



Thomas DOWNING
b. 1928 – d. 1985

Downing was born in Suffolk, Virginia, in 1928. He received his A.B. in 1948 from Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, and studied at the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, until 1950. In 1950, through a grant from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Downing traveled throughout Europe, enrolling briefly at the Académie Julian in Paris.

Downing returned to the United States in 1951, and after serving in the Army, moved to Washington, D.C. in 1953 to teach. The following year, he enrolled in a summer course at Catholic University where he studied with Kenneth Noland, one of the founding artists of the Washington Color School of painting. Noland became a good friend and a major influence on Downing's work. By 1956, Downing was an established member of Washington's artistic community, associating with the Washington Workshop Center for the Arts and later, in 1958, with the Sculptors Studio, where he had his first one-man show in 1959.

As a teacher from 1965–1968 at the Corcoran School of Art and Design, Downing also influenced many Washington area artists including [Sam Gilliam](#) and Rockne Krebs. In 1971 Downing moved to New York to teach at the New School of Visual Art, and after a brief tenure at the University of Houston in 1975, moved to Provincetown, Massachusetts. Downing had many exhibits during these years, several of them in Washington: two at the Osuna Gallery in 1979 and 1980 and at The Phillips Collection in 1985, the year of his death.

Downing's work has been featured in several exhibitions including Sculptors Studio, Washington, D.C. 1959; Origo Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1960; Jefferson Place Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1961; Allan Stone Gallery, New York, 1962; Stable Gallery, New York, 1963; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1966; Thomas Downing: Recent Paintings, 1966; Henri Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1966; Allan Stone Gallery, New York, 1966; Allan Stone Gallery, New York, 1968; La Jolla Museum of Art, 1968 Phoenix Art Museum (both Thomas Downing Paintings 1962-1968); A.M. Sachs Gallery, New York, 1968; Pyramid Gallery Ltd., Washington, D.C., 1970; Pyramid Gallery Ltd., Washington, D.C., 1972; La Galerie Arnaud, Paris, 1973; Pyramid Gallery Ltd., Washington, D.C., 1975; Tibor de Nagy Gallery, Houston, 1975; Osuna Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1979; Osuna Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1980; Salander O'Reilly Gallery New York, 1982; Harm Bouckaert Gallery, New York, 1985; Addison/Ripley Gallery, Ltd., Washington, D.C., 1985; Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., 1985; Tom Downing: 1965-1970, Addison Ripley Gallery, Ltd., Washington, D.C., 1989; Selected Paintings: 1971-1975, Addison/Ripley Gallery, Ltd., Washington, D.C., 1994; Origin of the Dot, Conner Contemporary Art, Washington DC, 2002; Thomas Downing: 1963-1976; Addison Ripley Fine Art, Warner Office Building, Washington DC, 2007; Thomas Downing: Washington Color School Painter, Gary Snyder Project Space, New York, NY, 2007

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