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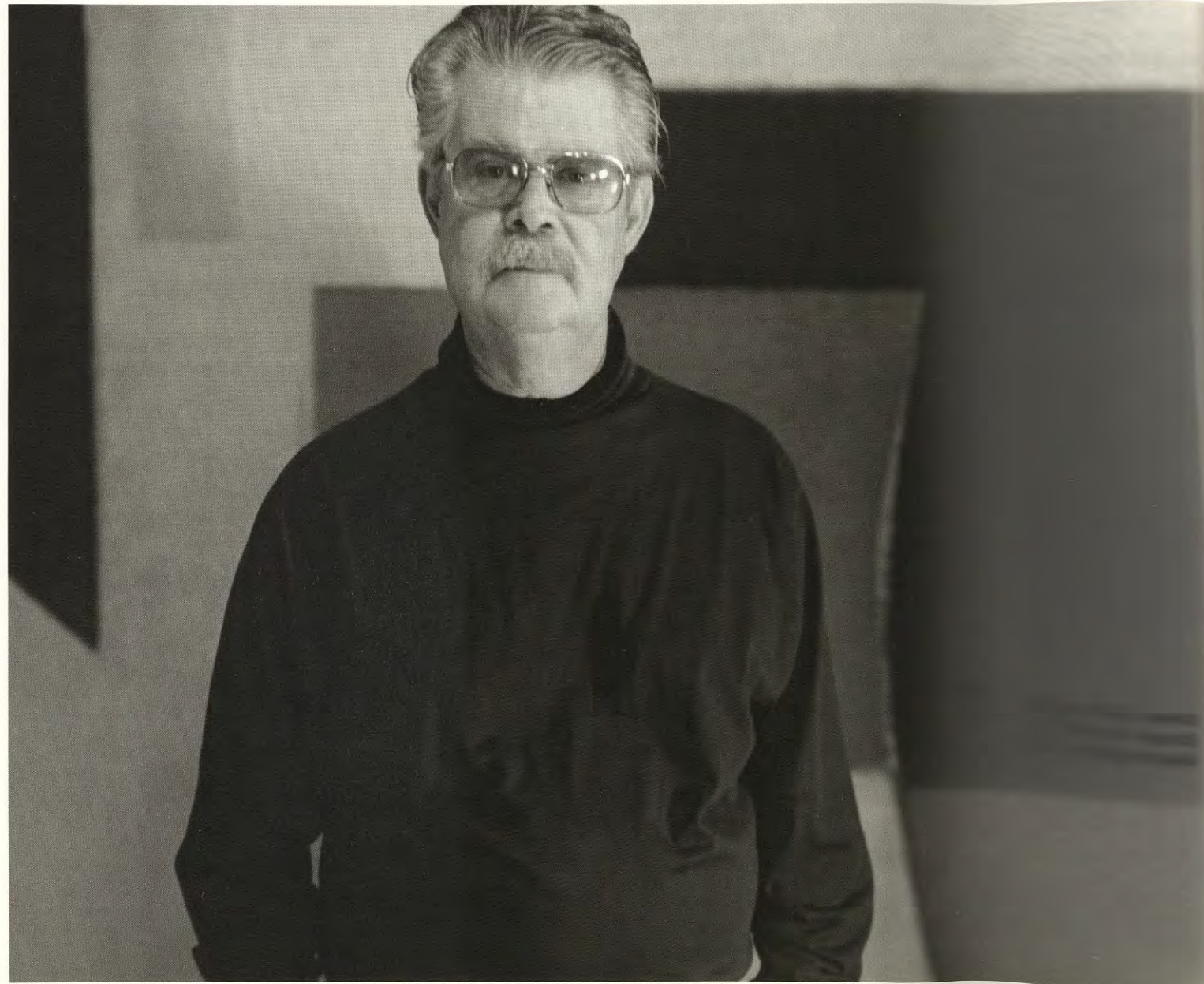
### *The Art Gallery University of Maryland at College Park*

This catalogue is produced in  
conjunction with the exhibition,  
*Willem de Looper  
A Retrospective  
Exhibition 1966-1996*  
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**1932-1945**

Willem de Looper was born October 30, 1932, the third child of Wilhelmina Johanna and Henri Bastiaan de Looper in The Hague, the Netherlands. As a young child, Willem attended a Montessori school. These schools were emerging at the time as a revolutionary approach to early childhood education. The Montessori system placed equal emphasis on imaginative and cognitive development; children worked with shapes and color at the same time that they were taught language and mathematical concepts.

By the time de Looper was seven years old, Germany had invaded Poland and World War II had begun. Very shortly thereafter, the Netherlands came under German occupation. De Looper's father was a partner in a small bank in a neighborhood where the Nazi headquarters were located. De Looper recalls that, during the War, the family moved three times within The Hague as the Nazi occupiers shifted the city's population to counteract the development of cells of resistance.

After one of these moves, they lived with a friend and client of de Looper's father who was an excellent pianist. During the war-time occupation, movement was severely restricted (one had to have a pass to leave one's neighborhood), and cultural life had all but disappeared (museums were closed during the War). In this constricted environment, music provided solace and stimulation. De Looper attributes his lifelong passion for music—which has profoundly affected his creative life to the present—to this experience.

*Willem de Looper in his California Street studio in Northwest Washington, D.C.*

*The 1930s were momentous for art and society in both Europe and the United States. By 1933 important practitioners of bold abstract art had emigrated to the U.S. to escape the threat of Nazism; Hans Hoffman had opened a school in New York, and in the following year another in Provincetown. Hoffman's influence was profound. Clement Greenberg and Harold Rosenberg attended lectures at his New York school in the late thirties, and some of his well-known students included Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler, and Larry Rivers.*

*Josef Albers left the German Bauhaus and arrived in the U.S. in 1933, the same year Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. Albers taught many important American abstract artists at the Black Mountain School and later at Yale. Among Albers' students was Kenneth Noland, one of the pioneers of what Clement Greenberg later called "post-painterly abstraction" and a founder of the Washington Color School. Many other avant-garde European artists emigrated to the U.S. as World War II got underway. Some settled in Chicago to start the New Bauhaus and others pursued their careers in New York and elsewhere, contributing to American abstraction's ascendance to world prominence.*

*In the mid-thirties, coinciding with Franklin D. Roosevelt's landslide victory, the U.S. government established the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Federal Art Project (FAP), the most well-known of seven separate federal arts programs which employed artists during the Depression. Duncan Phillips was appointed Regional Director of the WPA. Phillips was already an important figure in the art world because of his involvement during World War I in organizing artists to produce*

De Looper drawing at a table  
at his Montessori school



savings bonds and other War support artwork, and because of his establishment of the first American museum of modern art in 1918 on the top two floors of his family's Washington, D.C. mansion. The museum, initially called *The Phillips Memorial Gallery*, was started by Duncan Phillips as a memorial to his father and brother. The Phillips became home to major works of European Impressionism as well as important collections of first-wave American abstraction: paintings by Arthur Dove, John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Marsden Hartley, which later had a significant impact on de Looper.

Just as Duncan Phillips was involved in what seem to be opposite camps in twentieth century art, modernism and social realism, so were many other prominent American artists and arts patrons. Although the vast majority of the WPA and other federally-sponsored art fell into the social realist genre, there were significant abstract works produced, as well. Not only was the Mural Section of the Federal Art Project directed by the prominent abstract painter Burgoyne Diller, but several artists who later became leading figures in American Abstract-Expressionism were employed in this program: Rosalind Bengelsdorf (who founded the American Abstract Artists's Association), Ilya Bolotowski, Stuart Davis, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, and Philip Guston. In addition, Jackson Pollock (whose early work, incidentally, resembled that of regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton) and Ad Reinhardt, both known for their purely abstract painting, were employed by the Easel Division of the FAP.

In 1935, the new Whitney Museum of American Art in New York sponsored the first exhibition of American abstract



Willem and Frauke at their  
wedding reception at Jefferson  
Place Gallery in 1969.

**1945-1949**

De Looper's interest in drawing became increasingly serious as World War II ended and American publications became available again in the Netherlands. The teenager, who at that point had not yet received formal artistic training, practiced drawing by copying magazine illustrations. De Looper enthusiastically sought out American magazines, especially the *New Yorker*, for its sophisticated drawings and reporting of cultural life in New York. It was from the pages of the *New Yorker* that

painting, with a catalogue introduction by Stuart Davis.

In Washington, a school of painting associated with the Phillips Gallery was established in 1930. C. Law Watkins, a Yale classmate and lifelong friend of Duncan Phillips, was Associate Director of the Phillips Gallery and director of this school. From 1932 to 1938, when the school was closed because of the Great Depression, Watkins operated Studio House which combined the functions of a school and a commercial gallery.

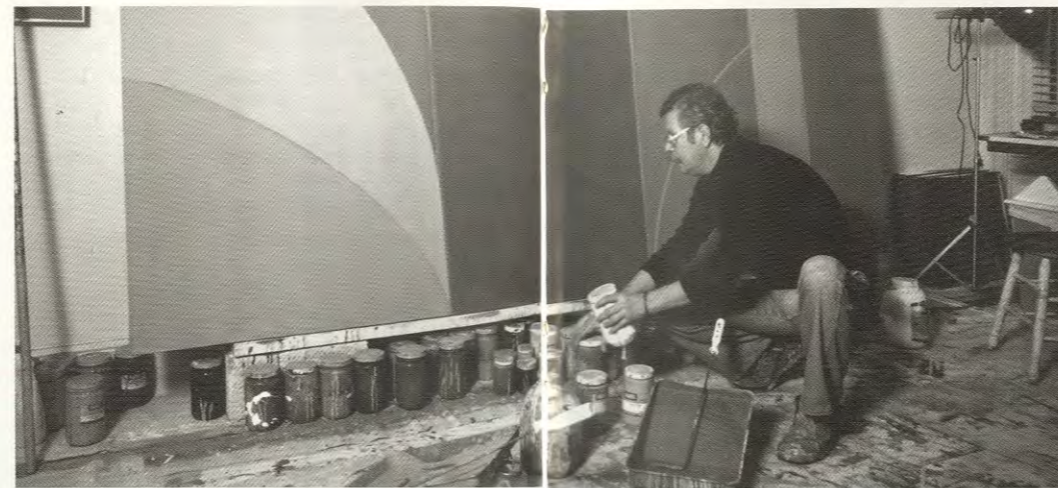
In 1942 this Phillips-associated school which had reopened on the top floor of the museum, became part of American University where it soon offered both a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. in painting. The connection with the Phillips was still quite close as students painted and drew at the Gallery several mornings a week. In 1945 with the death of Watkins, the direct affiliation terminated. William Calfee, who had served as a teaching assistant to Watkins at the Phillips Gallery School, became chair of the American University art department in 1946, and Sarah Baker and Robert Gates, both of whom had been associated with the school, became faculty.

During the forties Piet Mondrian arrived in New York, and by 1949, abstraction was well-established, recognized as an artistic vernacular, and hailed as peculiarly "American," as evidenced by the August 1949 Life Magazine article "Jackson Pollock: Is he the Greatest American Painter?"

de Looper began, as he has said, *to build my dreams of a life in the U.S., and of involvement in the music and art world so colorfully depicted in the New Yorker's pages.*<sup>1</sup> He was also strongly influenced by the vivid colors and striking graphics, layouts, photography, art, and advertising of the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life Magazine*. He attributes much of this early access to American publications to his brother, Johan (called Hans) who brought de Looper his first samples of these publications along with books of cartoons by Al Capp and Bill Mauldin, when he returned to the Netherlands from Buenos Aires via New York, after his first posting as a junior diplomat in the Dutch Foreign Service. The influences of these American publications are evident in de Looper's early drawings and watercolors.

**1950-1956**

In 1950 at age 17, de Looper joined his 28-year-old brother Hans in Washington, D.C., where he had just begun to work for the International Monetary Fund, the beginning of a 25-year career with that agency. For the first two years Willem was on a tourist visa. By 1953 the family had decided Willem should go to college in the U.S.; he enrolled at American University where he began his first formal study of art with faculty artists Robert Gates, Sarah Baker, and, Ben ("Joe") Summerford who, de Looper says: *was my primary mentor.*<sup>2</sup> He simultaneously majored in economics, a field more acceptable to his family. Willem continued to live with Hans during college and describes his older brother as being like a second father. *I cannot emphasize how much encouragement he gave me to pursue my art. He was always buying me art books. He gave me a Picasso book on the Vollard suite.*



*Large painting in process at the Fraser Stable Gallery. De Looper had a one-person exhibition here in 1977.*

**1957-1958**

*In 1951 the first book about abstract expressionism was published: Abstract Painting: Background and the American Phase, by Thomas Hess. In the same year ARTnews proclaimed that...a little-known movement is (rapidly changing) into one of growing national importance..., referring to a diverse group of artists who became the "New York School:" William Baziotes, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Ad Reinhardt, and David Smith.*

*The Washington Color School originated with groupings of artists around three institutions in the early 1950s: the American University Art Department where Jack Tworok, a part-time faculty member, encouraged investigation of the expressive, painterly, gestural mode associated with de Kooning; the Institute of Contemporary Arts, formed in 1947 by Robert Richman to provide classes and exhibit the work of major European and American*

And, most important, he paid for my education completely. I owe him so much.<sup>3</sup> De Looper soon changed his major to Fine Arts.

While pursuing his undergraduate studies, de Looper organized student shows, served as the art editor of the University's literary journal, and was selected for several local exhibitions featuring outstanding student artists.

He returned frequently to The Hague to visit his mother who had separated from his father and was living opposite the museum which held the largest collection of Piet Mondrian's works. He avidly visited as many newly-opened Dutch art museums as he could during these visits.

In 1957 after graduating from American University with a B.F.A., de Looper began a two-year tour with the U.S. Army in Europe, where he was stationed at Ludwigsburg, near Stuttgart. During this period he began to collect and study major art magazines and journals, and to travel extensively throughout Europe to see the great masterpieces of Western art in major museums. In 1958 the young artist was exposed for the first time to Abstract Expressionist canvases, which he saw at the American Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair. Throughout his Army tour, de Looper continued to draw and paint in notebooks he carried with him and at the Army base's craft shop. He was married for a brief time to a former school friend from the Netherlands while in the Army.

*contemporary artists; and the Washington Workshop Center for the Arts, organized by Leon and Ida Berkowitz in 1945. The Berkowitzes received support from Elaine and Willem de Kooning for the project, including bringing Washington art to the attention of influential critic Clement Greenberg, who was central to the development of the Washington Color School. He introduced Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland in 1953 (both artists worked in Washington at that time) to the paintings of Pollock and Frankenthaler, and convinced them of his assessment that these two New York artists were the waves of the future for painting. As a direct result, Louis began to create his stained veil paintings in 1954.*

*In 1959 the Museum of Modern Art organized a traveling exhibition, The New American Painting, which was shown in eight European countries, including Belgium, where it was featured at the U.S. pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair.*

**1959-1965**

Upon returning to Washington in 1959, de Looper continued to be particularly fascinated with the works of Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, as well as with the work of several artists involved in what would soon be known as the Washington Color School. Abstraction and strong emphasis on color, the qualities of the American Abstract Expressionists' works that had made a deep impression on de Looper in Brussels, continued to interest him during the sixties. He was also strongly attracted to the use of thinned down paint (*I loved the idea of the paint 'disappearing' into the canvas, he says*)<sup>4</sup> like that used by Morris Louis.

In 1959 de Looper was hired as a guard at The Phillips Gallery. The position came through with the help of Doris Woodward who worked at the Gallery and who was at that time married to de Looper's former American University classmate William Woodward. De Looper has noted that during 1962 and 1963 he filled a notebook with watercolors that emulated works in The Phillips Collection by Paul Klee, John Marin, and Arthur Dove. Gorky and Louis compositions, available for study in other Washington galleries and museums, were also influential,<sup>5</sup> as were "spiritualist" works of Kandinsky and Arp, though he maintains that he was *not drawn to the theosophist and other quasi-religious underpinnings of these works—I just liked them as art!*<sup>6</sup> De Looper continues to the present to deny "spiritualist" intentions in his own paintings.

During the early 1960s, de Looper experimented with Color School painting processes: spraying, rolling, pouring, and sponging. Color replaced line in the artist's attempts to convey a sense of spaciousness and volume.<sup>7</sup> In 1964 he began to

*In 1962 Pop Art made a dramatic debut in New York at the New Realists show at the Sidney Janis Gallery, signaling what many saw as a return to the object. The show and the artists were roundly denounced by many critics, including Harold Rosenberg. More typical of the time was adherence to the abstract expressionist orthodoxy of critic Michael Fried who, in 1965, pronounced the current work of de Kooning, Frankenthaler, Gorky, Gottlieb, Hoffman, Kline, Louis, Motherwell, Newman, Pollock, Rothko, Smith, and Still...the best new painting anywhere...and for 20 years or more.*

*The sixties also saw the rapid development of "minimalist" tendencies among New York artists: another challenge to abstract expressionism and post-painterly abstraction. These tendencies took two somewhat divergent directions: abstraction devoid of decorative detail and emphasizing geometry (Donald Judd, Tony Smith, Sol LeWitt, Robert Ryman, Agnes Martin, and Frank Stella); and presentation of "found" objects and materials as art (Carl Andre, Robert Morris, Robert Rauschenberg, Bruce Nauman, and Eva Hesse).*

*By the late fifties and early sixties, the Washington Color School was beginning to be recognized as a movement and all of the key figures were living and working in the Washington area. By 1959 Louis (1912-1962) was well-established with his veil-like stain paintings, and Noland (b. 1924) had broken through to his boldly simple geometries in opaque stained color. Louis and Noland are acknowledged as the primary influences in the development of the Washington Color School. Noland taught both Thomas Downing (1928-1985) and Howard Mehring (1931-1978) at Catholic University and through the Workshop,*



De Looper with one of his paintings from 1966

work in Magna (a type of acrylic paint), and later with water-based, acrylic emulsions that allowed him to create the veiled effects of staining that characterized the works in his first major group show at the 1965 Washington Area Exhibition sponsored by the Corcoran Gallery of Art. He received an honorable mention in painting at this exhibition for his work titled *October Sheath*.

Other exhibitions in which his work was represented during these years include: a drawing show and the annual exhibition of Washington artists at the Franz Bader Gallery, both in 1961; exhibitions at the Art Society of the International Monetary Fund in 1962 and at the Society of Washington Artists in 1964 and 1965; and a group show at the Jefferson Place Gallery in 1965.

*came in contact with Gene Davis (1920-1985). Other artists also associated with the "School," such as sculptor and painter Anne Truitt (b. 1921), report that Noland provided strong stimulation for Washington artists on returning from his frequent trips to New York. De Looper and Sam Gilliam (b. 1933), both still Washington-based at the time of this writing, are the stylistic and philosophical heirs of these pioneers.*

*In 1965 the Washington Gallery of Modern Art presented a pivotal exhibition titled Washington Color Painters which included Louis, Noland, Davis, Downing, Mehring, and Reed. In selecting this title, curator Gerald Nordland was the first to attach the color designation to this group of artists who became the Washington Color School.*

*In the 1950s and 1960s, The Phillips Gallery, (renamed The Phillips Collection in 1960) was a supportive and inspiring employer for many active Washington artists. In 1960 a wing was added to accommodate large contemporary works by key Abstract Expressionist painters such as de Kooning, Motherwell, and Rothko. When Duncan Phillips died in 1966 at the age of 80, his widow, Marjorie, and son, Laughlin, assumed direction of the museum which then consisted of a core permanent collection of 2,500 works acquired by The Phillips over a 50-year period.*

*Until the sixties, one of the few fine art dealers and perhaps the most important in Washington was Franz Bader, who ran the Whyte Gallery from 1939-1952, and in 1953 founded the gallery that has operated under his name ever since. The Henri Gallery has had a presence in the city*

**1966-1970**

De Looper's first solo exhibition was in 1966 at the Jefferson Place Gallery, where he exhibited works described in reviews as "large blossom designs."<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 2)

Also in 1966, de Looper's work was included in the Washington Watercolor Society Exhibition, the Hope College (Holland, Michigan) Fine Arts Festival, the UNESCO and Brandeis University's Art Exhibit and Auction at the World Bank. Several of his paintings were selected for the State Department's Art in Embassies Program for the first time in 1966. In 1967, de Looper was selected for the second time for the Corcoran's biennial *Washington Area Show*. He was included in a list of only five "younger artists" praised for... *maintaining interest on successive visits to the exhibition*. His large *Blue Over Green* was judged as... *more fluid and relaxed, an improvement on his work [of] last season.*<sup>9</sup>

Jefferson Place presented solo exhibitions of de Looper's work almost every year beginning with his first in 1966 and running through 1974. The Washington Gallery of Modern Art's 1968 *Group Seven* show, organized by curator Renato Danese, included de Looper's work, and his work was also shown during this period outside Washington: in 1968 at

since the sixties, and Jane Haslem, another dealer in contemporary art also began operating in Washington during the sixties. Barbara Fendrick opened a gallery under her name and Ramon Osuna opened Pyramid in 1970; both also specialized in contemporary art. Pyramid Gallery became Osuna Gallery in 1979. In 1964 The Washington Print Club was established to stimulate interest in graphic arts in the Washington area.

The Jefferson Place Gallery was organized in 1957 by Joe Summerford, William Calfee, and Robert F. Gates (all American University studio art faculty), and Mary Orwen. Alice Denney was the first manager. In 1961 Nesta Dorrance became the Director and the Gallery moved from Connecticut Avenue and Jefferson Place to 2144 P Street, NW. Throughout its twenty years of existence, Jefferson Place played a key role in Washington abstraction, exhibiting Davis, Louis, Noland, and others along with de Looper.

The Washington Area Exhibitions at The Corcoran Gallery of Art were biennial reviews of the "best" of local artists, determined by open competition and a jury composed of luminaries from other cities, especially New York. "Purchase awards" were made of the works of top prize winners, which then became part of the Corcoran's permanent collection. By 1966 there was concern that many of the more successful local artists were not submitting work, and calls were issued for abandoning the jury approach in favor of Corcoran staff selection.

Dorothy and Sam Gilliam with Willem and Frauke on a trip to Europe in 1968.



**1971-1973**

Brandeis University in Massachusetts, in 1969 at Silvermine College in Connecticut, and in 1970 at both Pennsylvania State University and at the Baltimore Museum of Art's *Washington: Twenty Years*. In a review of the WGMA *Seven* show, de Looper's work was characterized by critic Benjamin Forgey as an... *almost complete disintegration of form so that the principal formal confinement available is the rectangular edge of the painting.*<sup>10</sup>

In 1968 de Looper and his future wife, Frauke Weber, joined Sam and Dorothy Gilliam on a trip to Europe which included a stop in London to see the Kenneth Noland exhibition at the Kasmin Gallery. The Gilliams went to Paris just before the student riots in June of 1968, and then on to Southern France, while Willem and Frauke traveled to the Netherlands and Germany to visit family.

In 1969 the couple was married and moved into the St. Regis building on California Street, in Northwest Washington, where de Looper had a relatively large studio space for the first time. He dates the beginning of his production of large canvases to this move. He continues to maintain his residence and studio at this Washington location today.

In 1971 Willem and Frauke, who was working at the German Embassy in Washington, drove a car across the United States. Up to that time, de Looper had avoided travel and had resisted rather than sought vacations. He preferred, as he has said: *my studio and the city; and during this trip I kept saying to Frauke: 'Let's just go back now!' I really wanted to get back to my work in the studio*. But, ironically, that trip was influential in many ways. It can be seen in his reference to

*Many art trends during the 1970s continued to emphasize Minimalism, but a strong strain of artistic self-referentiality became apparent in the work of Robert Mangold and Brice Marden, among others. Conceptual art also gained prominence, as did "earthworks" and site-specific art, pattern and decoration, photo-realism, body and performance art, feminist art, and a range of other splits from the painting and sculptural modes which are often seen as the continuations of Modernism. By 1970*

landscape and the color of the west, and to artifacts of Indian culture in subsequent paintings. A number of canvases have Indian names. Frauke was very influential, too, as she specialized in the cultures of North American Indians in graduate school. Since their first trip, the de Loopers have been to Taos several times, and also to Santa Fe to visit their friend and Washington gallery owner Manfred Baumgartner. He was responsible for introducing them to the cultural life around Santa Fe including the O'Keeffe museum at Abiquiu where they were among the first visitors when it opened. The de Loopers 'adopted' a young Navaho girl whom...we have been assisting in small ways financially for about 10 years.<sup>11</sup>

During December 1971 and January 1972 an exhibition of works by Washington artists personally selected by Marjorie Phillips was shown at The Phillips Collection. It included a de Looper canvas entitled *Chinoise*, which was acquired by The Phillips and then traded later that year for another work. As Mrs. Phillips noted in her signed remarks in the exhibition guide, the exhibition was of...*the museum's favorite artists...I had in mind a small exhibition to be shown in the Main Gallery, and it may be one of similar shows stretching into the future.*<sup>12</sup> In 1971 de Looper was also represented in shows sponsored by his own gallery (Jefferson Place), the Instituto Guatemalteco-Americano, the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association, and the Art Society of the International Monetary Fund which were all in the Washington area. In addition, he exhibited at the Kingpitcher Gallery in Pittsburgh.

By 1972 the former museum guard had taken advantage of the many opportunities offered by what de Looper has termed

*an important phase of American Abstraction was closing. Several of the prominent painters whose work had affected de Looper either directly or indirectly had died: Louis and Kline in 1962; Hoffman in 1966; Reinhardt in 1967; and Newman and Rothko in 1970. Both Guston and Still died in 1980.*

*In 1972 Marjorie and Laughlin Phillips hired Richard Friedman of the Metropolitan Museum in New York as the museum's first professional curator. Friedman left The Phillips Collection in 1975, and James McLaughlin who had been at the museum since the 1930s, became the head curator, a position held until his death in 1982.*

the "formlessness of the place" (The Phillips Collection as an organization) to involve himself in many aspects of the museum's work from bookkeeping, making and filing slides, clerical support, and arranging for photography for catalogues, as well as handling reproduction rights. In 1972 when Laughlin Phillips became Director of the museum upon his mother's retirement, de Looper became Assistant Curator and, two years later, Associate Curator.

During the early seventies several of de Looper's works including *Spring*, *Toujours*, *Stretto*, *Syrinx*, and two untitled canvases were moving from place to place as part of the State Department's Art in Embassies Program. These works were exhibited in embassy residences in Canberra, Australia; Mogadishu, Somalia; Accra, Ghana; Port au Prince, Haiti; Santiago, Chile; Bucharest, Rumania; London, England; Managua, Nicaragua; Bern, Switzerland; Niamey, Nigeria; Peking, People's Republic of China; and Asunción, Paraguay.<sup>13</sup>

In 1973 de Looper was one of 39 artists involved in the Washington Gallery of Art's exhibition *Drawings and Small Works* which critic Paul Richard of *The Washington Post* characterized as demonstrating a...*new spirit of community growing in this city...which rules this exhibition but is apparent everywhere.*<sup>14</sup>

In a letter written in 1973, de Looper describes his prolific painting activity during this period: *I have a series of fairly large (8 x 10 feet wide) paintings which are new and [I] add to this supply with an average of one large painting per week.*<sup>15</sup>

**1974-1976**

1974 was an important year in de Looper's career. He was included in the *Washington Invitational* sponsored by the Adams-Davidson Gallery and planned to coincide with the opening of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. In the catalogue for the show, the director asserted that an... atmosphere of freedom was palpable in Washington (and in the selections she made for the show), and that it developed as a direct result of the innovations of the Washington Color School of the 1950s.<sup>16</sup>

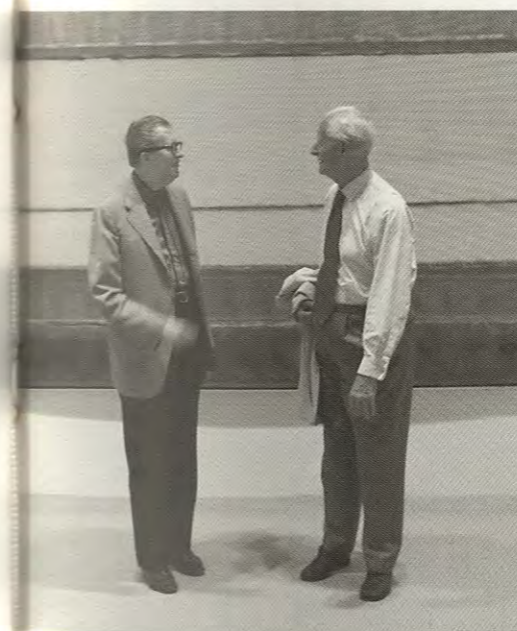
Also in 1974 de Looper was involved, along with other artists, in exhibitions and performances that were part of *Art Now '74* at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. For this event he designed *Sky Forms*, a work of circular and spiral forms of vari-colored smoke "painted" in the sky over the Kennedy Center building by a small skywriter plane. De Looper has noted that *Sky Forms* was his first and only venture into conceptual art.<sup>17</sup>

The Jefferson Place Gallery closed in 1974, and both Adams-Davidson and Max Protetch wanted to represent de Looper. He finally chose Protetch, known for his representation of minimalist artists. Before closing, Jefferson Place gave him a solo show, as did Protetch the following year. De Looper found the Protetch association...very stimulating, since, at the time, Max was representing people from all over. Joel Shapiro, Sol LeWitt, Ed Ruscha, Vito Acconci, Pat Steir, and Ellsworth Kelly were in Max's stable then. I was heavily influenced by Kelly for a number of years, especially by his sculpture. During this period, I was the only Washington artist Max represented.<sup>18</sup>

The early seventies were years of expansion of the visual arts in Washington. The following government-sponsored museums were opened: *The National Collection of Fine Arts* (renamed the *National Museum of American Art*), the *Renwick Gallery*, the *Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden*, and the *East Building of the National Gallery of Art*. The *Washington Project for the Arts* debuted in 1976, under Alice Denney's direction, in an old store and theater at 1227 G Street, NW.

From May 29 to June 16, 1974, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts sponsored *Art Now '74*, billed as "the first national arts festival," which highlighted "post object" and performance art, including developments in American contemporary painting, sculpture, photography, video, music, dance, and theater, with more than 50 artists participating. Highlighted in public relations pieces were artists Trisha Brown, Christo, Philip Glass, Robert Morris, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Serra, and Stephen Shore. Four Washington artists were included (after a protest that none were on the original list): Gene Davis, Willem de Looper, Sam Gilliam, and Rockne Krebs.

De Looper's father, Henri Bastiaan, and brother, Johan, at the *The Golden Door* exhibition at the Hirshhorn in 1976. They are standing in front of de Looper's painting which was included in that exhibition and in this retrospective (Cl. 17).



**1977-1978**

De Looper also noted that in the latter seventies minimalism was "rubbing off" and that the "spareness" of works by Brice Marden and Robert Mangold, also represented by Protetch, became increasingly influential. During this period de Looper traveled frequently to New York on Phillips Collection business and made special efforts to keep up with the minimalist work of Agnes Martin and Robert Ryman.<sup>19</sup> He produced a few all-white paintings, exploring the minimalist vocabulary for a brief time.

In 1975 and 1976 he was represented in two important museum exhibitions: one at The Phillips Collection, which featured his large canvases titled *Pasadena*, *Verde*, *Sur*, *Lamar*, and *Isleta*, and the *St. Regis Series* of ten small paintings on paper; and at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden's 1976 Bicentennial exhibition *The Golden Door: Artist Immigrants of America, 1876-1976*.

Also in 1975 Montgomery College, located just outside Washington in Takoma Park, Maryland, hosted a solo show for de Looper. The first retrospective of his work was organized at Northern Virginia Community College the same year. In 1976 the Federal Reserve Board, together with the National Academy of Sciences, sponsored de Looper's second retrospective with works from 1960 to 1976. The catalogue included an essay by David Schaff.<sup>20</sup>

In early 1977 concurrent exhibitions ran at Fraser's Stable Gallery and Max Protetch featuring large canvases and smaller works on paper. He was also represented by a 77" x 101" acrylic on canvas from 1975, donated by the Protetch Gallery, in

*During the 1970s, the number of commercial galleries in Washington increased dramatically. Among those new dealers contributing to the active arts scene were*



Hirshhorn's new acquisitions show, the first exhibition of purchased and donated art since the museum opened two and a half years earlier.<sup>21</sup>

De Looper's interest in printmaking dates to 1977. In a letter to Frank Gettings of the Hirshhorn, who had suggested that de Looper work with Tatyana Grosman of Universal Limited Art Editions in New York to create lithographs, the artist notes that his sketchbook acrylics, watercolors, and ink works [which] I do quite a lot of...but don't usually show...closely resemble... prints that I might make, in that they are free and improvised in nature and very rapidly done...In the past, I have always thought in terms of originals, but with the encouragement of people such as yourself as well as (recently) Jacob Kainen and Alan Fern, I have begun to think in terms of making some prints. Obviously, I would have to learn from the ground up, since I know nothing about the process.<sup>22</sup>

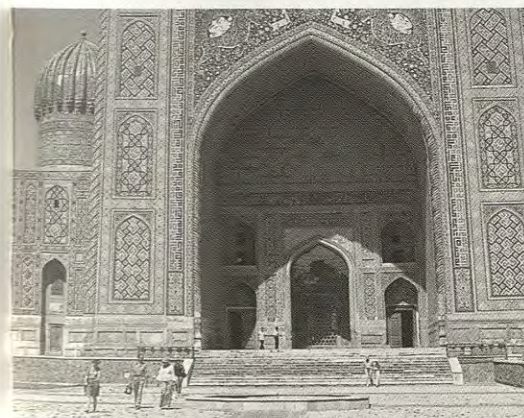
In June of 1977 de Looper was turned down for a National Endowment for the Arts Artist Fellowship, the first and only time he applied for such an award.

Also in 1977, at the urging of friends, Willem and Frauke joined a Smithsonian travel group for a Trans-Siberian Railroad trip across the Soviet Union. They traveled via Tokyo, (de Looper's first encounter with Japan), and also took a side trip to Samarkand and Taskent. This trip into the heart of the former Soviet Islamic republics was highly influential on subsequent work. As de Looper has said: *The blues and turquoises I began to use, and especially*

*Manfred Baumgartner, Robert Brown, Nancy McIntosh Drysdale, Kathleen Ewing, Christopher Middendorf, Max Protetch, Jack Shainman, and Komie Wachie.*

*The ideas of abstraction were being carried into the area university art programs in small increments during the fifties and sixties, and then with more sustained impact in the seventies. Jack Tworkov had taught summers at American University from 1948 to 1951 before de Looper enrolled, Philip Guston was a visiting artist in the fifties, and Gene Davis was there for a brief time from 1968 to 1970. At the University of Maryland in College Park, abstraction gained hold in the early seventies and remains a strong focus of the department into the mid-nineties. Jacob Kainen, initially painting figuratively, and later becoming one of Washington's important abstract artists, taught at Maryland in 1969 and 1970; Sam Gilliam from 1982 to 1985; and Anne Truitt began teaching in 1975 and continues as Professor Emerita. Although de Looper was not formally involved in teaching, the environment in which he worked for so many years at The Phillips fostered the free exchange of ideas among the staff, most of whom were professional or student artists. In the course of day-to-day work at the museum they frequently discussed their own work and related aesthetic issues—teaching and learning of the best sort.*

*One of de Looper's photographs of the Islamic architecture from Taskent. The curved arches and bright colors he saw during this 1977 trip had a direct impact on his paintings.*



**1979-1983**

*the modification of my 'window' shapes were direct results of exposure to the color and complexity of the indigenous Islamic culture of Samarkand and Taskent.*<sup>23</sup>

De Looper's small works on paper were first exhibited in 1978 at Montgomery College and at the Jean Marie Antone Gallery in Annapolis. Other exhibitions in 1978 were organized by Protetch, Catholic University, and the Chuck Levitan Gallery. The Chuck Levitan Gallery group exhibition of Washington artists' works on paper was de Looper's first exposure in New York. These important exhibitions of 1978 consisted of canvases which employed vertical rectangular shapes for the first time, and of new works on paper.

By 1979 de Looper was creating major exhibitions for The Phillips Collection such as *Franz Kline: The Color Abstractions*, and his painting career had become very well established. From 1979 to 1983, de Looper kept a comprehensive list of all paintings he made during these years, together with records of exhibitions and sales.<sup>24</sup> 1979 marked his first solo exhibition in New York, at the Sarah Y. Rentschler Gallery, and his second review in *ARTnews*.<sup>25</sup>

There were two exhibitions in Washington in 1980: a solo at the McIntosh/Drysdale Gallery, and another at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Also in 1980, the artist made a trip to Florida where he placed four (and later that year, six more) paintings at the Medici-Berenson Gallery in Miami and three at the Hodgell-Hartigan Gallery in Sarasota. The de Loopers began annual visits to Florida in 1981 and continued these trips through 1994.

*In 1979 the Max Protetch Gallery became Protetch-McIntosh. When Max Protetch moved his operations to New York in 1981, Nancy McIntosh Drysdale retained the Washington establishment and changed its name to McIntosh/Drysdale. In the nineties, the gallery changed its name again to Nancy Drysdale.*

*In the 1980s, several new galleries joined the Washington scene: Addison Ripley, Brody's, Jones Troyer Fitzpatrick, Marsha Mateyka, and Tartt. The National Museum of Women in the Arts and the new Smithsonian Museums, The Sackler Gallery and the National Museum of African Art, opened in 1987.*

*The 1980s witnessed an expansion of arts activities in the U.S. in many areas including the commercial marketplace, alternative spaces, and major museum exhibitions and construction. The decade may be most remembered for the flurry of Post-Modernist practice and theorizing, for*

## Chronology of the artist

The de Loopers also traveled to Europe from mid-December 1981 through early January 1982, where the artist placed and sold work with two galleries in Hamburg: the Galerie L, which had hosted an exhibition in 1979 of paintings on paper, and the Kunstverein Springhornhof. Simultaneously in 1981-82, the Janus Gallery in Los Angeles held the first exhibition of de Looper's work (eight paintings on paper) in California.

At The Phillips, de Looper curated *Photographs by Joyce Tenneson* in 1980 and *Philip Guston: The Last Works* the following year. He also participated with Sasha Newman in curating *Arthur Dove and Duncan Phillips, Artist and Patron*. The beginning of the traveling exhibition, *Master Paintings of The Phillips*, dates to 1981-82 when it traveled to San Francisco, Dallas, Minneapolis, and Atlanta. This exhibition kept changing and expanding through 1987 as it moved out of the U.S., first to Japan, and later to England, Spain, and Germany.

In August of 1982 de Looper was appointed Curator of The Phillips Collection. He had served briefly as acting curator following the death of his predecessor, James McLaughlin, who had been Curator since 1974.

In this new position, de Looper accompanied the *Master Paintings of The Phillips* exhibition to Japan and then to Europe in 1983, representing The Phillips Collection at openings, and usually giving slide lectures as well. This phase of the *Master Paintings of The Phillips* was organized in cooperation with the Yomiuri Corporation, the largest newspaper company in Japan, to raise funds for the renovation of the original Phillips Collection building. The

## Historical context

*Neo-Expressionist painting from Europe and the U.S., and for the ascendance of photography. However such painters as Richard Diebenkorn, Ellsworth Kelly, Brice Marden, Robert Mangold, Elizabeth Murray, and Frank Stella, and sculptors such as Scott Burton, Dan Flavin, James Turrel, and Jackie Winsor continued very vital work using an abstract vocabulary. In addition, painters like Susan Rothenberg and Anselm Kiefer defied categorization and reinforced the resilience of painting outside of trendy styles.*



De Looper at his desk at the Phillips. Renoir's *The Boating Party* is behind him.

three-week stay in Japan included time in Tokyo and Nara, the two venues for the exhibition, as well as Kyoto and Nikko, and was highly influential for de Looper. He traces his use of metallic paints and foils and his diptych and triptych "screen" formats to this visit.

De Looper also traveled to Paris in 1983 to prepare the Bonnard: *The Late Paintings* exhibition with which the museum reopened after renovation. A major project for de Looper during this period was the first retrospective for Morris Graves. De Looper curated this exhibition in conjunction with Ray Kass. It opened at The Phillips in 1983, and then made a five-city national tour.

In addition to his numerous accomplishments as a museum professional, de Looper the artist was involved in significant activities during 1982 and '83. In 1982 the Wald Harkrader & Ross law firm presented a large exhibition of his work, and the Kornblatt Gallery organized a solo show for the artist and became his dealer in 1983.

## 1984-1990

From 1982, when de Looper assumed chief curatorial responsibilities at The Phillips, through 1987, he led the first effort to inventory the entire collection and publish a summary catalogue. Also during this period he and the staff organized several small exhibitions from the permanent collection which were successfully traveled to many regional museums for a fee, one of several strategies devised by de Looper to raise funds for the renovation of the original building. In addition, he organized *Kimura: Paintings and Works on Paper, 1968-1984* (1985); *Three Washington Artists: Downing-Gouverneur-Gardener* (1985); *Lyonel Feininger* (1985); *Indian Art*

*Today* (1986); and *Leland Bell* (1987). He also oversaw the development of *Outdoor Sculpture* at The Phillips Collection, a series of shows of individual sculptors' works: Christopher Gardener (1985); James Wolfe (1986); Peter Charles (1985/1986); John Van Alstine (1987); John McCarty (1989); Dorothy Dehner (1990); Steven Bickley (1990); John Ferguson (1990/1991); Jene Highstein (1991/1992); and Lisa Scheer (1992).

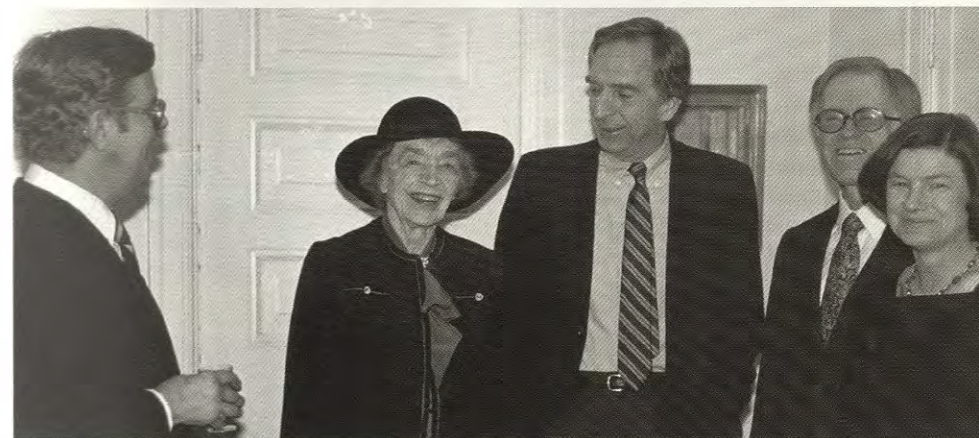
De Looper was in *The Washington Show* in 1985 organized by Clarie List at the Corcoran, and Kornblatt presented solo exhibitions of his work in 1985 and 1987. The latter exhibition, *Willem de Looper: Paintings from the Seventies*, featured works from 1973 through 1976. Ray Kass noted in an accompanying brochure essay: *The works of the late seventies embody a truly non-objective sense of content, as if they were windows in which there is no specific view...which infers a further level of abstraction [where] his subtle color achieves a heightened versatility, transcendently light-filled, or a veritable 'picture' of light.*<sup>26</sup> There were also solo exhibitions at the Tilghman Gallery in Boca Raton, Florida, in 1986 and 1988.

In 1987 de Looper resigned as Curator of The Phillips Collection but continued to work on several shows as Consulting Curator. His last exhibition as Curator was *John Graham: Artist and Avatar* on which he collaborated with Eleanor Green. De Looper worked on two 1988 exhibitions in conjunction with Linda Johnson: *Prints Washington*, and *Guillermo Roux*, and in 1989-90, on *Howard Ben Tre/William Willis*.

In 1988 there was a solo exhibition of recent de Looper work at the Shippee

*Sir Lawrence Gowing, British art historian and painter, was appointed chairman of The Phillips Curatorial Department at the time of de Looper's resignation. Gowing held this position from 1987 to 1989, retiring that year because of poor health. He died in 1991. Eliza Rathbone became chief curator in 1989. The Goh Annex at The Phillips opened in 1989 with de Looper's Howard Ben Tre/William Willis exhibition.*

Gallery in New York. That same year, the Smithsonian commissioned de Looper to create a print to be sold as a fund raiser for the Smithsonian Associates Program. The print was *Tunis I*, inspired by a trip Frauke took to visit friends in North Africa and by Dizzy Gillespie's jazz composition *Night in Tunisia*.



*De Looper at The Phillips Collection with Marjorie and Laughlin Phillips and other members of the Phillips family.*

\*In 1989 the Jones Troyer Fitzpatrick Gallery (now the Troyer Fitzpatrick Lassman Gallery) in Washington exhibited small paintings on paper, which de Looper created initially as pages in sketchbooks that he conceived as single works which could ultimately be removed and framed individually. This show was presented in conjunction with an exhibition of recent large canvases at Kornblatt and was reviewed in *Artforum* by Howard Risatti.<sup>27</sup> When the Kornblatt Gallery closed in 1992, de Looper moved to Troyer Fitzpatrick Lassman.

In 1990 the Atrium Gallery in St. Louis, Missouri, held a solo exhibition of de Looper's works on canvas and on paper.

*Terri Sultan came to the Corcoran Gallery in 1988 as Curator of Contemporary Art Charles Moffett, former senior curator of paintings at the National Gallery of Art, was chosen to succeed Laughlin Phillips in September 1991, becoming the first non-family member to direct the museum. Under his directorship the five large de Looper paintings in The Phillips Collection were exhibited in 1995 and 1996 in conjunction with a show of smaller de Looper works.*

*There have been other significant changes among the top curators of painting and twentieth century art in recent years in Washington: Jack Cowart left his position as Curator of Twentieth-Century Art at the National Gallery to become Deputy Director and Chief Curator at the Corcoran in the fall of 1992. Mark Rosenthal, the next Curator of Twentieth-Century Art at the National Gallery, left in 1996 but will oversee the Mark Rothko exhibition due to open there in the summer of 1998. Neal Benezra arrived at the Hirshhorn in January of 1992 as Chief Curator to fill the position vacated by Ned Rifkin. George Hemphill, previously associated for many years with the Middendorf Gallery, opened Hemphill Fine Arts in Georgetown in 1993 which quickly became recognized for its exhibitions of abstract painters as well as photographers. Many other names could have been mentioned in this very sketchy chronicle of individuals and institutions which presented important contemporary art in Washington. Even as this catalogue goes to press, other names will fade and new ones will emerge.*

*Although abstraction and color are clearly not the prominent forces in painting in the 1990s either in Washington or on the national and international art scenes, their*

**1991-present**

De Looper began making prints in 1991 with Smith Andersen Editions of Palo Alto, California, a printing studio and publisher that had worked with most well-known artists on the West Coast, such as Sam Francis and Richard Diebenkorn, as well as with Sam Gilliam from Washington. De Looper was introduced to the director of Smith Andersen by friends from Washington who had moved to California. At Smith Andersen he worked on a series of monotypes printed on a large press.

The Troyer Fitzpatrick Lassman Gallery held solo exhibitions of de Looper's work in 1992, 1993, and 1995, and in 1996 concurrently with the retrospective at The Art Gallery at the University of Maryland in College Park. In 1992 and 1995 the Atrium Gallery in St. Louis also presented his work again in solo exhibitions.

In 1994 de Looper completed a suite of works in pulp painting and water-based monoprinting on paper during an artist residency at Pyramid Atlantic, in Riverdale, Maryland, a center for custom papermaking, printmaking, and the art of the book. He returned for two more residencies during 1995 and 1996. It was during the 1996 residency that two commemorative prints were produced in conjunction with the retrospective at The University of Maryland. De Looper's alma mater, American University, presented a solo exhibition of

*unequivocal survival is important to note. As evidenced by the continuing vitality and fresh ideas in the work of Willem de Looper and other Washington artists, the history of this art movement in the capital city is not yet over.*

*De Looper in the studio at Smith Andersen in Palo Alto. On the wall behind him are some of the large monoprints he produced there in 1991.*

*De Looper enjoying the sun and broad vistas near Sante Fe. Black Mesa, which rises in the distance, inspired him and became the title of one of his 1992 paintings. (Fig. 15)*



his work at their Watkins Gallery in 1994, and the Corcoran included one of his paintings in their *New Acquisitions* show in 1995.

In late 1995 and early 1996, The Phillips Collection sponsored *Willem de Looper: Sketchbooks and Small Paintings on Paper*. This exhibition inaugurated the Museum's new series of single-gallery exhibitions devoted to contemporary art. In the museum's calendar publication, it was noted that: *Over the course of the last twenty years, [de Looper] has filled dozens of books with private and introspective works [which] are not preliminary studies...but finished paintings in themselves...he often turns the cover of the book into a painting...[and the small format] invites closer study of his subtle technique, strong use of color, and carefully balanced compositions.*<sup>28</sup>

In 1995 and 1996, while planning for the thirty-year retrospective at the University of Maryland, de Looper organized his archives and did an inventory of the work he retains in his own collection. In addition he assisted researchers in the development of the exhibition and catalogue. Although Willem and Frauke traveled to Arizona to attend the high school graduation of their "adopted" daughter in June of 1996, most of the days, weeks, and months preceding the retrospective were spent in his studio producing new paintings for this and the concurrent exhibition at the Troyer Fitzpatrick Lassman Gallery.

<sup>1</sup> Interview with the artist by Mary Jo Agerstoun, May 8, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with the artist by David Schaff, *Art International*, 1977, Vol. XXI/6, December 1977, 46.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with the artist, May 8, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> Ray Kass, essay in exhibition flyer, BR Kornblatt Gallery, Washington, D.C.: "Willem de Looper: Paintings from the Seventies," October 24 to December 2, 1987.

<sup>8</sup> Pamela Howard, "A New Year—A New Look," *The Washington Daily News*, Friday, January 14, 1966, 25 (includes black and white photo of *Crimson Joy*).

<sup>9</sup> Photocopy of review of the exhibition by Andrew Hudson, *Artforum*, March 1968, 60-63, archives of the artist.

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin Forgey, "The Question is ... To Paint, or Not..." *The Sunday Star*, September 15, 1968, L3.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with the artist by Mary Jo Agerstoun, April 22, 1996.

<sup>12</sup> Exhibition guide for *A Small Loan Exhibition of Washington Artists at The Phillips Collection*, December 4, 1971 to January 12, 1972.

<sup>13</sup> Registration-location-condition-receipt record copies, numbers 3869, 2058, and 2042; and letter from Willem de Looper to Mrs. Llewellyn Thompson, Director of the

Art in Embassies Program, U.S. Department of State, September 16, 1976, archives of the artist.

<sup>14</sup> Paul Richard, "The Community Art Spirit," *The Washington Post*, Friday, March 2, 1973, B1.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from artist to Mrs. Speyer, July 17, 1973, archives of the artist.

<sup>16</sup> Dale Kline Birkel, "Introduction," *Washington Invitational 1974* (Exhibition Catalogue). Washington, D.C.: Adams-Davidson Gallery, November 1 to December 7, 1974. Countering Birkel's claim that the artists included in the show were "followers" of the Color School, Benjamin Forgey of the *Washington Star-News* noted that "several of the artists were set in their ways before Louis and Noland developed their striking innovations in color," and that, instead, the show had "something of the atmosphere of an American University reunion. Three of the artists, Robert Gates, William Calfee, and Ben Summerford—were early stalwarts in the studio art department there and [are] still leading members of its faculty...[while] four others—Leon Berkowitz, Willem de Looper, Jennie Lea Knight, and William Woodward had at least some association with the department either as students or teachers...[This left] only two artists, Joseph Shannon, the independent realist and James Twitty, the flashy abstract painter who is largely self-taught [who] had no direct connections to this university..." the *Washington Star-News*, Friday, November 1, 1974, G1-2.

<sup>17</sup> De Looper noted ruefully that the piece was "even more of a conceptual piece, because the pilot didn't show up on the day he was supposed to and when he did, he couldn't do the colored smoke I had specified. But it was fun and gave me a

new respect for artists like Christo, since there were so many logistics including getting permission from the Air Force to fly in that air space! But it was a good example of the kind of atmosphere among the artists at Protetch and a tribute to Max. There were lots of other Washington art movers and shakers involved with the Kennedy Center events including Walter Hopps, Jocelyn Kress, and Mary Swift." Interview with the artist, May 8, 1996.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with the artist, May 8, 1996.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> In his artist's statement in this catalogue, de Looper states that "My ideal is to be an abstract painter, a non-objective painter, and even when the paintings contained figurative and biological shapes, my ideal was, as it is now, to have my paintings viewed in formal terms." Schaff, in his essay, notes that "De Looper has not heralded a radical approach to painting, in part because he works in too cosmopolitan a milieu, and because he has resisted fads and remained an individualist." From *Willem de Looper: A Retrospective*, 1976.

<sup>21</sup> Local press coverage of the exhibition praised "the intelligent gap-filling" evident in the acquisition of paintings by Stuart Davis, sculpture by David Smith, and works created since the museum opened in "the fields of abstract painting and sculpture (Jack Bush, Anthony Caro, Friedel Dzubas, Alan Shields, Willem de Looper, Gene Davis, Jacob Kainen, Joan Mitchell, Michael Todd...and Alma Thomas)." Benjamin Forgey, "Hirshhorn is Acquiring a New Look," *The Washington Star*, Sunday, April 3, 1977, G24.

<sup>22</sup> Letter from the artist to Frank Gettings, Curator of Prints and Drawings, Hirshhorn

*De Looper in his studio with large and small paintings from 1981-1982.*

Museum and Sculpture Garden, January 27, 1977, archives of the artist. In a letter to Gettings, of April 12, 1977, Tatyana Grosman declines Gettings suggestion that de Looper work with her to produce lithographs because "Unfortunately my commitments are with artists with whom I have worked for so many years, and we are far behind with various projects." Letter in artist's archives.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with the artist, May 8, 1996.

<sup>24</sup> Book in the artist's archives; text on cover: "Record of Paintings - 1980-1981-1982-1983 de Looper." First entry dated December 1979, last one dated December 5, 1983. This was the first and only time the artist made such a record of his production. Interview with artist, April 24, 1996.

<sup>25</sup> Cynthia Saltzman, "Willem de Looper" (Sarah Y. Rentschler), *ARTnews*, December, 1979, 170. De Looper was reviewed earlier, in *ARTnews*, summer 1974.

<sup>26</sup> Ray Kass, "The Paintings of Willem de Looper, 1973-1976." from the BR Kornblatt Gallery exhibition brochure, *Willem de Looper: Paintings from the Seventies*, October 24, 1989 through December 2, 1990, archives of the artist.

<sup>27</sup> Howard Risatti, "Washington D.C.: Willem de Looper: Jones Troyer Fitzpatrick Gallery; BR Kornblatt Gallery," *Artforum*, summer 1989.



<sup>28</sup> Phillips Collection, *News and Events: January-February 1996*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Because Nara was the Japanese capitol from 710-794, it has many Buddhist monuments. Today it still contains many of Japan's most significant cultural sites including the five-story pagoda and complex of buildings at Horyuji temple, supposedly the oldest wood structure in the world. It also has the largest bronze statue of Buddha in Asia (about 50 feet high) and a famous statue made in the dry lacquer technique imported into Japan from China.

<sup>30</sup> Michael Welzenbach, "Paint for Paint's Sake," *The Washington Post* (March 4, 1989), C2.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Welzenbach, "For de Looper, A Change of Color," *The Washington Post* (January 11, 1992), G2.

<sup>32</sup> Jean Lawlor Cohen, "Willem de Looper," *ARTnews* (summer 1992), 144-45.

<sup>33</sup> Letter to Anna B. Frances (October 1995), archives of the artist.

*Willem de Looper*  
*Biography*

ONE-PERSON EXHIBITIONS

Jefferson Place Gallery, Washington, DC  
1966, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974

Philomathaen Gallery,  
University of Pennsylvania,  
Philadelphia 1970

Montgomery College, Takoma Park, MD  
1974, 1978, 1985

Max Protetch Gallery, Washington, DC  
1975, 1976, 1977, 1978

Fraser's Stable Gallery,  
Washington, DC 1977

Jean-Marie Antone Gallery,  
Annapolis, MD 1978

The Catholic University of America,  
Washington, DC 1978

Galerie L., Hamburg, West Germany 1979

Sarah Y. Rentschler Gallery,  
New York, NY 1979

McIntosh/Drysdale Gallery,  
Washington, DC 1980

Ward Harkrader and Ross law firm,  
Washington, DC 1982

BR Kornblatt Gallery, Washington, DC  
1983, 1985, 1987, 1989

Tilghman Gallery, Boca Raton, FL  
1986, 1988

Shippee Gallery, New York, NY 1988

Troyer Fitzpatrick Lassman Gallery,  
Washington, DC  
1989, 1992, 1993, 1995

Atrium Gallery, St. Louis, MO  
1990, 1992, 1995

Watkins Gallery, American University,  
Washington, DC 1994

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

Corcoran Gallery of Art,  
Washington, DC  
*Washington Area Exhibitions*  
1965, 1967, 1980  
*The Washington Show* 1985

Washington Gallery of Modern Art,  
Washington, DC *Group Seven* 1968

Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD  
*Washington, Twenty Years* 1970

The Phillips Collection,  
Washington, DC 1975

Corcoran Gallery of Art,  
Washington, DC 1976

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,  
Washington, DC  
*The Golden Door: Artist Immigrants of  
America: 1876-1976* 1976

The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC  
*Willem de Looper: Sketchbooks and Small  
Paintings on Paper* 1995-96

RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITIONS

Northern Virginia Community College,  
Annandale, VA  
*Paintings from 1962-1975* 1975  
The Federal Reserve Board, jointly with  
National Academy of Sciences,  
Washington, DC  
*Paintings from 1960-1976* 1976

The Art Gallery at the University of  
Maryland, College Park, MD  
*Willem de Looper: A Retrospective  
Exhibition 1966-1996* 1996

COMMISSIONS

Smithsonian Resident Associates,  
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC  
*Serigraph Edition 150* 1988

Smith Anderson Gallery, Palo Alto, CA  
10 monotypes 1990

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Embassy of Netherlands,  
Washington, DC 1956

Hope College, Holland, MI 1965

Washington Society of Artists,  
Washington, DC 1965

Washington Watercolor Society,  
Washington, DC 1966

Silvermine College, CT 1968

Brandeis University,  
Waltham, MA 1968

Pennsylvania State University,  
College Station, PA 1970

International Monetary Fund,  
Washington, DC 1971

Northern Virginia Arts Association,  
Alexandria, VA, *Local Color* 1971

Kingpitcher Gallery, Pittsburgh, PA 1971

Adams-Davidson Gallery, Washington, DC  
*Nine Artists* 1974

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,  
Washington, DC  
*New Acquisitions* 1977

Fishbach Gallery, New York, NY 1978

Chuck Levitan Gallery, New York, NY 1978

Middendorf/Lane Gallery,  
Washington, DC 1979

Janus Gallery, Los Angeles, CA 1981-82

Atrium Gallery, St. Louis, MO  
*Works on Paper* 1993

871 Fine Arts, San Francisco, CA  
*The Book as Art* 1993

Addison/Ripley Gallery, Washington, DC  
*Evolution of the Print* 1994

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC  
*Recent Acquisitions* 1995

REVIEWS, ARTICLES, CITATIONS

*Arts* 1965

*The Washington Star*, Washington, DC  
1966-1979

*The Washington Post*, Washington, DC  
1966-1995

*The Nation* 1967

*Artforum* 1967, 1989

*Art in America* 1972, 1974, 1988

*ARTnews* 1974, 1992

*Art International* 1977 (6 color and 6  
black/white reproductions)

*New York News Journal*, New York, NY  
September 1979

*Die Welt*, Hamburg, West Germany 1979

*The Washington Times*, Washington, DC  
1983, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1992

*Interior Design* July 1986

*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, St. Louis, MO  
1990, 1992, 1993

*Riverfront Times*, St. Louis, MO 1992

*Washington City Paper*, Washington, DC  
May 1995

KOAN, Silver Spring, MD May 1995

*Who's Who in American Art*

*Who's Who in America*

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,  
Washington, DC

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC

The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC

The National Museum of American Art,  
Washington, DC

IBM, Washington, DC  
National Science Foundation,  
Washington, DC

Department of Health and  
Human Services, Washington, DC

The Washington Post Company,  
Washington, DC

Riggs National Bank, Washington, DC

Federal National Mortgage Association,  
Washington, DC

Pharmaceutical Manufacturer Association,  
Washington, DC

US News and World Report  
Executive Apartment, Washington, DC

The World Bank, Washington, DC

Westinghouse Company Collection,  
Pittsburgh, PA

Bethlehem Steel Corporation,  
Pittsburgh, PA

Phillip Morris Corporation, Richmond, VA

Goldman, Sachs, New York, NY

*Willem de Looper  
A Retrospective Exhibition  
1966-1996*

*Checklist of exhibition*

Citicorp, New York, NY	Cresap, McCormack, & Paget, Washington, DC	1	<i>Blodyn</i> , 1966 32" x 31" acrylic on canvas Courtesy of the Watkins Collection at the American University	10	<i>Untitled</i> , 1973 84" x 84" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	18	<i>Untitled</i> , 1976 15" x 18" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	27	<i>Untitled</i> , 1982 30" x 39.75" acrylic on board Collection of the artist
Federal Reserve Banks, Miami, FL and Richmond, VA	Peat, Marwick, Main & Company, Washington, DC			11	<i>Untitled</i> , 1973 72" x 96" acrylic on canvas Collection of Laughlin Phillips	19	<i>Untitled</i> , 1976 15" x 18" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	28	<i>Untitled</i> , 1982 84" x 72" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Security Pacific National Bank, Los Angeles, CA	Washington Harbor, Washington, DC	2	<i>Untitled</i> , 1967 24" x 24" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	12	<i>Untitled</i> , <i>Regis Series</i> , 1974-1975 15" x 20" acrylic on paper Collection of the artist	20	<i>Untitled</i> , 1978 21.75" x 21.75" acrylic on paper Collection of the artist	29	<i>Tunis</i> , 1983 78" x 100.25" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Atlantic Richfield Corporation, Los Angeles, CA	Oliver T. Carr Company, Washington, DC Chicapee Manufacturing Company	3	<i>Untitled</i> , 1967 48" x 66" acrylic on canvas Collection of Benjamin Forgey	13	<i>Untitled No. 3</i> , <i>Regis Series</i> , 1974-1975 15" x 20" acrylic on paper Collection of the artist	21	<i>Untitled</i> , 1978 85" x 50" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	30	<i>Untitled</i> , 1984 60" x 60" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Rosenthal Automotive, Fairfax, VA	Sterling Federal Bank, St. Louis, MO	4	<i>Summer</i> , 1968 61.5" x 49" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	14	<i>Untitled, No. 11</i> , <i>Regis Series</i> , 1974-1975 15" x 20" acrylic on paper Collection of the artist	22	<i>Untitled</i> (Diptych), 1978 50" x 96" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	31	<i>Untitled</i> , 1985 78" x 100" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Owens Illinois, Toledo, OH	United Savings, Rockwell, MD	5	<i>Red</i> , 1968 24.875" x 18" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	15	<i>Untitled</i> , 1975 48" x 48" acrylic on canvas Collection of Mr. & Mrs. John Freidenrich	23	<i>Untitled</i> , 1979 72" x 60" acrylic on canvas Courtesy of the Corcoran Gallery of Art	32	<i>Untitled</i> , 1987 48" x 48" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Victor Shargal and Associates, New York, NY	Krey Distributing Company, St. Peters, IL	6	<i>Spring Sound</i> , 1969 20" x 20" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	16	<i>Sur</i> , 1975 74" x 95" acrylic on canvas Courtesy of The Phillips Collection	24	<i>II</i> , 1980 72" x 96" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	33	<i>Untitled</i> , 1987 78" x 100" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Arnold and Porter, Washington, DC	Champion International, St. Louis, MO	7	<i>Syrinx</i> , 1971 84" x 75" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	17	<i>Untitled</i> , 1975 77" x 101" acrylic on canvas Courtesy of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden	25	<i>Untitled</i> , 1980 72" x 50" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	34	<i>Untitled</i> , 1988 70" x 72" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist
Arent, Fox, Kintner, & Plotkin, Washington, DC	Belvedere Inc., Belvedere, IL	8	<i>Untitled</i> , 1972 72" x 72" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist			26	<i>Untitled</i> , 1981 84" x 168" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist	35	<i>Untitled</i> , 1988 60" x 48" acrylic on board Collection of the artist
Howery & Simon, Washington, DC	Howard Hughes Medical Center, Bethesda, MD	9	<i>Untitled</i> , 1973 87.5" x 96" acrylic on canvas Collection of the artist						
Covington & Burling, Washington, DC									
Pepper, Hamilton, & Sheetz, Washington, DC									
Patten, Boggs, & Blow, Washington, DC									
Rosansky & Kay, Washington, DC									
Crowell & Moring, Washington, DC									
Squire, Sanders, & Dempsey, Washington, DC									
Deloitte, Haskins, & Sells, Washington, DC									
Witowsky, Weiner, McCaffrey, Washington, DC									
Lowenstein, Newman, Rels, & Axelrod, Washington, DC									