

The University of North Carolina  
at Greensboro

JACKSON LIBRARY



CQ

no. 1301

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

BASS, DAVID LOREN. Dichotomy of Observation. (1975) Directed by:  
Andrew Martin. Pp. 2.

This thesis of paintings and drawings was exhibited in the  
Weatherspoon Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina at  
Greensboro from April 27 through May 11, 1975.

A 35mm color transparency of each work is on file at the  
Walter C. Jackson Library at the University of North Carolina at  
Greensboro.

DICHOTOMY OF OBSERVATION

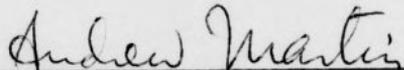
by

David Loren Bass

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

Greensboro  
1975

Approved by

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Adviser

This thesis has been approved by the following committee  
of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North  
Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser

Andrew Martin

Committee Members

Andrew Martin

Joan Gregory

William M. Paul

Clara Kelliker

Bill Gust

8 April 1975  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Joan Gregory and Claire Kelleher for their continued interest and support. I am particularly grateful to Andrew Martin and William Reed for their thoughtful and challenging encouragement. And, I am privileged to have studied with Peter Agostini, the artist most influential on my life.

CATALOGUE

- |                        |                |                     |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Untitled # 1, 1974  | 14 x 11 inches | Watercolor on paper |
| 2. Untitled # 2, 1975  | 10 x 14 inches | Oil on paper        |
| 3. Untitled # 3, 1975  | 10 x 8 inches  | Pencil on paper     |
| 4. Untitled # 4, 1975  | 11 x 8 inches  | Pencil on paper     |
| 5. Untitled # 5, 1975  | 14 x 11 inches | Watercolor on paper |
| 6. Untitled # 6, 1975  | 11 x 9 inches  | Pencil on paper     |
| 7. Untitled # 7, 1973  | 6 x 7 inches   | Pencil on paper     |
| 8. Untitled # 8, 1974  | 11 x 6 inches  | Pencil on paper     |
| 9. Untitled # 9, 1974  | 11 x 9 inches  | Oil on paper        |
| 10. Untitled #10, 1975 | 11 x 7 inches  | Oil on paper        |
| 11. Untitled #11, 1974 | 11 x 9 inches  | Oil on paper        |
| 12. Untitled #12, 1971 | 10 x 13 inches | Oil on paper        |
| 13. Untitled #13, 1974 | 8 x 11 inches  | Oil on paper        |
| 14. Untitled #14, 1972 | 7 x 11 inches  | Oil on paper        |
| 15. Untitled #15, 1974 | 8 x 11 inches  | Watercolor on paper |
| 16. Untitled #16, 1974 | 4 x 3 inches   | Pencil on paper     |
| 17. Untitled #17, 1974 | 6 x 5 inches   | Watercolor on paper |

The paintings and drawings constituting this thesis exhibition result from a contemplation and investigation of light and its properties. Working with traditional materials, such as oil on canvas, and with the traditional media of the landscape, the stilllife, and the interior, I attempt to come to terms with the seemingly inconsequential properties of light as I perceive them. Through these perceptions, made manifest in paint, I reveal a personal ordering of the visual world. I also try to endow the light in these works with personal significance in which others may find meaning.

My perception of the visual world determines the nature of the works. I begin with close study of each light situation, whether a simple object poised before a background, an expanse of an interior, or a landscape. This observation reveals a simultaneity occurring in my perception. Sometimes the observed light is a part of the objects themselves. It appears determined by surface texture and color in addition to size and placement in the field of light. This is especially true when I focus on the overall light situation. However, at other times, when I narrow on a specific area of the object or situation, the light becomes an element apart from the objects. It seems to float and hover around each object, dematerializing the form and creating a field of illuminated energy. The paintings and drawings in this thesis show reflect this dichotomy of observation.

To create these perceptions of light, I follow a dual procedure which is determined by the inherent qualities in the objects themselves

or situations and by intuition and temperament. For each procedure I begin by stroking amply diluted pigments over the picture plane and placing the low middle values. Simultaneously, I design the pictorial space by describing large areas of concentrated and less-concentrated lights. The quality of light in the object, interior, or landscape then determines the light I see and the procedure I use. If the light seems to be an overall light, I proceed to fill in the various lights in the space. I constantly evaluate my judgments of the light quality to suggest depth, brightness, and luminosity as it appears in the observed situation. However, if the light seems to hover and to illuminate the object, interior, or landscape, I concentrate on one area at a time to see the luminous quality of the surrounding light. I then proceed to suggest light as an overall principle in short strokes of tone color. This results in an obliteration of the contour and shadows for a common substratum from which the object appears to emerge into existence.