



Stephen Scott Young: New Works

By William H. Gerds

It was exactly twenty years ago that Stephen Scott Young came to mainstream public attention. Since then, he has had a series of major museum and gallery shows in cities throughout the American South, as well as in the Bahamas (where he has maintained a studio), and London. Though Scott Young's work is included in the permanent collections of a number of American museums, from South Carolina to Ohio, to date his works have been exhibited almost exclusively in the South - an omission the present exhibition seeks to correct.

Scott Young was born in 1957 in Honolulu, Hawaii, where his father, in the military, was stationed. The son of a Caucasian family from Macon, Georgia, he spent his first years there, before his family moved to Greenville, Delaware, outside of Wilmington, and then to St. Augustine, Florida, where he attended Flagler College. He went on to study printmaking for three years at the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Florida. But he had also early developed an interest in watercolor painting, and came to public attention when he won the first prize in watercolor in *American Artist's* 1985 national art competition. His mature style did not emerge until 1987, on his first visit to Harbour Island in the Bahamas, where he has produced a remarkable body of work devoted to representing the images, the lifestyle, and the setting of the island's native inhabitants.

Young presently resides in Jupiter, Florida, and much of his most acclaimed subject matter has been drawn from images of blacks, frequently children and the aged. This focus has given Young a much-acclaimed identity and strong following in the South, but it has also limited the appreciation of his art and ignores the breadth of his interest in many aspects of figural imagery as well as some of his earlier paintings, including some superb works created in New England.

The various authors who have written about Scott Young have emphasized his appreciation of the work of both Old Masters, particularly Vermeer and Caravaggio, as well as earlier American painters in watercolor, Thomas Eakins and especially Winslow Homer, and more recent artists of the twentieth century, Edward Hopper and Andrew Wyeth. Scott Young's art can be most closely associated with that of Andrew Wyeth, but Wyeth is only one of many painters who offered him motivation and, in the end, his achievement is the product not of the inspiration of other artists, but a reflection of his own experiences, his own temperament, his own interests, and his own passions.

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