

JEFFREY STEPHANIC
photographs

DOUGLAS H TELLER
watercolors

FEBRUARY 9-MARCH 2, 1989

The Dimock Gallery, Art Department
The George Washington University

DOUGLAS H TELLER

watercolors



Rose Cottage at Perry Green, 1988

Douglas H Teller was born in Battle Creek, Michigan. He attended public schools in Battle Creek, then moved to Kalamazoo where he became an Art Major at Western Michigan University and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree. He initially pursued graduate studies in painting and art history at Michigan State University. Teller continued his graduate studies in the field of art history and archaeology at Catholic University and subsequently in painting and printmaking at The George Washington University where he received his MFA degree. Teller joined the faculty at The George Washington University in 1962. A professor of design and printmaking, he currently teaches courses in design, serigraphy and watercolor. An active member of the Washington community, Teller has served as president of the Society of Washington Artists and has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Society of Washington Printmakers. As an artist he has worked extensively in the area of serigraphy participating in numerous exhibitions. He has been recognized through a variety of awards, selection for one-person exhibitions, most notably at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1965. The exhibition of his work in many group shows throughout the United States and locally at The George Washington University's Dimock Gallery, testify to an active creative life. Teller's work is contained in many public and private collections in America and abroad.

Douglas H Teller has always been interested in travel and has over the years spent time in Europe, particularly in France and England. On numerous journeys to South and Central America he has made extensive visits to Surinam, Columbia, Honduras, Panama, Mexico and Venezuela. Such trips have had a decided thematic and technical impact upon his work.

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DOUGLAS H TELLER

watercolors

Through his watercolor paintings Douglas H Teller explores geographically diverse sites. His artistic venue includes the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, Somerset England, Mexico City, St. Croix and tropical Venezuela. However, whether he is depicting the shoreline at St. Croix, the low tide at Somerset, or a beach on Maryland's Eastern Shore, the catalyst for creation is the artist's absorption with nature.

To capture these varied and artistically demanding scenes, Teller brings his formidable technical resources. His handling of an unforgiving medium ranges from precisely detailed, polished passages to monochromatic washes and textured dried tones punctuated with white. In his consideration of the possibilities of watercolor Teller proposes approaches and solutions which link him to such artistic forebears as the British landscape painters of the last century. It is not surprising that he has focused on some of the same locales which fascinated the latter. Yet, Teller's interests are expansive. Just as he is attracted to a broad spectrum of scenes, his interpretations and the moods evoked are appropriately varied.

Teller is a Romantic/Realist, who, drawn to the examination of landscape, recognizes the complexity and challenge of that exploration. He reaches no unilateral conclusions. Rather, several distinct responses to nature are discernible. In *Low Tide at Somerset* the dry dark tonalities of the foreground yield to the smoother, lighter greys of the middle ground, which combine with the expanse of sky to serve as a backdrop for the silhouetted village. Using spattering for contrast and fine lines of black ink, Teller only suggests the architecture. It consists of wavering, uncertain shapes captured in the vortex of a moving, overpoweringly vast landscape. Here, as in *Near Stolford* and *Eastern Shore* man is not included, although his presence is implied. He is, at best, a spectator, a witness to nature's

immensity and mystery. While an isolated farmhouse perched above a barren riverbed testifies to human presence and plight in *Near Stolford*, in *Eastern Shore* the lonely expanse of moors, enveloped by the grey afternoon sky, is populated only by the rhythmically swaying sea oats.

For Teller nature speaks a various language. Thus, he also reveals her domesticated, tranquil side in the rolling hills and verdant pasture lands in *Wembdon from Model Farm*. The terrain is now horizontal, comfortably curved. Houses nestle safely in the hollows and gracefully sweeping roads dissolve in the gently yielding forms of the trees. The immense loosely washed skies vibrate with light. They embrace and unite man and nature. In *Perry Green Pasture* even the potentially ominous clouds, poised to unleash the gathering rain, pose no threat to the peaceful scene below. Here, as in *Rose Cottage at Perry Green*, and *Shenandoah Valley* transparent green, blue and beige areas, punctuated with brighter tonalities, are clear and delicate. The brushstrokes are loose and sweeping, seemingly effortless in their suggestion of nature's gentler temperament.

Teller's dialogue comes full cycle in his direct and unquestioning recording and full acceptance of nature's sheer exuberance and beauty. These scenes are bright and exultant in the intense dramatically contrasting tones of the tropical beaches of St. Croix or in the lyrical *Poppy Field, near Bishop's Lydeard*. But even the clear identification of more familiar red poppies and Queen Anne's lace does not conceal the sense of wonderment which the painter transmits to his audience. These scenes pulsate with a joyous acclamation; they are pictorial echoes of timeless sentiments.

Lilien F. Robinson
Professor of Art History



Venezuelan Landscapes
DOUGLAS H TELLER

VENEZUELAN LANDSCAPES

DOUGLAS H TELLER

WATERCOLORS

DECEMBER 14, 1986 - JANUARY 15, 1987

COSMOS CLUB, WASHINGTON DC

2100 Massachusetts Avenue NW

On the cover: *La Guaira* 17 X 26 inches, 1986.



Tepuy Country 19 X 25



Canaima 19 X 25

Ciudad Bolívar 19 X 27



Paseo Orinoco 15 X 23



Cathedral At Merida 29 X 20





La Vela 18 X 26



Iglesia - Los Aleros 19 X 25

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

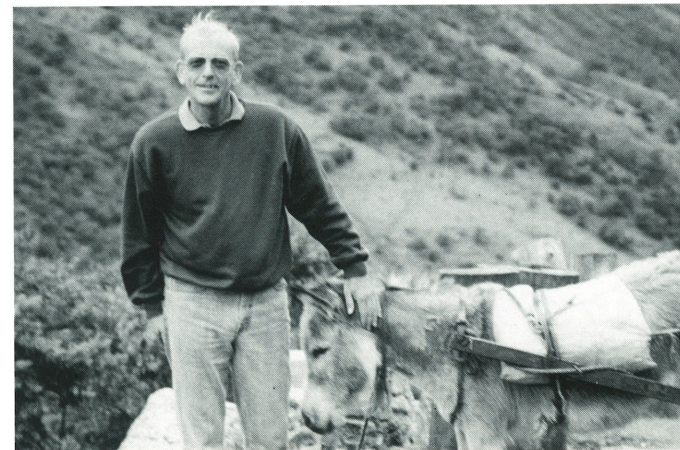
All paintings are in the water color medium and were executed in the year 1986.

1. Canaima 19 X 25
2. Cathedral at Merida 29 X 20
3. Ciudad Bolivar 19 X 27
4. Ciudad Bolivar No. 5 19 X 25
5. Fog on Monte Avila 14 X 22
6. Iglesia - Los Aleros 19 X 25
7. La Guaira 17 X 26
8. La Selva 22 X 29
9. La Vela 18 X 26
10. Mansiones Verdes 14 X 22
11. Monte Avila 18 X 25
12. Paseo Orinoco 15 X 23
13. Playa 11 X 14
14. Raspadero 19 X 28
15. Roadside Stand on the Trans-Andean Highway 20 X 29
16. Tepuy 22 X 29
17. Tepuy Country 19 X 25

© 1986 Douglas H Teller, Washington DC.
Design: Michael J. Dennis Photography: Richard Rodriguez

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Douglas H Teller has always been interested in travel and has over the years spent time in Europe, particularly in France. On numerous journeys to South and Central America he has made extensive visits to Surinam, Columbia, Honduras, Panama, Mexico and Venezuela. Such trips have had a decided thematic and technical impact upon his work. Teller's 1986 visit to Venezuela has served as inspiration for his most recent suite of watercolor paintings.





Roadside Stand on the Trans-Andean Highway

20 X 29 inches, 1986.

COSMOS CLUB, WASHINGTON DC
DECEMBER 14, 1986 – JANUARY 15, 1987

Foreword

With the purpose in mind of exploring each artist's oeuvre in some depth, we inaugurated the series of biennial two-person fine arts faculty exhibitions with an exhibition of the works of Douglas H Teller and H. Irving Gates in March 1979. The exhibition of the works of Jeffrey Stephanic and Douglas H Teller marks the completion of the first cycle of two person fine arts faculty shows which were initiated by The Dimock Gallery. With the participation of Jeffrey Stephanic, who became a full-time fine arts faculty member in 1980, a new cycle of exhibitions is inaugurated with different pairings of faculty members. We expect to continue this series into the next decade. The format of this exhibition has, over the past ten years, featured two full-time members of the Art Department every other year. The artists who have shown together in the past were given shows in order of their appointment to the full-time faculty of the Art Department. The purpose of the exhibition is to provide the artists with adequate space to present a body of work and to document the works with a catalogue. The Dimock Gallery is pleased to present the works of Jeffrey Stephanic and Douglas H Teller, and the staff is most grateful to the artists for their generous participation in the organization and presentation of this exhibition.

Lenore D. Miller
Curator of Art

JEFFREY STEPHANIC

photographs



Lava Tube Entrance, Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii, 1988

Stephanic, a native of Canton, Ohio, has been in the Washington, D.C. area since 1965. After service in the U.S. Navy and a ten year career in medical technology, he returned to college and received a B.A. in Fine Arts (1977) and M.F.A. in Photography (1980) from The George Washington University where he is presently Associate Professor of Photography. He is a recipient of the Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington Award of Excellence, the David Lloyd Kreeger Prize in Photography, the Myron Lowe Scholarship, and as co-designer and photographer, he received the 1982 Printing Industry of America Award for the poster *Renaissance, 1982*, for The George Washington University Art Department. Stephanic has been in solo exhibitions at Gallery 4, Alexandria, Virginia; Northern Virginia Community College, Woodbridge, Virginia; The Little Art Gallery, North Canton, Ohio; and Pittsburgh Filmmaker's Gallery, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Stephanic's work has been in group shows at the Rathbone Gallery, Russell Sage College, Albany, New York; the Janvier Gallery, University of Delaware, Newark; the McNeese State University, Louisiana; GWU's Dimock Gallery; the Washington Project for the Arts; the Chrysler Museum and the Hermitage Museum, Norfolk, Virginia. He has also been the recipient of research grants and private commissions for his hand-colored works. His hand-colored prints are included in numerous private collections. He has lectured at the National Gallery of Art and conducted workshops on the hand-coloring technique at The Smithsonian Institution as well as serving as juror for local and national photographic competitions.

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The George Washington University

JEFFREY STEPHANIC

photographs

This exhibition includes a decade of hand-colored photographs by Jeffrey L. Stephanic depicting a tradition of his artistic sensitivity to the landscape and his commitment to this expressive medium. The construction of his pictures begins with an underlying structural composition rendered in the sharp precision of a black and white photograph. It is when he brings to that composition the subtle colors of hand tinting that Stephanic's work becomes unique and personal. In addition to the technical expertise, his perception of the details of nature transcends culture and geography. He is indeed an artist with the ability to observe the important little vignettes of nature which are universally recognizable and pleasing to the eye. Moreover, his images capture the familiar without losing the essence or the particularity of the landscape they record.

Stephanic reveals a multi-dimensionality within the simplicity of his compositions. He produces an image which is both intimate and universal; a quiet moment, a personal glimpse of the world, an open door for the viewer to share a private experience with nature. The subjects which attract Stephanic are varied. He captures the monumentality of a panoramic vista or the vitality of a single leaf. He produces an image of the enormity of architectural forms in space or brings to life a single corner of an interior. The common factors in all of his work are the contrasting views in nature, the tension between the general and the specific and a subtle strength in a seemingly calm, serene and gentle landscape scene. It is the artist who manipulates the line, form and color which transform the chaos of nature into a tranquil and peaceful scene. Stephanic sees the peace, order and harmony within the chaos of both the natural and the man-made structures in the environment. His close-up view of the commonplace world is expertly reproduced in the small and gently detailed wonders of nature.

Stephanic's current work depicts scenes from his recent travels to France and Hawaii. From these two varied cultures and climates he finds a similarity in the underlying structure and a difference in the natural construction of the landscape. In the aerial perspective of both the *Jardin de la Fontaine, Nîmes, France* and *Koko Head, Hawaii* the illusion of distance occurs as the eye moves upward in the composition. The contrast of the stability of the formal garden of Nîmes with the strong moving forces of nature in the lava flow in Hawaii is highlighted by Stephanic's control of the medium and his ability to quiet and calm the turmoil in nature.

The special feeling that Stephanic has for a tropical climate and his particular love for the landscape and environment of Hawaii is clear. He captures the dichotomy of the island, its tranquility along side the powerful natural forces which can so suddenly transform the landscape. His images evoke the damp humid air and gentle fragrant breezes producing an easy going, languid mood that can be instantly interrupted with hurricanes, tidal waves and the unyielding lava flow from the ever present active volcanoes. This gentleness and underlying strength of the tropical environment is depicted in *Lava Tube Entrance, Volcanoes National Park*, where the viewer is drawn into the drama of the lush foliage. It is a magnified view of a small segment of the vast forested greenery on the island and one feels completely engulfed by its tropical richness. The feathery touch of the fern in the foreground invites further exploration, but the dark recessions of the forest behind forbid entry. Similarly, in *Tree Ferns, Volcanoes National Park*, the dense mystery of the forest is framed with the delicate branches of giant ferns. The contrast between the softness of the fronds and the dark mystery of the forest from which they emerge creates a tension which Stephanic seems to isolate, identify

and come to terms with. The interplay between these different elements in nature is rendered harmoniously and in complete compatibility.

Stephanic, known for his intimate views of nature in works such as *Ivy and Rock* and *Route 66, I*, has always been able to successfully integrate opposing textures and colors. The combination of the rough tactile quality of the brown-grey stone and the petal-soft warm orange-red of the leaves blend as perfectly in his composition as they do in nature. Moreover, he is able to magnify the small details within the panoramic view of a distant landscape such as *Days Gone By, Georgetown University*. It is in this work that Stephanic successfully combines the general with the specific. The panorama of the crowded trees, the activity of the boathouse along the shoreline of the Potomac River and the Georgetown University architecture above share equal attention with the isolation of the single rower in the lower left corner.

Stephanic's architectural landscapes depict man-made structures with the same intimate detail he brings to nature. This is a characteristic that he began early in his career with the *East Wing, National Gallery of Art* in which he fills the horizontal picture plane with the building and uses the geometric lines of the architecture to frame and define the softness of the brilliantly lighted entrance. The light and dark contrast, the geometric lines and forms, the minute detail within the grand vista and the intimate mood these features evoke are hallmarks of Stephanic's work. The success of his later architectural landscapes depend on the tradition and character of the intimacy which he mastered so brilliantly in this earlier piece.

Paris Rooftops and *L'Oasis, Arles, France* are works in which he has continued that intimate tradition. Composed of juxtaposed geometric lines and forms these architectural landscapes focus on a detailed piece of the whole. Each shows a portion of a building, the whole of which exists beyond the

picture plane. The view of the cafe façade of *L'Oasis* is elevated, eliminating the horizon line as well as other environmental references. The structure comes intimately close to the viewer. The shadows, the strong sunlight and the absence of people at the cafe tables suggest early morning and evoke a mood of quiet solitude.

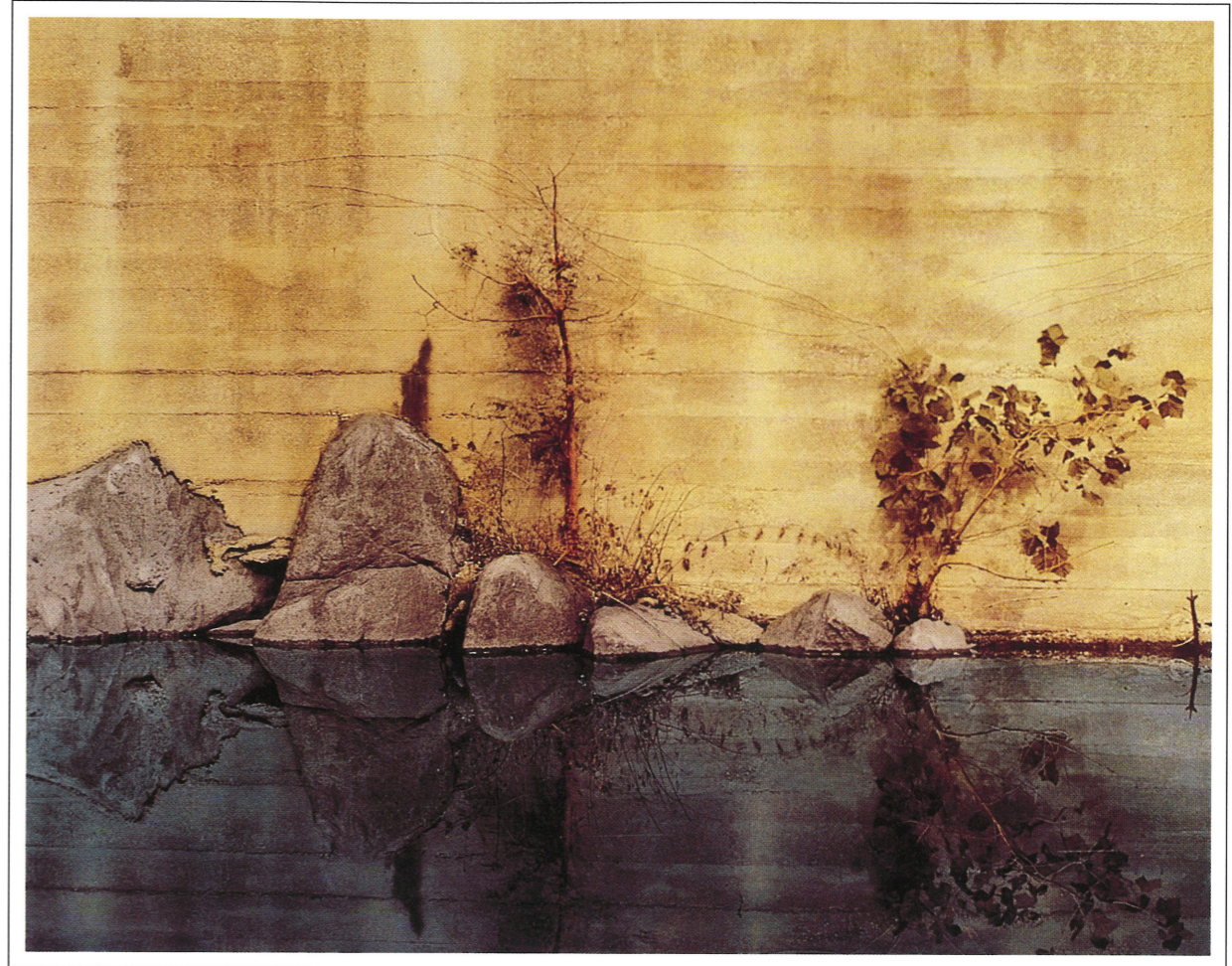
A similar mood exists in the Paris picture. The elevated horizontal view focusing on the windows of the building directly across lends an atmosphere of voyeurism. The deep recessed shadows moving deep into the windows summon feelings of intimacy and privacy in an otherwise public space. The contrast here lies between the hidden mystery implied by the open windows juxtaposed to the mundaneness of the peeling plaster on the side of the building. Although the geometric forms of the Parisian building recall the earlier *East Wing, National Gallery of Art*, the sensitivity to subtle color tonalities and textures of *Paris Rooftops* renders a departure in its ability to immediately confront the viewer with magnified detail.

Whether Stephanic's images are inspired by nature or man-made structures he is responsive to the smallest detail which captures the essence of the whole. He has an ability to look for and record that one element which will evoke a complete atmospheric mood. His recent works are evidence that his personal view of the landscape and sensitivity to the wonders of nature is universal.

Barbara J. Stephanic
Art Historian

JEFFREY L. STEPHANIC

Hand-Colored Silver Prints



Jeffrey L. Stephanic's hand-colored photography reveals singular technical and aesthetic contributions. Expressive of the artist's feelings, images are simultaneously evocative and provocative.

Subsequent to a theoretical and practical exploration of nineteenth and twentieth-century photography, Stephanic has rejected traditional approaches to black and white photography as well as contemporary color photography. None seemed appropriate to his concerns. While offering considerable technical control, black and white photography did not provide the desired range of expressiveness. Conversely, color photography, an effective vehicle for exploring mood, lacked permanency of color.

Attracted by the color durability of hand-tinted nineteenth-century photographs, Stephanic began to experiment with hand-coloring of black and white photographs, using both water and oil based pigments. The latter were selected because water-based colors are not only less permanent but are too rapidly absorbed into the emulsion. Oil based colors, which range from opaque to transparent dry slowly and thus can be worked and reworked until the desired effect is achieved. In contrast to commercial color photography, hand-coloring lends itself to blending and mixing.

That the hand-coloring process permits an extensive range of color and texture is apparent when the subdued, muted and yielding passages of *Walkways 1* (page 3) are compared to the smooth intense greens and yellows of *Caesar's Best* (page 10). Potentially, the range of the palette encourages perceptual as well as arbitrary coloration, thus satisfying both realistic and abstract concerns of such pieces as *The Pears* (page 8) and *Fire Escape* (page 6). Stephanic's technique also insures the

uniqueness of each print. Duplication is not possible since no two prints can be hand-colored in precisely the same manner.

The artist's allegiance to tradition in the adaptation of nineteenth-century hand-tinting is paralleled by his selection of real and identifiable subjects. A wall along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, the exterior of a shop in Italy, a still life of pears and a water lily share immediate familiarity. But just as the viewer gradually discovers new and at times arbitrary nuances in the colors, so the scenes reveal unexpected moods and realities. They are never as they appear. The viewer's initial certainty concerning subject-matter is easily challenged as is the identification of the process itself. Photography and painting are eventually merged, incapable of being separated. The images are similarly ambiguous, ultimately enigmatic.

Stephanic appears to be recording the comfortingly real scene. But it is not the specific and the necessarily tangible totality that fascinates him but the individual shapes, the line, the nuances and the implied mood. Reality is the departure point, but Stephanic prefers an unorthodox, and at times, startling point of view. Minute aspects are examined: a bit of a wall, a fire escape, a leaf of lettuce. The artist molds and transforms the images, insisting that photography is authentic art and not merely a reflection but a recreation of nature. The final images are inevitably solid, precise and frequently architectonic. Whether depicting the East Building of the National Gallery of Art, or a deck plate, he captures an underlying compositional stability.

The objects selected suggest an inherent order and permanency. Two Italian scenes, *Graciella Meli's Residence* (page 5) and *Antique Shop* (page 12) are cases in point. Stephanic explores traditions reflected in the three hundred year old house, restored to its original white plaster walls and arcuated doorways. He focuses on a passage flooded with light which reveals a

collection of simple classical vessels juxtaposed against the red warmth of terracotta floors. The facade of the antique shop with its weather-beaten but solid wooden doors is laden with merchandise of diverse periods and cultures. The heavy stucco walls display layers of paint peeling as if to unravel its origins in a distant past. The passage of time seems momentarily suspended in these quiet scenes, enclosed in solid architectural environments and bathed in warm Mediterranean light. Time is transcended by the photographer and thus by the viewer.

Similar qualities are manifested in singularly different scenes. In *Deck Plate* (page 7) Stephanic's love of Maryland's eastern shore leads to an examination of a more recent past. The simple, ordinary unyielding metal fixture on a dilapidated, storm-battered deck suggests something of the nature, even essence of the challenging seafaring life of the Chesapeake. The specific subject become less important as the viewer yields to the photographer's implications and suggestions.

Stephanic reflects upon small fragments of life. Yet they seem to suggest more profound realities. The viewer is invited to join in the artist's contemplation of an inherent timelessness and universality.

Lilien F. Robinson
Professor of Art History
The George Washington University

Cover: *C & O Canal, Georgetown, 1984, 11" x 14"*



Walkways 1, 1982, 11" x 14"



Rocks and Ivy, 1985, 11" x 14"



Graciella Meli's Residence,
Formia, Italy,
1984, 15" x 11"



Fire Escape,
1985, 14" x 11"



Deck Plate, Chesapeake Bay, 1983, 11" x 14"



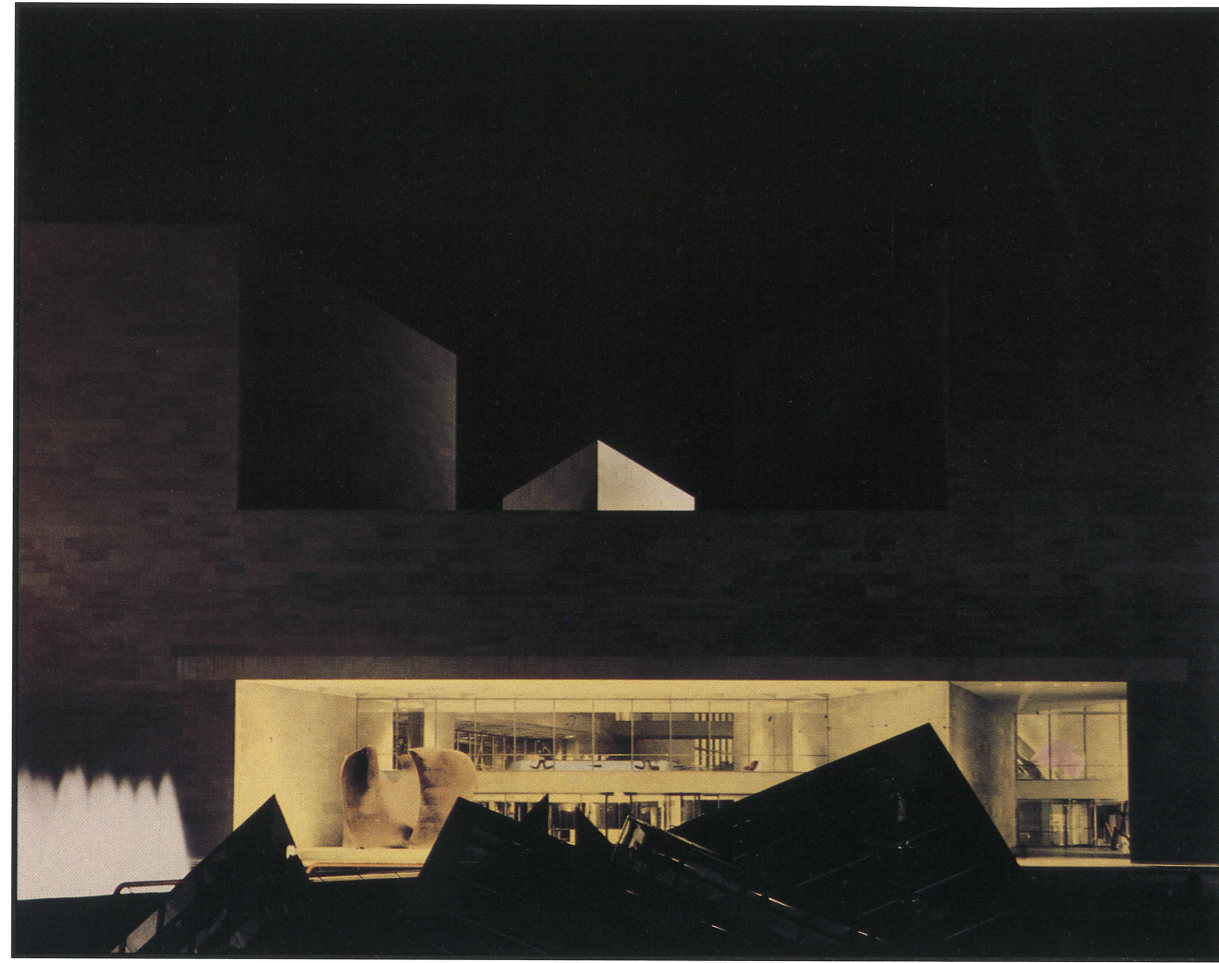
The Pears, 1985, 11" x 14"



Lilies, 1985,
14" x 11"



Cesar's Best,
1983, 15" x 11"



East Building, National Gallery of Art, 1980, 11" x 14"



Antique Shop, Sulmona, Italy, 1984, 11" x 14"

Hand-coloring photographs is nearly as old as the photographic process. From the discovery of photography during the 1820's, photographers sought the element of color in their images and devised numerous processes to achieve that goal. Experimentation was conducted with watercolors, oil pigments, color carbon tissue and dyed potato starch. Hand-coloring with oil pigments became popular from the Civil War era until the late 1960's, when modern color film and print materials replaced this medium. Recently, there has been a revival of this very beautiful process, expanding the expressive scope of the photographic medium.

The hand-coloring process begins with the making of a black and white photograph to establish the tonal scale of the image. A black and white print is capable of expressing an almost unrivaled range of tone. Conventional color photographic materials tend to be deficient in tonal depth and rely solely on color perception to establish scale. In addition, a black and white photograph is more permanent than modern color photographic materials.

Thin layers of transparent oil paint applied to the surface of the photograph harmonize with the underlying image. An attempt is made to carefully blend the colors so the surface application of pigments is not apparent to the viewer. A clear varnish or archival wax is then applied to further smooth and protect the surface of the print.

The resulting prints have an individual quality. The color is richer and deeper than commercial color photographic materials and the print has a more tactile surface. An additional benefit is that no prints from the same negative are exactly alike, each print is distinctly an individual image.

JLS

Jeffrey L. Stephanic, born in Canton, Ohio, 1946, has been in the Washington, D.C. area since 1965. He received his B.A. in Fine Arts and M.F.A. from The George Washington University where he is presently Assistant Professor of Photography. His specialty is hand-colored photographs and his award winning works have been exhibited nationally and are in

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS:

- 4th Annual Brandeis Juried Art Exhibition*, Strathmore Hall, Rockville, Maryland, May 1985.
Scenes of Southern Italy, Italian-American Historical Association Conference, Washington, D.C., Nov. 1984.
Faculty Exhibition, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., Mar. 1984.
Special Exhibition - 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C., Oct. 1983
University Recruitment/Best in U.S., Poster exhibition, McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana, June 1983.
The Ritz, Washington Project for the Arts, April 1983.
In Celebration - Art at The George Washington University, Art Barn Gallery, Washington, D.C., Oct. 1982.
Group Exhibition, Janvier Gallery, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, May 1982.
Faculty Exhibition, Dimock Gallery, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985.
10 Washington Photographers, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C., May 1981.
Freshworks, Hermitage Foundation Museum, Norfolk, Virginia, 1978.
Light Images, Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia, 1978

numerous private collections. Mr. Stephanic has lectured on photography at the National Gallery of Art and has taught workshops on the hand-coloring technique at The Smithsonian Institution and recently received a grant for the research and development of a portfolio of photographs of Central and Southern Italy.

AWARDS AND HONORS:

- Chairman, Annual Fund Drive, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, George Washington University 1984-86.
University Research Grant, The George Washington University, 1984.
Alumni Service Award, The George Washington University, 1983.
First Prize, Renaissance 1982 poster printed by Stephenson, Inc., Printing Industry of America, 1982.
Myron Lowe Scholarship, 1979.
David Lloyd Kreeger Prize in Photography, Dimock Gallery, The George Washington University, 1979.
Award of Excellence Scholarship, The Art Director's Club of Metropolitan Washington, D.C., 1977.

Catalogue made possible by a grant from The George Washington University.

Design by: Samuel B. Molina
Associate Professor of Visual Communications
The George Washington University

Printed by Stephenson, Inc., Alexandria, Virginia

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