CONTEMPORARY COURTROOM ARTISTS
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March 3 - 28, 1976

Anthony Accurso
Marilyn Church
Stephen Cohen
Ida Libby Desgrove
Albert Herr
Joseph Fabini
Richard Tovin出し
Meryl Toerner
Betty Wells

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Irvin Grant
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James Ladd
Marina Lary

Syrupes University Art Galleries

THE COURTROOM ARTIST AT WORK

Courtroom artists are an immensely varied breed: some are freelance illustrators, others are more steadily employed as staff illustrators for television networks or newspapers. Still others do illustrations for television sports programs, children's books, political cartoons and wildlife stories. Many of them also work in other areas, including mosaic designing, mural painting and lithography.

Almost all of them have extensive educational backgrounds in art or in illustration, and some teach these subjects at major art institutions.

The five artists selected for this exhibition consider their work exciting and challenging. All of them emphasize the pressure of their assignments since they must meet with short deadlines. Courtroom artists must be quick and exacting in their sketches. Newspapers generally require a few close-up sketches, while television demands many more sketches (these being in color) showing a heightened action and mood.

Because cameras are banned from the courtroom, the public's only opportunity to 'see' what transpires within the courtroom is through the drawings produced by artists. There are no laws which prohibit sketching in United States courts. However, the judge in each trial determines the rights of the courtroom artist, just as he oversees the general conduct of all present in the courtroom. Some judges request all news media people to sit in a designated section of the courtroom, while other judges permit the artists to sit anywhere. During the Watergate Hearings, Judge John Sirica gave the courtroom artists "the best seat in the house" in order to have the proceedings recorded for posterity.

Before the public views the drawings on television or in the newspaper, a rapid sequence of events must occur. In the courtroom, the artist works in close cooperation with a reporter, who may suggest views that would be particularly effective. Initial sketches are most often done with charcoal or felt-tip markers. Written or mental notes may be made by the illustrator, in order to finish the drawing at a later time. After the artist leaves the courtroom, the drawings are taken to a nearby studio, office, or home room, where the artist often applies final touches with watercolor or pastel.

The preparation of the drawings for newspapers differs from the preparation for television. For newspapers, the drawings are photographed in black and white; they are then presented to an editor who decides whether the drawings will be used or not. The news story must be important enough to merit an illustration, or the artist's drawing may face competition with a photograph which shows one of the key persons as they enter or leave the courtroom.

For television, the drawings must conform to a 5:7 format (the vertical-to-horizontal ratio), which fits the size of the television screen. The artist may have to add details, background, and even additional strips of paper in order to conform to this ratio. The drawings are then mounted on a black backing (white paper reproduces with a hash glare on the television screen) to be filmed by a camera crew. The film is subsequently edited by a reporter and sometimes a facsimile producer. An appropriate sound track is then taped. These tapes are "fed" to the television wire service, so that at a later time the public will hear a summary of the day's trial, and see a sequence of drawings which illustrates the highlights and personalities of the courtroom scene.

Barry M. Winsker
A STYLISTIC APPRECIATION

The drawings in the "Contemporary Courtroom Artists" exhibition are, first and foremost, historical documents. They are a visual record of the people involved in important trials; they capture the highlights of the dramas and decisions of the court proceedings. Because of the legal ban of cameras from the courtroom, these drawings provide the only visual record of what occurs inside the courtroom during a trial as it is in session.

More than just historical documents, though, these drawings take their place within a long American tradition of reported fact as art. The tenet of art for art's sake is alien to the artist-reporter; he has to report the who, what, and where of a newsworthy trial. But he also has to create an interesting and effective image. When a face is shown in close detail, the details of the surrounding space may dwindle into a few suggestive lines; if an action is highlighted, then the particulars of a face may be indicated by an abbreviated shorthand. The mood of the judge and jury might be suggested by a heightened use of color. So although the artist is restricted to reporting the facts, he makes the best of an opportunity to select, suggest, and dramatize.

The styles of the nine courtroom artists are diverse. Because of the constraints of time, the drawings are often sketchy, and leave much of the paper showing. The artist seeks to suggest action with quick loose strokes, a swipe of charcoal may substitute for the texture of a jacket or give the feel of space and atmosphere. A tangle of lines may translate as the chaotic movement of a crowd of people. With only a sparse use of line, the artist is able to present anxious deliberation, an aura of dignity, or the look of tired resignation.

In contrast, though, some of the artists have a deliberate, more thorough, style. They carefully model the features of a face from light to dark with subtle changes of color. The artist describes the solidity of forms in space, and thereby expresses—perhaps unconsciously—something of the classical confidence in the stability of the law and the honor of judicial procedure.

Of the artists represented in this exhibition, Joe Papin and Richard Tomlinson have the loosest and most relaxed styles. The witty line of Papin's pen and ink drawings suggests the nervous energy, the vagaries, and the uncertainties of any trial. Tomlinson's intermixture of light and heavy use of the charcoal catches the nuances of the attitudes of his subjects. By turns, we see one jurors attentive, and another seemingly altogether disenchanted with the whole ordeal.

Almost in direct contrast to the energy in the styles of these two artists, Al Her's work—with its steady line and subdued coloring—emphasizes the solemnity and austerity of the court proceedings. Rather than a distinct time and place, Her's works seem to represent a more universal, abstract view of the courtroom.

Special qualities are found in each of the artists' works. With quick summary strokes, Betty Wells captures the essence of a character type in Police Ballistics Expert Joseph Reiss (Cat. 73). A quiet contemplative note is struck by Tony Accurso's Empty Jury Box (Cat. 28). The artist's view of the artist can be seen in drawings by each of the following artists: Accurso (Cat. 1, 7); Papin (Cat. 24, 53); the renditions of William Kunstler by Dengrove, Trestser, and Wells—Cat. 28, 67, 69—and the George Salad of Diego Rivera's trial by Dengrove and Herr (Cat. 13, 41).

The artist's view of the artist can be seen in drawings by each of the following artists: Accurso (Cat. 1, 7); Papin (Cat. 47, 47); and Tomlinson (Cat. 55, 59).

Courtroom artists have to be as objective as possible and still present an interesting image for the public eye. These images are then carried to the public via the television and newspaper media. However the drawings that are shown on T.V. are aired for only moments, and the images that are reproduced in the newspapers may lose some of the energetic quality of the original drawings. This exhibit, then, seeks to do the artist justice, by presenting the original works to be viewed at first hand—to be appreciated as historical documents and as works of art.

Susanne Owens
1. Anthony Accurso

Felt-tip pen and watercolor, 18 x 24

ANTHONY ACCURSO

BORN: Brooklyn, New York, 1940
STUDIED: The Brooklyn Museum Art School, Brooklyn, New York; High School of Art and Design, New York, New York; Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York
CURRENTLY: Freelance illustrator and courtroom artist

EXHIBITIONS
1973 University of Notre Dame Law School, Notre Dame, Indiana; One-person exhibition

"I enjoy illustrating from life whenever possible, capturing the moment or the gesture in essence. Sketching animals in their movements and unstudied naturalness has aided my observations in the courtrooms in recording the personalities in a trial scene."

15. Marilyn Church

Prosecutor John R. Wing Cross-Examining
Pastel, 18 x 24

MARILYN B. CHURCH

BORN: New York City, 1941
CURRENTLY: Courtroom artist for The New York Times and ABC-TV; Illustrator and painter

EXHIBITIONS
1975 "A Selection of Recent Works by Members of the Faculty," Institute Gallery, Pratt Institute; Group exhibition
1973 Pratt Institute; One-person exhibition
1972 Women's Interart Center, New York City; Group exhibition
1962 Pratt Institute; One-person exhibition
1959 Art Students League Woodstock

"Of all the different kinds of illustration I have done, the courtroom, with its high drama of history-making decisions, the skilled performances of attorneys, and always the challenge of a same-day deadline, offers the most exciting and rewarding experience of my career."
34. Ida Libby Dengrove
Robbie "Harlequin" Cookie Listening to
Presidency of Two Former Generals During the
Hearing for a New Trial for Bubbes and John Aron,
Jersey City, N.J., February, 1973. Pastel,
14 x 17

35. Stephen Cohen
Senator Sam Ervin During Senate Watergate
Watercolor, 14 x 13 1/8

Exhibitions
1975 "News Media Artists," The Harbor Gallery,
Cold Spring Harbor, New York, Group exhibition
1974 Media Artists Show, Douglas College Art Gal-
lery, New Brunswick, New Jersey, Group exhibition

I have always preferred to call a courtroom sketcher
an art journalist. Like a journalist, he must capture
the heart of a story by visually editing unnecessary
facts. He must be quick and to the point and still
enhance the story comprehensively. The press is sen-
itive and spontaneity is the key word.
I started sketching in 1969 when there were just a few
of us doing this sort of work. I learned to work under
pressure through experience. The more I did it, like
everything else, I learned to relax despite the pres-
sure I had to concentrate solely on my work and not on a
thousand other things, primarily the fact that it is shown
on T.V. to twenty million people."

Ida Libby Dengrove
Born: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1926
Studied: Moore College of Art, Philadelphia
Art Students League, New York, New York
Graphic Sketch Club, Philadelphia
Currently: Free lance artist for NBC NEWS CENTER 4
-NBC

Exhibitions
Pennsylvania Academy of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Art Alliance, Philadelphia
Pfax Club, Philadelphia
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
National Academy of Design, New York
Natal-Lytic Theatre, Astorly Park, New Jersey
ALBERT S. HERR
BORN: New York, New York, 1922
STUDIED: Art Students League, New York, 2 years
Colorado Springs Fine Art Center, 2 years
CURRENTLY: Courtroom Artist

"There is usually a dominant mood in a particular courtroom trial; tension, confusion, hostility... or on the other hand, comedy or foolishness. I consider my sketches most successful when I'm able to convey that mood visually."

JOSEPH WOOD PAPIN
BORN: St. Louis, Missouri, 1931
STUDIED: Ohio State University, B.F.A., 1955
CURRENTLY: Reportorial Artist, New York Daily News

EXHIBITIONS
April 1975 Featured Artist, Showcase III, New Jersey
1966 Pan American Gallery, New York City
1962 McGraw-Hill Gallery, New York City; One-person show
1959 J.W. Thompson Gallery, New York City; One-person show

"Drawing is everything" (Vasari). Reportage—on the scene drawing—has always been my great love. Something of an historian, I enjoy recording events large and small that affect us all. I follow in the tradition of artist reporters who have always provided a special eye. This is my challenge, both as freelancer (13 years) and especially here at the Daily News where the obstacles have been continuous, starting with an army of photographers and me. The past timidity of an old, insular bureaucracy and the previously low expectation of a vast tabloid readership are among several obstacles. I would like to add an appreciation to the new editorial managing editor for opportunities never before offered."

Illustration on cover.

RICHARD ALLAN TOMLINSON
BORN: Akron, Ohio, 1933
STUDIED: Art Center School, Los Angeles, California, 1954-1956
The School of Visual Arts, New York City, 1968-1969 (Jack Potter, Instructor)
CURRENTLY: Media artist for WNEW-TV, Metromedia Television

EXHIBITIONS
1969 XXIII American Drawing Biennial, Norfolk Museum of Arts & Sciences, Norfolk, Virginia
1964 43rd Exhibition, Art Director's Club
1963 "Design and Printing for Commerce," American Institute of Graphic Arts

"Drawing for a T.V. News Show can be, and is for me, a way of relating to everyday news events, not only for courtroom trials, but other subjects: sports, news specials, etc."
65. Meryl Treatner
Carl Albert at the Nelson Rockefeller
Vice-Presidential Hearings, Washington, D.C.,
December, 1974. Pastel, 16 x 20

EXHIBITIONS

“I like working with the news because nowhere else can my work receive such immediate exposure to so many people. I do a great deal of editorial art, but portraits are my special love—capturing all the complexities of each personality. That’s why the courtroom has a special fascination for me; trials are intense human drama which reveal individual personality as well as the character of society.”

MERYL TREATNER
CURRENTLY: Freelance courtroom sketch artist, magazine and newspaper editorial illustrator, designer/illustrator with Educational Communications Inc. in Wayne, Pennsylvania

72. Betty Wells
jury in the Dobson Trial, Baltimore, Md.,
November, 1973. Pen, ink and markers, 14 x 17

EXHIBITIONS
1974 “Watergate Sketches by Betty Wells.” Baltimore Museum of Art in co-operation with the New York Society of Illustrators

“Drawing is the foundation of all my art, from abstract to realism, with pen and ink remaining my favorite medium. The simplicity of the pure, swift, modulated line in black and white is preferred, but in T.V. art the line becomes the skeleton for an action sketch in color. For television, I strive for speed, accuracy, detail, action and mood. The intensity of the moment, and the body language of the subject become important to every drawing. I want the public to be there; to see what I see; to feel what I feel. An instant must be captured in an instant, and it must be alive, the viewer must be as moved by the events as I.”

BETTY CHILDS WELLS
BORN: Baltimore, Maryland
STUDIED: Johns Hopkins University Evening School, Baltimore, 1946
One year graduate work, Maryland Institute of Art, 1949
Maryland Institute of Art, Baltimore, 1949
CURRENTLY: Courtroom Illustrator for NBC; Painter and muralist in a variety of media
Syracuse University Art Galleries


IDABIBBYDENGROVE


33. Patrolmen Thomas Shea and Walter Scott During the Hearing a Two Former Convicts During the Hearing of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter and John Artis. New Jersey, N.J., February 1975. Pastel, 14 x 17


ARTISTS ILLUSTRATING THE FOLLOWING DRAWINGS ARE PEN, INK AND MARKERS.

63. Carl Albert at the Nelson Rockefeller Vice-Presidential Hearings. December 19, 1974. Pastel, 16 x 20
64. The Scotts at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
65. William Kunstler at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
66. Sergeant Leonard Matlovich During His Trial. Hampton, Virginia, September 19, 1975. 18 x 24
67. William Kunstler at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
74. John Connally at His Trial. Washington, D.C., August 9, 1974. 14 x 17
75. Prosecutor Turkheimer During the Convoy Trial. Washington, D.C., April 16, 1975. 14 x 17
76. Sergeant Leonard Matlovich During His Trial. Hampton, Virginia, September 19, 1975. 14 x 17

RICHARD TOMLINSON
54. Second Trial of Alice Crimmins. Queens, N.Y., April 1, 1971. Charcoal, 13 1/2 x 17
63. Carl Albert at the Nelson Rockefeller Vice-Presidential Hearings. December 19, 1974. Pastel, 16 x 20
64. The Scotts at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
65. William Kunstler at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14

MERYL TREATNER
63. Portrait of W.A. "Tony" Boyle. Media, Pa., March 27, 1974. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
64. Richard Sprague Pointing Accusingly to W.A. "Tony" Boyle. Media, Pa., April 2, 1974. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
66. The Scotts at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14
67. William Kunstler at the Patricia Hearst Hearings. Harrisburg, Pa., August 18, 1975. Pencil and markers, 12 x 14

JOSEPH PAPIN
44. Mrs. Anna Siegel, Juror, Carried Out on Stretcher During Trial of Patrolman William Phillips. New York, N.Y., August 10, 1972. Ink and wash, 14 1/8 x 11 1/2

Rear Cover: Anthony Accursio
Empty Jury Box - Jury Out Deliberating, Gurney Trial, Tampa, Fla., August, 1975. Pen and watercolor, 18 x 24

Photographs by Deborah Mann.