

Drawing and Painting History - Abie Harris

Seems as if I have always drawn. My mother and older sister painted and I was into it early. After a high school visit to the Ackland Gallery at UNC, my painting intensified. My paintings were very exploratory and reflected an uninstructed and adolescent rebellion.



Abstraction circa 1950

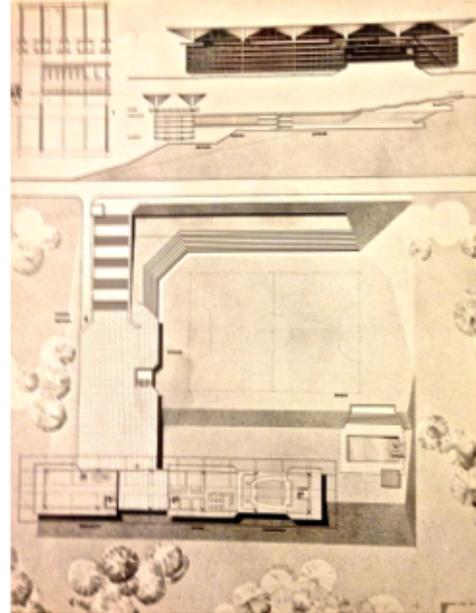
NC State's School of Design when I came in 1952 was a very exciting and stimulating place - I loved it. Being taught by artists such as Roy Gussow, Duncan Stuart and architects such as Vernon Shogren, George Matsumoto and Horacio Caminos charted a lifelong path for me.



Winning the Paris Prize in architecture gave me the opportunity to travel in Europe and study at the Ecole des Beau Arts.

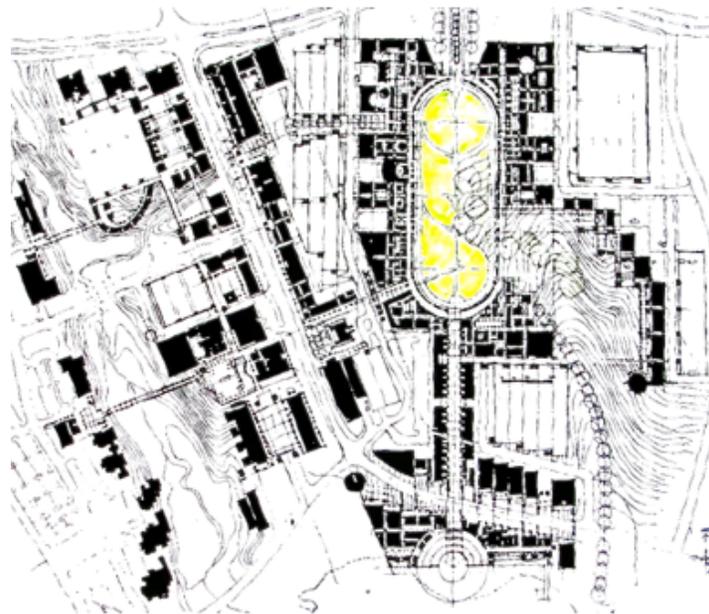


Ghent 1959



Project at Ecole des Beau Arts 1959

Drawing has always served me well as a student and as an architect. My architectural focus became campus planning; and its most interesting dimension was conceptualizing design ideas.



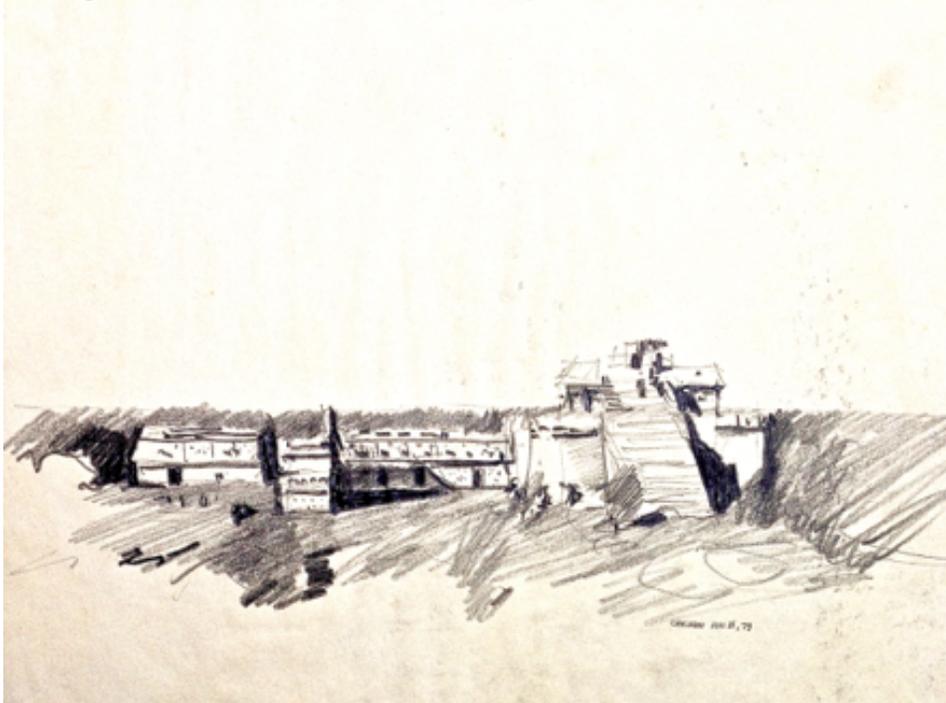
NC State University Centennial Campus Master Plan 1991

Entering many architectural design competitions provided a scenario for drawing. Retrospectively, I think my interest lay more in the drawing/expression of the design rather than the architecture itself.



University of Miami Master Plan Competition 1987

Drawings made while on our honeymoon in the Yucatan, 1979



Campus Planning

Centennial Campus (1966-98) Conceptual architectural drawings
Many of these donated to the DH Hill Special collections



Spring Hill Precinct Centennial Campus NC State University 2002

Globe Road Drawings

Began drawing the Blue Ridge Mountains from family house at
Blowing Rock circa 1980 - drawing the same view every summer



**Raleigh Historic Buildings - pastel drawings - show at Block Gallery
2007**



Mordecai House 2007

JS Bach's Goldberg Variations

My good friend, David Marschall, violist with the NC Symphony, suggested in 2009 that I draw JS Bach's Goldberg Variations. I spent the next several months drawing over fifty compositions that were displayed during five performances with David and his string trio, Quercus. I drew live during two of these performances. Also, I drew while the trio rehearsed many times.

This experience revealed many aspect of my direction - I enjoyed the structure of the music composition; drawing in synch with the music kept me drawing fast and continually; and there was little premeditation or conscious thought while drawing.



Penland School of Crafts (1999-present)

Master Plan drawings

Water tower drawings done during class I taught

Self portrait class- summer 2012 (with Beverly Mclver)

Began oil/acrylic painting



Self portrait Penland 2012

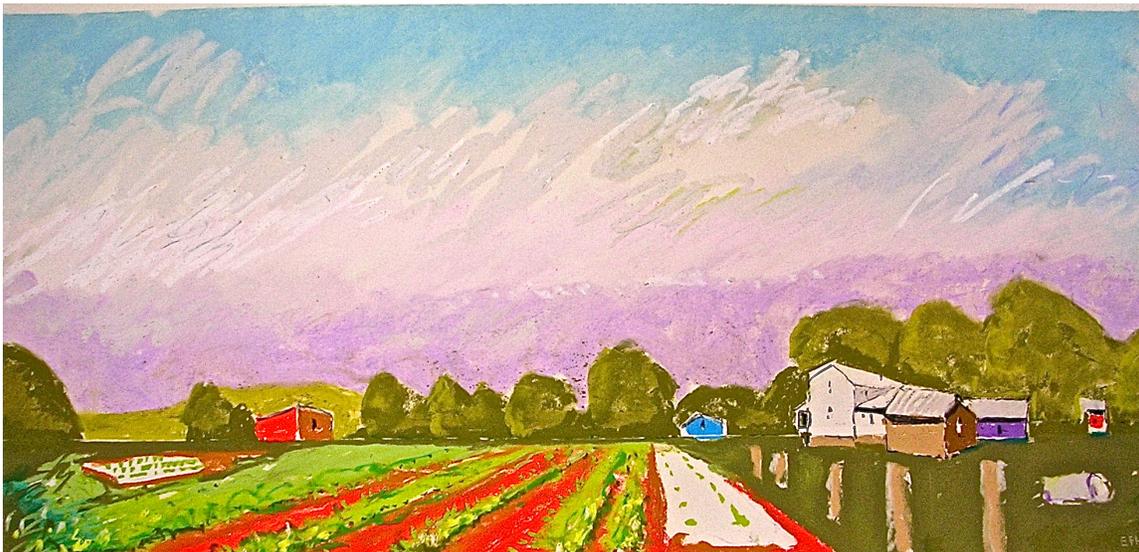
Winter Studio 2013 Tea Pot escapade



Recent work.



CoonRock Farm: drew farm and veggies and had a show at Zely & Ritz Restaurant in 2007



Summary

Looking back it seems that I may be more of a drawer than painter. Not sure about the difference. I love the sensations of putting ink, pencil, pastels on paper. Its tactile aspects, its fast moving for me and requires little conscious planning. Seldom do I go back and add or subtract. I go after the spontaneous, first impression, the parti, the sketch, the gesture.

Artists whom I admire include those who do repeats of the same like Monet and haystacks, Turner and his watercolors of Venice, Morandi and his repeats and his drawings, Lou Kahn and Corbu travel sketches, etc. Certainly George Bireline's window paintings have had a big impact. The abstract expressionists I greatly admire.

From the porch of the family Big House in Blowing Rock, overlooking the Blue Ridge mountains, I have made many, many drawings

Personally, I think I am driven in large measure by a need to be recognized.

I respond best to "projects" such as drawing Coonrock Farm, the Penland teapots, whose structure and discipline focus me and sometimes gets me in a zone, a state we all yearn for. Drawing the Goldbergs simultaneously with the music was a good working structure for me - the composition was established and I infilled with gestures, usually with a limited palette, reflecting my impressions of the music.

April 24, 2013