

Spring 4-2019

To Japan and Back: The Art of Orr Marshall

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Marshall, Orr, "To Japan and Back: The Art of Orr Marshall" (2019). *Archives & Reprint Series (imprint)*. 6.
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TO JAPAN AND BACK



THE ART OF ORR MARSHALL

a collaboration between Orr Marshall and Linda Callaway

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ORR
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Published by:

Humboldt State University Press
1 Harpst St.
Arcata, CA 95521-8299



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ISBN-13: 978-1-947112-12-4

Reprint manager:

Carolyn Delevich

Cover:

Studio Portrait, 1991
acrylic on canvas, 36" x 36"
collection of the artist

Frontispiece:

1. Study for the head of ***Tattoos II***, 1996
india ink and acrylic on paper, 9 5/8" x 5 1/4"
private collection

Dedicated to

Joseph Charles Welsh

who worked hard putting together
text and illustrations of the original paper edition.



Orr Marshall and Fukiko Oguchi Marshall in front of Fukiko's "Pink Petal Sky" triptych from their "Unseen Works" exhibition at the Black Faun Gallery, October 2017. Photo by Claire Reynolds.

This second edition of
To Japan and Back: The Art of Orr Marshall
 is sponsored by
The Black Faun Gallery



Insecticide (殺虫剤), 1967-2017
 oil on linen, 36" x 66"
 Orr Marshall © 2017



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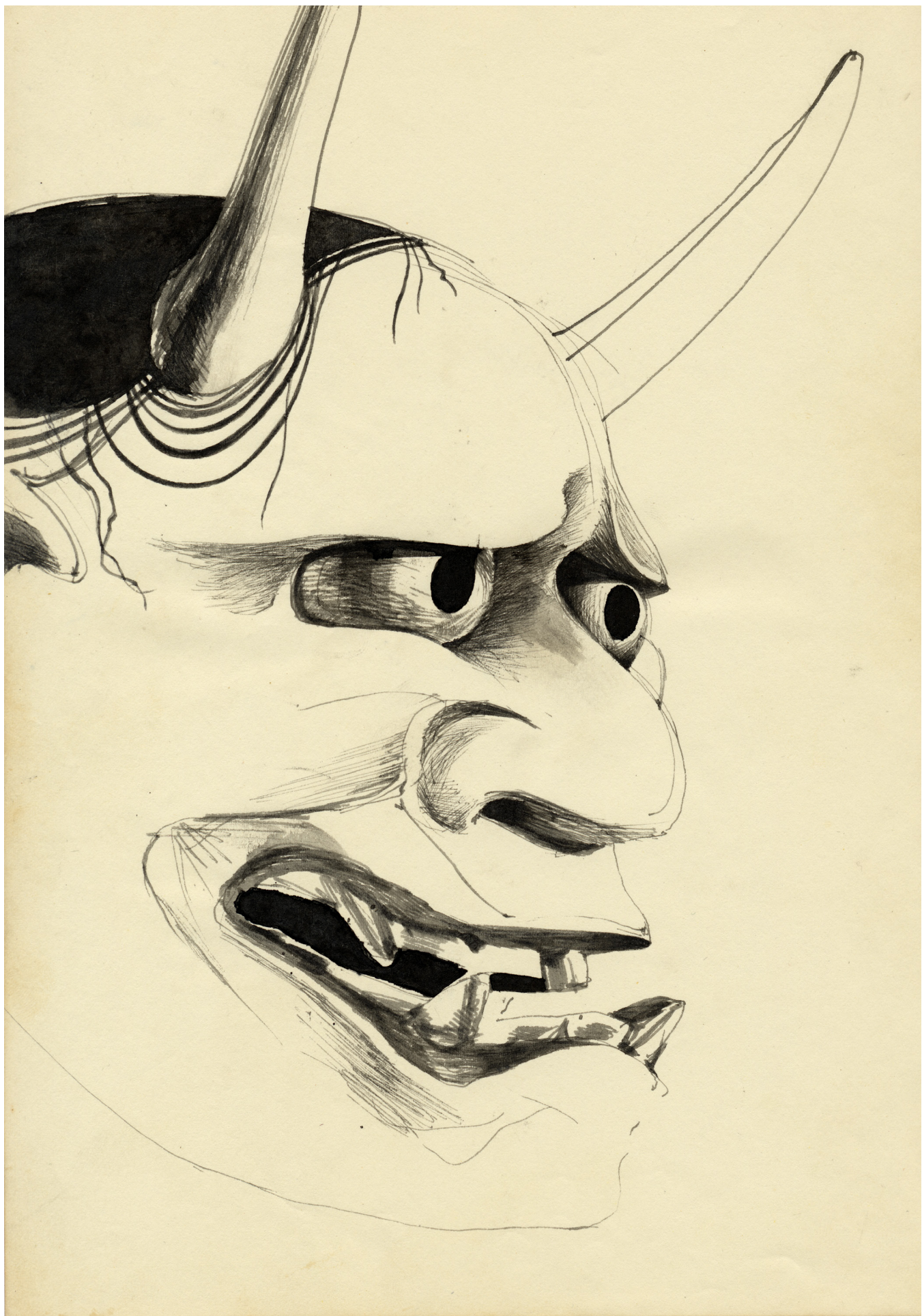
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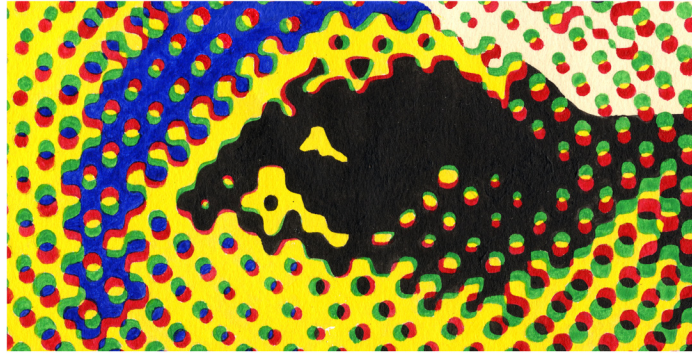
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How to See



3. *Eye study*, detail, acrylic on paper

How many ways are there to interpret an idea, to present a vision? The artist Orr Marshall's exploration of these questions is the subject of this book in text and images. He began drawing pictures, like most children, as soon as he was able to hold a pencil or a crayon. Just as he did when he was little, privately drawing the weird characters of his imagination, or together with his best friend drawing the "neat cars" of their fantasy, futuristic contraptions that could fly and attack enemies; so he goes on working today, although with new subjects and new media, yet still in the same spirit of puzzlement, wonder and delight.

Walking with Noises

The small child is mystified by the big world around him, its sights and sounds and actions. He must comprehend them and gradually take part in them. Marshall the little boy and potential artist, while trying to master those everyday skills, had another question: how did people make the wonderful pictures he saw in books and in the art museum? Answers might be found in books themselves, and when he first went to the school library he was happy to discover that he could read the storybooks there. Another joy came when the art teacher first appeared in his classroom and it turned out that they could draw pictures at school!

Now that he was able to read the books that others read, a further challenge lay ahead: the Chinese writing on paintings and ceramics brought from the Far East by relatives. Could he ever learn to read or write that beautiful script? In time he noticed also that some people talked in unfamiliar ways. One day in a doctor's office he heard some women and their little children speaking in the strangest, most unearthly sounds! Thinking back on it many years later, he decided the language was probably Chinese, quite possibly Cantonese.

And so he pondered questions of visual and verbal communication while walking to and from school. What if you painted everything the wrong color, the opposite of

what it ought to be? Red grass, orange sky, black sun and so on. What if you made everything get bigger in perspective instead of smaller? After an artist had painted a red (or mostly red) picture, a blue one, a green one, an orange one, a purple one and so on through all the common color names, would he have run out of things to paint? Then there were unusual colors which made such a powerful impression on him but which could not be described by any of the usual names, so he made up his own special names for them.

If a person could change the customary artistic terms and depict things in different ways, he wondered, what about changing the sounds of speech? While walking to school and back he practiced all the strangest mouth noises he could manage, along with which he learned to whistle. As his linguistic awareness dawned, he tried to imagine how it would feel to live in a different language, and he attempted specific sounds: the French uvular R and nasal vowels, German umlauts, Chinese tones. At first he thought it must be physically impossible to make such sounds unless you were born into the language and were hereditarily equipped to do so. But little by little he felt sure that some day he too could learn to produce those sounds.

High-School Intrigue

As a teenager, Marshall was enchanted by the whimsical, almost childlike work of the Swiss artist Paul Klee. He had not yet seen a Klee original, but he collected every reproduction or postcard of his work that he could find and read every available word about him. Just then he was old enough to obtain a card for the city library, where the shelves of art books opened up new vistas. He read about oriental art and calligraphy and about the whole history of modern European art. Here he found the confluence of art and language: books about Klee and the German expressionists had footnotes in German, and books about the French impressionists and their successors had footnotes in French. By all means he must learn those languages. Then he discovered the Russian alphabet. Some letters looked the same but were not pronounced the same as their English counterparts, some looked like English ones turned sideways or backwards, and some were totally foreign. This he also had to learn. With the exception of high-school French, he studied the languages alone — difficult, but not impossible. He ordered Russian books from a New York supplier, imported from the USSR. His father told him to watch out or the FBI would be after him. He didn't know whether to take this seriously.

The case of oriental languages was otherwise. However much he read about them, without a teacher he could not be certain how to pronounce the tones of Chi-

nese or how to combine the different writing systems of Japanese. These languages would have to wait.

Interaction of Color

Marshall was fortunate to attend Yale University, where the art department was headed by the well-known painter Josef Albers, who had studied at the Bauhaus in Germany and had taught there along with such artists as Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky.

At Yale Albers personally taught the basic courses in color and drawing. In the first session of the class called “Interaction of Color,” he showed slides of work done by earlier students and explained the subject matter to be studied. The leading idea was that color is the most relative medium: the same color may appear different through the influence of its surroundings, or in a similar way two different colors may appear the same. The slides he showed were the most beautiful examples of color Marshall had seen, and Albers was the most inspiring teacher he had ever encountered. He taught students to work thoughtfully and with self-discipline, and to be independent in their creative thinking.

Albers often visited classrooms and gave advice to the students. He was always kind and helpful to the young Marshall. A year later, when Marshall visited the department chairman’s office for a portfolio review and was invited by Albers to major in art, it was the happiest moment of his life.

At Yale he also took courses in French, German and Russian. He felt he should first study those Indo-European languages which are more or less related to English. Beyond that he only had time to go occasionally to the Yale Institute of Far Eastern Languages and listen to tape-recorded Chinese lessons.

Pacific Rim

Marshall spent the final year of his master’s degree program in Europe. When he returned to the U.S. to look for a teaching job it was too late to find any in the east. Since he had never been to the west coast, he thought it might be good to look there. As a result he went to teach at the California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, across the bay from San Francisco. There, at last, he had the long-awaited opportunity to study first Chinese and then also Japanese, through University of California evening classes in Berkeley. There was ample occasion to experience Far Eastern art, music and films, and to visit San Francisco’s China- and Japan-towns. Furthermore, at the school where he taught there were many oriental students who helped

him with his studies. Among them his wife-to-be, Fukiko, taught him more than anyone about Japan and its language and culture, and helped him gain the Japanese Ministry of Education grant with which he went to study in Tokyo. As noted in later chapters, the years in Japan were crucial to his work.

Racing with the Mind

Traveling back and forth across the Pacific four times during a total of five years in Japan, Marshall and his family eventually settled in Eureka on the north coast of California, where he became a college art teacher again. He learned much from the experience, but only after he stopped teaching did he have time to put his own precepts into practice.

The basis of that practice is to give shape to his imagination — to make the invisible visible. Many of the ideas which occur to him and will appear as images in his art, he feels, have a latent existence apart from himself and unknown to the world until he finds them and brings them forth as tangible, convincing and inevitable creations. To do so takes much time and experimentation with drawing, color and composition. Meanwhile new ideas arrive too fast to carry them all out, so he records them for future reference either as sketches or as written notes.

His artistic method varies from one work to another, as will be seen. The nature of the idea determines the approach: whether it will be presented in bright or subdued colors or in black and white alone, in a more realistic way or less so, in dots or stripes or other patterns. Each approach is a way of seeing the world through art, and sometimes the way of seeing in itself gives rise to an idea. For example, the discovery of pictures among random patterns leads to a search for more pictures from the same source (“Life on the Floor,” p. 58).

The various approaches presented in these chapters do not constitute fixed periods in a consecutive historical survey. They are flexible categories that overlap and intermingle. The artist may return to an earlier style that he had set aside temporarily, or he may take it up again because he has found a new way to work with it. A fresh inspiration may lead to a totally new approach. He may want to “re-see” a work in progress, looking at it upside down or reversed in a mirror, or distorting it by squinting or looking at it through various lenses; if he then finds a way to improve it, he will make changes accordingly.

In fact, he likes to incorporate multiple meanings into a single work, to paint pictures within pictures, and for the strangeness and surprise of their juxtaposition, to contrast varied treatments within the same picture — rounded against flat, comic against serious, complex against simple. Then when his works go out into the world,



4a and 4b. *Tokyo subway sketches*, ink, 1965–67

he enjoys hearing people read into them still other meanings and stories which he himself had not foreseen.

Increasing the Population

Yet as his pictures leave the studio to find new acquaintances and new interpretations, the artist loses those old friends who had surrounded him. An empty studio is a lonely place. Therefore he goes on bringing his visions to life. That is the challenge and the joy: to give visible form to people, places and creatures seen and remembered, or better still, to embody in tangible form the transitory apparitions of imagination and dreams, which otherwise no one else would see. So the artist continues to re-populate his studio with fresh companions, constantly creating his world anew.

Japan Firsthand



4c. *More subway sketches*

When Orr Marshall arrived in Tokyo in 1965 with a Japanese government scholarship to study art at the National University of Fine Arts, the city was a sea of grey extending to the horizon. The buildings were grey, the unpainted wooden houses were grey, the walls and streets were grey, even the concrete telephone poles were grey. To his dismay, although he had studied Japanese assiduously for several years in advance of the trip, the language at first hearing seemed almost impenetrable.

But as people's speech became more comprehensible day by day, so his surroundings gradually revealed their richness and beauty. The first touches of color he noticed were in cracks and crevices. Japan being a damp, humid country, there were patches of green everywhere: at the base of walls, in the corners of steps and in the cracks of sidewalks were mosses of more varied texture and more shades of green than he had seen anywhere else. With time, the elegant or subtle hues of classical art and architecture, the naive contrasts of folk art and the brash, daring tones of modern advertising and design shone paradoxically all the more clearly among the neutral greys.

The first picture he painted in Japan was *Tokyo Traffic* (5). A monochromatic rectangle of oncoming cars is bounded by the orange-and-black-striped warning colors seen at construction sites, while shadowy figures of pedestrians outlined among dark diagonal stripes hint of crowded streets and subways.

Residential and industrial sections of Tokyo may have been grey and vast, but business, entertainment and shopping centers were colorful in the extreme and gave the artist more ideas. In America few would remember the old red and white spiral-striped barber poles. By contrast, not only were such poles displayed at Japanese barber shops, they were made from translucent red and white plastic and motorized so as to rotate, with flashing colored lights inside. Marshall combined the design of those poles with myriad bananas stacked on the shelves of streetside fruit stalls to produce the explosive arrangement of *Fission* (6).



5. *Tokyo Traffic*, 1965
oil on linen, 58" x 30"
collection of the artist



6. *Fission*, 1966
oil on linen, 34" x 58"
collection of the artist



7. *A Car is Born*, 1967
oil on linen, 45" x 45"
collection of the artist

Themes of women and cars recur throughout the works created in Japan. In one painting originating from a dream, the distorted nude body of a woman descends from above into a square of solid yellow and ejects a little black and white car from her mouth onto its trajectory across blue waves: thus *A Car is Born* (7). Then in *Cooling Off* (8), the curving contour of grey hills over a multitude of blue roofs turns into the roofline of a yellow car. A woman in underwear lies inside the car just visible above the window edge, her leg hanging out the window and yellow silhouettes of recumbent women floating upward into the sky. Another dream became *The Image Maker* (9), where the featureless pink silhouette might be interpreted as the artist's self-portrait, holding his image of three dancing women described in photo-negative style between his hands.

While studying at the University of Fine Arts, Marshall lived a subway ride away (4a,b,c) in central Tokyo, near a color printing plant. In the street he found discarded test-printing sheets which influenced him, as did newspaper advertising inserts, concert flyers and movie posters, through their photographs, bold calligraphy



9. *The Image Maker*, 1969
oil on canvas, 47" x 30"
collection of the artist



8. *Cooling Off*, 1970
oil on linen, 40" x 32"
collection of the artist



10. *Little Me*, 1968
oil on linen, 66" x 50"
collection of Andrew and Amanda Ferroggiaro

and bright colors. Such sources played a part in *Little Me* (10), where a small nude crouches at the bottom in front of a curved orange horizon fringed with palm trees. This curve also serves as the lap of a huge yellow-green bathing-suited woman, whose laughing head occupies the top of the picture. Her shoulders, hand and head are painted starting with deep green below, fading to white and finally to bright red at the top. The effect of one color smoothly gradated into another, called *bokashi* in Japanese and often seen in *ukiyo-e* prints, especially in the sky, is one that appeals to the artist. He has used it for the background of *Fission*, *Cooling Off* and *The Image Maker* as well as in many other pictures, and not only for skies. The radiating red and yellow stripes in the background of *Little Me* were suggested by the red and white sun rays of the earlier Japanese flag.

Out of curiosity, Marshall bought a good fortune almanac and calendar for the year *Shōwa 41* (1966) from a sidewalk vendor. In it he discovered the diagram of a face divided into many sections. Each section was labeled with its name in Chinese characters, for use in judging a person's fortune and character from his facial features — a practice sometimes called “physiognomy” in English. For the mysterious painting *Physiognomy* (11) he re-drew the face to achieve the degree of quizzicality he desired, doubling the eyeballs, adding teeth and lengthening the earlobes. Each section of the face is painted a different color, the calligraphy of the Chinese characters is done with gold leaf, and the head is bordered on both sides by hands suggesting Buddhist *mudra* (symbolic hand gestures). The man and woman painted horizontally below the face and over a bed of flames are marked with the numbers of a healing system also shown in the almanac.

Work done in Japan by an artist from the U.S. west coast might be called “trans-Pacific,” a term which applies literally to the sculpture *Hoodstand* (12). Marshall made the first few fragments of it in California during a winter sojourn between stays in Japan. He took the pieces by ship to Tokyo, where he continued and nearly completed the work. Then he carried much larger parts of it by ship back to the U.S., where he finished and assembled them. Elsewhere he had painted women or cars, but here he built those motifs in three dimensions, using actual auto parts, eliminating the usual head of hair and truncating the woman's figure at mid-torso. With her partial body she balances on her hands over an automobile hood, which the artist bought from an auto scrap dealer next to his house in Tokyo and sawed down to its streamlined teardrop shape. From a sheet of metal he cut, bent and welded the column supporting the hood, and then took the metal parts to a plating factory for the chrome finish. The entire sculpture is slanted precariously forward at a dangerous angle. Its colors are restricted to white, black and metallic, underlining the stark contrast between humanity and mechanization.

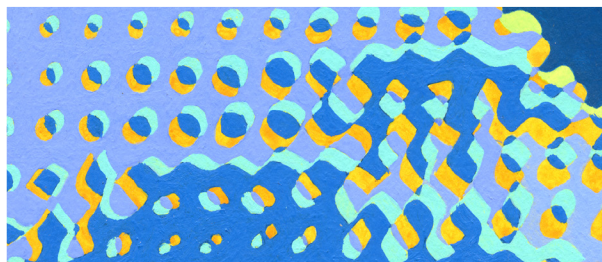


11. *Physiognomy*, 1967
oil and gold leaf on linen, 57" x 62"
collection of the artist



12. ***Hoodstand***, 1969
polyester resin and fiberglass, chrome-plated steel, wood, glass marbles, hair, paint, 6' x 2' x 3'
collection of the artist

The Dot Series



13. *Color-dot study*, detail, acrylic on paper

Black and white photographs on the pages of newspapers, magazines, or books are often printed in half-tone; that is, the gradated tones of the photograph are changed into a regular pattern of tiny black and white dots. If the picture is highly magnified, one sees the dot-pattern, not the picture.

Intrigued by this confusion of pattern with image and by the possibility of changing the black and white dot-patterns into arbitrary colors, Marshall looked at tiny half-tones in Japanese magazines through a strong magnifying lens and drew them much larger on graph paper. He later re-drew some of these “hand-made photographs” on acid-free paper (as the earlier graph paper proved to be impermanent), making the fine graph lines with a ruling pen and diluted acrylic paint, and painting the half-tone dots with a brush and black gouache. *Circle Girl* (14) and *Sachiko* (15) were based on photos less than one inch high, changing, simplifying or eliminating some of the dots to strengthen the image.

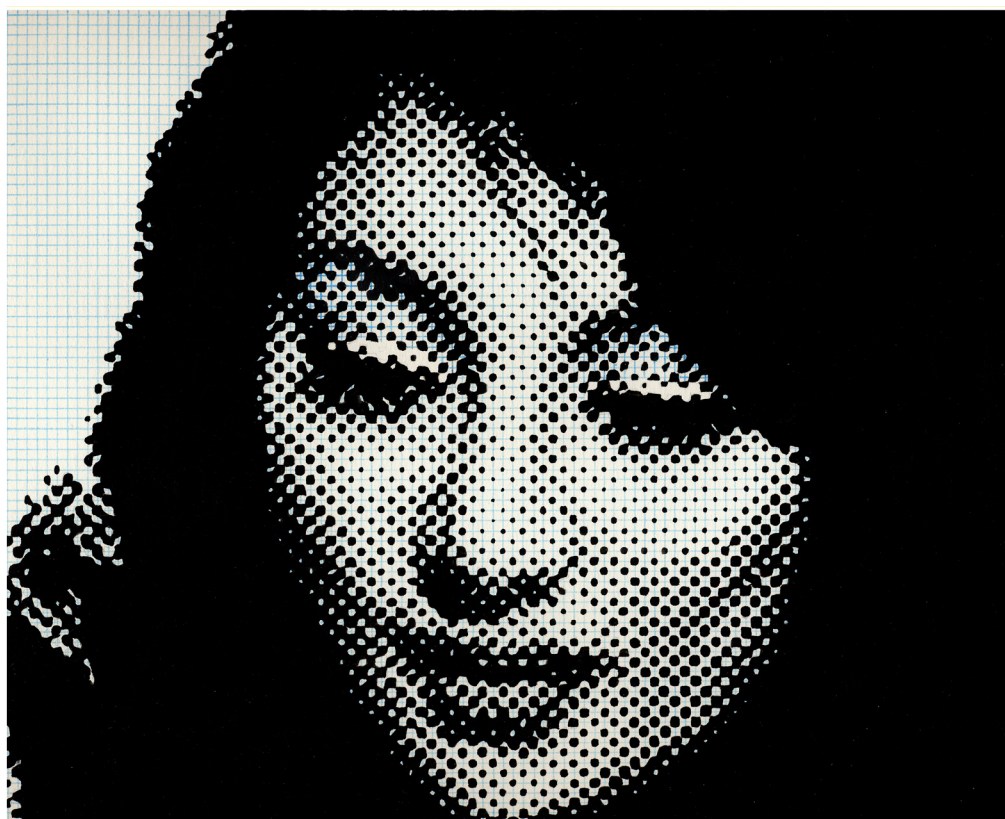
Shifting into bright color with the serigraph *Interface* (17) he printed the same woman’s face twice so that the dot-pattern half of one overlaps the brush-drawn half of the other. Enlarging the eye from this print into much larger dots, he painted it in layers of successively diminishing sizes, one eye within another within yet another, for *Inner Eye* (16).

The Face of Night (18), *The Face of Dusk* (19) and *The Golden Glasses* (20) expand color-dot painting into further realms, the first two superimposing diagonal elements of a large face over an abstract landscape where a small, lonely figure stands silhouetted against a darkening sky. *The Face of Night* uses regularly spaced half-tone dots, but in the latter two paintings, the dots have turned into free-form, amoeba-like shapes. Some of the color-dot pictures give the impression of gazing through water at bright-colored, floating aquatic creatures.

More recently, Marshall has taken his dot series in a new direction. Noting how the pale blue-green grid pattern of his hand-drawn graph lines (in *Circle Girl* and *Sachiko*) gave a subtle, cool tonality to the image, he thought of using lines of stronger and more varied color over which to position half-tone dots in black or other colors. The results are *Circle Smile* (22), *Ice Queen* (23), and *Naomi* (24).



14. ***Circle Girl***, original 1976, redrawn 1994
gouache and acrylic on paper, 7" diameter
collection of the artist



15. ***Sachiko***, original 1976, redrawn 1994
gouache and acrylic on paper, 8 1/2" x 10 1/2"
collection of the artist



16. *Inner Eye*, 1980
acrylic on board, 20" x 18"
collection of the artist



17. *Interface*, 1973
edition of 20 serigraphs, 17" x 22"



18. *The Face of Night*, 1980
acrylic on board, 36" x 24"
collection of the artist



19. *The Face of Dusk*, 1987
acrylic on board, 34" x 24"
collection of David and Ahlrene Welsh



20. ***The Golden Glasses***, 1979–81
acrylic on board, 36" x 54"
collection of the artist



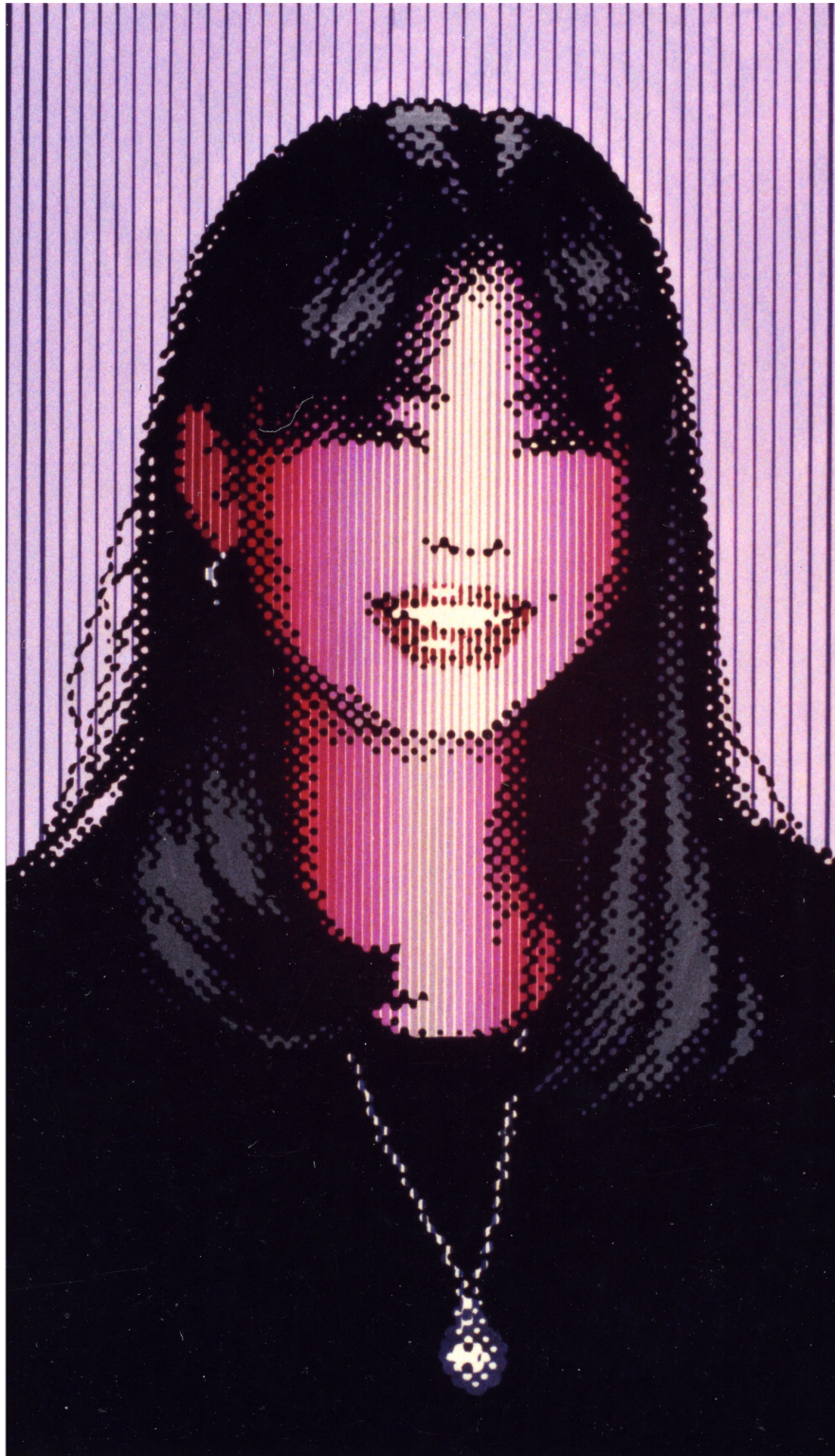
21. ***Study for The Golden Glasses***, 1978
india ink on paper, 3" x 4"
collection of the artist



22. *Circle Smile*, 1996
gouache and acrylic on paper, 7" diameter
collection of David and Ahlene Welsh

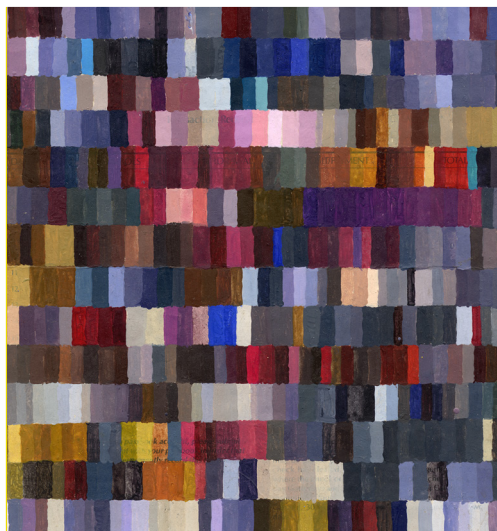


23. *Ice Queen*, 2001
acrylic on paper mounted on board, 23" x 13"
collection of the artist



24. *Naomi*, 1998
acrylic and gouache on paper, 16 1/2" x 9 1/2"
collection of Marvin and Atsuko Pilchen

The Square Series

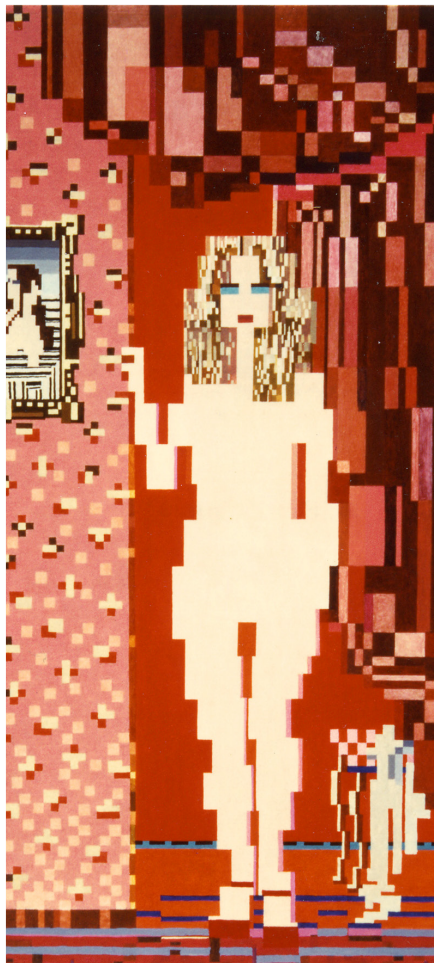


25. *Color tests*, acrylic on paper

To test acrylic color mixtures and see how they look when dried and compared with each other, Marshall paints them in rows of small adjacent rectangles on a scrap of paper (25). While painting a picture he also puts many of the color mixtures down on a sheet of paper in parallel bands, labeling each stripe in fine-pointed pencil with abbreviated names of the colors used and noting their proportion in the mixture (37). These records enable him to mix the same colors again quickly. Coincidentally, some of the fortuitous color combinations on the sheets also give him ideas for paintings.

Once while looking at his sheets of color rectangles and stripes, it occurred to him: what would paintings be like if done this way, with nothing but right angles and horizontal and vertical edges? In other words, how about making entire pictures out of squares and rectangles?

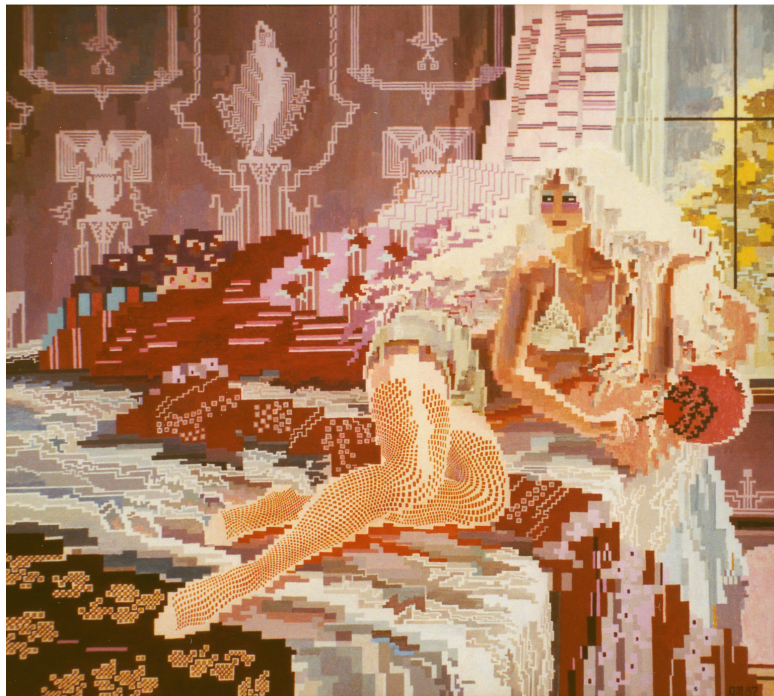
He applied this idea to a relatively curvilinear and therefore challenging subject, painting a series of small figure studies and giving them re-spelled and agglutinated titles to impart a science-fiction flavor: *Neonude in Redroom* (26), *Bluestocking with Sudden Breeze* (27), and *Rozodalisk* (28). On the wall at the left edge of *Neonude* is part of a framed painting in which a reclining nude, although still squared off, is depicted in more conventional colors, contrasting with the hot color scheme of the rest of the picture. *Bluestocking* appears in a neoclassical setting of fluted columns against a night sky with square stars. In *Rozodalisk* even the texture of the bedsheets and the weave of the stockings are depicted with intricately squared patterns.



26. *Neonude in Redroom*, 1984
acrylic on board, 15" x 6 3/4"
collection of the artist



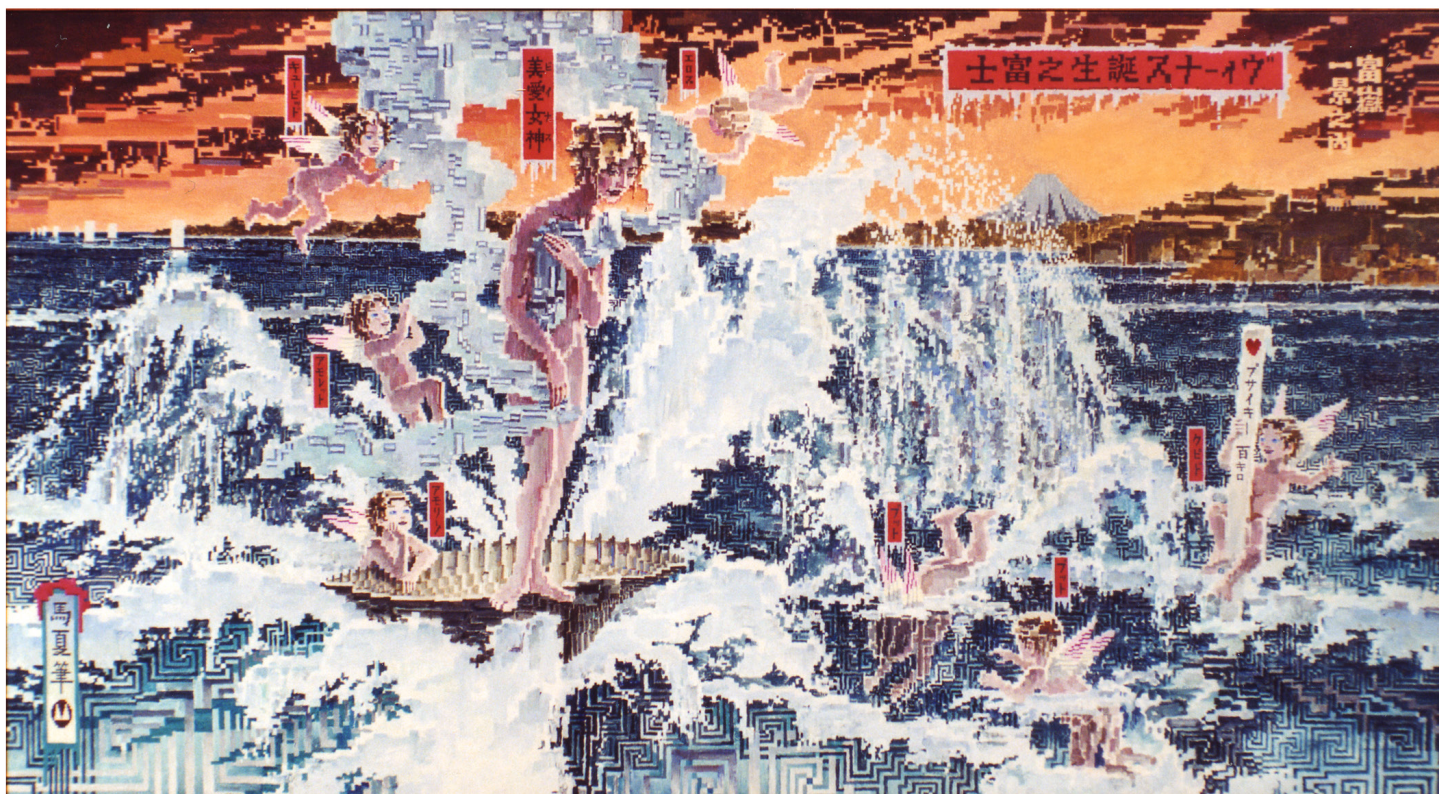
27. *Bluestocking with Sudden Breeze*, 1985
acrylic on board, 21" x 14"
collection of Barbara Dahn



28. ***Rozodalisk***, 1987
acrylic on board, 16" x 18"
collection of David and Ahlene Welsh



29. ***A Day in the Country***, 1987
acrylic on canvas, 30" x 36"
collection of the artist



30. *Fuji with Venusbirth: from the series, One View of Mount Fuji*, 1985
acrylic on canvas, 33" x 60"
collection of David and Ahlene Welsh

–Which showeth the Nascent Venus, upsprung from the geometric [i.e. thalassometric] Sea of Japan, accompanied by her sons Eros, Cupids I and II, Amoretto, Amorino, and various Putti, all in Quest of the Princess Psyche, who is to be found 100 kilometers hence.

A Day in the Country (29) is an imaginary view of the Los Angeles skyline as seen from above the approaching freeways. *Fuji with Venusbirth* (30) combines classical European mythology and Japanese landscape, as the goddess floats on her Botticellian half-shell past Mt. Fuji on the horizon. The title of the picture, the artist's signature and the names of all the characters are written in Japanese calligraphy as they would be in an *ukiyo-e* woodblock print (although with squared contours in this case).

While the curving contours of his color-dot paintings gave the artist an aquatic impression, to his surprise the squared shapes of the present series were unintentionally but decidedly comical.

Dream, Symbol, Myth



31. *Ecstatic Emissions...* study

The Octet began with a dream in which I saw myself in a small room surrounded by a group of instrumentalists playing some very attractive music. I did not recognize the music; though I strained to hear it, and I could not recall any feature of it the next day, but I do remember my curiosity...to know how many the musicians were... after I had counted them to the number eight, I looked again and saw that they were playing bassoons, trombones, trumpets, a flute, and a clarinet. I awoke from this little concert in a state of great delight and anticipation and the next morning began to compose the Octet.

Igor Stravinsky, in Dialogues and A Diary, Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft

Imagination, dreams... thoughts and pictures welling up from the subconscious must have provided creative inspiration to artists of all cultures and all periods of history. Such calls from the depths of one's being demand expression, and Marshall has felt their imperative. Since his youth he has found such images to be fertile grounds for drawing and painting.

Locations seen in dreams become familiar when they appear repeatedly, whether they resemble places known in waking hours or differ from any place ever seen before. Marshall has often visited a dream-museum that must have its origin in the Toledo Museum of Art (Toledo, Ohio), where he spent many youthful hours engrossed in collections ranging from the ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman worlds through Old Masters to modern 20th-century art. In his dreams that museum is amalgamated with parts of other museums visited around the world, to produce a place vaguely similar to, but not quite the same as any of them. He dreamed of looking through prints and postcards in the bookstore of one such museum, where he found a picture by an artist unknown to him showing a desolate, sandy desert stretching into the distance under a dark sky. The landscape was bare, except that here and there could be seen the heads and hands of women buried in the sand to neck level, who were emitting rising streams of vapor and bubbles.

Remembering this picture vividly after waking — although not with total clarity — he decided to try drawing it with pen and india ink. After drawing many studies (31) to clarify details and establish the overall composition, he began the final version. While working on it he was struck with the idea of making a verbal frame for the scene. He wrote stream-of-consciousness lines of commentary, which he then hand-lettered in multiple rows around the perimeter to make a compound frame of dense, intricate textures, and he used the first two words of the inscription as the title of the picture: *Ecstatic Emissions...* (32). This was his first major ink drawing, less in physical size than in the fact that it took six months to draw. Photo-offset prints of the drawing were also made, the same size as the original.

A surprising dream-image, which impressed Marshall so strongly as to keep him working on the idea for years, was the dark head of a woman, seen in profile against a night sky and surrounded by pale blue lines that glowed like neon tubes and outlined the head of a lion. The effect was that of a human head within an animal head, uniting the two in a single entity. He tried to draw this simultaneous animal-human head on a human body, but somehow he could not make a believable connection between them.

Several years later, the problem was unexpectedly solved when he glimpsed a bit of sunlight shining through the colored pattern of a window shade. Although the pattern itself had nothing to do with heads, when seen from a distance it looked exactly like what he had tried to draw. At the same time it revealed a connection between his idea and the imaginings of people thousands of years ago. What he saw there was a dark human head outlined in red and streaked with pale ochre lines suggesting stripes and whiskers. The human profile was then surrounded with a pale border defining the head of a lion. But most importantly, the rear half of the head was covered with a pale yellow-green shape like an ancient Egyptian headdress: this would cover the neck and make a convincing connection between the animal head and the human body. Furthermore it reminded him that artists from the Egyptians back to prehistoric cave muralists had drawn, painted and sculpted creatures which were part human, part animal; the head he envisioned, however, was both at once. He painted the picture that way, using the colors he had seen in the sunlit patch on the window shade and placing the figure against a background of jagged white mountains running with rivers of blood. He named it *Sekhmet* (33) after the Egyptian goddess of war, who was represented with a human body and the head of a lioness. Later he painted *Aurora Leonina* (34) as a return to the original colors of the dream: the dark head surrounded by pale blue lines. In place of a headdress, a dark mane of hair streams out behind, as though this gigantic feline-headed feature of the landscape were an incarnation of the Roman goddess of dawn, Aurora, blown by the winds of morning.



33. *Sekhmet*, 1988
acrylic on canvas, 30" x 48"
collection of the artist



34. *Aurora Leonina*, 1990
acrylic on canvas, 40" x 48"
collection of the artist

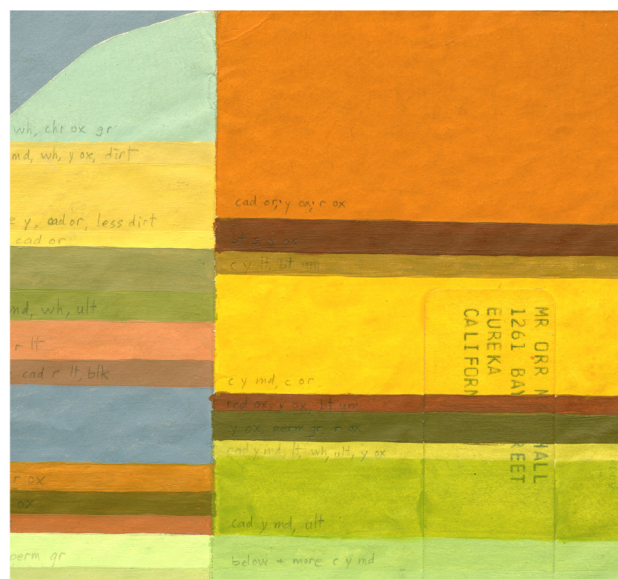


35. *Garden Party with Guest*, 1983
acrylic on canvas, 34" x 60"
private collection

Another dream image, in which women sitting at an outdoor table wore hats so large that their faces were nearly hidden, was the source of *Garden Party with Guest* (35). The artist placed himself small and far away on the other side of the table as a perhaps uninvited guest, while women in lemon yellow and pale green sundresses sip their tea, dominating the foreground. An interesting combination of color stripes (37) from one of his color-mixture sheets (cf. "The Square Series," p. 32) later moved him to paint a related scene, *The Chocolate Chip Cookie* (36). The colors appear as a deep orange sky, red-brown and yellow-brown bands of landscape, and a yellow-orange tabletop. The motif of stripes permeates the painting in horizontal zones of color, echoed in the women's striped dresses and even in the stratified clouds. Against these color strata are contrasted yellow flowers on the dress; a burst of red flowers from a vase on the table; a little airplane looping through the clouds and leaving a multi-colored trail; and last but not least, the cookie.



36. ***The Chocolate Chip Cookie***, 1989
 acrylic on canvas, 34" x 44"
 collection of John and Sandra Hanna



37. Source colors for
The Chocolate Chip Cookie
 (stripes at upper right)



38a. Source patterns for *Ancient Flight Paths*
acrylic on paper



38b. *Ushabty of Menmet*,
papier mâché, acrylic, wood
collection of the artist

Patterned bands of paper accidentally dropped on a larger sheet of blue caught the artist's interest, and he saved the arrangement (38a) for future reference. Eventually he decided to turn it into a spectacularly criss-crossed skyscape. He had made those colored bands, painted with rows of little chevron lines, while planning an Egyptian design (38b). He decided that if there had been such a thing as ancient astronauts, their space ships would have left Egyptian trails behind them, so he called the painting *Ancient Flight Paths* (39).

In March 1989 the artist went with his daughter and her chorus on a trip to the Soviet Union and Romania. At the end of the same year, the Romanian dictator Ceaușescu was deposed by a revolution. Its climax occurred in Bucharest near the hotel where the chorus group had stayed. Thinking how close they had come to that event, and in tribute to the people who suffered and died, Marshall painted *Romania, December 1989* (40). Basing the picture on a figure he had dreamed, which consisted of ragged shreds of green, white and black, he put together fragments of smaller figures and stacked them up to form a large dark composite man in those colors. The entire surface is streaked with firing lines. The yellow shape at top is a map of Romania punctured at cities where major uprisings occurred. The largest red stain is the capital, Bucharest, with a baby held up before it.



39. *Ancient Flight Paths*, 1989
acrylic on board, 48" x 32"
collection of the artist



40. *Romania, December 1989*, 1990
acrylic on canvas, 72" x 32"
collection of the artist

While trying out colors or painting small studies for larger works, Marshall sometimes discovers color combinations which, although not useful for the work at hand, are yet so attractive in themselves that he saves them for the future. Such was the origin of *The Chocolate Chip Cookie* and *Ancient Flight Paths*. It happened again in the case of his painting *Te Poe* (42), meaning “The Pearl” in the Tahitian language, which he chose in homage to Gauguin. The kernel of this painting was the clothing pattern of the woman at upper right: orange-colored clusters like foliage or flowers above slender yellow stems, highlighted by paler patches on top of the clusters. He had invented such a pattern (41) for an earlier picture; he didn't use it then, but he liked it and kept it for later reference.



41. Source Pattern for *Te Poe*
acrylic on paper

Eventually it gave him the idea for *Te Poe*, where people and animals would nearly disappear into a jungle-like setting, camouflaged by the patterns of their clothing, pelts or skins. He painted a scene of women who are almost hidden among the foliage, revealed only by their dark arms and faces. The diamond-shaped eyes of human and beast glow as echoes of similarly shaped clouds covering the sky. It remains for the viewer to find the mystic pearl of the title.

Thus paintings grow out of other paintings. In the sky of *Te Poe*, the artist noticed a yellow shape like an elongated horse-head stretched above the seated woman in orange. He imagined painting a gigantic horse that leaps across the sky over a seated figure. Developing the idea through many drawn and painted studies, he completed the painting *Hippolyta* (43), named for the legendary Queen of the Amazons. She reigns in her flamboyant costume on a fanciful throne, flanked by colorful patches hiding more figures and approached by distant horseback riders. Over her head, not just one but three great blue horses rear up against a yellow sky.



42. **Te Poe** (*The Pearl*), 1989
acrylic on canvas, 71" x 47"
collection of the artist



43. *Hippolyta*, 1994
acrylic on canvas, 60" x 42"
collection of the artist

Portraits and Other Excursions

Does an artist depict what he sees with his eyes or what he perceives with his imagination? Marshall is among those who would admit to both. He is preoccupied with the visions of his inner eye, but he ventures at times into the visible world, and the result is frequently portraiture.

As an art student working from the model in drawing classes, he acquired a taste for figure drawing, and since then he has often worked with the human figure. His occasional self-portraits derive from his own ready availability as a model. In fact, he draws or paints a self-portrait only when a particularly interesting idea for such a picture presents itself.

For example, one day in his studio as he held up a stack of shiny black Japanese food boxes (*jūbako*) to examine his dark reflection in its surface, he happened to notice another reflection of himself in a mirror on the wall, along with a small self-portrait hanging near the mirror, not to mention the mirror reflection of a large painting (*Te Poe*, 42) behind him. This scene became his *Studio Portrait* (44): multiple self-portraits against a segment of the studio wall. The picture poses questions on the nature of representation: which parts of it are meant to be “real,” which reflected, and which painted or drawn? Which parts are reversed and which are not? And, fragmentary though some of them may be, how many self-portraits are here?

Deep red sunsets that the artist saw night after night from his studio window moved him to paint *Studio Sunset* (45). To avoid leaving the room empty, he put the first available model into the picture — himself. Mirror reflections are reversed, but Marshall did not want his studio or himself to appear reversed in the painting. Therefore, after making a preparatory pencil drawing of himself in a mirror, he corrected the orientation by turning the paper over and retracing the lines. To make a more detailed drawing of his head, he used two mirrors, one reflecting the other to turn the image back to the right position. (Several years later he came across a newspaper article that explained the deep, intense red of those sunsets: they had been caused around the world by a volcanic eruption in the Philippines.)



44. *Studio Portrait*, 1991
acrylic on canvas, 36" x 36"
collection of the artist



45. *Studio Sunset*, 1993
acrylic on canvas, 58" x 39"
collection of the artist



46. **Reflective Apple**, 1990
pastel on paper, 8 1/2" x 7"
private collection



47. **Still Life with Ripe Pear**, 1990
pastel on paper, 9 1/2" x 14"
private collection



48. **Cups**, 1991
pastel on paper, 5" x 7 3/4"
collection of Scott Chandler



49. **Apples and Jūbako**, 1991
pastel on paper, 6 1/4" x 6 1/4"
collection of Valerie Weyna

Marshall started drawing with pastel to try out a new medium. Pastel colors cannot be mixed together as paint can; the procedure and the result are quite different. Strokes of different-colored pastel crayons are put down side by side or overlapping, unmixed, partially mixed or rubbed together. At first he used the medium for small still life drawings — *Reflective Apple* (46), *Still Life with Ripe Pear* (47), *Cups* (48), *Apples and Jūbako* (49). Then he made pastel studies for paintings. He drew *Red Rose*, *Pink Rose* (53) and *January Roses* (54) in order to understand the form of the flower, for possible inclusion in a future painting. On the rear wall in the painting *Studio Sunset* appear two pastel portraits, both of which originated from the artist's trip to Russia with his daughter's chorus. He had been studying Russian for decades, so to visit the country for the first time and hear the language spoken and see it written everywhere was a moving experience. In the original version of *Woman in Moscow* (51) he drew a moody sky and a remembered impression of the city in steep perspective, with the gigantic spire of a "Stalin skyscraper" on the horizon. *Crown of Flowers* (50) was a study for the larger drawing *At the Edge of the Russian Birch Forest* (52). For Russians, the symbol of their country is not the bear but the birch tree.



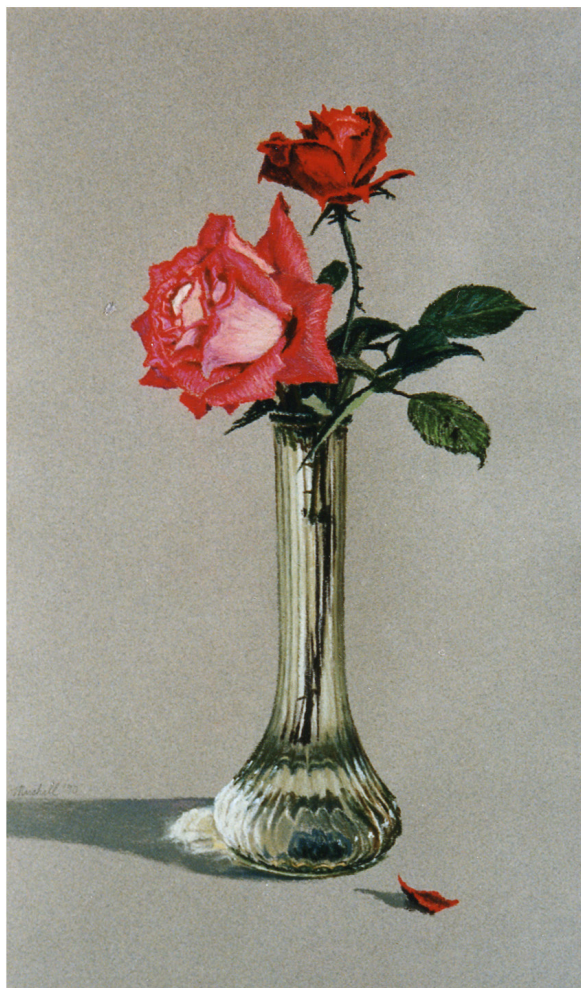
50. ***Crown of Flowers***
(Little Russian Girl), 1992
 pastel on paper, 6 1/4" x 5 1/8"
 collection of the artist



51. ***Woman in Moscow***, 1990
 pastel on paper, 25" x 18 1/2"
 collection of the artist



52. ***At the Edge of Russian Birch Forest***, 1992
 pastel on paper, 14 1/2" x 19 1/4"
 collection of Judith Lea Koretsky



53. ***Red Rose, Pink Rose***, 1990
pastel on paper, 19 1/2" x 12"
collection of Virginia Sarley



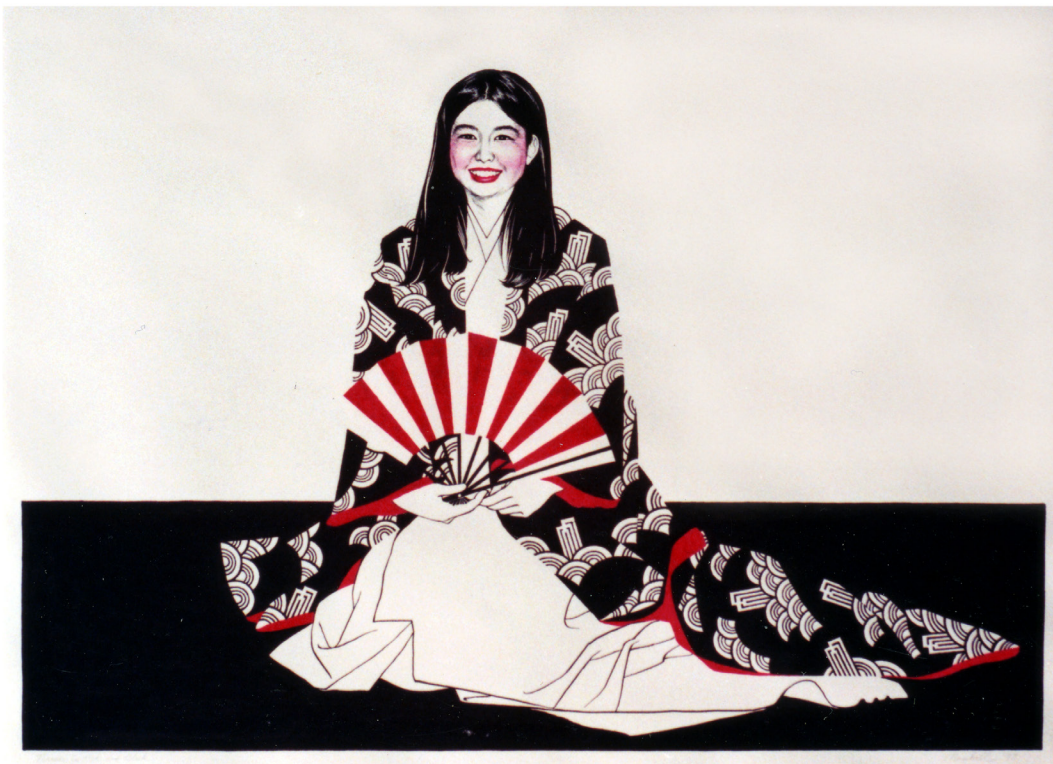
54. ***January Roses***, 1997
pastel on paper, 26" x 16 1/2"
collection of the artist



55. ***Eureka Moonrise***, 1993
acrylic on canvas, 32" x 50"
collection of the artist



56. ***Veronica***, 1992
acrylic on canvas, 40" x 36"
collection of the artist



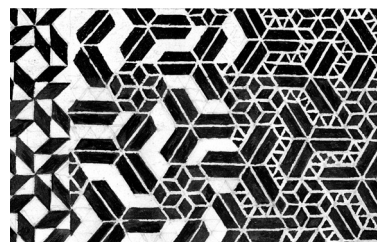
57. ***Naomi in Red and Black***, 1998
 india ink and acrylic on paper, 17 1/2" x 23"
 collection of Marvin and Atsuko Pilchen

A full moon in the daytime sky and long shadows cast across the scene by a low sun were the starting point for ***Eureka Moonrise*** (55), the cityscape seen from the artist's window. In painting this picture he confronted a perspective problem: how to include the nearly 180-degree view. He did it by distorting the perspective, but disguised the distortion to make it barely noticeable.

Portraits can be invented from imagination. ***Veronica*** (56) portrays the saint of the Christian legend holding the cloth with which she wiped the face of Christ. The turbulent clouds were suggested by a torn cloth hanging in front of a window, and some of the clothing was borrowed from traditional garb still worn in Central Asia. But Veronica herself and the scene as a whole are imaginary. The picture was painted to respond to a sacred theme set for a particular gallery exhibition.

Naomi in Red and Black (57) is yet another kind of portrait: a drawing of the same girl as in ***Naomi*** (24), distilled to the boldest of patterns and the simplest of color contrasts. Realism can have many faces.

Scenes from the Movie



58. Pattern study for *The Audience*

High-contrast black and white movie film produces an image in pure black and white with no intermediate grey tones. It was the dream of a movie shot with such film that revealed to Marshall a new way of drawing. In the dream-film he saw an astonishingly vivid scene of figures in many-patterned clothing against walls of still more patterns, all in stark, scintillating black and white. The intensely beautiful dream-vision remained long in his memory. He tried to recapture it with an india-ink drawing, but at a certain point he had to set the incomplete drawing aside, not knowing how to continue it.

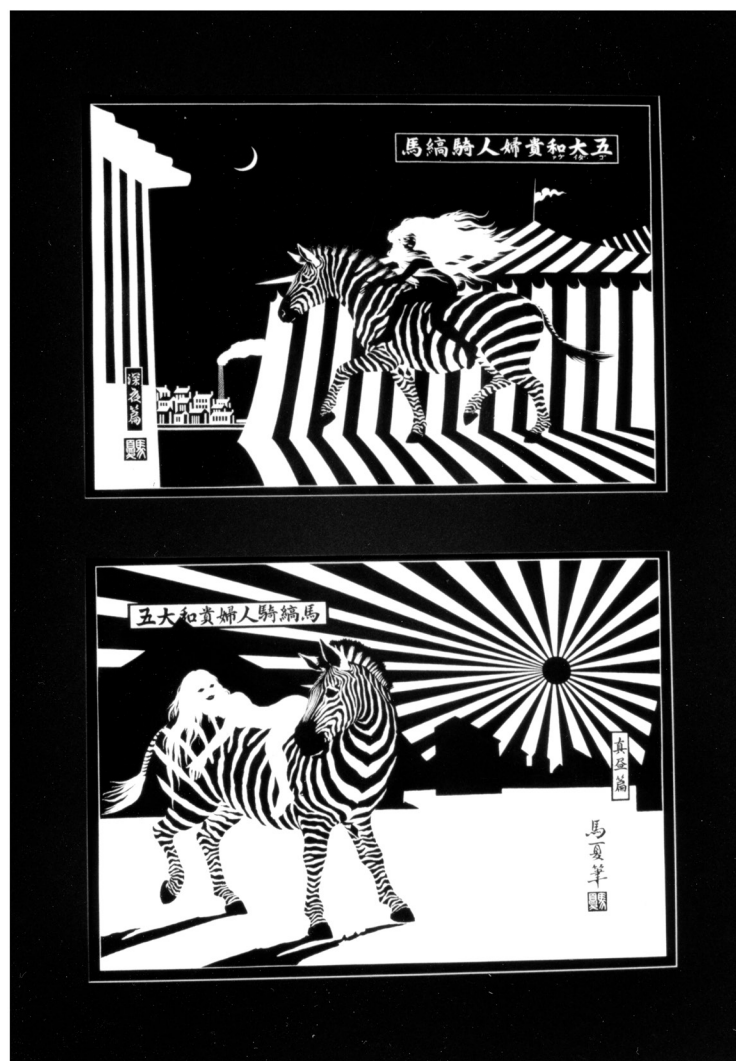
At last, some twenty-five years later, he understood how to proceed. He drew a small new study, centered around the figure group from the early sketch, adding figures and animals and broadening the background. After more experimentation with black and white patterns (58) and many sketches of individual characters and creatures, he was ready to undertake the large final drawing.

The result was *The Audience* (59). Artists ordinarily draw outlines, but this drawing has no outlines: forms are defined only by pattern against pattern, black against white. The scene glows with a pale light from amidst the blackness. The perspective is tilted at an odd angle, with receding lines nearly parallel rather than converging. An assembly of women dressed in wildly varied costumes and accompanied by animals, large and small, actual and fantastic, confronts a single man seated before them. Is the woman on her raised throne granting him an audience? Are she and her companions silently watching him, or is he the watcher? Or you, the spectator, are you the audience who observes this scene? The illusion of white drawn on black and the ambiguities of perspective and subject matter in the drawing pull the viewer into its dream-like atmosphere.

In fact it was drawn only with black india ink and fine-pointed pens, occasionally using a small brush to fill in larger black areas. All the whites, down to the finest white lines, are blank white paper. White shapes are made by drawing black around them and letting the paper show. To make a white line, for example, one may draw two parallel black lines close together and fill in black on either side, leaving a blank white line of paper between them.



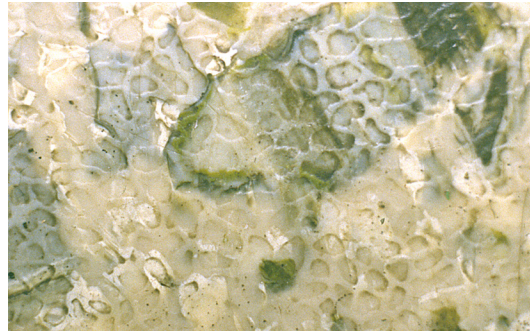
59. ***The Audience***, 1997
india ink on paper, 53" x 48"
collection of the artist



60. *Godiva in Black and White*, 1998
india ink on paper, 36" x 26"
collection of the artist

The zebra at the right edge of *The Audience* gave the artist ideas for further drawings. He could put a rider on a zebra simply by making the human figure solid black against the zebra's stripes, or else solid white. So he did it both ways in *Godiva in Black and White* (60), putting two drawings in a single frame and writing a description across the top of each in Japanese calligraphy, which in translation says "Lady Godiva Riding a Zebra." The two drawings are also labeled with Japanese subtitles. Above, in the "Late-night Version," a dark rider stands out against the stripes of the animal and the tent. A thin crescent moon hangs in the black sky, while a cluster of tiny city buildings glimmers in the distance. Below is the "Mid-day Version," with a white rider and a black sun that casts dark shadows and emits black and white rays.

Life on the Floor



61. The floor, detail, original face of *Nanette*

...when you look at a wall spotted with stains, or with a mixture of stones... you may see battles and figures in action; or strange faces and costumes, and an endless variety of objects, which you could reduce to complete and well drawn forms. And these appear on such walls confusedly, like the sound of bells in whose jangle you may find any name or word you choose to imagine.

Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*

An artist often goes looking for subjects among traditional sources, such as landscape, still life or genre. But in an unguarded moment, a powerful image may hit him out of the blue, as though it had searched him out and taken him in its grip.

One day while staring absent-mindedly at the old linoleum floor of his house — nondescript tiles with no design, marked only by chopped-up darker bits scattered through a pale background in a monochromatic jumble — Marshall was startled by a tiny, angry face glaring back at him. It looked nearly photographic. He had to kneel down and examine it closely to see that it was no face at all, just random blotches within the linoleum. Over succeeding days and months he discovered more and more faces, figures, animals and strange creatures around the floor. He began to trace or draw them, and he has started putting them into his paintings.

The pastel drawing *Nanette of the North** (62) was inspired by a woman's head seen on the floor above a pale soft shape suggesting a fur coat. The artist drew her tall figure enveloped in white and invented a desolate, icy background. But he based her head on a tiny half-tone photograph rather than the face on the floor. This pastel was done as a study for a possible larger painting, in which he may use the more whimsical head he originally saw on the floor (61).

*Cf. *Nanook of the North*, a film made in 1920-1922 by Robert Flaherty, father of the documentary film.



62. *Nanette of the North*, 1996
pastel and acrylic on paper, 29 1/2" x 20 1/2"
collection of the artist

63. Tracings from the floor



Cupcakes head

The springboard for his painting *Cupcakes* (64) was another strange face on the floor (63). He traced the head and added a suitable body to make the figure at left in the painting, then made three more figures in similar style to complete the group around the table. A tank from the Red Star Cupcake Service, camouflaged in pink, is parked at the left edge; it says “Delivery” in Japanese on the side — guaranteed secure transport. Mr. Banana Man, the delivery person, runs up with another tray of refreshments, while the ladies with their crowns of white-frosting hair lunch on pastel-frosted cupcakes, acid-bright drinks and a heaping bowl of jello-like confection.

Everything in this painting is wrong: the perspective, the anatomy, the unnatural colors. Even the protagonists’ diet is all wrong. But intentionally so, because the picture is an indulgent satire. The confections and the drinks, the slash of blue-green swimming pool across the background and the rainbow above the clouds are there to give little stabs of brightness to the generally bilious yellow tonality of the scene. A newsletter has fallen to the ground, the cover imprinted “Urgent! Latest Cupcake Information!” Poisonous reptiles crawling out from the underbrush — a gila monster and a coral snake — merely add a touch of *malaise* to the otherwise innocuous *déjeuner*.



64. *Cupcakes*, 1999
acrylic on canvas, 42" x 52"
collection of the artist

VERBALISM

A NEW ART FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VERBALISM

As the old millennium draws to a close, art works are still expected to be self-explanatory, to stand on their own unsupported by any verbal interpretation or justification. This state of affairs must end; a new millennium calls for a radical shift in our approach to art. Thus, the Verbalist Movement has been inaugurated by Orr Marshall on 09/09/99 in Eureka, California, U.S.A., establishing the Written Word as *sine qua non* of the Visual Arts.

THE VERBALIST MANIFESTO:

The Art of the Future will have meaning only through mediation of the Word.

Henceforth, the essence of the Artwork is its Title.

The first phase of Verbalism is Police Art.

The second phase is Cow Art.

THE VERBALIST MOTTO:

What you see is **NOT** what you get.

THE VERBALIST MANTRA:

Art is a Verb.



«Глаголисты всех стран, Соединяйтесь!»

(Translation from the Russian: "Verbalists of all lands, Unite!")

N.B.: If you have read this proclamation, U2 are a Verbalist.

Verbalism



66. Marshall's proposed Verbalist Monument for the city of Ulyanovsk (broadcast on BBC World Service, 07/23/2001)

Idle musings, random thoughts...

Chance words run through the artist's mind: "You are... aka U.R."

Followed by the obvious question: "U.R. what?"

And the flippant retort: "Under arrest."

Then comes the inspiration: "A rest? How about a quarter rest?" (That is, a rest of the musical variety — a symbol printed on a musical staff representing silence of a certain length.)

And in a flash, the whole mental picture is before him: the two large capital letters U.R. backed by a mirror in which the viewer sees his (or her) own reflection, and above the letters, the five horizontal lines of a musical staff occupied by one big quarter rest.

Thus Verbalism was born, a not quite serious yet not entirely facetious major artistic movement for the new millennium. (See *Manifesto*, 65.) Actually, the idea for a movement came later, when Marshall had occasion to take part in some exhibitions with a millennial theme. Before that, he constructed *U.R. under a Rest* (67) just as he had envisioned it, out of the most basic elements: a horizontal band of mirror spanned by capital letters, and horizontal music staff lines hung with a quarter rest, all in white plus minimal black. But he had another idea, a mirror in the form of a human silhouette, and that is how he made *U.R. under a Rest II* (68). This one is black with white staff lines and the curling fronds of a thirty-second rest. White capitals and Roman numerals float across the silhouette, where black and white edges are multiplied, echoing back again and again to the mirror. A puzzle: how many layers are actually there? (See detail, 69.)



67. *U. R. under a Rest*, 1999
acrylic on board, mirror glass,
wood, enamel, 31" x 22"
collection of Marvin Pilchen



68. *U. R. under a Rest II*, 1999
acrylic on board, window glass, mirror glass,
wood, enamel, 31" x 22"
collection of Marvin Pilchen

Given the chance and a modicum of privacy, the first thing anyone will do when confronted with these Verbalist mirrors is look at him/herself. Then the viewer is trapped: to be addressed U.R. and placed under a rest becomes embarrassing. But there is no need for a mirror in *The Recidivist* (70), where the artist puts himself in the same predicament, under every rest in the book.

Seeing that he was reasonably skilled in sawing holes to form letters and other shapes, Marshall began to wonder what else he could make that would be black and white and perforated all over. "Holy cow, that's it!" he exclaimed, and with *Holy Cow* (71), Verbalism embarked upon a new phase. Embracing realism in a literal sense, the cow is made with real leather (the ears), real nipples (baby-bottle), real balls (i.e. the eyeballs), real holes, and real astroturf.



69. **U. R. II**, detail



70. **The Recidivist**
(*I am repeatedly under a rest*), 1999
india ink on paper, 27" x 19"
collection of the artist



71. **Holy Cow** (*and a snake in the grass*), 2000
masonite, wood, enamel, leather, rubber, wooden beads, astroturf, 17" x 31" x 12"
collection of the artist

Japan from Afar



72. Kunichika: *Kabuki Triptych*, detail, head of Anego Kakezara

Besides making paintings, drawings, prints and sculpture, Marshall has also done some experimental filmmaking. While in Japan he considered making a film in which the actors would appear in historical Japanese costume and setting, such as seen in *ukiyo-e* prints of the 19th century or earlier; but the action of the film would be interrupted by the noises of cars, telephones, radios, trains and other modern devices. He was not able to carry out this project.

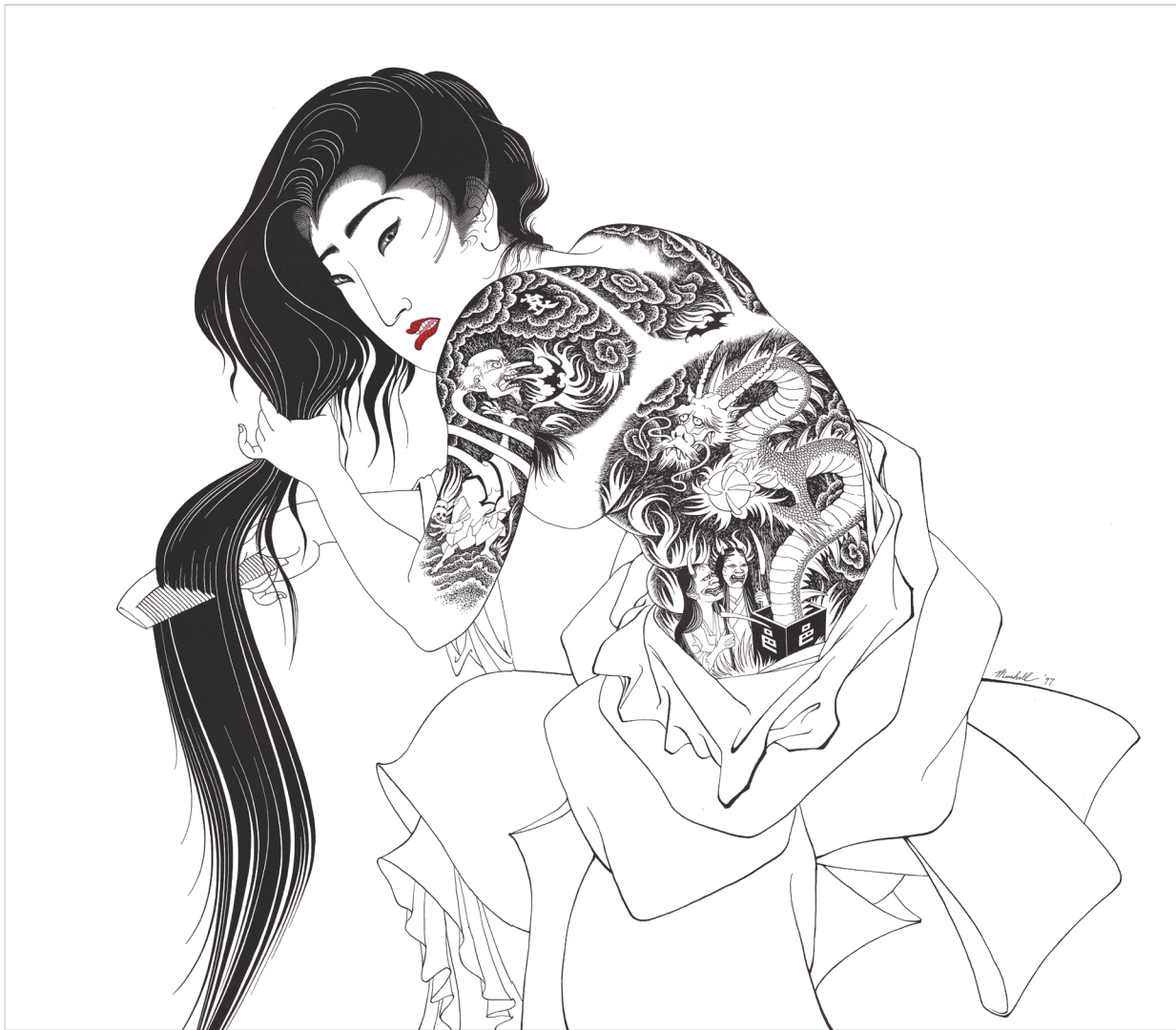
After returning to the United States, he sometimes included Japanese pottery, textiles or calligraphy in his pictures and drew his “hand-made photographs” based on half-tone photos in Japanese magazines. But it was a request from a gallery client, who noticed the calligraphy in his *Studio Portrait* (44) and asked if he would paint a Japanese scene, which led him to exploit his penchant for creative anachronism by painting *Tōsei Fūryū Bijin Soroi* [*Assorted Elegant Beauties of the Present Age*] (77). What he had not done in film, he could do here, inserting furtive traces of the modern world into a scene from an earlier time. A traditional wooden teahouse is the setting for *geisha* in their sumptuous *kimono*, relaxing, chatting, strolling in the fading light. They are depicted as though in a Japanese woodcut, their intricately patterned garments outlined in calligraphic strokes and the title of the picture and the artist’s signature inscribed in Japanese. A closer look into the open room, however, reveals a color television set and a folding screen with mass-media headlines. Across the arched wooden bridge over the distant river streams rush-hour motor traffic, and tall city buildings with neon signs are silhouetted against the twilight sky.



73. Toyohara Kunichika: *Kabuki Triptych*, 1865, woodblock print, 13 1/2" x 28 1/4"

In Tokyo in the latter 1960s, Marshall explored second-hand bookstores and discovered 19th-century *ukiyo-e* prints for sale at very low prices. He acquired prints by Toyokuni III, Yoshitoshi and Kunichika. One by the latter artist shows a scene (73) from a *Kabuki* play, with a pair engaged in a swordfight while clinging to the thatched roof of a hut drifting in flood waters. Although he knew nothing about the play, Marshall deduced that the woman in the center of the picture named Anego Kakezara (72), confident and defiant, must have been the heroine of the action and victor in the duel.

He decided to paint her in a scene from his own imagination, which became *Zoku Anego no Fūzoku* [*Customs of the Boss Lady, Continued*] (79). Here she kneels on a *tatami* floor, her sword hanging nearby. Her *kimono* is turned down to her waist, exposing the tattoos covering most of her arms and torso (and incidentally allowing the artist to paint pictures within a picture, a favorite device of his). Beside her is a large wooden tub of water with which she has bathed herself and washed her long black hair. While combing her hair dry, she turns to look sharply back over her shoulder, as though startled by intruders. Within the fan-shaped vignette at upper left is the man in black on the thatched roof, his sword raised just as in the original woodcut, like a memory of her vanquished enemy. The room darkens toward its depth, and there, *shōji* are slid back to reveal a watery landscape and low mountains on the horizon. Above is a sunset sky in those intense, hallucinatory dye-colors seen



74. ***Tattoos II***, 1997
india ink and acrylic on paper, 42" x 48"
collection of the artist

in certain late 19th-century Japanese woodcuts — *bokashi* from deep red fading out to white and quickly back to midnight blue-purple at the top.

Among many studies for this picture, the artist drew one in india ink and acrylic to establish the design of Anego Kakezara's tattoos, showing the upper half of her body the same size as in the painting. After painting the picture he decided to draw the same study again, improved and much larger, and the result was ***Tattoos II*** (1, 74). In response to popular demand he also made a set of hand-colored offset prints of this drawing in smaller size.

Modern Japanese media images join the fray in ***Manga Fan: Sonya-Mandala*** (81), a portrait of the artist's daughter with some of her favorite characters when she was young — Doraemon on her shirt and Hello Kitty zooming around her. As in *ukiyo-e* prints, the title, the artist's signature and some character names are written

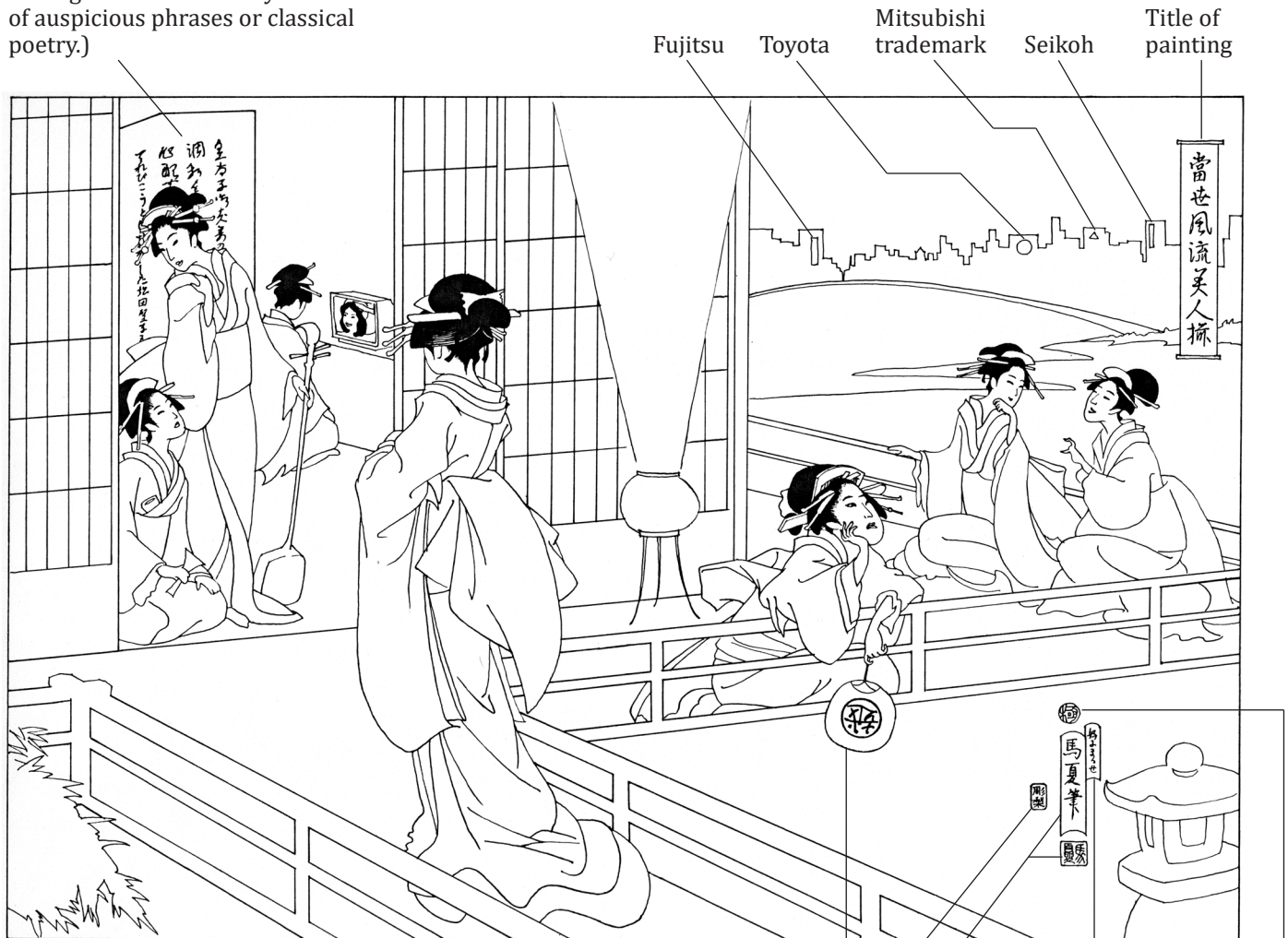


75. **Manga Fan** sketches

in vertical cartouches. The only historical personage in this picture appears at top center with her name written beside her: *Maboroshi-Daiyu* (“The Phantom Lady”). This is an imaginary portrait of the late 19th-century courtesan known by that name who was the mistress of the printmaker Yoshitoshi. As she chops off *sushi*-sections with a sword, she is labeled with another epithet: *Ten no Itamae-Sama* (translatable as “The Great Sushi Chef in the Sky”). At lower right is *Aibo*, the robot-dog manufactured in Japan. The rest of the characters are from *manga* (“humorous pictures,” anything from comics to TV cartoons to animated film), from the artist’s imagination or from that lowly source described in the chapter titled “Life on the Floor” (p. 58). There is the giant robot wearing his throbbing heart on his chest, toppled by the sparkling gaze of the story-book girl leaning over the parapet. At upper right the little girl from milk-chocolate boxes is licking her lips. At left the girl from a penmanship correspondence school ad is squashing smiling tomatoes before they can fly away again. And all around, frantic creatures are emitting the noises and cries written beside them — squeaking, shrieking, howling, growling, quacking, croaking, gurgling, woofing, snoring and whizzing.

76. Notes for the painting *Tōsei Fūryū Bijin Soroi*

Magazine headlines about marital problems of the crown prince and about nude TV commercials. (Calligraphic inscriptions on folding screens ordinarily consist of auspicious phrases or classical poetry.)



Hori Nashi – "engraving by Nashi," imitating the abbreviated name of the woodblock engraver. But with a different character and the same pronunciation, it could mean "There is no engraving," as the picture concerned is not a print but a painting.

Signature and seal of the artist, Orr Marshall, written in Chinese form *Ma Hsia* (rather than Japanese), based on the names of two painters of the Sung Dynasty, Ma Yuan and Hsia Kuei, active 1190 - 1225.

Konomi ni makase – "following his liking."

Gokuin – "seal of quality" often shown on *ukiyo-e* (Japanese woodblock prints of the 19th century and before).

Trademark of Mitsukoshi department stores



77. **Tōsei Fūryū Bijin Soroi** (*Assorted Elegant Beauties of the Present Age*), 1995
 acrylic on canvas, 24" x 36"
 collection of Donald and Sally McDonald

78. Notes for the Painting *Zoku Anego No Fūzoku*

Zoku: "continued", because in this picture, Marshall has imagined a further scene in the life of the character Anego Kakezara.

Anego: translated as "boss lady". See explanation below.

The man in the fan-shaped vignette appears in a print by the 19th-century artist Toyohara Kunichika. The full print, which shows him dueling with a woman called Anego Kakezara on the roof of a house drifting in a flood, inspired Marshall to paint this portrait of her in *ukiyo-e* style... with a few departures from historical accuracy.

The bamboo pattern on the vase and the pines and plum blossoms seen through open *shōji*, taken together as *shōchikubai* (pine, bamboo, plum), are symbols of good fortune.

Written beside the woman's head is her name, Anego Kakezara. The term of respect *Anego* was addressed to the wife of a gambling boss, or to a person who was herself a gambler. Her nickname *Kakezara* means "chipped dish". She is combing her hair dry, having just washed it in the wooden tub, with a mirror on a stand behind and a comb, brush and hair ornaments in the dish at her feet.

Some *ukiyo-e* prints list the name and address of the publisher and printseller. The right-hand column here gives the location, Sherman Oaks, California. The left-hand column says *Gyararī Ō-Ran-Dō*, approximating the name "Orlando Gallery" in Japanese sounds. The three characters *Ō-Ran-Dō* actually mean "Hall of Yellow Orchids": hence the flowers in front.

Signature & seal of the artist, Orr Marshall, written in Chinese form *Ma Hsia*, based on the names of two painters of the Sung Dynasty, Ma Yuan and Hsia Kuei, active 1190 - 1225.

Fūzoku: "customs", i.e. genre or scenes from everyday life, which were often depicted in *ukiyo-e* (traditional Japanese woodblock prints produced until the late 19th century).

Her sword and outer garment are hung over the standing screen. The cloak is decorated with fragments of calligraphy from *Onna Imagawa*, an old book of precepts for women's behavior.



Full-body tattooing, in actuality practised only by men, was common especially among *yakuza* (gangsters) and earlier also among firemen and other rough characters. Such tattoos were banned by the Japanese government in 1997 because of increased *yakuza* violence. Here the woman's tattoos include typical motifs such as the dragon and stylized spiral clouds. Wrapped around her arm is a ghost with an extendable neck, *rokurokubi*. Two figures next to the dragon display *Noh* drama masks of female demons, *Hannya* and *Namanari*.

Two traditional motifs - morning glories and a triangle arrangement called "fish-scale pattern" in Japanese - are combined in the *kimono*. Red undergarments were popularly worn by women in the 19th century.

續姉御之風俗

姉御加け

天目漢文

加州シヤマン・オックス市
黄蘭堂

馬夏也



80. Notes for painting *Manga Fan: Sonya-Mandala*

(a portrait of the artist's daughter at age 5 going on 6)

Top Center: imaginary portrait of *Maboroshi - Daiyu*
 ("The Phantom Lady"), mistress of the 19th-century print-maker Yoshitoshi.
 Additional epithet: *Ten no Itamae-Sama* ("The Great Sushi-Chef in the Sky").

Bē...: (raspberry noise.)

Il, ne!: "How nice!",
 Sonya thinks.

Guuuu: "Zzzzzz."

Hello Kitty zooms (*kyūn*)
 past, saying "Harō!"

Doraemon: well-known
 TV character (in Japan)
 on Sonya's shirt —
 Robot-cat made in a
 Japanese factory on
 9/3/2112, sold cheap
 as defective goods be-
 cause his ears came off,
 arrived in 20th century
 by time machine. Bal-
 loons describe some at-
 tributes: infra-red eyes,
 4th-dimensional pocket
 (holds anything/ever-
 thing), switch (his tail),
 sticky hands (for climb-
 ing walls and walking
 on ceiling).

Perori: (sound of lolling
 tongue.)

Miko-chan: little girl
 from magazine ads for
 penmanship school.

Gucha!: "Squish" - she is
 squashing self-satisfied
 tomatoes before they can
 fly away.

Artist's signature in
 Japanese and seal in
 Chinese characters

Giant E-pluribus-unum
 dog containing George
 Washington.



Title cartouche, *Manga Fan*, held by *Peko-Chan*, the little girl from milk-chocolate boxes.

Manga: "Comic pic-
 tures." including
 comics, TV cartoons,
 animated films, etc.

Sonya Misuzu: her
 English and Japanese
 names

Run-Run: little
 storybook girl with her
 sparkling (*pika-pika*)
 gaze.

Giant TV robot, his
 heart beating (*doki-
 doki*), toppling over
 (*gura-gura*), his legs
 going limp (*gunya*) from
Run-Run's enchanting
 gaze.

Aibo, the robot-dog
 made by Sony

Written beside all the
 creatures are the
 noises they make.

Subtitle at bottom: *Sonya-Mandala*.

A *Mandala* is a Buddhist devotional painting which sometimes depicts a large central deity surrounded by smaller attendant demi-gods or scenes from parables.



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collection of the artist

Biography

Education

1958	Yale University, Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts, summa cum laude
1961	Yale School of Art and Architecture, Master of Fine Arts in Painting; studied with Josef Albers, Neil Welliver, William Bailey and Rico LeBrun
1960 – 61	Study and travel in Europe
1965 – 67	National University of Fine Arts, Tokyo, Japan
1965 – 71	Study and travel in Japan and Southeast Asia

Employment

1961 – 65,	California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland
67 – 68	instructor in drawing, painting, color, design
1968 – 71	English teacher and translator, Tokyo, Japan
1971 – 77	College of the Redwoods, Eureka, California, art instructor
1977 – present	Artist, self-employed

Solo Exhibitions

1960	Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio
1962	Toledo Public Library
1989	Pacific Art Center, Arcata, California
1990	Pacific Art Center
2001	DA Center for the Arts, Pomona, California
2006 – 07	A Bridge to Japan: Orr Marshall Retrospective, Morris Graves Museum of Art, Eureka, California (included a showing of his experimental films ROSENOSE & Five Shorts)
2013	Orr Marshall Oddworks, Sewell Gallery, Eureka, California
2018	Orr Marshall Prints, Bunny Gunner Gallery, Claremont, California

Selected Group Exhibitions

1965	Vorpall Gallery, San Francisco, California
1966	Baikatei Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
1969	Tsubaki Gallery, Tokyo
1970	Japan Printmakers' Annual, Tokyo
1980	Galleria Beretich, Claremont, California
1988	Midwest Figurative, Michigan Gallery, Detroit, Michigan
2000	Older California Artists, Cal Poly Pomona Downtown Center, Pomona
2005	Elder Arts Celebration, de Young Museum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California
2005	Visual Assault Team show, Accident Gallery, Eureka, California
2007	Elder Arts Celebration, Sanchez Art Center, Pacifica, California
2009	Black and White Invitational, Empire Squared Gallery, Eureka, California
2010	Fellow Travelers, Upstairs Gallery, Arcata, California
2017	The Unseen Works: Orr Marshall and Fukiko Oguchi Marshall, Black Faun Gallery, Eureka, California

Awards and Publications

1960	Toledo Area Exhibition at Toledo Museum of Art, Roulet Medal, First in Show
1960	Painting reproduced in book <u>Prize-Winning Paintings</u>
1965 – 67	Japanese Ministry of Education scholarship for study at National University of Fine Arts, Tokyo, Japan

1970	St. Mary's College Film Festival, Oakland, California, Second award
1970	Sonoma State College Film Festival, Rohnert Park, California, First award
1988	Redwood Art Association Annual Spring Show, Eureka, California, PLC award
1989	Redwood Art Association Annual Spring Show, Eureka, EAF award
1989	Painting on cover of <i>North Coast View</i> magazine, December issue
1990	Redwood Art Association Annual Fall Show, Best in Show award
1999	Northern California Arts Open International Exhibition, Sacramento Fine Arts Center, Award of Excellence
2001	Humboldt Arts Council Members Exhibition at Morris Graves Museum of Art, Eureka, Best of Show for <i>Manga Fan: Sonya-Mandala</i> , painting to be on cover of HAC bulletin <i>The Palette</i> , 2003 edition
2002	"To Japan and Back: The Art of Orr Marshall", self-published print book
2005	Book cover art, "X & Y and Other Like Stories" by Heidi Cyr
2007	40 th Humboldt Film Fest, Best Experimental Award for "Love Story", Humboldt State University, Arcata, California
2019	"To Japan and Back: The Art of Orr Marshall", online edition of the book, published by Humboldt State University Press

Selected Collections

Toledo Federation of Art Societies, Toledo, Ohio
 College of the Redwoods, Eureka, California
 Kaiser Permanente, Fontana, California
 David and June Davis, Honolulu, Hawaii
 David and Ahlene Welsh, Pomona, California
 Donald and Sally McDonald, Claremont, California
 Barbara Dahn, Pasadena, California
 John and Sandra Hanna, Pomona, California
 Marvin and Atsuko Pilchen, San Diego, California
 Cheryl Russell, Denver, Colorado
 David Hatcher, Chicago, Illinois
 Andrew and Amanda Ferroggiaro, Brooklyn, New York
 Conrad Calimpong, Ferndale, California
 Paul Mann, McKinleyville, California
 Kevin Bourque, owner, Black Faun Gallery, Eureka, California

Representation

The Black Faun Gallery, Eureka, California

Acknowledgements

The artist expresses his deepest gratitude to his parents Charles and Juanita Marshall, his sister and brother-in-law Ahlene and David Welsh, and his wife Fukiko, for their boundless generosity and unstinting support, without which neither the art nor this book would have been possible.

He also thanks Linda Callaway, who proposed the book in the first place and devoted her summer to typing it out and composing and editing the pages with her computer; Joe Welsh, for his expertise and perseverance in putting the illustrations and text into digital form and printing the copies of the book; Nicholas Marshall for technical backup; Stephen and Sonya Marshall for added manga inspiration; Claire Reynolds, director of The Black Faun Gallery, for connecting us with the Humboldt State University Press, Arcata, California; and Carolyn Delevich, HSU Press, for editing this online edition.

Orr Marshall, May 2002, April 2019



THE AUTHOR AND ARTIST, ORR MARSHALL

for much more artwork in many media,
including notes, translations, and preparatory studies:
www.orrmarshall.com



Humboldt State University Press
HSU Library
1 Harpst Street
Arcata, California 95521
<http://library.humboldt.edu/about/HSUPress.html>
ISBN-13: 978-1-947112-12-4

ISBN 9781947112124

