

Walter Darby Bannard 1934 - 2016 New Haven, Connecticut

Summary -

A leading figure in the development of Color Field Painting in the late 1950s and an important American abstract painter, Walter Darby Bannard (better known as Darby Bannard) was committed to color-based and expressionist abstraction for over five decades.

During his undergraduate years at Princeton University, he joined fellow students, the painter Frank Stella and the critic and art historian Michael Fried, in conversations that expanded aesthetic definitions and led to an emphasis on opticality as the defining feature of pictorial art. Bannard continued to explore attributes of color, paint, and surface through innovative methods, striving throughout his career for vital and original expressive means. He was also an important writer on formalist issues in art, serving as an editor for *Artforum* and a contributor to *Art International*. His extensive publications date from the 1960s to the end of his life. In the early 1990s, Bannard moved to Miami, where he served as professor and head of painting at the University of Miami, Coral Gables.

Bannard was born in 1934 in New Haven, Connecticut. He attended Phillips Exeter Academy and graduated from Princeton University in 1956. Bannard, who made drawings and watercolors throughout his youth, was self-taught as a painter. He derived inspiration for his earliest paintings from the art of William Baziotis, Theodoros Stamos, and Clyfford Still. By the late 1950s, he had turned from an expressionistic style to working with large areas of contrasting color, creating austere minimal paintings. In the next decade, he was one of the first artists to blend artist's materials with commercially produced tinted alkyd resin house paints in a search for greater color options. In 1964, he was included in the landmark exhibition, *Post-Painterly Abstraction*, organized by Clement Greenberg and held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. His first solo exhibitions were in 1965, at Kasmin Gallery, London; Richard Feigen Gallery, Chicago; and Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York. He was also included that year in the Museum of Modern Art's, *The Responsive Eye*. In 1968, Bannard received a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and a National Foundation of the Arts Award.

In about 1970, Bannard's focus shifted to an exploration of the liquid quality of paint. Drawn to the new acrylic mediums that were becoming available, he began working on the floor using thick gel surfaces and color suspended in Magna or polymer mediums. At the time, he "thought of color as a liquid, flowing over and settling on a roughened surface, changing as it mixed and dried." His method involved stapling his canvases to slightly raised wooden platforms. After tightly sizing his canvases, he scraped on colored gel with squeegee-like tools. When the surface was dry, he poured colored polymer over it in layers, allowing the paint to find its place. He was drawn at the time to close-valued rather than strong colors and often allowed his pale warm grounds to serve as colors in their own right rather than acting as supports for other colors. Karen Wilkin stated in *Color as Field* (2007): "Bannard probed just how subtle chromatic nuances could be before they became unbroken expanse. In these pictures, even composition could be reduced to a kind of near-negative, an echo of something no longer there." (p. 61) In the late 1970s, Bannard was instrumental in the retrospective exhibition of the work of Hans Hofmann. He curated the 1976-77 exhibition and wrote the catalogue that accompanied it.

During a painting workshop in Saskatchewan Canada in 1981, Bannard developed a kind of gel "drawing" on canvas, in which he applied his paint on large sheets of fiberglass. By the middle of the decade, he had returned to a slower, more subtle system of marking his gel, while also returning to pouring colored polymer. He also reincorporated expressionist methods in his art. In 1987, he began his "brush and cut" paintings, consisting of large scale canvases in which he applied transparent tinted gel with large street brooms and industrial floor squeegees to make painted "drawings," featuring vigorous brushwork and



three-dimensional illusions. After moving to Miami, he incorporated more color into his large paintings, while producing small mixed-media “landscapes” on paper, inspired by the flat land and water and the lowering sun of the Florida Everglades.

Throughout his career, Bannard moved between the poles of Expressionism and Color Field Painting, resulting in a body of art that constantly evolved as the artist forthrightly faced the situations that his art presented, reacting to them with rigor and intuition.

In 1983, Bannard held an Invitational Residency at the National Endowment for the Arts. He taught at many art schools, including the University of Miami and the School of Visual Arts, New York. Over the course of his career, Bannard had almost one hundred solo exhibitions and was included in an even greater number of group shows. He is represented in public collections across the country as well as abroad. His museum collections include Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York; Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio; Baltimore Museum, Maryland; Blanton Museum of Art, The University at Texas, Austin; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Cleveland Museum, Ohio; Dallas Museum of Fine Art, Texas; Dayton Art Institute, Ohio; Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta, Canada; Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Honolulu Museum, Hawaii; Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana; Kenyon College Art Gallery, Ohio; Larry Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut; Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida; Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Victoria, Australia; New Jersey State Museum, Trenton; Newark Museum, New Jersey; Portland Art Museum, Oregon; Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey; Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, New York; the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts.

Education -

1934

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey

Solo Exhibitions -

2018

Walter Darby Bannard: Paintings from 1969-1975, Berry Campbell, New York

Early Paintings, Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami

2016

Walter Darby Bannard: Recent Paintings, Berry Campbell, New York



2015

Walter Darby Bannard /Minimal Color Field Paintings : 1958-1965, Berry Campbell, New York

2014

Walter Darby Bannard: Dragon Water

2009

Darby Bannard, The Miami Years, Then and Now: A retrospective exhibit of 20 years of Painting, Center for Visual Communication, Miami, Florida

2007

Jacobson Howard Gallery, New York

2006

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo

Moving into Color: Paintings by Darby Bannard, Rauschenberg Gallery, Edison College, Fort Myers, Florida

2002

Darby Bannard: Recent Acrylic Paintings and Oilstick/MM Paintings of the 1990s, Emory & Henry College, Virginia

1999

Darby Bannard: Paintings 1987-1999, Lowe Art Museum, Coral Gables, Florida

1997

Walter Darby Bannard Retrospective of 47 paintings, Lee Scarfone Gallery, University of Tampa, Florida

1996

Dorsch Gallery, Miami, Florida



1993

Farah Damji Gallery, New York

1991

Montclair Museum of Art, New Jersey

Knoedler Gallery, London

1990

Miami-Dade Community College, Florida

Greenberg Wilson Gallery, New York

1989

Greenberg Wilson Gallery, New York

1988

Richard Love Gallery, Chicago

1987

Brush Art Gallery, St. Lawrence University, New York

1986

Salander-O'Reilly Gallery, New York

1984

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1983

Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, North Carolina

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada



1982

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1981

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1980

Ulrich Art Museum, Wichita State University, Kansas

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1979

Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1978

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

David Mirvish Gallery, Toronto

1977

Lamont Gallery, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, New Hampshire

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

Greenberg Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri

1976

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1975

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

David Mirvish Gallery, Toronto



1974

Knoedler Contemporary Art, New York

1973

Pasadena Art Museum, California

Lawrence Rubin Gallery, New York

Baltimore Museum of Art (traveled to High Museum, Atlanta; Houston Museum of Art, Texas)

1972

Lawrence Rubin Gallery, New York

Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California

Kasmin Gallery, London

1971

Neuendorf Gallery, Cologne, Germany

1970

Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York

Lawrence Rubin Gallery, New York

Kasmin Gallery, London

Joseph Helman Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri

David Mirvish Gallery, Toronto

1969

David Mirvish Gallery, Toronto

Bennington College, Vermont

1968

Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York

Kasmin Gallery, London



1967

Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York

Nicholas Wilder Gallery, Los Angeles

1966

Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York

1965

Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York

Richard Feigen Gallery, Chicago

Kasmin Gallery, London

Group Exhibitions -

2018

Bannard, Connelly, and Romberg – The Collection of Caroline Dunlop Millett, InLiquid, Philadelphia

Summer Selections, Berry Campbell, New York

Hollis Jeffcoat | Darby Bannard – That Devil Paint, Watson MacRae Gallery, Sanibel Island

57th Street, America's Artistic Legacy, Part I, Cavalier Galleries, New York

2017

Summer Selections, Berry Campbell, New York

2016

Post-Painterly Abstraction: Belgium-USA, Roberto Polo Gallery, Brussels, Belgium

Summer Selections, Berry Campbell, New York

2015

Summer Selections, Berry Campbell, New York



2011

Color Field Revised, Loretta Howard Gallery, New York

Nature and the Non-Objective Realm, Taubman Museum, Roanoke, Virginia

Mono, Poly, Concrete, Galerie Konzette, Vienna

2010

Abstract USA '58 - '68, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Darby Bannard and the Miami School, Center for Visual Communication, Miami, Florida

2009

Art Since 1945: In a New Light, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, Texas

Circa 1959: Transitions in the Work of Nine Abstract Painters, Jacobson Howard Gallery, New York

2008

Color into Light, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas

Circa 1958: Breaking Ground in American Art, Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

2007

Born in the USA, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

Color as Field, Denver Art Museum, Colorado

2006

Meaning and Metaphor, Syracuse University Art Gallery, New York

2005

Modernism and Abstraction, Palm Springs Desert Museum, California

Hans Hofmann: The Legacy, The Painting Center, New York



2004

Minimalist Painting, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Color Field Revisited: Paintings from the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Haggerty Museum of Art, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

2001

Clement Greenberg: A Critics Collection, Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon

1999

The Rowan Collection: Passion and Patronage - Painting in Los Angeles and New York, Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, California

1998

Masters of the Masters, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio

1997

Masters of the Masters, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio

1993

The Denver Art Museum, 1883-1993, Denver Art Museum, Colorado

1992

Abstractions and Monochromes, Galerie de Poche, Paris

Stars in Florida, Fort Lauderdale Art Museum, Florida

1990

Free Market, Galerie 1900-2000, Paris

The Moffett Collection, Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art, Florida

1986

Definitive Statements - American Art: 1964 - 1966, List Art Center, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island



1984

Directions in Contemporary American Ceramics, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

1983

Twentieth Century Art from the Metropolitan Museum: Selected Recent Acquisitions
The Queens Museum, Flushing, New York

National Midyear Exhibition, Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio

1982

Recent Trends in Collecting: 20th Century Painting from the National Museum of Art
National Collection of American Art, Washington DC

1981

Sheldon Memorial Gallery, Kansas City, Missouri

International Communications Agency, Washington DC

1979

Art in America After World War II, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Knoedler Galleries, New York

1978

15 Sculptors in Steel Around Bennington 1963 – 1978, Park-McCullough House,
Bennington, Vermont

Painting and Sculpture Today 1978, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana

1977

Private Images: Photographs by Painters, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles

1976

Cronaca, Galleria Civica, Modena, Italy

Galerie Ulysses, Vienna, Austria



1975

American Art Since 1945, from the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Modern Art, New York

1974

Continuing Abstraction in American Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

The Great Decade of American Abstraction: Modernist Art 1960 to 1970, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas

Contemporary American Artists, Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio

1973

American Paintings of the 20th Century, University of Texas, Austin, The Michener Collection

Curator's Choice, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Morris Museum, Morristown, New Jersey

11 American Artists, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Canada

1972

Annual, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Acquisitions, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Abstract Painting in the '70s, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Painting and Sculpture Today – 1972, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana

Bannard, Goodnough, Noland, Olitski, Poons, Stella, Galerie und Edition Merian, Krefeld, Germany

Masters of the Sixties, Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta, Canada, (traveling to Winnipeg Art Gallery, Canada)

9 American Painters, Dayton Art Institute, Ohio

American Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

1971

The Structure of Color, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Toward Color and Field, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas

Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts



Six Painters, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, (traveling to Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland; Milwaukee Art Center, Wisconsin)

1970

Six Painters, Venice Biennale, Venice

Two Generations of Color Painting, University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

The Form of Color, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio

Color and Field, 1890 – 1970, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, (traveling to Dayton Art Institute, Ohio; Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio)

1969

Annual, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

The Development of Modernist Painting: Jackson Pollock to the Present, Washinton University Gallery of Art, St. Louis

One Tendency of Contemporary Art, Kunstmarkt, Cologne, Germany

Corcoran Biannual, Washington DC

1968

Art of the Real, Museum of Modern Art, New York (tour of European and American museums)

1967

Annual, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Color, Image and Form, Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan

1966

American Painters, Smithsonian Institute, Washington DC

Museum of Modern Art, Embassies Program

1965

University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

The Responsive Eye, Museum of Modern Art, New York (traveling United States museum tour)



Chicago Art Museum, Chicago

1964

Post Painterly Abstraction, Los Angeles County Museum (traveled to Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Toronto Art Museum, Toronto, Canada)

Grants & Awards -

1991

Richard A. Florsheim Art Fund Grant

1986

Francis J. Greenburger Foundation Award

1983

National Endowment for the Arts, Invitational Residency

1981

Distinguished Classmate Award, Princeton University Class of 1956

1968

National Foundation of the Arts Award

Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship

Collections -

Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York

Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Ohio

Arkansas Art Center, Little Rock



Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Canada
Art Museum of South Texas, Corpus Christi
Asheville Art Museum, North Carolina
Baltimore Museum, Maryland
Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama
Blanton Museum of Art, The University at Texas, Austin
Brooklyn Museum, New York
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
Cheekwood Museum of Art, Nashville Tennessee
Cleveland Museum, Ohio
Dallas Museum of Fine Art, Texas
Dayton Art Institute, Ohio
Denver Art Museum, Colorado
Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta, Canada
Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Greenville County Museum of Art, South Carolina
Grey Art Gallery, New York University
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia
Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York
Honolulu Museum, Hawaii
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana
Kenyon College Art Gallery, Ohio
LaSalle University Art Museum, Philadelphia
Lawrenceville School Art Museum, New Jersey
Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida
McNay Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Miami University Art Museum, Florida
Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Saint Louis, Missouri
Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin
Montclair Art Museum, New Jersey
Morris Museum, Morristown, New Jersey



Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas
Museum of Modern Art, New York
National Gallery of Victoria, Australia
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
New Jersey State Museum, Trenton
Newark Museum, New Jersey
Neuberger Museum of Art, Harrison, New York
Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, New York
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania
Portland Art Museum, Oregon
Portland Museum of Art, Maine
Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
RISD Museum, Providence, Rhode Island
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California
Sheldon Museum of Art, Lincoln Nebraska
Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Massachusetts
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Springfield Museum of Fine Arts, Massachusetts
Storm King Art Center, New Windsor, New York
The Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio
University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, North Carolina
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts
Winnipeg Art Gallery, Canada
Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

