

# STEPHEN S. PACE

A Life in Art: 1918–2010





*San Miguel, 46-1*

1946

Oil on Canvas, 16 ½" x 22 ¾"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.023



# **STEPHEN S. PACE**

A Life in Art: 1918–2010

**Kenneth P. McCutchan Art Center**  
**Palmina F. and Stephen S. Pace Galleries**

**May 23–September 2, 2011**

University of Southern Indiana





Untitled, 61-W17A

1961

Watercolor on Paper, 22" x 31"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.084

# STEPHEN S. PACE Artist and Friend

It has been a great privilege to know Stephen Pace. I have wonderful memories of time spent with him and Pam at his home and in his studio, looking at artwork and discussing the critical issues that have shaped our time. Like all the great masters, Stephen's art is built on a profound respect for drawing, and from his earliest works we observe a way of seeing that is formed by this medium. Drawing has been the foundation for shaping human experience into visual ideas. Stephen's work is no exception, and through all transformations that we see in his art, the superlative master hand of an exceptional draftsman can always be observed. I loved to watch him draw and see his ideas emerge from those masterful black lines on fine white paper.

Stephen, for me, will always be that most determined man who often faced the world with few words but always with wit. He possessed a sense of justice for himself and others that marked him as a liberal-minded man. At his passing he went from this world with his brushes in hand and his wool hat on his head. I remember the honor guard and the folded flag handed off to Pam to mark his military service as we made our goodbyes.

Shortly after, I visited with Pam at their home in New Harmony and spent some time alone in his studio. The easel was set with his final painting and his work was all about the room, much as it had been so many times before. He will be missed a great deal, but he has left us much in his work, and we will always have our memories of this most remarkable man.

*Michael Aakhus*  
Dean, College of Liberal Arts

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It is with great pleasure that the Kenneth P. McCutchan Art Center/Palmina F. and Stephen S. Pace Galleries presents the exhibition, Stephen Pace: A Life in Art, 1918–2010. It is with much pride and with some poignancy that we present this show; although Stephen Pace lived the life of a true artist for 91 years, he was still taken from us too soon. USI students, faculty, and the larger community all have benefitted greatly from his presence and his art, and through the USI Art Collection, will continue to do so far into the future.

Stephen Pace's connections to Southern Indiana are deep: much of his boyhood was spent on a farm near New Harmony, Indiana, his first art lessons were taken at the Evansville Museum, and, after a long and internationally recognized art career, his last years were lived back in his beloved New Harmony, where he created art until his death in September of 2010. He was strongly connected, too, to the University of Southern Indiana, through presenting lectures on his work, being awarded, with his wife Palmina, an honorary Ph.D., and visiting with USI art students in the campus painting studio, patiently and graciously discussing their artworks with them. In addition, it was through the generous and significant bequest of Stephen and his wife Palmina that the galleries in the McCutchan Art Center were able to be completed, opening in fall 2008. And, in the most wonderful gift of all, they donated—over a number of years—237 of Pace's paintings, drawings, and prints to the University of Southern Indiana, making our collection of his works the largest in the U.S. Susan Colaricci Sauls, Registrar of the USI Art Collection, has skillfully selected from these works to create this beautiful and powerful chronological exhibition.

I hope you will take great delight in the artworks in the exhibition and in this attendant catalog, handsomely designed by Joan deJong, chair of the USI Art Department. My sincerest appreciation goes to her and Ms. Sauls, and to Palmina F. Pace, the Pace family, David Bower and the USI Foundation, College of Liberal Arts dean Michael Aakhus, Laura Hudgins of the Stephen Pace Gallery in New Harmony, the USI Photography and Publishing Services staffs, the Art faculty, and the Art Center Galleries assistants, without whom this exhibition could not have become a reality. Please enjoy the show.

*Kathryn Waters*  
Director, Kenneth P. McCutchan Art Center/ Palmina F. and Stephen S. Pace Galleries





*Dunes Horses*

1982

Lithograph on Paper, 22 ¼" x 30 ¼"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2009

2009.006.010

# STEPHEN S. PACE Notes on the Exhibition

This exhibition is the culmination of my unique responsibility of leading a team of USI students and art professionals in the cataloguing of over 6,000 paintings, prints, drawings, and sketchbooks completed by Stephen Shell Pace during his lifetime. The experience provided those involved in this project a comprehensive view into the life of a quintessential American artist. The nearly 70 items, placed in the galleries chronologically, are from the collection of over 237 works donated to the University of Southern Indiana by the artist and his wife, Palmina F. Pace. Works were selected based on the consistency of subject matter and varied uses of line throughout his many decades as an artist.

Stephen Pace's early works reflected the traditional and disciplined influences of his first artistic mentor, Evansville artist Robert Lahr. His drawings were regimented and the colors were expected. The human figure was often placed within familiar surroundings and landscapes included structures and animals. These consistent themes, confident lines, and pure colors remained with him throughout his career.

After he served during World War II, Stephen Pace eagerly sought new experiences in art. Looking back he commented that "Being in the army opened up whole new worlds for me" (Sawin). His desire to experiment sprung from the art he saw in Europe and Mexico, as well as influences from a chance meeting with Pablo Picasso and newly forged friendships with artists like Milton Avery and Franz Kline. Pace's lines pulled away from their realistic placement and produced more organic shapes. Figures softened and landscapes were formed with layers of color and silhouettes. Although not exhibited here, toward the end of this period Pace explored abstract compositions with sharp angular shapes and heavily saturated colors. This and many of the more traditional skills he learned earlier created a pathway for his more abstract work which would follow.

The start of the 1950s found Pace travelling through Europe with his wife Pam for an extended tour. In Paris, he occupied a studio with other American artists; they created an informal art think tank. Pace's paint strokes and color became bolder; lines and shapes expanded and contracted. Soon after returning to New York City he studied with the artist Hans Hoffman, who later referred to Stephen as one of his most promising students (Willard). Although known as an Abstract Expressionist, this style occupied a very short period of his career. Pace is quoted as saying, "I never wanted to be labeled. I wanted to be part of the whole world. I never wanted to be part of what's in fashion" (Alexis).

During the early 1960s figures started to reemerge in his painted work as organic shapes rather than realistic images. Eventually Pace anchored the figures to interior scenes or landscapes. The drawings produced during this period had a more cohesive appearance with a strong, flowing dark line. This post-Abstract Expressionist period produced a more figurative body of work that was a combination of his expressionist energetic lines and the more traditional compositions from his pre-1950s era. By the end of the 1960s Stephen Pace found the artistic style that he continued to employ for the remainder of his life.

Always very aware of his own story, he shared vignettes from farms in Missouri, Indiana, and Pennsylvania, seacoasts and activities from Maine, along with interiors of his home and studio. Often Pace's subject matter included friends and family either participating in manual labor or household activities. Always ready with a sketchbook, he created during spontaneous drawing sessions or simply from a recalled memory. Stephen completed the images with an energetic line that comes from the discipline and familiarity of repetitive drawing. His natural color palette was clean and significantly brighter than the darker tones of his Abstract Expressionist canvases. Stephen Pace expressed this reflection about his work, "I want to lift people. I only paint when I am in a good mood. Whatever is happening to me happens to the painting" (Alexis).

In 2007 Stephen and Pam Pace returned to Indiana and his work took on a renewed energy. While his pure color, strong line, and personal subject matter remained unchanged, there was a sense of urgency, a strong desire to complete the compositions that remained in his memory or arose during new experiences in New Harmony. Stephen continued to work daily in his studio and painted until his last day. In one of his last interviews he is quoted as saying, "I've got to do my best work. Every single day" (Crothers).

*Susan Colaricci Sauls*  
Art Collection Registrar

## Works Cited:

- Alexis, Karin. "Stephen Pace (Washington D.C.)." *Art Voices* January/February 1981.
- Crothers, Julie. "courierpress.com." 18 July 2010. Evansville Courier Press. 24 July 2011 <<http://www.courierpress.com/news/2010/jul/18/keeping-pace/>>.
- Sawin, Martica. *Stephen Pace*. New York and Manchester: Hudson Hills Press, 2004.
- Willard, Charlotte. "Four Masters of Modern Art Select New Talent." *Look Magazine* 24 November 1959: 64.





**Untitled**

1961

Charcoal on Paper, 29 ¾" x 21 ½"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.138



**Untitled**

2005

Ink on Paper, 30 ¾" x 23"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.068





*Linda with Arms Upraised, 05-8M*  
2005  
Oil on Canvas, 30 ½" x 20 ½"  
Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010  
2010.003.027



*Jennie #2, 10-39*  
2010  
Oil on Canvas, 16" x 11"  
Gift of Palmina F. Pace, 2011  
2011.004.010

*Three Women, 63-17*  
1963  
Oil on Canvas, 75" x 114"  
Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010  
2010.003.038









**Untitled**

1944

Watercolor on Paper, 22" x 13 1/2"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.091B



**Untitled**

1948

Oil on Canvas, 27 1/4" x 20 1/2"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.015



Untitled, 63-3

1963

Oil on Canvas, 22" x 24"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.032



*Seeking Shelter #2*, 91-W17

1991

Watercolor on Paper, 29 3/4" x 22 1/4"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.086





*Fall Meadow, 04-01A*

2004

Oil on Canvas, 16 1/2" x 10 1/2"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.004



**Untitled, 57-12**

1957

Oil on Canvas, 80" x 66"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2008

2008.003.019





Untitled

2007

Oil on Canvas, 36" x 52"

Gift of Stephen S. and Palmina F. Pace, 2010

2010.003.020





## STEPHEN SHELL PACE

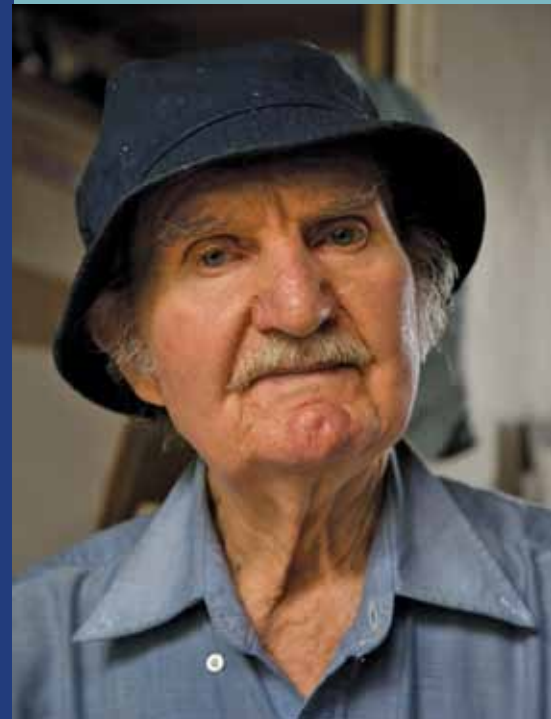
Born in 1918 near Charleston, Missouri, Pace began formal art training in Evansville, Indiana. After serving in World War II, he studied in Mexico, 1946; Art Students League, New York City, 1948-49; in Paris and Florence, 1950-51; and with Hans Hoffman, 1951-52. Pace has influenced students at many institutions including American University, Washington, D.C., where he retired from teaching in 1983. In the Summer of 2010 he was named the Artist of the Year by the Arts Council of Southwestern Indiana. Stephen Pace shared his vocation for painting with the University of Southern Indiana and New Harmony communities until his death in September, 2010.

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Indiana, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008  
Spanierman Gallery, New York, New York, 2011  
Katharina Rich Perlow Gallery, New York, New York, 2007, 2006, 2004, 2002, 2000, 1998, 1997, 1994, 1991, 1989, 1987  
Union College, Schenectady, New York, 1999  
Courtyard Gallery, Washington, D.C., 1996  
Bates College Museum of Art, Lewiston, Maine, 1994  
Evansville Museum of Arts & Science, Evansville, Indiana, 1992  
Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1991  
A.M. Sachs Gallery, New York, New York, 1985, 1983, 1981, 1979, 1978, 1976, 1974  
Bard College, Annadale-On-Hudson, New York, 1975  
Kansas City Art Institute, Missouri, 1973  
Des Moines Art Center, Iowa, 1970  
University of California, Berkeley, California, 1968  
Howard Wise Gallery, New York, New York, 1964, 1963, 1961, 1960  
Chicago Arts Club, Chicago, Illinois, 1962  
Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, California, 1961  
Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, 1959  
Poindexter Gallery, New York, New York, 1957, 1956

### SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York  
National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.  
National Academy of Design, New York, New York  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts  
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.  
Curie Institute, Paris, France  
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana  
Evansville Museum of Arts, History, and Science, Evansville, Indiana  
Portland Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine  
Yale University Museum, New Haven, Connecticut  
University Art Museum, Berkeley, California  
University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, Indiana  
Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine  
University of Denver, Denver, Colorado  
Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, Washington  
Hallmark International Award Collection, Kansas City, Missouri  
Bristol Myers Collection, Princeton, New Jersey  
A.T. & T., Chicago, Illinois



(on the front cover)  
*Artist with Red House #2, 09-59*

2009

Oil on Canvas, 40" x 60"

Gift of Palmina F. Pace, 2011

2011.004.004

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[www.usi.edu/libarts/artcenter-galleries](http://www.usi.edu/libarts/artcenter-galleries)

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