

**The  
Elmhurst  
College  
Art  
Collection**

A. C. Buehler Library  
Elmhurst, Illinois

# The Collection

The Elmhurst College art collection contains over 60 pieces of original artwork, many of them by important artists referred to as Chicago "Imagists." The collection was begun in 1971 with residual gift monies which were available to furnish the then newly completed A.C. Buehler Library. These monies were generously given to Elmhurst by Mr. and Mrs. Albert C. Buehler of Barrington and the federal government through Title I of the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963.

Because of the college's interest in supporting the efforts of Chicago artists, original Chicago art was selected to be the focus of the collection. Melvin George, director of the college library from 1965 to 1974, Latham Baskerville, chairperson of the college's Art Department from 1947 to 1972, and Ted Halkin, Art Department chairperson from 1972 to 1975, were instrumental in this decision.

Ten pieces by Chicago "Imagists" were included in the original purchase from the Phyllis Kind Gallery in Chicago. These works included Steven Urry's "Head Flower", Karl Wirsum's "Click", Barbara Rossi's "Curls" and "Shep", Roger Brown's "Performance", Ray Yoshida's "Untitled", Jim Nutt's "Toot Toot Woo Woo", Gladys Nilsson's "More Fowl Beasts", Miyoko Ito's "Chinoiserie" and Jordan Davies' "Untitled".

Since 1971, additional acquisitions have been made possible by matching grants from the Illinois Arts Council's Permanent Collection Purchase Program and through gifts and trusts. All art pieces are displayed in the A.C. Buehler Library on the college campus, 190 Prospect, Elmhurst.

The art collection serves as a continuing source of cultural enrichment for the entire Elmhurst College community as well as for individuals from the metropolitan area who use the library's resources. Moreover, as selected pieces from the collection have been loaned for display at museums, galleries, universities and international exhibitions, their appreciation and enjoyment have been even more widespread.

For more information on the Elmhurst College art collection, contact the director of the A.C. Buehler Library at 279-4100, ext. 255.

# Chicago "Imagist" Art

The Chicago art that has generally come to be known as "Imagist" art came into prominence in the late 1960s. Its subject and form come to life in intelligible imagery in fantastic formats, or in fantastic imagery in intelligible formats, or in pure fantasy — but it is always root bound to the physical and spiritual world we live in. Its temperament ranges from the outlandish and explosive to the meditative and narrative, and from the vulgar and humorous to the mysterious and passionate. It is serious in intent, rich in talent, impeccable in craftsmanship and prolific in output.

"Imagist" art emerged simultaneously with a disenchantment in the 1960s that U.S. technology had its harmful side, that natural resources were being depleted, that the American dream of human equality was far from realized, and that the Vietnam crisis had revealed our capacity for ill will. Where before we had thought of ourselves as ingenious, independent and humane, we now saw ourselves as defective, vulnerable, and oppressive.

The "Imagists" reveal a world of imperfection, dispossession, farce and outrage gaining advantage over enlightenment, compassion, propriety and restraint. Their vision is tempered by a heartfelt appreciation for the restorative powers of primitive and naive art, and the memories of their own childhood. Their acceptance and illustration of the world in its imperfect state is not unlike medieval man who saw himself as sinful, ribald and weak, and whose temporary saving grace was to do the best he could, develop a sense of humor about his vulgarities, and trust in God to save him in the end.

While the artists of this movement were studying at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, they began exhibiting in various groups with the fanciful titles of "The Hairy Who," "The Non-Plussed Some", and "The False Image." Early in their public visibility, notable art teachers and critics began talking and writing about them as a lively, original new development in the art world.

By 1974 they had achieved a serious national

(continued on reverse side)



and international reputation. Shortly after its purchase, Elmhurst's painting by Jim Nutt entitled "Toot Toot Woo Woo" was selected for representation by the United States at the 1972 Venice Biennale in Italy, and the Chicago "Imagist" artists were chosen as sole representatives of United States art at the 1973 Sao Paulo Biennial in Brazil. The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the National Collection of Fine Arts in Washington, D.C., and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago have all focused on their work. They are now represented in numerous museums and private collections, and featured in several books and voluminous articles.

As diverse and as individual as these artists are in their style and presentation, it is more than a coincidence that they have all flowered in the same city at the same time and with the same striking spirit and quality. The boundaries, the representatives, and the popular label "Imagists" are all inconclusive at this early stage, but the mastery of these artists, their healthy outlook, and their love of making art all point to their leadership in determining the face of late 20th Century American art.

Sandra Jorgensen  
Professor of Art, and  
Chairperson, Elmhurst College  
Art Department



# Location of Artwork

(For information on individual artists and works, see subsequent inserts)

## IN FRONT OF LIBRARY

Steve Urry **“Head Flower”**  
(Aluminum)

## MAIN LEVEL

Richard Loving **“Effusive Breakout”**  
(Oil and acrylic on canvas)

Philip Hanson **“The Grand Entrance”** (Acrylic on canvas)

Gertrude Abercrombie **“Tree at Aledo”** (Oil on canvas)

Roger Brown **“Standing While All Around Are Sinking”** (Etching and aquatint)

Roger Brown **“Sinking”**  
(Etching and aquatint)

Karl Wirsum **“Click”**  
(Acrylic on canvas)

Ted Halkin **“Untitled”**  
(Pencil)

Dominick DiMeo **“Torso/  
Landscape”** (Sand, plaster, gouache, and vinyl on jute)

Ray Yoshida **“Preposterous Proposition”** (Acrylic on canvas)

Philip Hanson **“Distant Helmut Ceremonial Piece and Eroded Grill”** (Acrylic on unprimed canvas)

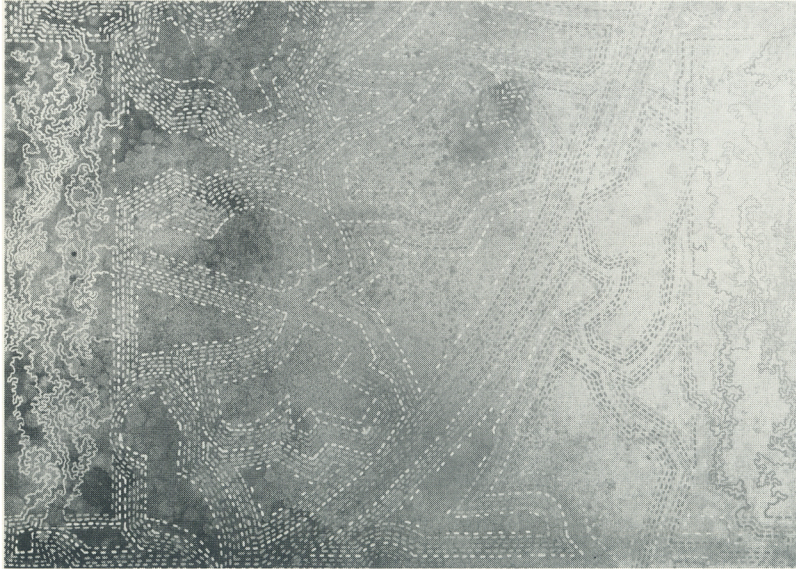
Karl Wirsum **“Ice Pick Nick Fisherman”** (Diptych — wooden sculptures)

Ed Paschke **“Cobmaster”**  
(Acrylic on canvas)

Margaret Wharton **“Unified Photo Series”** (Nine photographs)

Thomas H. Kapsalis **“Table Still Life”**  
(Oil on canvas)

(more on reverse side)



"Effusive Breakout" (1977)

Oil and acrylic on canvas, 56" x 76"

Richard Loving

- Born 1924 in Vienna, Austria
- Studied at Bard College, Annandale on the Hudson, New York Medical School, Division of Cornell University and New School for Social Research in New York

Purchased in 1979 with a matching grant from the Illinois Arts Council's Permanent Collection Purchase Program