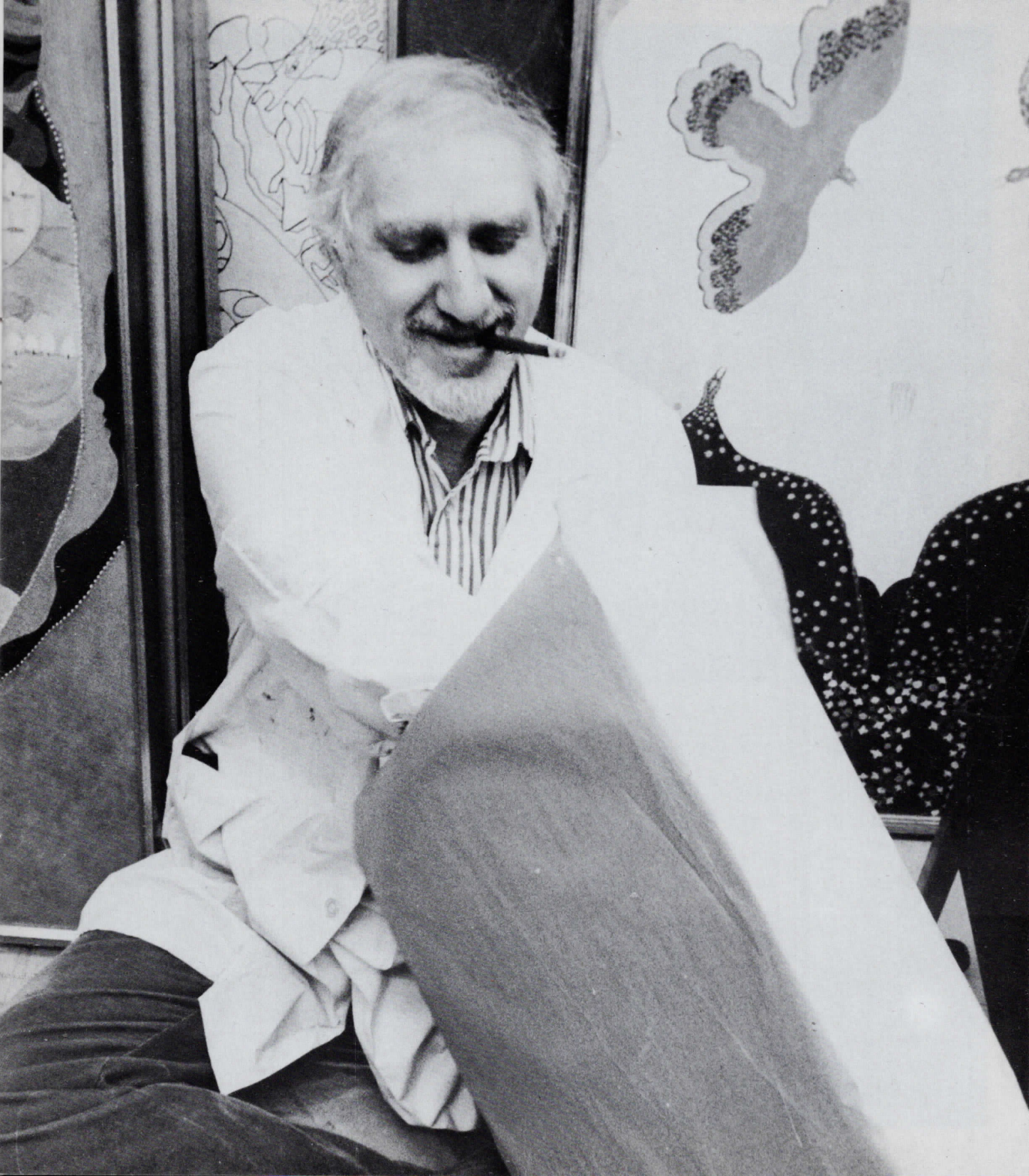




Richard Callner

**University Art Gallery
State University of New York
at Albany**

January 17 through February 13, 1977





above: 6 **Mirror of Lilith**
 opposite: 3 **Lilith Leaving Eden**

“It is difficult yet desirable to preface one’s catalogue with comments about intentions and ideas about imagery.

The real meaning and intention behind my imagery is direct and clear to me. I enjoy dealing with the glorification of the relationship of people to nature, people to architecture, people to animals, and, of course, people to people. The vehicle I use to achieve this is mythology. It takes its forms from Middle Eastern myths as well as Asian myths and has evolved into a contemporary mythology in which the “Mother God” figure is both prominent and dominant.

About fifteen years ago or so, I came upon the myth of Lilith. This first wife of Adam has been given many attributes; among them, incredible beauty, feminine independence, and the power to invoke and control evil. She was the angel that brought Adam to paradise; was Adam’s first wife, Satan’s wife, a medieval destroyer of children, the serpent in the garden, and is said to have created an alternative line of children in opposition to the begotten of Adam and Eve. Quite often I have combined Lilith with other myths, for example, Artemis of Ephesus, Venus, Leda, and Diana, the moon goddess. Usually I use only the female figure because I find it more graceful than most male figures. The bird is a frequent symbol for the male figure and it suits Lilith quite well for at one time she created wings with which to fly about.

My early work was influenced by the art and artifacts found in the Museum of Natural History in Chicago and also the gloomy, dark colors of my childhood in Chicago. I found that the camera and film could not be matched at showing man at his worst. It seems to me that one of the main areas left to most artists is in culling out attitudes of beauty in times of non-beauty. This is a matter of personal artistic choice. I do not feel there is a “right” or “wrong” way to make images. I hope for an increase in unique ways to present an artist’s personal view of his society. It is the differences that fascinate me in people, places, and art.”—Richard Callner





16 Parade to Heaven or Hell 1974 41 by 44½ ins

Catalogue of Paintings

- 1 **Cycle** 1975 oil on canvas 49 by 43 ins
- 2 **Three Graces** 1970 oil on canvas 47 by 53 ins
- 3 **Lilith Leaving Eden** 1975 oil on canvas 41 by 48½ ins
- 4 **Homage to Toyen** 1976 oil on canvas 52 by 47 ins
- 5 **Cartoon (for tapestry)** 1975 oil on canvas 36 by 48 ins
- 6 **Mirror of Lilith** 1968 oil on canvas 26½ by 38 ins
- 7 **Lilith Still Life** 1975 oil on canvas 43 by 51 ins
- 8 **Group** 1975 oil on canvas 43 by 37 ins
- 9 **Three Graces in Heaven and Hell** 1976 oil on canvas 51 by 41 ins
- 10 **Study for Lilith Leaving Eden** 1975 oil on canvas 10 by 15 ins
- 11 **Promenade** 1975 oil on canvas 36 by 45 ins
- 12 **Lilith Island** 1975 oil on canvas 43 by 41 ins
- 13 **Pandora** 1976 oil on canvas 36 by 36 ins
- 14 **Europa** 1966 oil on canvas 27 by 40½ ins
- 15 **Lisa as Lilith** 1976 oil on canvas 35½ by 52½ ins
- 16 **Parade to Heaven or Hell** 1974 oil on canvas 41 by 44½ ins
- 17 **Lilith Tapestry** 1974 80 by 69 ins
- 18 **Leda and The Swan (tapestry)** 1974 80 by 65 ins
- 19 **Dreams of Lilith** 1969 oil on canvas 78 by 59 ins

opposite: 1 **Cycle** 1975 49 by 43 ins





Richard Callner

Richard Callner is Chairman of the Art Department at the State University of New York at Albany. Mr. Callner came to Albany from Tyler School of Art at Temple University in Philadelphia where he had been Professor of Painting since 1965. He was the founding director for the art school for the Temple Abroad program in Rome. Before going to Temple, Mr. Callner was a member of the art faculty of Olivet College, Olivet, Michigan and Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana.

He was educated at the University of Wisconsin and at Columbia University, where he received his M.F.A. degree in 1952. He had done additional study at the Art Students League in New York and holds a certificate from the Academie Julien in Paris.

A Guggenheim Fellowship was awarded to Mr. Callner in 1959 and during that year he painted in England and France. He has served in Turkey as a Visiting Artist for the U.S. State Department. In this country, he has been a Visiting Artist at the Kalamazoo Art Institute, Olivet College, and the University of Wisconsin.

Guest lectureships here and abroad have taken Mr. Callner to Cambridge, Smith, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Anglo-American Institute in Rome, Skowhegan School of Art, Bogazdici University and the Istanbul Academy of Fine Arts, the University of California at Santa Cruz and to the Society of Poets and Painters of the Cote d'Azur.

The artist's activities of recent years include a television series on art for two mid-western stations, the chairmanship of the U.S. Embassy Advisory Committee on Art in Rome, service on the exhibition juries of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, the International Exhibition Print Club in Philadelphia, and the Old Orchard Exhibition in Skokie, Illinois. The Ein Hod Tapestry Makers of Israel commissioned Mr. Callner to do the paintings from which the tapestries in this exhibition are made.

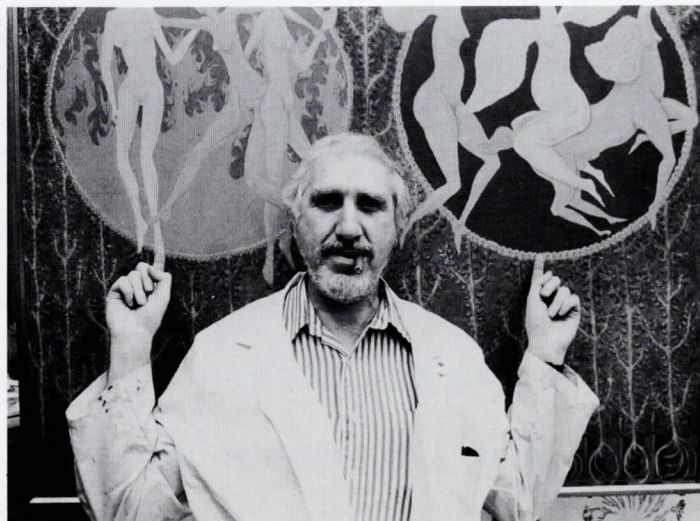
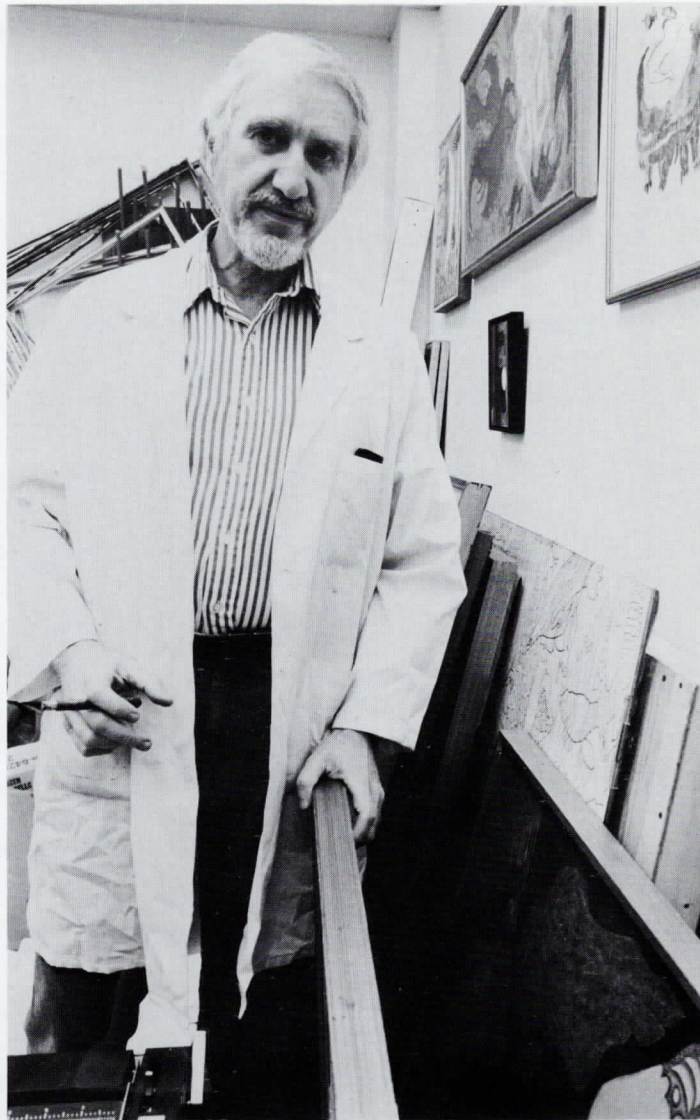
Exhibitions

1975

Bristol Museum, Rhode Island; one man exhibition
Invitational Print Exhibition—5 works
Philadelphia Art Alliance

1974

University of California—Santa Cruz, Cowell College
Gallery; one man exhibition
Gallery 696, Rochester, New York. One man exhibition
Watercolor U.S.A., Springfield Art Museum,
Springfield, Missouri



1973

U.S.I.S. Galleries, Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Turkey;
four one man exhibitions.

1972

Ursinus College; one man exhibition

1971

Gallery 252, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; one man
exhibition

1970

10-year Retrospective Exhibition, Tyler School of Art
International Graphics Exhibition; Scripps College,
Claremont, California, Lang Art Center

1969

Curwen Gallery, London; group exhibition
Tyler School of Art, Rome; three man exhibition
Traveling exhibition; Cologne, Freiburg, Hamburg,
Saarbruecken, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Germany;
one man exhibition

1968

U.S.I.S. Galleries, Naples, Rome, Italy; one man exhibi-
tions U.S.I.S. Galleries, Munich, Hannover, Heildel-
burg, Germany; one man exhibition
Premio Internazionale dell'Arte, Acreale, Sicily; 2nd prize
DeCordova Museum, Boston; group exhibition

1967

American Artists in Rome, Trieste, Genoa, Milan,
Bassano, Italy; one man exhibition
Picadilly Gallery, London; group, exhibition

1966

Tyler School of Art, Rome; group exhibition
Olivet College, Olivet, Michigan; one man exhibition

1965

Philadelphia Print Club Members Juried Exhibition
Olivet College Fine Arts Festival National Exhibition
Walker, Art Institute Invitational, Minneapolis

1964

Chatham College, Pittsburgh; one man exhibition
Kalamazoo Art Institute, Kalamazoo, Michigan;
one man exhibition
Hope College, Holland, Michigan; one man exhibition

1963

Michigan Printmakers Annual Exhibition, 1st prize
3M Corporation Invitational Print Exhibition,
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts 158th Annual Exhibit

Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana;
one man exhibition

Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan; one man exhibition

1962

Butler Institute of American Art Mid-year Annual Exhibit
Washington D.C. Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition
Eastern Michigan University Invitational Exhibition

1961

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts 156th Annual Exhibit
Butler Institute of American Art Mid-year Annual Exhibit
Bay Printmakers Society Annual Exhibit, Oakland, Calif.
Exhibition of Michigan Artists, Detroit, Michigan
Wisconsin State Fair Exhibition, Milwaukee; 1st prize
Jewish Community Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin;
one man exhibition
Irving Galleries, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1960

Adler Galleries, Paris
King Street Gallery, Cambridge, England

1959

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts 154th Annual Exhibit
Butler Institute of American Art Annual Exhibition

1958

Provincetown Arts Festival, Provincetown, Mass.
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts 153rd Annual Exhibit

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Butler Institute of American Art Annual Exhibition
Washington D.C. Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition

1956

Library of Congress 14th Annual National Print Exhibit

1955

Bay Printmakers Society First National Exhibition
Michiana Annual Painting Exhibit, South Bend, Indiana

Collections

University of Wisconsin Museum

Chicago Art Institute

Philadelphia Museum

Yale University Museum

Detroit Art Institute

Kalamazoo Institute of Art

Worcester Museum of Art

University of Michigan Museum

Museum of Painting and Sculpture, Istanbul

Cincinnati Museum

Mary Armstrong Museum, Olivet College, Olivet,
Michigan

Fort Wayne Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

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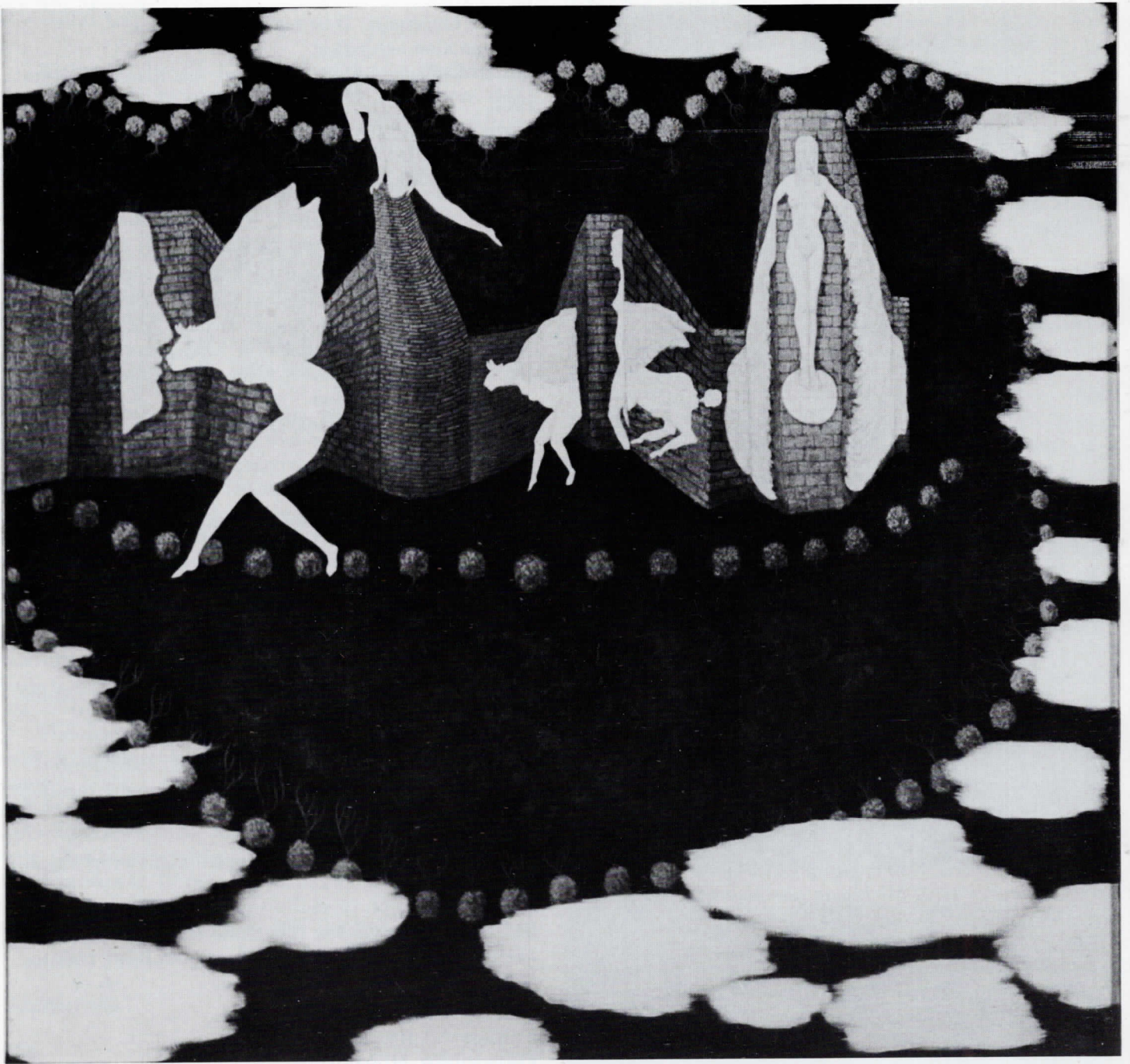
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Philadelphia Museum
Yale University Museum
Detroit Art Insitute
Kalamazoo Insitute of Art
Worchester Museum of Art
University of Michigan Museum
Museum of Painting and Sculpture, Istanbul
Cincinnati Museum
Mary Armstrong Museum, Olivet College, Olivet,
Michigan
Fort Wayne Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana



University Art Gallery
State University of New York at Albany
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12222

This exhibition has been designed and installed during a sad time for the University Art Gallery staff and the artist, Richard Callner. The performance of the persons below, during the illness and death of the Gallery's Director, Donald Mochon, has been the most fitting tribute they could make to that fine artist and humanist, who has taught us so much and whom we have loved so well.

Nancy Liddle, Acting Director

John Wisniewski, chief of installations
Mindy Bailin, assistant to the Directors

student staff:
Paula Bradwell
Teresa Cathey
Austin Hernandez
Beverly Ifill
Bonnie Kelsey
Peter Giscombe
Carol Notias
Rob Phelan
Tom Intrator

photo credits:
Melanie Walker, photographs of the artist
Lindsay Buono, photographs of the artist's works
catalogue design: Christina Mochon



Richard Callner's Lilith

Richard Callner's fascination with the elusive Lilith legend preceded the revival of that legend by contemporary feminists, and his works must be understood without reference to that movement, though they may be of special interest (whether positive or negative) to liberationists of both sexes. An ancient legend of Lilith instructs us that Lilith was the first wife of Adam, created by Yahweh out of the "dust" (not from his rib or bone) and hence standing on an equal footing with God. Created as a complement and companion for Adam, she properly insisted on her equality with him, finally deserting him because of his resistance to that claim. Drawing upon the power of the Ineffable Name, she "flew" away from Adam, relocated herself in the Red Sea, and, in refusing the commands of the angels to return to Adam, she was punished with the daily loss of three hundred of her own children. She was eventually replaced by Eve, whose origin (from the bone of Adam) insured her subservience to the male Adam.

Callner's Lilith is neither the Lilith of the feminist movement nor the Lilith of the Jewish tradition, though he has nourished himself upon the latter. She is, first of all, the uncanny creation of Richard Callner, male, contemporary, symbolist. Like the legendary Lilith, his Lilith is elusive, mysterious, sometimes airy or watery or emerging from dust (earth) from whence Yahweh called her. And like her, this

Lilith is polymorphic, her face is muted so that the archetypal radiance will capture and recapture us, dazzling us with flowing energies, dancing forms, nourishing fullnesses, disappearing from one context only to emerge tantalizingly free in a subsequent one—occasionally bound, forever renewable. In Callner, the religious imagination chooses a twilight language to celebrate with Yahweh that delight which man and God find in the erotic-esthetic fullness of the soul that freely manifests the hidden goodness of being human. This Lilith will never grow old, never devour our children, never appear as child, never quite become our wife, mother, or sister. Lilith, we are told, fled Eden, but for Richard Callner she remains a flickering radiance that allows us to rejoice in something that simply is. Perhaps this Lilith has brought Eden back into our embattled souls, insisting against our rational element, that in the end it is better to let delight capture us, than to try to unravel the mystery that is our life.

Robert M. Garvin

■ Robert Garvin is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the State University of New York at Albany. He is a specialist in Philosophical Anthropology, History of Religions and Asian Philosophies. He is presently co-director of a new program at the University—*Cultural Diversity in the Human Condition*.

