

Interview with Grace Hartigan, Artist-in-Residence



Grace Hartigan, Artist-in-Residence

By SARAH M. TAYLOR

She will darken, decisive as a light bulb, when the building crumbles. She had thought herself tough, but now each day, trembling and cloudy she sighs, feathered, for that virginity which seeks her out. The harp would flee her pale fingernails, but the sea may flatten into a smile before she's done with those bruising.

She has not a natural voice.

Frank O'Hara, "Portrait of Grace"

Although a vital member of the Abstract Expressionist school of painting, Grace Hartigan is a prolific and independent painter in her own right. Her own creativity has caused her to venture into a wide range of expressions. As Frank O'Hara's poem in honor of Hartigan suggests, she is her own master, displaying verisimilitude and a humanitarian sensibility within the painted medium.

It was at the tender age of twenty-eight that Hartigan decided to take control of her own life, declaring herself to

be a professional artist. She left her lover of five years, gave up her eight year old son to be raised by paternal grandparents, and convinced her employer to fire her, in order to receive unemployment compensation. This was a frightening and drastic move, but a necessary one in the establishment of Hartigan's self image as an artist. She wanted to be dedicated to her work, without becoming occupied with conflicting relationships. According to Hartigan;

To be quite honest about it, I had marvelous relationships during the fifties, with wonderful men, but I never had a commitment that was more important or as important as my painting. I didn't want to live out of the studio. I didn't want to live with anyone or have them live with me. I wanted hours to myself. I didn't want to cook or do any of those things.

Hartigan established herself in New York and began to become involved with the founders of Abstract Expressionism, Willem DeKooning and Jackson Pollock. Both of these artists aided Hartigan

both professionally and personally. Pollock became a close friend and an important connection into the New York art scene. DeKooning had a profound influence upon Hartigan's own style of painting.

Describing Pollock as a "pourer" and DeKooning as a "brusher," Hartigan adopted the more painterly style of DeKooning, displaying a rhythmic quality with her brush, a touch of structure within her forms, and a vivid intensity within her palette. While painting she listens to either Greek or Flamenco music, enhancing her personal rhythm and providing a sense of lively energy as she allows her brush to dance symbolically across the canvas. Describing her style, Hartigan relates;

If you work the way I work and on the scale that I work, you work with your body. My painting is quite rhythmic. I tend to do more organic forms than architectonic forms. Organic does mean the use of the body, the rhythms of the body and the naturalness of nature, rather than the art-

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Steve Kaplan: Student-of-the-Month

By AMY FRIBUSH
and ARLENE FURMAN

Steven Delaware Kaplan, born at Watts Hospital in Durham, has been chosen to receive the honor of being Guilford College's first Student-of-the-Month. Congratulations Steve - you are a source of pride to the community and are to be commended for your spirit and contributing vigor.

Steve acquired his unusual middle name, Delaware, when hitch-hiking in the state of the same name; he was let off on charges if and only if he would forever and furthermore bear the name of the state. So having not much of a choice the name stuck and has now become a unique part of his integral self.

Steve's mother informed him that as a child he ran and bit people's knees, however Steve has no recollection of

any of this. One of his hobbies was sleepwalking into a room of people and slamming his head in the door a couple of times. This accounts for his present day condition.

The Kaplan family is made up of Steve, two younger sisters followed by a younger brother along with an Irish Setter named Gorton after a former prime minister of Australia who was punched out for chasing after women.

Another of Steve's interests is playing the tuba, which, to him is much more than an output of oompahs. He was the first tuba player music major of UNC in Chapel Hill. They didn't even have a tuba teacher at that time so Steve was forced to hitchhike to Winston-Salem in order to be taught there. He feels that tuba players are ostracized as weird people and are not socially accepted. He has since given

up playing because he lets himself become too vulnerable to competitive performing pressures, and also, he has no tuba. He now only plays in his dreams which consist of walking down a street in New Orleans and seeing a tuba he can afford in a pawn shop. This would be a fantasy come true for Steve.

The only other interest that appealed to Steve was English Literature, so he decided on a major in this field for his Sophomore and Junior years. Feeling defined as a non-student and caught in a red-clay rut there, he wanted to reconsider his position before graduation after being on the sliding board since first grade.

After Steve decided to drop out, he went through an array of various forms of employment such as winter construction work, Switchboard crisis counseling, dishwashing and

factory fun with furniture where he stapled through his thumb. He came from unemployment to the maintenance department grounds crew at Guilford.

Fall is Here and Here Come Seminars

Seminars being held during fall break are filling up rapidly.

The seminar to be held to Washington, DC (Oct. 15-21) has about five remaining spaces available. Students able to drive their car (thus cutting their expenses) and provide transportation for others in the seminar, would be greatly appreciated. The topic of the seminar, "US Food Policy in a Hungry World." Some of the people and places to be visited include the Dept. of Agriculture, Dept. of State, major farm lobbies and congressmen.

The seminar on marine science in Seahorse Key, Florida is filled and has a wait-

Doing this he enjoyed riding Yazoo, a three-bladed lawnmower, singing and smiling to the campus folk. He came to

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ing list.

There are five spaces left in the New York seminar on urban problems to be held Oct. 14-21. Visits are planned to Greenwich Village, Ninth Precinct Police Station, Odyssey House, Booth House on the bowery, East Harlem, City Hall, UHAB Headquarters and the United Nations. There will be free time to attend theatre, museums, Lincoln Center and other places of interest.

Students interested in Fall Break seminars should contact the Center for Off Campus Education (Frazier Apt. #21) as soon as possible.