, seems to imply a certain votive significance. It is about those eternal Southern pursuits of farming, going off to war, and "beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks" as the scripture says.

The Cistern ... you may have known places like it. You drive by them all your life and never know they're there, perhaps behind a wooded grove with cedar trees all around. It blooms up at you because the bricks have gotten redder and redder and the glass panes in the windows have gotten greener and greener and warped until they give forth images you know are not there.

The Guardian ... Floyd has been a friend of the family for many years. Notice the old car on the left which replaced horses. The car is rusting now -- with chickens probably roosting in the back seat, while the horses are still around giving birth.

The Scarecrow ... takes on a very anthropomorphic shape when positioned on its cross and is quite a powerful symbol. I returned to the circus image. There I discovered my master of ceremonies, the circus clown, who bends over and sweeps his hand out in a grand gesture.

The Tobacco Auction ... I've treated this tobacco auction barn as if it were a temple. Up in the frieze are these wonder gods that have been created by Madison Avenue. Auctioneers are also walking around doing their mumbo jumbo. Off to one side, a young black woman watches the ritual; a confrontation develops between the illusion and fantasy of the gods on the wall and the hard reality of her existence.

The Forge ... I became fascinated with small places where people put the things that matter to them. They come to claim these places as their own. This piece is again about illusion and reality and the symbols denote sexuality and fertility.

The Wagon Shed ... after a time your eyes become accustomed to the dimness of the wagon shed. We see newspaper clippings with photographs of World War II fighter planes, flags, a little boy on a goat cart, and a Black funeral procession. One gets the idea that this has become a shrine that a father has made for

his son who he sent off to the war but who never returned.

The Commissary ... in the backroom of a country store, a wedge of light from an unseen window gives an almost votive significance to the long handled rakes and shovels, placed in a rhythmic dirge-like march. This print is concerned with unanswered questions about young men who march away to war and fail to return, and of the emptiness they leave behind.

Old Pony ... a tribute to old ponies that are there when children are being raised and then faithfully wait in the barnyard, long after those children have grown up.

The Wedding Party ... the store in the background had notions it was going to be the heart of a big town or an important agricultural empire. In front of the store an apparition of a bride and groom with their attendants pose for a wedding picture. This print is about courage, hope, and heroism. It is a courageous, hopeful store, as well as a very courageous, hopeful couple who are starting out their life together.

Early Easter ... this is the same rebirth theme. I'm primarily concerned with a particular light, a coloration, and a lacy network of winter trees projected on a pool of water.

The Gathering ... at the top of the railroad crossing, one sees the words "Southern (Southern Railway) Crossing" (railroad crossing). The title for my trilogy *Southern Cross* came from this. Southern Cross, among other things, is also a constellation in the Southern Sky.

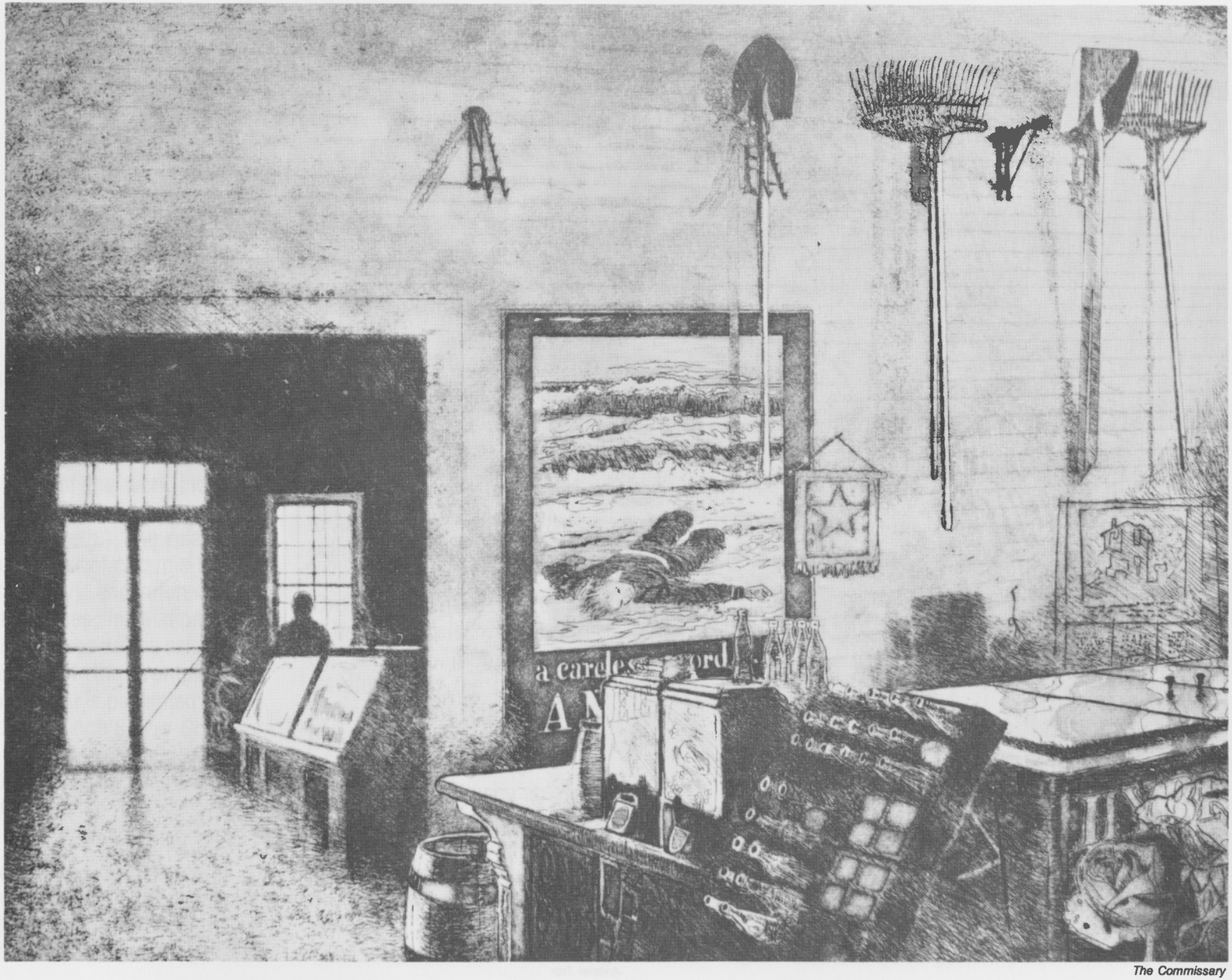
Air Battle ... this is a whimsical piece about an armada of whirly gigs and other things stuck up on poles that pretend to fly and don't. A flock of crows has attacked this invading armada.

The Vixen ... the title "Late Light" comes from this print. It deals primarily with the light of a particular time of day.

Mollie's Table ... this piece looks backward and forward in time. It poses questions and causes reflections about the drama of life. The various symbols refer to a genealogy of women.

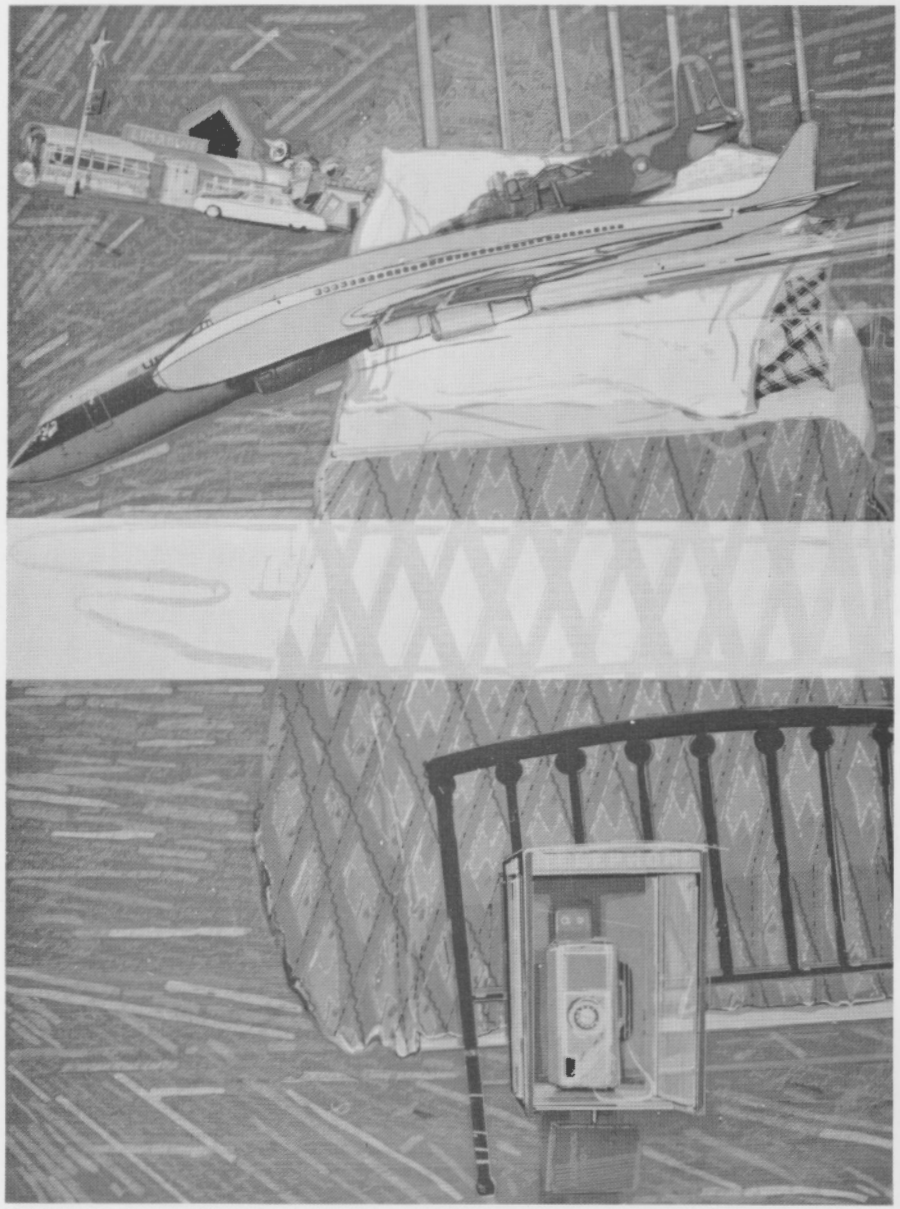
In the spring sunlight a little girl plays with her dog and symbolizes a rebirth and life progressing at a certain pace.

Please direct purchase inquiries to the artist, Boyd Saunders, Box 305, Route 1, Chapin, SC, 29036, (803) 345-5625.



The Commissary

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER



Another Trip

Thomas Seawell

Empty/empty (empty centers) 1979-1982

A suite of ten screen prints

Comments from Thomas Seawell

A Title Page ... a rambling narrative (written into the field skin as in all of the images; it can be read as text or as a textural, layered field, or wall); a number of images are introduced in levels that set the tone of the work including references to formal elements and their meanings (texture, edge, line, etc.), the relation to certain ceramic work (a set of ceramic houses by the artist, Barbara Frey), and references to action, seeing, observances, in relation to internal goings on; the titlepage will be referenced throughout. A section of the frontpiece of Callot's *The Miseries of War* is presented as well as the first glimpse of Munch's *The Scream,* both as sign board images. Traveling, or ''the trip'' is introduced as a main theme to run throughout the work.

This is a very long title for reasons ... several themes layered together simultaneously: 1) the idea of the ''bridge'' as crossing; joining; connector; barrier. 2) the literal trip refers to snap decisions and separations in going to Europe, and the experiences of seeing and observing in a new sense. 3) the impleachment of my face into Munch's figure in *The Scream.*

Split Trips ... a day/night image based on two actual personal trips and the remembered images; these two different times, mix with European forms. If you stand in the Syracuse train station, look North, and go to the left you go to Chicago, but if you go to the right, you go to Albany; this, however, is only used as a symbol and is not so restricted to particular events.

The Town Square ... dealing with ''thinking of being an artist'', aiming at becoming an artist, as seen in memories of a trip with a fellow art student at the beginning. Homage to the author, William Faulkner, with notations on his position as artist: the Munch image disappears in the shadow, seen for the last time until the final sheet. The image structure metaphors the placement of forms around a town square; time is the factor in image and text.

Broken House ... based on a personal experience, at a particular time, during a particular incidence, referenced in dialogue concerning leaving a certain literal state of 'state of emotion' as brought on in romantic designs; a dissatisfaction with being in the same place for too long; one's career; all comes together in a faculty picture where a ''ceramic house'' (the main motif), is knocked off a table and broken by an art historian; notes on doors as symbols: Ivan Albright's *That Which I Should Have Done I Did Not Do.* This is a climactic image, coming in the middle rather than at the end.

Snow ... based on the Oswego geographical location and its phenomenon as explained through a meaningful personal experience with snow and a former graduate student who is seeing snow for the first time - this image concludes with a humorous search through the parking lot, the attempted portrayal of the feeling of falling snow out of the lights, and the inablility to find one's car while being driven by the cold and the overwhelming desire to get away, to be out.

Hill Variation/Theatre Variation IV ... using the primitive childlike/Klee symbol of ''the hill'', the idea is the persistent rediscovery of ''theatres'' in variation, of the peak of glamour now piled on the corner lot like so many tin cans, importance forgotten, place in history passing,

the melancholy memories disappearing, and, also, intertwined with a true experience from childhood: going to a horror movie as a boy, the humorous episodes in the theatres, running down the hill from the theatre at the end, ''seeing the beast in every bush'', equated with later existence when one is more aware of happening and occurrence. The excited response to theatres of all kinds.

Another Trip ... this was the last image that evolved and was brought about by my musing over and becoming aware of certain circumstances that I had become involved in by taking a trip and living during the summer of 1981 in Texas. The 8th image was brought around by: visual observances of completely new circumstances, the idea of distance - references to ''the phone'' as the only communication.

Nightflight/2nd Callot Variation ... here the focus is on music and violence, references to war thrown against refrains of love, not only of music in general, but as homage to a certain group of seldom looked at composers, the Americans predominantly working in the 1940's - '60's (Barber, Piston, Harris, Mennin, etc.). Samuel Barber's score (an almost empty first page), ''Nightflight'' written during WWII, placed as a grid ghost over the empty center from which the Hiroshima bomb blast rolls out of a rainbow. Pulled to the upper left top where it becomes impleached with the reworked ''Hanging Tree'' from Callot's *The Miseries of War.*

The Final Acts ... begins with a summation of the illness, passes through a recapitulation of most of the forms, tells the story of the last printing, including humorous references to the sloshing of ''ink on the shoes''. The images move from a dark shadowed past on the left of the field to a mass of clustering, darting forms in the light pushing out of the right side or the last edge, symbolizing a hopeful commitment, at least a connective, to further work...

Both full sets and individual prints from sets are available. Please direct purchase inquiries to the artist, Thomas Seawell, at one of the following addresses: 1) P.O. Box 14, Sterling, NY 13156-0014, (315) 947-5405, or 2) 1513 Park Street, Commerce, TX 75428, (214) 886-3102.

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

If I Show You My Tenderness

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

Larry Lebby

A thematic grouping of nine lithographs 1973-1980

Comments from Larry Lebby

If I Show You My Tenderness ... the print was produced in memory of my friend Alex English's grandmother and her sisters. The figures, in the foreground, although seen as a group, become individual because of the strong variation of values among them. This variation also gives the print a rhythmic quality. In the background is a delicately rendered antebellum house which assumes aspects of a stage set.

Project New Day ... the man in this print is my great uncle who first taught me to value the land and the rural way of life. Here, the complexity of nature contrasts strongly with the simple dignity of these rural people who are close to, yet distinct from nature.

The Ghetto ... is a statement of my feelings about the social conditions in America. I'm not shouting, but my art quietly says that we need to resolve some real problems.

Carolina's World ... a tribute to my special friend, Carolina Day, and to all of her beauty and her mischievous deeds.

A Tribute to All Political Promises ... regardless of the political promises made before elections, unsatisfactory conditions persist for too many Black Americans. This is a statement of my feelings about those promises made, but never kept.

Black Pearl ... depicts my Aunt Evelyn and a group of children she keeps. She was an inspiration to me in the early stages of my art career.

The Morning After ... depicts my great aunt and uncle. The figures are drawn with the same degree of detail as the trees and grass surrounding them, thus making them an integral part of nature.

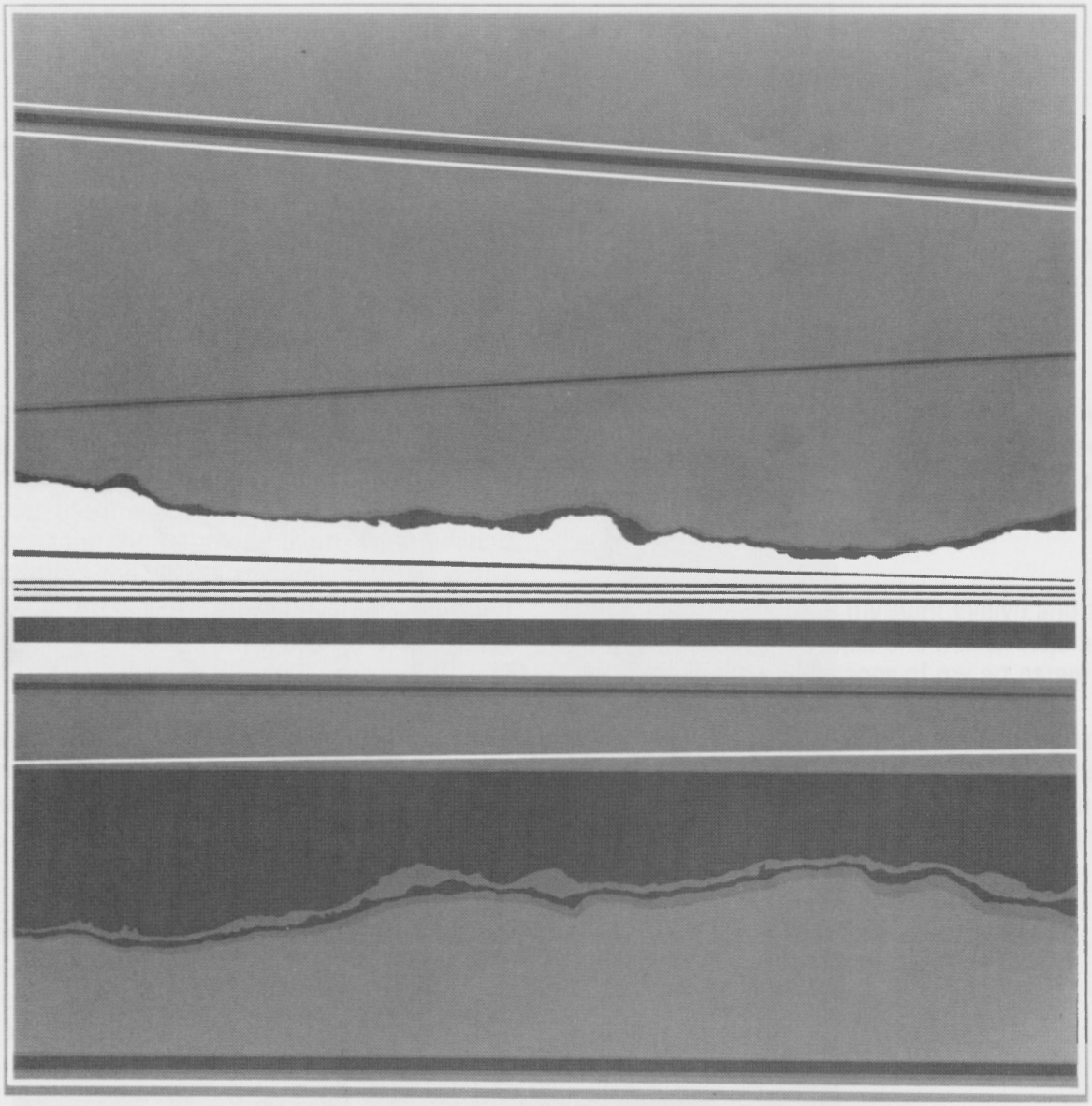
Odell ... pertains to the WPA program started by Roosevelt to give relief to Americans during the Depression. My children's great-grandmother, Odell, a Black-Cherokee Indian, taught a sewing class through the WPA in North Carolina. Odell and her mother were two of the Cherokee Indians moved to Oklahoma from North Carolina by the United States Government in the Trail of Tears.

Archie, Ricky, and Lee ... Archie was a pop singer during the sixties who became a very close friend. This lithograph is composed so that the viewer's eye sees the work as a whole, moving from figure to figure without abrupt transitions.

Please direct purchase inquiries to the artist, Larry Lebby, 32 DeLane Drive, Columbia, SC, 29204, (803) 256-2283.

Project New Day

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER



Miami International

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

Robert Hunter

A suite of twenty serigraphs on paper, 1976

I did not travel to do this suite of prints. I did them as a result of my travels. I can keep visual images in my mind the way a good writer can write detailed descriptions of places and things from memory. For me, recollection is like looking at a slide collection in my mind.

Formally, my collage looking images came after tearing or shaping paper. From these shapes, I created this suite of prints. My only criteria was that whatever I did, it would be in red, white and blue, and that it is a reminiscence and celebration of America. I have chosen to work abstractly because that is the only way I could illustrate my feelings of awe about this country. Things are often something other than the way they appear, so working realistically was impractical for that reason as well. I marvel at this nation. Possibly much of this enchantment comes from my sense of belonging to it for such a long time. My ancestors started out in the 17th century on the East coast and ended up in the 20th century on the Western seaboard. I have crossed the country at least 25 times, either by air, train, car or bus and have traveled to all but two of the continental states. The following are my comments about my subjects:

Jamestowne ... a town in American history and observed in ruins by crossing an estuary.

Black Hills ... South Dakota's mountain where a visitor may find Indians and sculptured heads of several presidents of the United States.

Appalachia ... in the distant mountains our predecessors, the Indians, lived.

Montana Ore ... Montana is an arid state. The stark landscape has been changed by the earth being moved and sliced, revealing nuggets of ore, silver, gold and copper, etc.

Denver ... the "Mile High" city, mind boggling when you think that upon leaving the Mississippi River, you travel both horizontally and vertically. Then, when you are in Denver, you see tall mountains in the background. This is what I call a "state of mind" because reality is diametrically opposed to the image of a place that would be a mile high.

Fort Bragg ... this is a "state of mind" because of all the manipulated stimuli used in training for battle. There they disorient perceptions in order to create lucid action in times of confusion.

Oklahoma ... impressions from the Broadway musical mixed with the reality of the State. Stripes in the sky represent music and the feel of Americana.

Metropolitan ... an American plan, a city, a mega city translated into right angles and rectangles.

Industry ... a new order of technology. We have invented, used and consumed its products.

Commerce ... The flow of goods to Europe and Asia. .. the mechanical products of our energy and resources.

Miami International ... Southern Florida's flat landscape is seen against the Everglade vegetation in silhouette. Jet trails crisscross the air.

Cape Canaveral ... vertical shaft of light and smoke in contrast to the flat plane of land and sea contrasts technological America and natural America.

Apollo ... vertical cylinder looming above the Cape Canaveral landscape.

Chicago Night ... a skyscraper by the shore on a moonlight night depicts the great midwestern city.

New York ... super city built on the eastern shore of the United States which has been a mecca for immigrants for 200 years.

Chesapeake Bay ... the calm waters of a huge inland bay, beside the undeveloped Eastern Shore. Impressions of this placid, pastoral place are reminiscent of Fragonard and Boucher paintings.

Puget Sound ... a large, active body of west coast water where the snow covered mountains are seen in the distance.

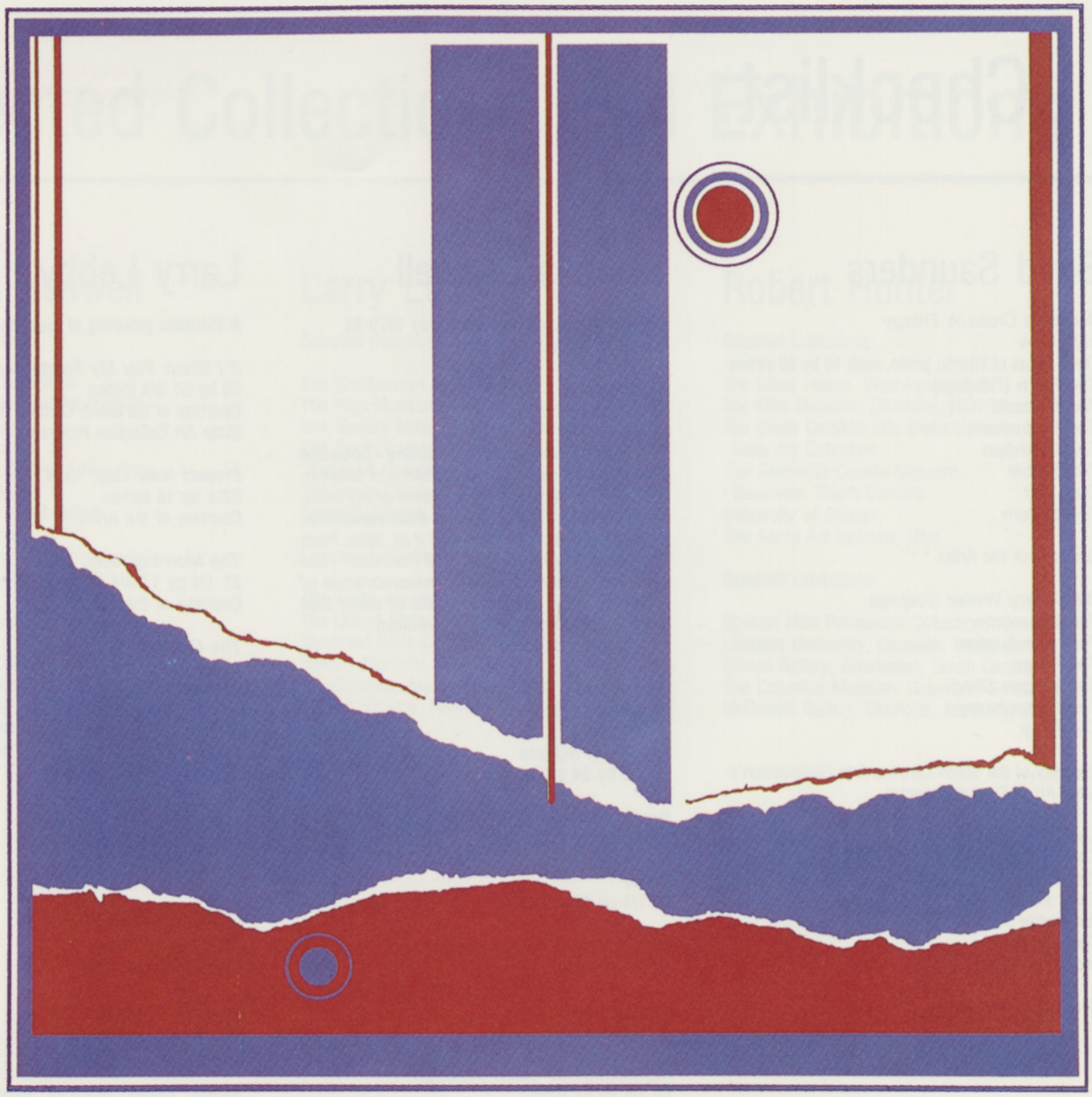
Red River ... the Red River Valley of song fame is captured by this work; red water mixed with micro particles of silt and dirt, flow as a border between Texas and Oklahoma to Arkansas and Louisiana.

East-West ... one of the many bridges across the Mississippi River - the landmark that separates east and west. For many, this location is where east and west start and end.

Mississippi Lights ... looking west from the eastern shore, dark night on the river with dots of moving and stationary lights.

Please direct purchase inquiries to: Tempo Gallery, 215 W. Stone Ave., Greenville, S.C. 29601 (803) 233-1070

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER



Cape Canaveral

SAUNDERS SEAWELL LEBBY HUNTER

Checklist:

Boyd Saunders

Southern Cross/A Trilogy
1976-1984
Three suites of intaglio prints, each 16 by 20 inches
The Farm (Titlepage)
The Orchard
The Bedroom
The Guardian
The Stable
Dog Trot
The Cistern

Courtesy of the Artist

Blackberry Winter (titlepage)
The Scarecrow
Tobacco Auction
The Forge
The Wagon Shed
The Commissary
Old Pony

Courtesy of the South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection Program.

Late Light (titlepage)
The Wedding Party
The Gathering
Early Easter
Air Battle
The Vixen
Mollie's Table

Courtesy of the Artist

Thomas Seawell

Empty/empty: (empty centers) 1979-82
A suite of ten screen prints

A Title Page
19 1/4 by 24 inches

This is a very long title for reasons - because it is not just a variation on a theme of Munch, it is, also, a variation on a theme of my own, "The Bridges", but it is more than variations, it is impleached images; and it is, also, from the group, "Remembered Self Portraits" - but even more than these it is remembrance of a certain time, a certain state of mind that lurks importantly within my motion.
19 3/8 by 24 inches

Split Trips
19 3/8 by 24 inches

The Town Square
19 1/2 by 24 inches

Broken House
19 1/4 by 24 inches

Snow
24 1/4 by 19 inches

Hill Variation/Theatre Variation VI
19 by 24 inches

Another Trip
24 1/4 by 19 1/4 inches

Nightflight/2nd Callot Variation
19 3/8 by 24 inches

The Final Acts
24 by 19 3/8 inches

All prints courtesy of the South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection Program.

Larry Lebby

A thematic grouping of nine lithographs

If I Show You My Tenderness, 1980
25 by 31 3/4 inches
Courtesy of the South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection Program.

Project New Day, 1979
22½ by 16 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

The Morning After, 1980
21 1/4 by 17 3/4 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

The Ghetto, 1973
11 by 15 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

A Tribute To All Political Promises, 1974
21 1/4 by 17 1/2 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

Odell, 1973
21 by 13 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

Black Pearl, 1973
19 3/4 by 15 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

Carolina's World, 1976
18 1/2 by 15 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

Archie, Ricky, and Lee, 1976
19 by 14 3/4 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

Robert Hunter

A suite of twenty serigraphs on paper, each 20 by 24 inches.

Jamestowne
Black Hills
Appalachia
Montana Ore
Denver
Fort Bragg
Oklahoma
Metropolitan
Industry
Commerce
Miami International
Cape Canaveral
Apollo
Chicago Night
New York
Chesapeake Bay
Puget Sound
Red River
East - West
Mississippi Lights

All prints courtesy of the South Carolina's State Art Collection Program.

Selected Collections and Exhibitions

Boyd Saunders

Selected Collections:

The South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection
University of Mississippi
Denison University, Granville, Ohio
U.S. Park Service, Wildlife Collection
Van Braun Space Center, Huntsville, Alabama
University of Arizona

Selected Exhibitions:

The Smithsonian Institution
The Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina
The Atkins Museum, Kansas City
Palazzo Venezia, Rome, Italy
Beijing and the Worker's Palace, Taiyuan
American Embassy, Ankara, Turkey

Thomas Seawell

Selected Collections:

The Smithsonian Institution
The Pushkin Museum of Art (USSR)
The British Museum
The Brooklyn Museum
Collections of the States of New York and South Carolina
Rochester Memorial Art Gallery
Ft. Worth Art Center
The South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection

Selected Exhibitions:

American Consul General, Leningrad
Associated American Artists, New York City
Pace Gallery, New York City
The American Federation of Arts Touring Program
Aspect-Aegis Gallery

Larry Lebby

Selected Collections:

The Smithsonian Institution
The High Museum, Atlanta
The Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey
The South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection
The South Carolina State Capital
Benedict College, Columbia, South Carolina

Selected Exhibitions:

The White House
The United States Senate, Washington, D.C.
Mansfield State College, Pennsylvania
Newark Museum, New Jersey
The Columbia Museum, Columbia, South Carolina
Palazzo Venezia, Rome, Italy

Robert Hunter

Selected Collections:

The White House, Washington, D.C.
The Mint Museum, Charlotte, North Carolina
The South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection
The Greenville County Museum, Greenville, South Carolina
University of Oregon
The Akron Art Institute, Ohio

Selected Exhibitions:

Springs Mills Permanant Collection, New York City
Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina
Gibbes Gallery, Charleston, South Carolina
The Columbia Museum, Columbia, South Carolina
McDonald Gallery, Charlotte, North Carolina

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SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION
1800 Gervais Street•Columbia, South Carolina 29201

For more information about the South Carolina Arts Commission's State Art Collection Program please contact: Visual Arts Director, South Carolina Arts Commission, 1800 Gervais Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201.