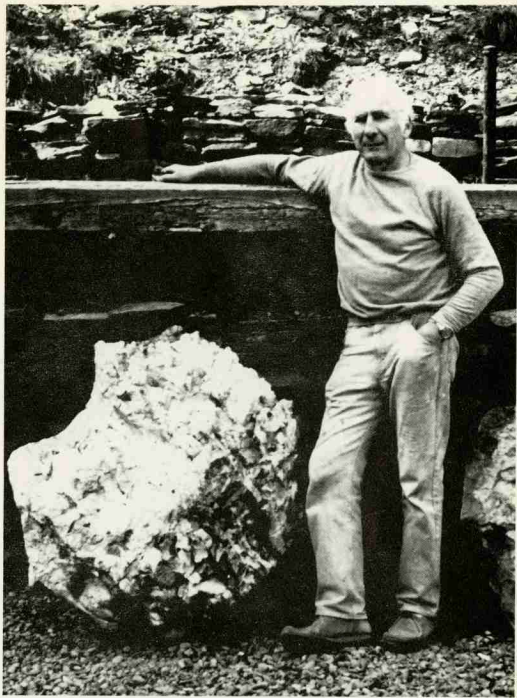


Manuel Bromberg

Paintings, Drawings, Sculpture
Retrospective 1938-1992



When there is too much of something—
something is missing. And I try to do what is missing.

Front Cover: Detail from Mural, College Union building,
North Carolina University, polychrome plaster, 10' x 40', 1953

Designed by: Tina Bromberg

Printed by: Lith Art Press

If there is, in history, a good and a bad time for an artist to be born into the world then certainly the last years of World War I would rank among the worst. The startling shift in values that emerge out of this war was to have a profound and disturbing effect on all of world art. In the period that followed the remaining shreds of 19th century Romanticism and Academic art dissolved in the dying forms of American Regionalist art. A young American artist-in-training then would find himself placed in the terrible paradox of old and new, at the death of a traditional esthetic and the birth of a singularly unclear doctrine of revolt and change. He would come of age in the depth of an economic disaster, the Great Depression of the 30's, and mature during yet another major war with more to come. The evolution of the modern art market left only fraud, deceit and utter critical confusion as the dependable facts of professional existence. Toughness, cynicism, endurance became the requisites for artistic survival.

Manuel Bromberg has survived as an artist in the most difficult of periods. Neither critic, nor historian, nor public can really understand the personal sacrifice and hurts that are the consequences of continuing to act as an artist in this century of art. It is not the matter of record, the rewards and moments of acclaim that make an artist—it is the fundamental act of performing as an artist over and over again despite a culture which often appears to offer little reason for doing so. This is what the artist knows and Manuel Bromberg is an artist.

In an issue of Life Magazine in 1940 there is reproduced the prize winning sketches of forty-eight murals being painted for new post offices under the Federal Works Agency. Among the winners are Lee Gatch, Adolph Gottlieb and Manuel Bromberg. A note from and Assistant Chief in the Fine Arts Section compliments the student of Boardman Robinson and Henry Varnum Poor; Arnold Blanch passed on the comment to the Agency that, ". a boy named Bromberg.", was, ". sure doing a swell job." This commission had been preceded by others including one of the 1939 World Fair and followed by an invitation to the 1940 Whitney Annual. In 1943 the War Department selected him as, ". one of a small group of outstanding American artists to go to an active war theater and there obtain a graphic record of the war." A little later, in an American newspaper, one could see a photograph of T/Sgt. Bromberg and Queen Elizabeth at a showing of his war paintings in London. By 1944 he had received a Citation for Legion of Merit. A statement in the Citation reads, "He has exhibited the qualities of genius and an artist, and has displayed unusual courage and initiative as a soldier by taking voluntary risks under fire in order to give proper portrayal of our army in action." The post-war years found Bromberg with a Guggenheim Fellowship in Creative Painting; head of the art department at Salem College and in 1949, an associate professor at North Carolina State College, School of Design, where he became one of the first few to recognize and support the work of Buckminster Fuller. The School of Design had been newly organized with a staff that included Lewis Mumford, Mathew Nowicki, James Fitzgibbon, Naum Gabo, Roy Gussow and Edward Catalano. Bromberg was involved in the early explorations of Fuller's Geodisic dome and was for a time, in 1953, along with Fitzgibbon, Vice President of Skybreak Corporation— Fuller was President. He abandoned the hard-edge abstract painting style that had succeeded the years of figurative and portrait work and broke loose again in innovative mural experiments using polychrome painting on and direct cutting into plaster. A number of mural commissions were the result of the perfecting of the technique. One in 1963 consisted of two walls, 900 square feet, for a professional building in Teaneck, New Jersey, designed by A. W. Geller. With the help of union plasterers the finished mural held 10,000 pounds of polychrome cement.

Bromberg has exhibited in major galleries and museums over the country and the world— London, Paris, New York, Detroit, Los Angeles and San Francisco— and lectured in nearly as many. A continuation of the 1963 reliefs, his most recent work in plastic, giant polyester cast sections of a Catskill mountain cliff were exhibited in the O. K. Harris Gallery in New York and one section was given the State University College at New Paltz in memory of Martin Luther King. Writing on evolving art, Peter Schjeldahl commented on the "astoundingly realistic" qualities of this work. William Seitz wrote in response to the initial impact and originality of the cliff face, "During a period when nature is being raped and polluted, when our cybernetic buildings make us forget its existence, how admirable it is that one sculptor was moved, and had the skill, ruggedness and determination, to recreate a huge fragment of nature's randomness and structure and present it before us for meditation and rejuvenation. Such audacity, one feels, would have delighted the souls of William Cullen Bryant and Thomas Cole." A description of the process and reproductions of pieces are soon to appear in *Leonardo*, a European art journal. Currently in progress is a "boulder" project, a planned 30-foot high polyester replica of a complete boulder form. These pieces are intended as city plaza sculpture— internally illuminated and providing rich contrast to the mechanical bleakness of urban, sky-scraped landscapes.

Henry F. Raleigh



Ink drawings from pocket sketchbook during Invasion of Normandy, June 1944, for paintings in U.S. Army Center for Military History





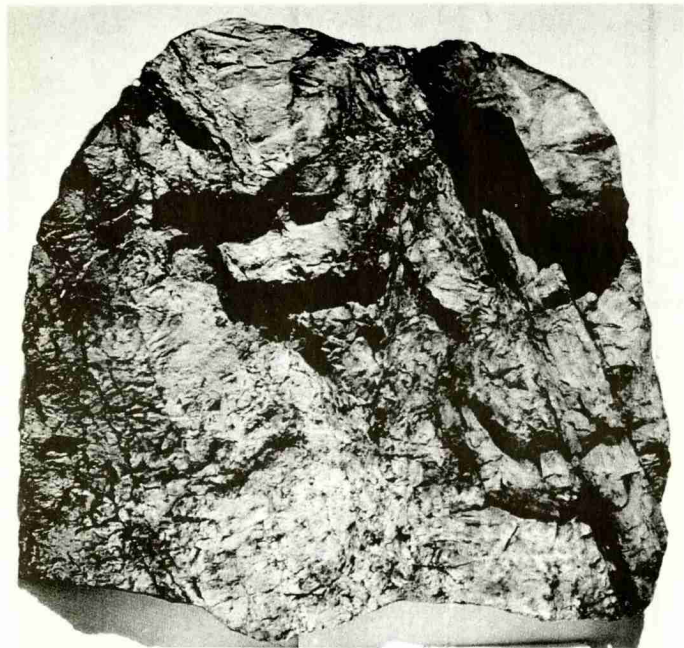
The Card Players

gouache painting, 10" x 14", 1942

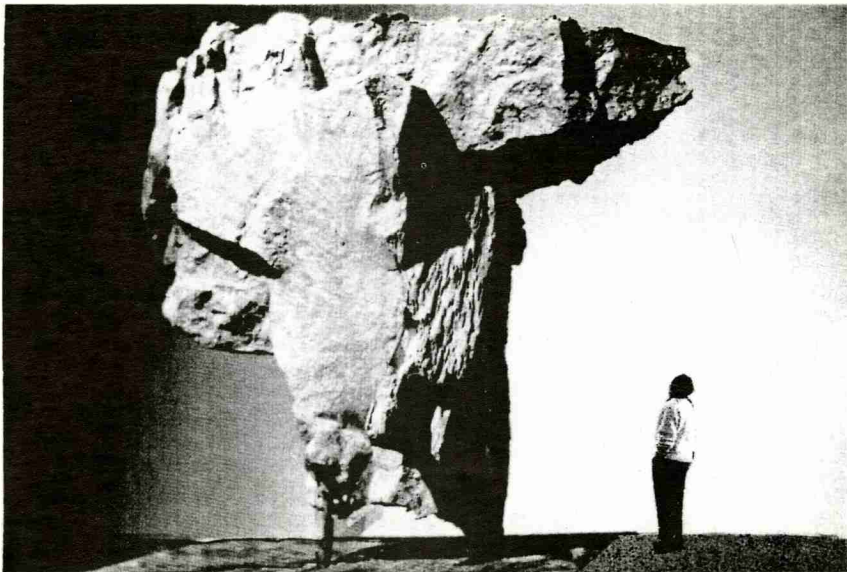
(reproduced in Gallery of Great Paintings, Crown, 1944)



Dr. David Kleiman
oil portrait
40" x 48", 1956



Cliff section
Princeton Museum
fiberglass 77" x 64" x 17", 1971



Model for sculpture park, fiberglass, 1991

ASSOC. PROF. DESIGN N.C. STATE
1949-54

MANUEL BROMBERG

Professor Emeritus, State University of New York, New Paltz, NY
Distinguished Research Fellow, State University of New York
Professor, School of Design, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC
Fellow, Creative Painting, John Simon Guggenheim Foundation
Official War Artist, U.S. Army, European Theater, World War II

BORN:

March 6, 1917

EDUCATION:

Cleveland Institute of Art, graduate.
Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center
with Boardman Robinson
and Henry V. Poor

EXHIBITIONS:

O.K. Harris Gallery, New York
Kraushaar Gallery, New York
Chicago Art Insitute
Denver Museum
San Francisco Museum
New York World's Fair American Art
Richmond Museum of Art
Cleveland Museum
Detroit Insitute
Philadelphia Museum
Corcoran Gallery
War Art 48 States Traveling Show
Whitney Museum
Three Man Show, National Gallery,
London
Three Man Show, Westminster Abbey,
London
National Gallery, Ottawa
Grand Palais DeChamps Elysees, Paris
Atlanta High Museum
North Carolina Museum of Art
Everson Museum
Washington Irving Gallery, New York
Art USA, New York
Art International, World House Gallery,
New York
Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center

MURALS:

Tablequah, Oklahoma Post Office
Greybull, Wyoming Post Office
Geneva, Illinois Post Office
Keesler Field, Mississippi
College Union Building, North Carolina
State University
Teaneck Medical Center, Teaneck,
New Jersey

WORK REPRODUCED IN:

Life Magazine
Art News
Art Digest
New York Times
Gallery of Great Painting (Crown)
War Art (Hyperion)
American Art Today (National Society)
Arts Magazine
Democratic Vistas (Temple University)

REVIEWS:

New York Times
Chicago Sun
Detroit News
San Francisco Chronicle
Los Angeles Times
Commercial Appeal Memphis
Vogue Magazine
Magazine of Art
Art Digest
Encyclopedia Americana (Mural Painting
in America)
Art News
Leonardo Magazine

COLLECTIONS:

Numerous Private Collections
Battle of Normandy Memorial Museum,
Caen, France
Smithsonian Collection
Storm King Art Center
Hankone Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan
U.S. Army, Center Military History,
Washington, DC
West Point Museum
Princeton Art Museum
SUNY New Paltz, Martin Luther
King Jr. Memorial Sculpture
General G.C. Marshall Library
FDR Library, Hyde Park, New York
Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center

An abstract artwork featuring a dense network of thin, light-colored lines and dark, irregular shapes. Handwritten letters are scattered throughout: 'D5' and 'GOD R X' at the top; 'B' in the center; 'E' on the right; and 'C' at the bottom right. A circular shape with radiating lines is visible in the lower-left corner. The overall composition is complex and layered.

August 15 — September 7, 1992

Woodstock Artists Association, Inc.
28 Tinker Street
Woodstock, New York 12498
(914) 679-2940