



William Utermohlen (1933-2007)



William Utermohlen  
1933 - 2007

A Retrospective

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GALERIE BECKEL-ODILLE-BOÏCOS

Front Cover

*Blue Skies*, 1995 oil on canvas, 152 x 122

Back Cover

*Self Portrait*, 1955, pencil on paper, 28 x 21

# Contents

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Foreword – Robert Devcic	1
	4
	8
	11
	14
	17
	20
	23
	26
	29
List of Exhibits	32
GV Art & Curators	34
Further Reading	35



William Utermohlen, 1967, Highgate

# William Utermohlen

Philadelphia, 5 December 1933 – London, 21 March 2007

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Bill Utermohlen was born in south Philadelphia in 1933. He studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts from 1951 to 1957 and, on the GI Bill, at the Ruskin School of Art in Oxford in 1957-58. In 1962, he settled in London, where he met and married the art historian Patricia Redmond. In 1969, he received his first important London show at the Marlborough Gallery. London life and London characters have particularly marked his numerous portraits, which constitute one of the richest aspects of his work. In the 1980s, he painted two major murals for two great North London institutions – **the Liberal Jewish Synagogue at St John's Wood** and the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead.

Apart from portraits, still lifes and drawings from Bill's art can be arranged in six clear thematic cycles: The **"Mythological"** paintings of 1962-63; the **"Cantos"** of 1965-1966, inspired by Dante's *Inferno*; the **"Mummers"** cycle of 1969-1970, depicting characters from South Philadelphia's New Year's Day parade; the **"War"** series of 1972, alluding to the Vietnam War; the **"Nudes"** of 1973-74 and, finally, the **"Conversation Pieces"** – the great decorative interiors with figures – of 1989-1991.

In 1995, Bill Utermohlen was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Signs of his illness are retrospectively apparent in the work of the early 1990s – **notably in the "Conversation Pieces"**. In his last works – the self-portraits of 1995-2000 – Bill's style changed dramatically. Terror, sadness, anger and resignation are expressed, as the artist fights to preserve his artistic consciousness against the gradual progress of dementia.

Since their exhibition by the Wellcome Trust in London in 2001, these last portraits have received increasing recognition by the medical community, the press and the public. They have been exhibited in Fogg Museum of Art at the University of Harvard (2005), Philadelphia Academy of Medicine, New York Academy of Medicine (2006), the Cité des Sciences in Paris, the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles (2007), the Chicago Cultural Center (2008) and the Musée de la Civilization, Quebec (2010). The greatest of the **"Mummers"** paintings, *Old Glory* (1970), was recently shown in a retrospective of figurative European art of the 1960s at the Museo della Permanente in Milan (2011).

Two major late portraits will be on show in the exhibition *Brains– the Mind as matter* at the Wellcome Trust, London from 29 March to 17 June 2012.

Chris Boiões  
Paris  
April 2012

## The "*Dante Cycle*" 1964 – 65

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In 1965-66, William began his first major cycle of paintings based on Dante's 34 cantos of the *Inferno*. The fact that, in 15<sup>th</sup>-century Florence, everyone could quote passages from the great poem fascinated the artist. Dante was called the "poet for cobblers and bakers" – the poet for humble people like William's father, himself a baker.

With their medieval references, the precision of their drawing and their romantic depiction of pain, suffering and death, the Dante paintings jarred with the optimistic mood and the superficial art of the Pop era. They were also, for the artist, a foundation experience – a journey of discovery and understanding into the human predicament. By the end of the cycle, William emerged as a mature and committed figurative painter.





*An Elder of Santa Zita (Demon & Sinner) Canto XXI, 1966, oil on canvas, 152.5 x 122*

"Ah, how ferocious was he in his aspect!  
And how he seemed to me in action ruthless,  
With open wings and light upon his feet!  
His shoulders, which sharp-pointed were and high,  
A sinner did encumber with both haunches,  
And he held clutched the sinews of the feet.  
**From off our bridge, he said: "O Malebranche,**  
Behold one of the elders of Saint Zita;  
Plunge him beneath, for I return for others  
**Unto that town, which is well furnished with them."**

(Longfellow translation)

Entering the Fifth Pouch of the Eighth Circle of Hell, **Dante sees "an astounding darkness."** The darkness is a great pit filled with a boiling tar. As Dante examines the pitch to determine its composition, Virgil shouts for him to watch out: a demon races up the rocks on the side of the pit, grabbing a new soul and tossing him into the black pit. As soon as the sinner comes up for breath, the demons below—the **Malabranche, whose name means "evil claws"**—thrust him back into the boiling tar with their prongs.



*Canto XXV - Cacus*, 1966, oil on canvas, 152.5 x 120

And I beheld a Centaur full of rage  
**Come crying out: "Where is, where is the scoffer?"**  
 I do not think Maremma has so many  
 Serpents as he had all along his back,  
 As far as where our countenance begins.  
 Upon the shoulders, just behind the nape,  
 With wings wide open was a dragon lying,  
 And he sets fire to all that he encounters.  
**My Master said: "That one is Cacus, who**  
 Beneath the rock upon Mount Aventine  
 Created oftentimes a lake of blood.  
 He goes not on the same road with his brothers,  
 By reason of the fraudulent theft he made  
 Of the great herd, which he had near to him

(Longfellow translation)

Cacus is the angry centaur who seeks to punish Vanni Fucci in the pit of the thieves. Dante presents him as an elaborate monster, with snakes covering his equine back and a dragon, shooting fire, astride Cacus's human shoulders. Virgil explains that Cacus has been separated from the other centaurs patrolling the River of Blood in the Circle of Violence (*Inferno* 12) because he stole cattle belonging to Hercules, who brutally clubbed Cacus to death. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil portrays Cacus as a half-human, fire-breathing monster who inhabits a cavern under the Aventine hill filled with gore and the corpses of his victims.

"There darted forth a serpent, which transfixed him  
 There where the neck is knotted to the shoulders.  
 Nor 'O' so quickly e'er, nor 'I' was written,  
 As he took fire, and burned; and ashes wholly  
 Behoved it that in falling he became.  
 And when he on the ground was thus destroyed,  
 The ashes drew together, and of themselves  
 Into himself they instantly returned."

(Longfellow translation)

*The Dust Again, Canto XXIV, 1966* from the "Dante" cycle depicts Vanni Fucci, one of the most arrogant and blasphemous characters of the *Inferno*, a thief from Pistoia who is incinerated (after receiving a snakebite) and then regains his human form, like the Phoenix rising from the ashes. It is an intensely romantic and terrifying image. The handling of the tragic head and, particularly, the white forehead reappear 30 years later in Bill's last self portraits and "masks."



*The Dust Again Canto XXIV, 1966, oil on canvas, 152.5 x 120*



*Canto XXVIII – An Eye for an Eye for all Eternity, 1966, oil on canvas, 152.5 x 120*

A cask by losing centre—piece or cant  
 Was never shattered so, as I saw one  
 Rent from the chin to where one breaketh wind.  
 Between his legs were hanging down his entrails;  
 His heart was visible, and the dismal sack  
 That maketh excrement of what is eaten.  
 While I was all absorbed in seeing him,  
 He looked at me, and opened with his hands  
**His bosom, saying: "See now how I rend me;**  
 How mutilated, see, is Mahomet;  
 In front of me doth Ali weeping go,  
 Cleft in the face from forelock unto chin;

(Longfellow translation)

Virgil and Dante continue on to the Ninth Pouch of the Eighth circle of Hell, where they see a line of souls perpetually circling. Dante sees that they bear wounds worse than those suffered at the battles of Troy and Ceparano. A devil stands at one point of the circle with a sword, splitting open each sinner who walks by. One of the sinners speaks to Dante as he passes — he is Mohammed, prophet of the Muslims. These are the Sowers of Scandal and

Schism and, for their sins of division, they themselves are split apart. Worse, as they follow the circle around, their wounds close up so that they are whole by the time they come back to the sword, only to be struck again.



# The Mummers Parade 1969-1970

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The Mummers Parade is held each New Year's Day in Philadelphia. Local clubs compete in one of four categories (comics, fancies, string bands, and fancy brigades). They prepare elaborate costumes and moveable scenery, which take months to complete. This is done in clubhouses, many of which are located on or near 2nd Street (called "Two Street" by the locals) in South Philadelphia.

William began this cycle, based on his own memories of the Philadelphia New Year's Day Parade, in 1969. In a letter dating from November 1970, the artist states: "The Parade is becoming a vehicle for expressing my anxiety over the difficulties that the news media presents us with an unrelenting stream. The threats of holocaust, famine, pestilence and the Vietnam War, are all entering the Parade. I find these problems fit comfortably into the crowded, whirling, diving dance performed at the beginning of each year." An elaborate metaphor for William's American identity – his Philadelphia working-class roots combined with his later impressions of America now seen in "exile" from London – the "Mummers" are one of the richest and most complex cycles in the artist's career.

Patricia Utermohlen has repeatedly commented on William's consciousness of the class distinctions of Philadelphia and how he saw the Mummers Parade as the only time in the year the South Philly dock workers ever got to occupy the city centre. These men or their sons were also the victims of the Vietnam War since they, rather than the affluent college students, intellectuals or artists, were the ones most commonly called up for the draft: "All the long-held resentment of being an underdog is acted out in these pictures".

Many archetypes and symbols – like the dance of death, the carnival figure, blackface, the clown, Uncle Sam, the American Indian (*New Year's Morning*), and stars and stripes – are used in the *Mummers* in a complex mix of art: historical allusion, Americana and references to late-1960s issues, including the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War. The emphasis on tragic mask – like heads in the *Mummers* cycle – recurs in the late *Masks* and the artist's own last self-portraits of 1995-2000.

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*Mommers Cycle – Old Glory, 1970, oil on canvas 180 x 301*

William's disgust at the unfairness of the American military draft of the Vietnam War years is best expressed in *Old Glory*. He says in a 1970 letter "... *Old Glory* shows the Mommers in patriotic costume, dancing unaware of the four horsemen (of the Apocalypse) behind them." These are the men, unskilled, mainly dock workers who will fight and die in Vietnam." In earlier versions for the painting, the seven Mommers appear dancing individually in their stars and stripes costumes. As the painting evolved, the flag motif overtook the picture, becoming more and more prominent until, by the end, it absorbed the seven dancers, leaving only their hands and heads apparent. At the same time, the flag split at the top and bottom revealing a hellish darkness beyond. Out of the darkness ride forth the four horsemen of the Apocalypse.

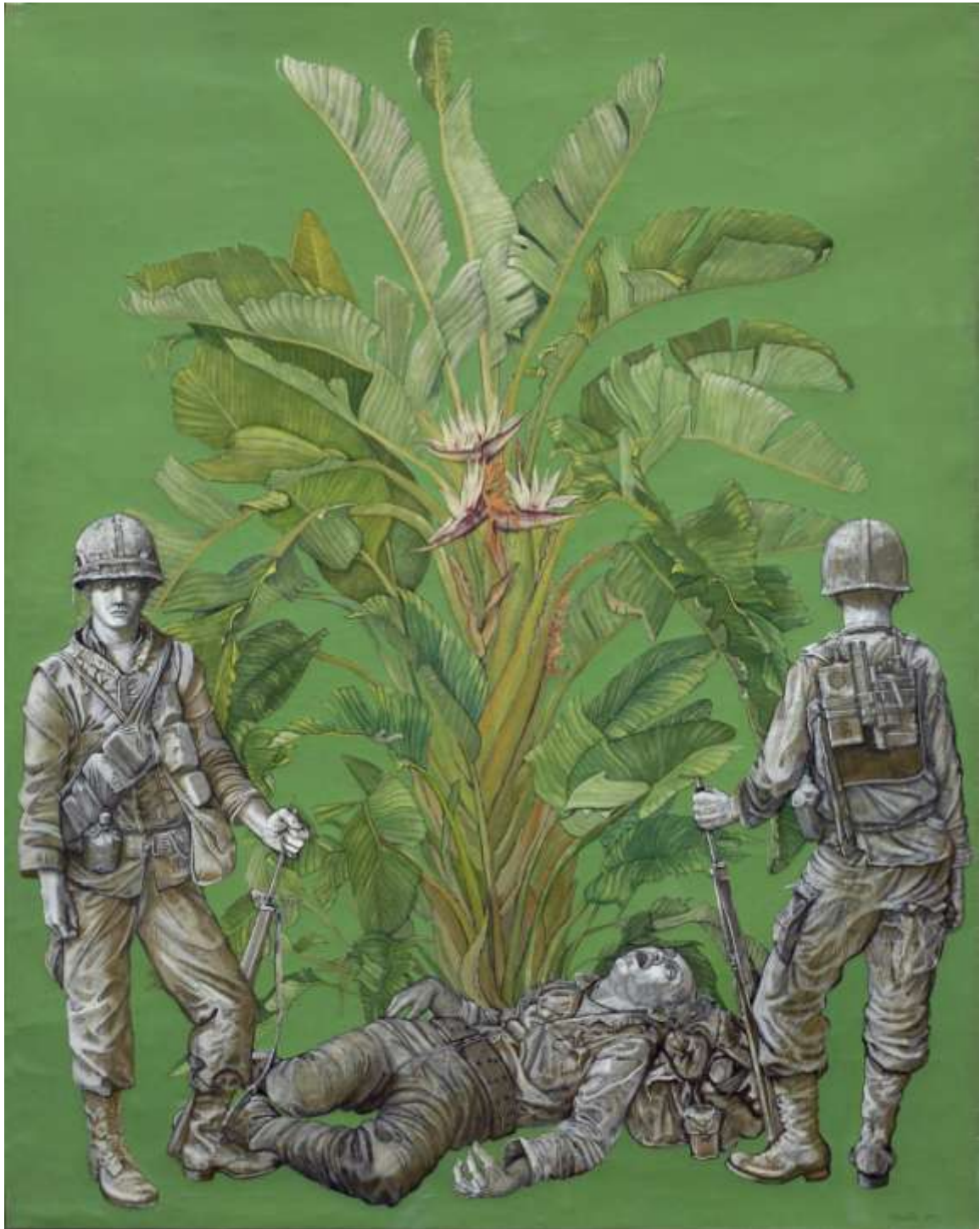
The elaborate costume in gorgeous colours of the Indian chief from a "fancy division" moving down the narrow street is like a vision of exotic splendour in the ambient greyness and drabness of South Philadelphia. This is how it must have struck William when he was a child, for here he has carefully placed the chief before his boyhood home, the street number of which appears on the edge of the curb to the left.



*Mommers Cycle – New Year's Morning, 1970, oil on canvas 87 x 71*

## The Vietnam War

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*Bird of Paradise*, 1972, oil on canvas, 121 x 91

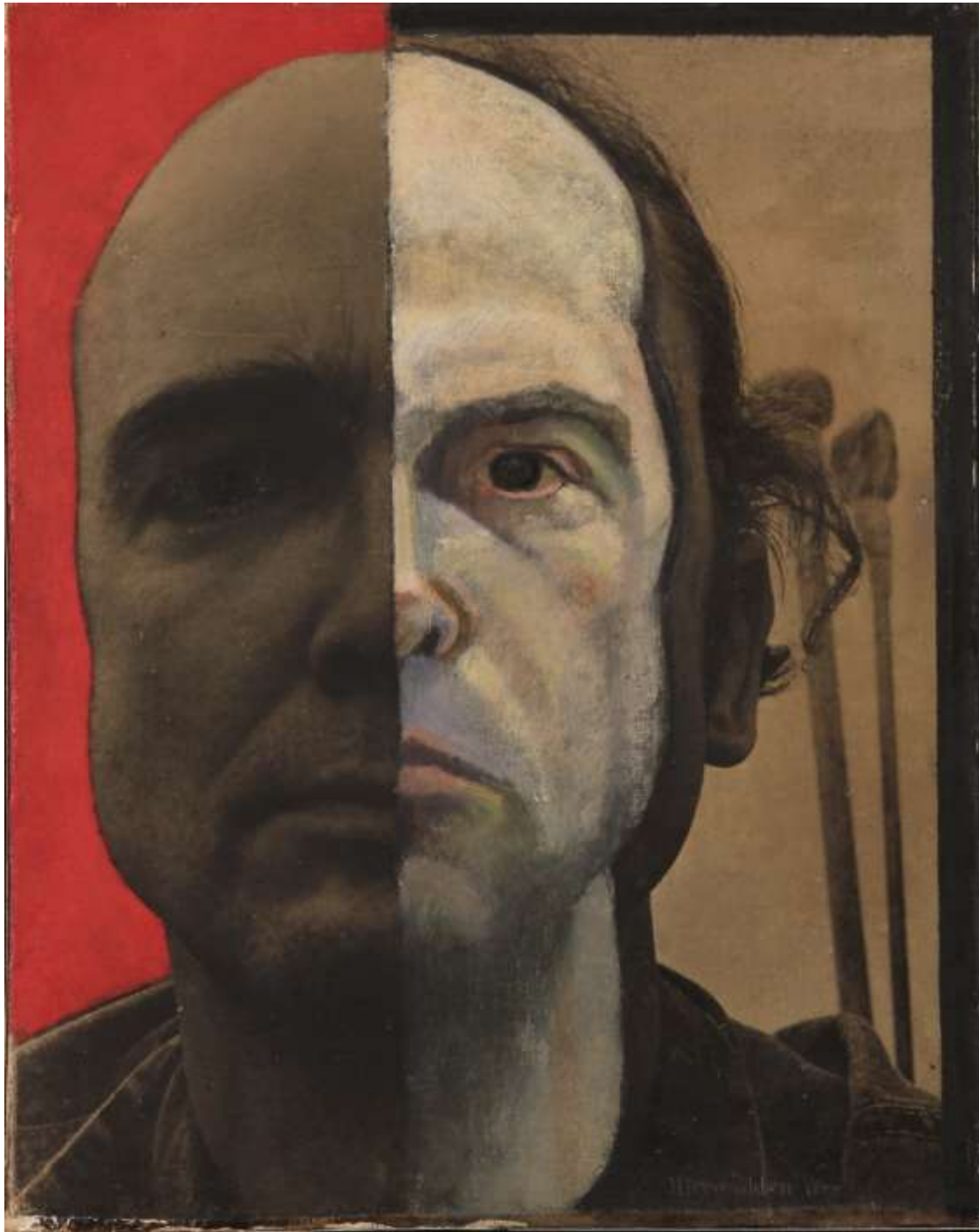
*Soldier and Reflection* 1972 is a commemorative painting, part of a series painted to honour the dead American soldiers in Vietnam. The sleeping/dead soldier lying below the palm-like tree (symbol of martyrdom) is framed by two still, melancholy sentinels. His pose and the sharp, linear handling of his uniform are inspired by two of William's favourite Renaissance artists: Mantegna (the sleeping disciples in *The Agony in the Garden*) and Piero della Francesca (the sleeping soldiers in the *Resurrection*).

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## Portraits

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*Self Portrait (split)*, 1977 oil, charcoal, photograph on gesso on canvas, 25.5 x 20

In *Self Portrait (split)*, 1977 William uses the experimental procedure of painting over photographic enlargements printed on canvas with light sensitive emulsion. The left hand side of the head is entirely painted over. The right hand side is the photographic print. But here the red paint of the background has eliminated the errant right ear and the hair as if the artist were a penitent figure or a convict. The split space and the dramatic red and black composition are used again to great effect in *Self Portrait with Saw* 1997.

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A similar split but this time horizontal is used in the **two portraits of the artist's wife from 1977**, using the same photograph. Eyes and mouth are painted in turn as if the artist is exploring different aspects of the same figure.

In *Pat I* the eyes have a steady tender quality whereas the mouth is shut and hard.



*Pat I*, 1977, oil and photography on canvas, 25.5 x 20



*Portrait of Rosamund Fokschaner*, 1982, oil on canvas 101 x 101  
kindly on loan from Rosamund Fokschaner

In the 1980s, William began to paint portraits on commission. Most of the sitters were friends or students of his wife the art historian Patricia Utermohlen, who taught the history of modern art for various London institutions and, later, at home.

For these portraits, William carefully examined the personality and environment of the sitter. Pose, dress and gestures were conceived so as to **express not only the artist's but also the sitter's vision of themselves**. In Rosamund's portrait, the rich patterns created by the dress, cushion and Persian miniatures of the background heighten the sense of luxury and femininity of the figure. They also bring to mind the decorative impact of Matisse's "odalisque" paintings of the 1920s.





Penny Mather's portrait has a more formal quality. The empty background and the narrow vertical format, reminiscent of a Japanese screen, accentuate the **minimalism of the décor and modernity of the sitter**. The presence of the little dog adds warmth to the image and alludes to 18<sup>th</sup>-century traditions of portraying upper-class ladies with their pets.

*Penny Mather*, 1983, oil on canvas, 147 x 58.5  
kindly on loan from Penny Mather

This late portrayal of the artist's wife, Patricia, is executed in the rapid, spontaneous, more expressionist style of the 1996 "mask" watercolours. The sad gaze, the smeared mouth and striped motif **are also present in the artist's last oil portrait of his wife, *Pat* 1997**. She is the only recognisable figure, other than himself, in his work after 1995.



*Pat*, 1997, oil on canvas, 35.5 x 35.5 (for comparison purposes)



*Black Stripes (Pat)*, 1994, watercolour, ink & pencil, 29.5 x 23

## The Last Portraits 1995-2000

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In 1995, William Utermohlen was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. In *Blue Skies*, his last large painting, William paints his reaction to this knowledge: a devastated figure holding on to a table as on to a raft in the blue bleakness of an empty studio. The artist was admitted to the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery at Queen Square and supervised by a team led by Dr. Martin Rossor and nurse Ron Isaacs. While at the hospital, William was encouraged to continue drawing and to portray himself. These drawings became the subject of a notable article published in June 2001 in the British medical journal, *The Lancet*.

Patricia Utermohlen comments on this time: "As each small self-portrait was completed, William showed it to his nurse, Ron Isaacs. Ron visited the studio, photographing every new work. Ron's conviction that William's efforts were helping to increase the understanding of the deeply psychological and traumatic aspects of the disease undoubtedly encouraged William to continue."

The last self-portraits, painted between 1995 and 2001, are indeed unique artistic, medical, and psychological documents. They portray a man doomed, yet fighting to preserve his identity and his place in the world in the face of an implacable disease encroaching on his mind and senses. With courage and perseverance, the artist adapts at each point his style and technique to the growing limitations of his perception and motor skills to produce images that communicate with clarity and economy from within his predicament. To the very end, colour, brushwork, and line retain their artistic and expressive vocation, the result of a lifetime dedicated to visual and psychological observation and the faithful rendering of facts.

William Utermohlen made his last drawings in pencil from 2000 to 2002. He was taken care of by his wife, friends, and carers at home until his deterioration made his admission to the Princess Louise Nursing Home necessary in 2004. He died in Hammersmith Hospital in London on March 21, 2007.

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*Blue Skies*, 1995, oil on canvas, 152 x 122

Patricia Utermohlen recalls the beginning of this final artistic period in her husband's life: "William was not happy in the mezzanine studio (in our house), so it was decided he should move to a studio outside the house in the East End of London. We were soon aware that something serious was happening. He got lost travelling to the studio and began to miss appointments." *Blue Skies* was painted in the new studio; it was to be his last large work, 6 by 4 foot his favourite size for large pictures like the Dante Cantos.

"It is empty by comparison with the other pictures, and painted in a much more urgent manner ... Obviously, it is a self-portrait. He sits alone at his painting table, no evidence of paints and brushes. The colour composition of the whole picture is simple, just a burnt sienna yellow and deep ultramarine blue; the only break is a little white and the happy light yellow table top that reminds us of his hopeful pictures. The figure is dominated by the empty space: one hand grasps the cup, and the other hangs on to the table for reassurance, whilst above him is the skylight. Although the skylight is reminiscent of the other studio (paintings), this one leads to nowhere, just to a terrifying lonely emptiness."

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The pose of this figure who has collapsed onto a tabletop is reminiscent of the bent-over figure of the artist in the painting *Blue Skies*. Here, however, the feeling of collapse is complete. The figure is not holding on to the table or the mug anymore and seems stricken and lifeless, the puppet-like head resting on the table and turning to face us.

*Desperate Figure*, 1995, pencil on paper, 28 x 21



The artist seems to mourn his lost self in *Self Portrait (Red)* 1996. He has become a shadow of his former self, and the clothes floating on the ghostly body show the bright red colour of pain. The front part of the skull – the source of his illness – is sharply outlined. Red and green are here the dominant colours as yellow and orange fade into insignificance. The same two colours indicate illness and pain in the late paintings of Vincent van Gogh.

*Self Portrait (Red)*, 1996, mixed media on paper, 46.5 x 33  
kindly on loan from Catharine Poilleux





*Self Portrait (Green)*, 1997, oil on canvas, 35.5 x 35.5



*Self Portrait*, 1955, pencil on paper, 28 x 21  
(for comparison purposes)

The asymmetrical features of *Self Portrait (Green)* 1997, with the extended right ear, are strangely reminiscent of one of William's earliest self portraits, the pencil portrait of 1955. In the 1997 portrait, William expresses his emotions with remarkable precision, using a new style of expressionist brushwork and bold drawing. Sadness, anxiety, resignation and the feeling of feebleness are all apparent. The creamy pink streaks on the forehead and the distorted features are also reminiscent of Francis Bacon's self-portraits. The implacable black background represents the end.



*Self Portrait (With Easel)*, 1998, oil on canvas, 35.5 x 25



Vincent van Gogh, *Self Portrait*, 1889, Zurich Kuntshaus  
(for comparison purposes)

*Self Portrait (With Easel)* 1998 depicts the artist's head tightly framed by the rectangle of his easel. The head now floats detached from the body. The left eye retains its vivid dark pupil (as in the early *Self Portrait* 1955) and the right eye is blank. Green and red are the dominant colours – red a colour denoting pain, green, illness as in the late portraits of Vincent van Gogh. This is the last self-portrait in which the artist's features are still recognizable.



*Erased Self Portrait*, 1999, oil on canvas, 45.5 x 35.5

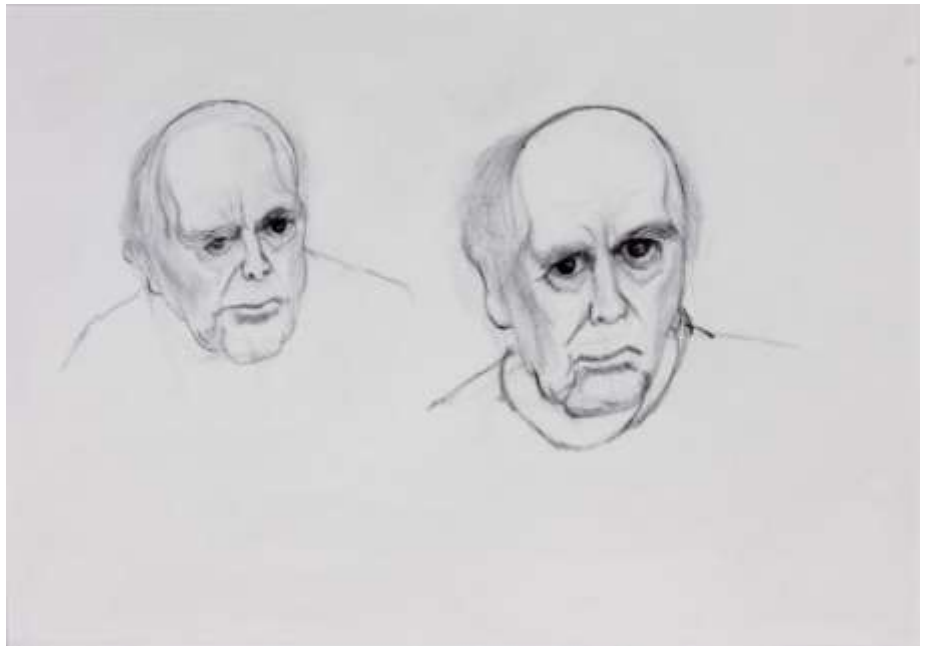
After 1998, William experienced increased difficulty in handling oil paints. On the last painted self-portrait, *Erased Self Portrait* 1999, the features have been scratched out and painted over by the artist in a possible act of frustration. The gesture also has a symbolic aspect. As his senses are failing, the artist has eliminated all sense organs from his head. The eyes and mouth are completely gone, the eyes very faint, only a painful red ear still protrudes on the left. Red (pain) and green (illness) are the only colours left. The white smear on the forehead possibly denotes the spreading protein atrophying the brain.



*Self Portrait With Cat*, 1995, pencil on paper, 43 x 31.5

Brought back from his East End studio, William was reinstated into the mezzanine above the dining room. In the portraits that William painted there, until the final loss of his motor skills, he illustrated the emotional and sensorial impressions of a man who knew he was losing his mental faculties. A spectrum of emotions – depression, bewilderment, and resignation – was expressed in the works that followed. All three emotions are visible in *Self Portrait With Cat* 1995. In his last years, the artist sought the companionship of the two house cats, warm and comforting and also mute, increasingly like himself.

In *Double Self Portrait* 1996, the artist focused on the contour of his skull, which he delineated twice in the head on the left. His gaze here is heavy and resigned and the sagging cheeks are those of an old man. In the head on the right, the black eyes glare out powerfully. Their expression is angry and bruised.



*Double Self Portrait*, 1996 pencil on paper, 31.5 x 43

In his last portraits, the artist seems to have aged prematurely. The balding head is prominent and the jowls sag. The eyes stare out darkly but without focusing. In this portrait, he seems to express an angry bewilderment.



*Self Portrait (scowling)*, 1996, pencil on paper 28 x 19.5

## The “Mask” Watercolours 1996

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At the same time that the artist was beginning the series of his last self-portraits, he produced a series of watercolours of mask-like heads in a free and spontaneous style, very different from the controlled linear technique of his pencil drawings. Patricia Utermohlen associates the freedom and urgency of the watercolour style of these late heads to German Expressionism, the primitive and psychic renderings of heads by artists like Emil Nolde or Ludwig Kirchner. In the “*Masks*”, William expresses his emotional anguish in the most direct possible manner.

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*Imaginary Portrait of Francis Bacon, 1967/alterd 1997, watercolour and oil on paper 29 x 22.5*

This much earlier watercolour of a head (annotated on the back "Imaginary Portrait of Francis Bacon") was altered by the artist with the addition in oil paint of the red stripes on the bottom in 1997, the year the artist painted his last self-portraits. It is an early example of the Expressionist facet of William's style that is frequently used in his watercolour and ink studies for the Mumpers paintings of the late 1960s. Francis Bacon is the School of London artist that most fascinated William throughout his career. Bacon's painful handling of his distorted, tragic figures trapped in their own internal hells, must have strongly appealed to William at a time when he was preparing his own exhibition of the Dante *Inferno* series at Bacon's London gallery, the Marlborough, in 1969.

The figure's gaze expresses sadness and loss. The expression of this early work must have spoken directly to William's feelings in the period immediately after the diagnosis of his fatal illness. By adding the stripes, he actually transforms the earlier head into a late self-portrayal or, possibly, an image of his wife Patricia, looking anxious and distraught, as in the 1997 portrait with a striped motif, *Pat* (page???)

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*Mask (Clown)*, 1996, watercolour on paper, 21 x 25

In most late portraits, there is an emphasis on the frontal lobe of the skull, where William knows the source of his illness lies. A white substance (possibly associated with scanned images of his own brain and medical imaging depicting amyloid plaques) appears in several oils and watercolours, as in *Mask (Clown)* 1996.



*Mask (Black Marks)*, 1996, watercolour on paper, 45 x 35

This watercolour represents a primitive death's head or mask. The absence of a nose, ears and the diminutive mouth indicated by five red dots may point to the progressive breakdown of the sensory organs that Alzheimer's patients must experience.



*Masque (byzantine)*, 1996, watercolour, 28 x 28.5



*Masque (green neck)*, 1996, watercolour, 28.5 x 21



*Masque (head with red eyes)*, 1996, watercolour, 22 x 14

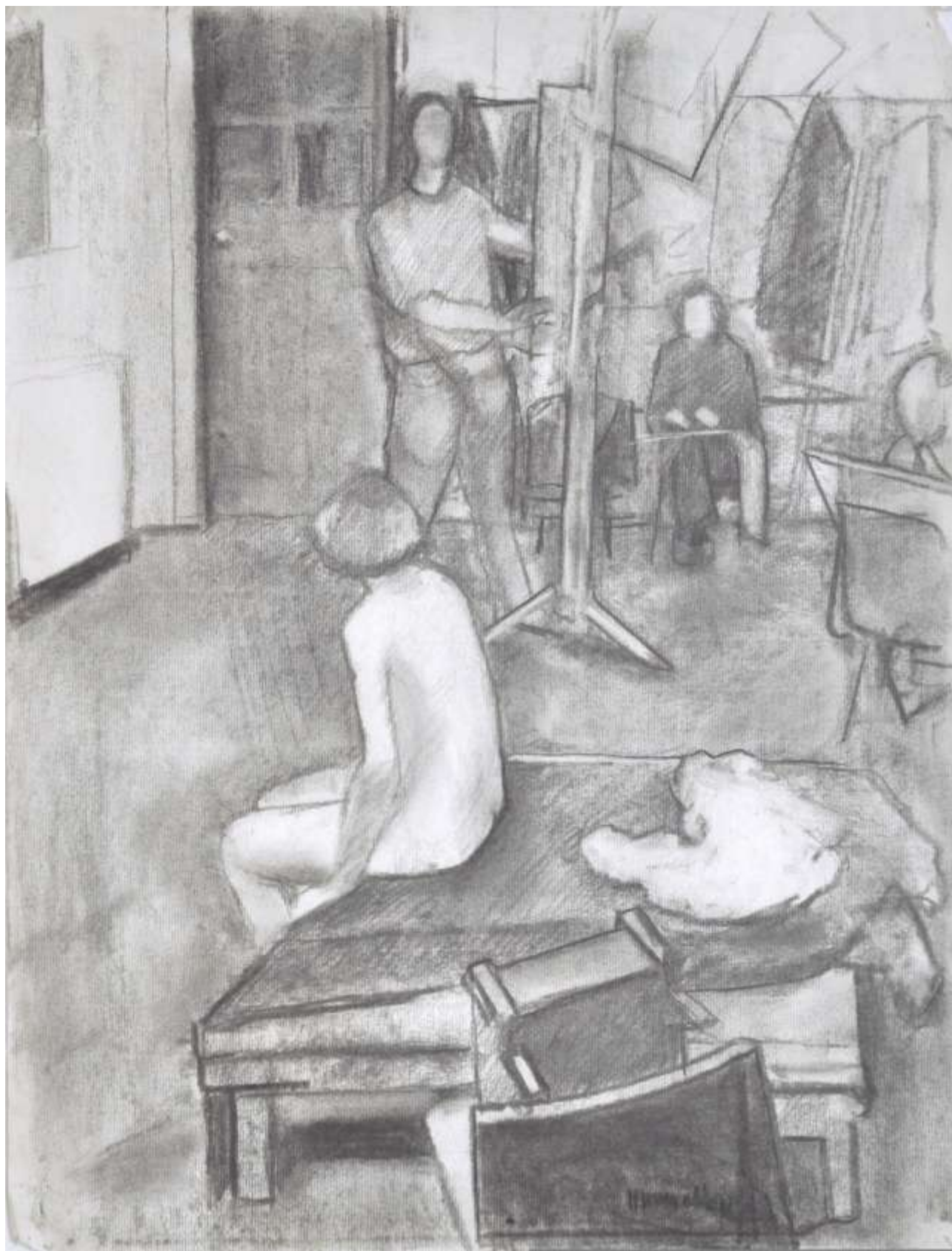
## The Life Drawings In The Studio

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Drawing from the model played a vital role in William's art, as is testified by the numerous studies in charcoal of nudes and heads the artist regularly drew from the 1950s to the early 1990s. William's nudes are quite different from the standard academic exercise in anatomy or graceful posing. Rather than isolating the figure against a blank background, the artist ties the model into the surrounding space of the studio, locking the body unto a strong linear network that reinforces the design and the composition. The result is a dynamic tension between strong linear contours and three-dimensional modelling – a tension which constitutes the essence of modern drawing in the tradition of Picasso, Matisse or Beckmann. The head studies are notable for their concentration on the psychology of the model. Character and mood are observed as closely as the structure of the head giving each model, man or woman, a distinctive presence altogether rare in life drawing and closer in feeling to the portrait. However, the absence of clothing and the social environment usually attached to portrayal, gives the models an unguarded and vulnerable quality without a social mask that is ultimately very moving. In the late drawings, (1985-1995) the bold black contours bestow an extra sense of strength and monumentality to the bodies. Frequent shifts in space and erasure marks add to the physical and psychological tension of the drawings, making them some of the artist's greatest.

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*The Studio*, 1978, charcoal on paper, 64.5 x 50



*Nude with black hair*, 1979, charcoal on paper, 52.5 x 39.5



*Model in armchair*, 1986, charcoal on paper, 75 x 54



*Nude and drawing*, 1980, charcoal on paper, 52 x 40.3



*Pensive model*, 1984, charcoal on paper, 54.5 x 38





*Torso*, 1987, charcoal on paper, 76.5 x 54.5



*Nude with Matisse*, 1987, charcoal on paper, 77 x 55.4



*Model and cat*, 1987, charcoal on paper 75 x 54.5



*Seated model and stool*, 1989, charcoal, 108 x 74



*Nude with head turned away, 1989, charcoal on paper, 55 x 76*



*Seated Boy with Easel, 1990, charcoal on paper, 76 x 56*





Standing Model, 1991, charcoal on paper, 75.5 x 55



*Seated model in Profile*, 1991, charcoal on paper, 76 x 56.2



*Model and chair*, 1994, charcoal on paper, 76 x 56.2

## Late drawings

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In the drawings executed after his diagnosis in 1995 William frequently represents simple mannequin-like figures that appear in their surroundings – a room, a studio, a car – like dislocated puppets. Their limbs seem to have ceased to function or connect properly. The artist here expresses his sense of the breakdown of basic motor skills that is already affecting him. Simple actions, like drinking coffee, getting into a car or picking up something from the ground, are now increasingly difficult and causes for great anxiety.

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*Car Driver*, 1996, pencil, 18 x 20



*Figure in Studio with mug*, 1995, pencil and conté, 29 x 22



*Twisted Figure and Chair*, 1997, pencil, 27 x 20

## Lithographs

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In 1994, William executed ten lithographic illustrations for a book of Wilfred Owen's famous World War One poems, published in Paris by Nova et Vetera. Sliding and falling figures of wounded soldiers indicate a pre-occupation with disorientation and traumatic experience. Executed the year **before his diagnosis, these images have a premonitory quality. They also stem from the artist's lifelong** fascination with war and soldiers and memories of his own military service in the American army in the 1950s. The precise contours of the figures and their uniforms contrast with the soft textures of the backgrounds. William highlights the powdery quality unique to lithography from stone achieving a great delicacy of surface, further reinforced by watercolour washes. This delicacy of tone acts as a foil to the tragic and painful scenes of death and wounding. It adds a meditative quality to the series **and expresses the artist's compassion and pity for the doomed young men in the poems.**

Wilfred Owen – Ten Poems, 1994, lithographs, some with watercolour, edition of 20, 23.5 x 16



*Apologia Poemate Meo*

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*Arms and the boy*



*Asleep*



*Greater Love*



*Insensibility*



*The Next War*



*Smile Smile Smile*



*Strange Meeting*



*The Send Off*



*The Show*



# Curriculum Vitae

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## Solo Exhibitions

- 2012     *William Utermohlen - Œuvres inédites*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris  
*William Utermohlen - Retrospective*, GV Art, London
- 2008     *William Utermohlen - Rosenthal Fine Art*, Chicago, Illinois  
*William Utermohlen - Works 1955-2001 - Portraits of the Mind*, Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago, Illinois  
*Inside Alzheimer's - Portraits of the Mind*, State Capitol Building, Sacramento,  
  
*Portraits of the Mind* - The Art Foundry Gallery, Sacramento, California
- 2007     *Hommage à William Utermohlen - Œuvres 1950-2002*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris  
*The Later Works of William Utermohlen* - University of Nevada Medical School, Reno,  
  
*Portraits from the Mind* - Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles.  
*William Utermohlen Derniers Portraits 1990-2000 - Cité des Sciences, Paris.*  
*The Later Works of William Utermohlen* - Wilkes College, Pennsylvania.
- 2006     *The Later Works of William Utermohlen* - College of Physicians, Philadelphia,  
  
*The Later Works of William Utermohlen* - The Enrichment Center, Winston-Salem, North  
  
*The Later Works of William Utermohlen* - Portraits and Promises - New York Academy
- 2005     *William Utermohlen The Late Potraits* - Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- 2001     *Art and the Brain: Portraits by William Utermohlen*, Wellcome Trust, London.
- 2000     *William Utermohlen - Œuvres: 1955 - 1997*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris.
- 1999     *William Utermohlen - Ritratti 1955-1997*, Palazzo Montefano, Vedrana di Budrio, Bologna
- 1996     *William Utermohlen*, Galerie Toft, Paris
- 1991     **Christie's Education, London**
- 1990     Camden Art Centre, London
- 1974     Mead Art Gallery, Amherst, Massachusetts
- 1971     Galerie d' Eendt, Amsterdam
- 1970     Galerie d' Eendt, Amsterdam
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- 1969 Marlborough Fine Art, London
- 1967 Bonfiglioli Gallery, Oxford
- Nordness Gallery, New York, New York
- 1965 Bonfiglioli Gallery, Oxford
- 1963 Traverse Theatre Gallery, Edinburgh Festival, Edinburgh

## Group Exhibitions

- 2012 *Brains -The Mind as Matter*, Wellcome Trust, London
  - 2011 *Da Bacon ai Beatles, Nuove immagini in Europa Negli Anni del rock*, Palazzo della Permanente, Milan, Italy.
  - Trauma*, GV Art, London
  - 2010 *"The Nude" Etienne Gros, Obaji Nyambi and William Utermohlen*, Jennifer Norback Fine Art, Chicago Illinois
  - 2009-10 *Human Copyright*, Musée de la Civilization, Qubec, Quebec
  - 2005 *Visages*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris
  - 2004 *Nus d'atelier*, Beckel- Odille-Boïcos, Paris
  - Natures Mortes*, Beckel Odille-Boïcos, Paris
  - 2003 *War*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris
  - 2002 *Nus*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris
  - 2001 *Natures Mortes*, Galerie Beckel-Odille-Boïcos, Paris
  - 1997 *Le Corps et l'âme - Le Nu*, Galerie Cornette-Pajarin, Paris
  - 1994 Exposition de Nova et Vetera, galerie Cornette-Pajarin, Paris
  - L'Heure Exquise Chez Edouard Manet*, Atelier d'Edouard Manet, Paris
  - 1963 London Group
  - 1962 Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
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## Scientific Articles and recent Press Selection:

15 November 2011	<i>Corriere della sera</i> , Metti una sera alla permanente
15 November 2011	<i>La Repubblica</i> , Metti le cuffie, guarda e ascolta arte e musica ai tempi del pop rock
15 November 2011	<i>La Repubblica</i> , Da Bacon ai Beatles, la mostra rock da visitare ascoltando la musica
3 May 2009	<i>ottawacitizen.com</i>
25 June to 1 July 2009	<i>Nouvel Observateur</i> , <b>Toiles de maître</b>
27 June to 3 July 2009	<i>Télérama</i> , <b>L'oeil de verre</b>
March 2008	<i>Agenda aging services of California</i> , Art show links Aging Services <b>with Alzheimer's group</b>
14 February 2008	<i>Capitol Weekly</i> , A quiet descent into dementia
January 2008	<i>Artnow Online</i> , International Art exhibition Reveals Mind of <b>Alzheimer's</b>
August 2007	<i>Agenda aging services of California</i> , <b>Artist's self-portraits</b> chronicle descent into Alzheimer
2007	<i>Demenz</i> , Der einsame Blick in den Spiegel
9 February 2007	<i>Times Lidear</i> , Portrait of a disease
15 November 2007	<i>NewsReview.com</i> , A beautiful mind
14 March 2006	<i>Philadelphia Daily News</i>
27 March 2006	<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> , article by Susan Boni
24 October 2006	<i>New York Newsday</i> , article by Jamie Talan
24 October 2006	<i>New York Times</i> , Science Times article by Denise Grady
July-August 2003	<i>American Scientist</i> , article by Vernon Ingram
April 2002	<i>Bild Der Wissenschaft</i> , Germany aby Michael Brandler
30 June 2001	<i>The Lancet</i> , London article by Sebastian G. Crouch, Ron Issacs, Martin N. Rossor (pp. 2129-2133)
July-August 2001	<i>SCRIP Magazine</i> , London
29 June 2001	<i>Daily Telegraph</i> , London - article by David Derbyshire
3 July 2001	Daily Telegraph, London - article by David Derbyshire
8 July 2001	<i>Sunday Times</i> , London
29 July 2001	<i>Toronto Star</i> , article by Margaret Driscoll
31 July 2001	<i>Daily Mail</i> , London,
6 August 2001	<i>Dagens Nyheter</i> , article by Erika Egstrom
13 August 2001	<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> , article by Andrea Gerlin
2 July 2001	<i>Le Quotidien du Médecin</i> , Paris article by Renée Carton

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Willism Utermohlen, 1964 Philadelphia



# GV Art

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Is a contemporary art gallery which aims to explore and acknowledge the inter-relationship between art and science, and how the areas cross over and inform one another. The gallery produces exhibitions and events that create a dialogue focused on how modern humans interpret and understand the advances in both areas and how an overlap in the technological and the creative, the medical and the historical are paving the way for new aesthetic sensibilities to develop.

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**Robert Devcic – Founder, Director and Curator**

Working independently to establish a new model for a contemporary art gallery.

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# Galerie Beckel Odille Boïcos

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Was founded in Paris in 1999 by three partners, **Chris Boïcos**, Franco-Greek art historian, Daniel Beckel, American international lawyer and Pascal Odille Gallerist, official French art expert.

In its 13 years of existence, the gallery has organised more than 80 exhibitions of contemporary artists, printmakers and photographers in Paris and in partnership with other galleries and institutions in France and in the USA.

An aesthetic and poetic universe that is expressive and unique, as well as technical proficiency in their chosen media, is the basic criterion for the selection of the artists in the gallery. All generations and a great many nationalities (French, American, Australian, Czech, South African and Greek) are represented in a variety of mostly figurative styles.

## Galerie Beckel Odille Boïcos

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## Chris Boïcos

Exhibition curator **Chris Boïcos** was born in Athens in 1958. He studied Art History at the University of Syracuse, New York and met the Utermohlens at its London department in 1979. He subsequently studied at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. He is Professor of the History of Art for the Paris departments of the University of California, University of Southern California, University of Wisconsin and University of Delaware. He is a founder and, since 1999, director of the Galerie Beckel Odille Boïcos in the Marais district of Paris. He has curated all exhibitions of the work of William Utermohlen in the USA and in Paris.

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A Retrospective

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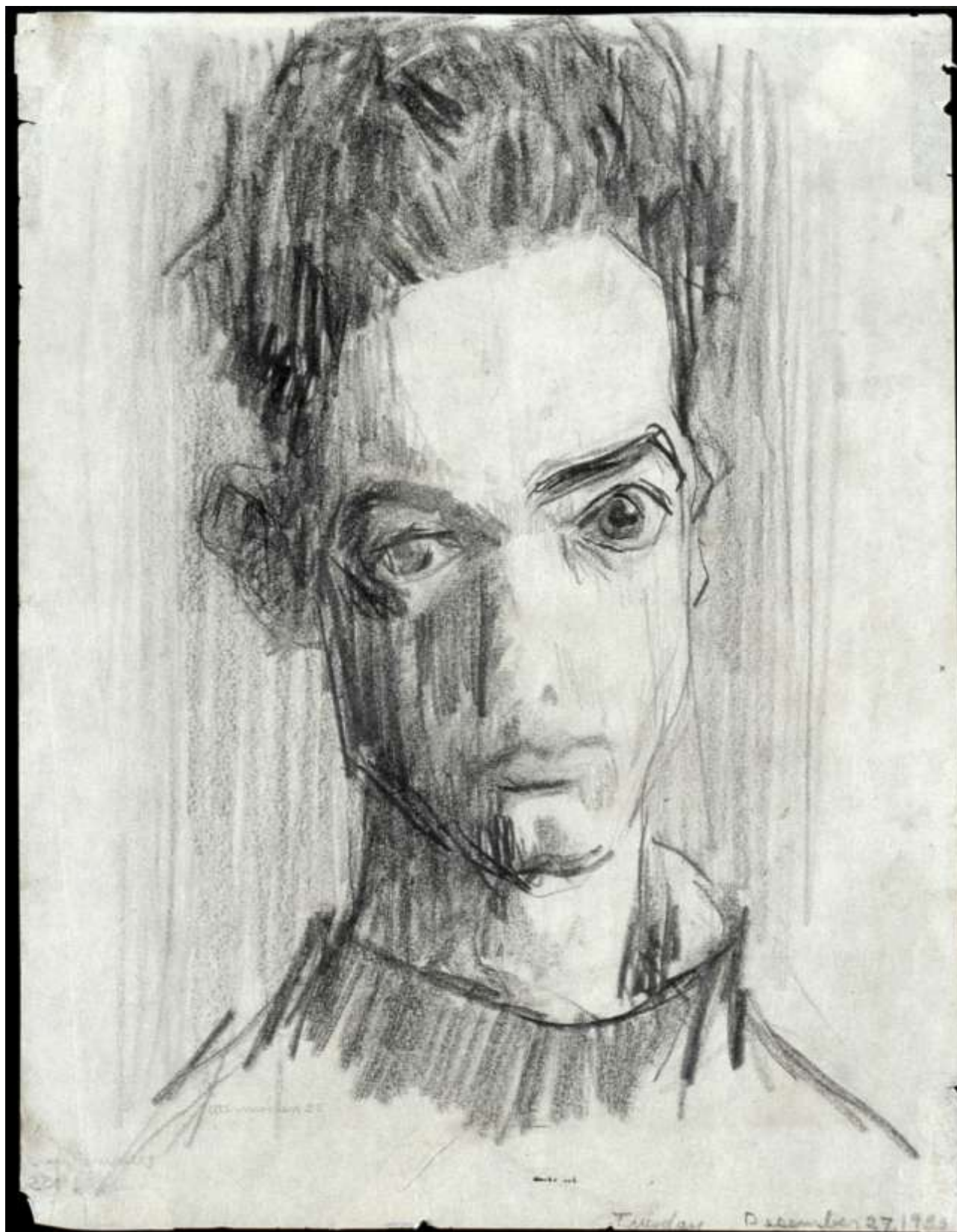
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