

BOB THOMPSON



drawings



Untitled (Standing Nude)

ca. 1958, ink on paper
24 x 18 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.

FRONT:

Untitled (Man in Hat) (detail)

ca. 1958, oil on paper
13 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.

BACK:

Untitled (Portrait) (detail)

ca. 1958, charcoal on paper
23 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 in.

BOB THOMPSON drawings

november 30, 2011 - january 8, 2012

steven harvey fine art projects in cooperation with Martha Henry, Inc

I always think about Bob Thompson's work in terms of how new it was, although in many ways it was of course, old. Nevertheless, at the time it came to our notice, we were suddenly, and frighteningly, diverted from abstraction's intelligence to the stuff of nightmare—real monsters in bold colors—and forced to admit that we were looking at what was divinely, and classically, human. Which was indeed scary, because what Bob had seen and painted was us. And since we were young and convinced of how avant-garde and clever and superior we were to all who had gone before, it was painful to acknowledge repetition, and mortality, and all the ways in which we, too, would be subsumed into the past. Yet, perhaps more importantly, we also saw the future in those multicolor worlds.

I wrote a story once using aspects of Bob in a character—a man who called his lover his “orange woman”—and then one day was shocked to find myself looking at a woman in one of his paintings, as orange as I'd thought I'd made her up. Like Bob my character died too young, though the comparison ends there. These days, as witness this show, Bob Thompson is still very much with us, and we have seen several generations of artists who have been influenced by his work.

More than just a new vision, though, Bob was my friend. I went to his wedding, posed for the painting of my young family that he never got to finish, and have always thought he saw my own future in the somewhat worried face he gave me. I imagine he'd be pleased to note I no longer hold that expression, maybe due to the presence of a small painting of his, which includes a figure with guardian angel wings and greets me at my apartment door. A large print of another work hangs between my bookshelves; I like it there because its strong, declarative figures seem comfortable among ideas and raging passions. But my favorite reminder of Bob is a small, wrought iron, wooden topped stool that my feet rest on as I write. It's indestructible; I've had it since 1965, when he and Carol went to Europe, and by now it's seen a lot of me. I like to think I've still got my feet on the future we imagined for ourselves then, and that we carry those like Bob who didn't make it all the way to now, in respect for what they meant to leave us, what we have been given to keep.

Hettie Jones
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Untitled (Seated Nude)
1959, pastel on paper
17 ½ x 23 ¾ in.

Untitled (Man in Forest)
ca. 1958, charcoal on paper
11 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.



Untitled (Nude in Forest)
ca. 1958, charcoal on paper
11 ¾ x 17 ¾ in.

Untitled (Figure & Still Life)
ca. 1958
charcoal and gold paint on paper
11 7/8 x 17 5/8 in.





Untitled (Portrait)
ca. 1958, pastel on paper
11 ½ x 8 ½ in.

Last Painting
1966, oil with ink on canvas
55 ½ x 63 ¾ in.



*Study for Expulsion
and Nativity*
1963, pastel on paper
9 x 12 in.





Entombment
ca. 1961-63, ink on paper
15 x 20 in.

Red
1958, pastel on paper
13 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.



Christ's Sermon on the Mount
ca. 1961-63, ink on paper
15 x 20 in.



Untitled (Landscape)
ca. 1958, watercolor on paper
13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.



FAR LEFT:
Portrait of Nina Simone, Provincetown
 1965, ink on paper
 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18 in.

LEFT:
Ladies in Waiting Outside from Piero della Francesca's "Discovery of the Wood of the True Cross and Meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba"
 1960-61, ink on paper
 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Charlie Hayden
1960, ink on paper
15 x 20 in.



Waiting Figure # 4
1958, watercolor on paper
12 7/8 x 9 3/8 in.



Untitled (Figure with Balloon)
ca. 1958, watercolor on paper
13 1/2 x 10 3/4 in.

