



## David Byrd - Drawing from Painting

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GREG KUCERA GALLERY

Nov 2nd – Dec 23rd 2017

Seattle, 212 3rd Avenue SMap & Full Hours

### Press Release

In 1958, he began work as an orderly in the psychiatric ward at the Veteran's Administration Medical Hospital, Montrose, NY. For thirty years, Byrd worked with doctors and nurses in care of the patients damaged by WW II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. This experience provided him with his defining body of paintings related to the patients' individual behaviors, general routines, and distinct personalities.

In 1988, Byrd retired from the hospital, bought a piece of land near Sidney Center, NY, and built his permanent home, mostly by himself. From 1992, Byrd devoted himself to painting, from memory, the places, people and situations he had seen in his previous lives. While not ignorant of recent art history, nor of the canon of 20th century artists, Byrd's work is anachronistic in that he remained true to the period of his formation as an artist. Though he died in 2013, one senses the concerns of the artists of the 1940s, of social realism, and of genre painting.

Working through connections to one of our artists, Jody Isaacson, living near Byrd, we produced a major exhibition of his work in April - May, 2013. David Byrd died

from cancer in May 2013 within weeks of his first and only exhibition in his life time. Building on the success of our gallery show in 2013, we presented Byrd to an even wider audience through art fairs. Our one-person exhibition of his work at the 2015 ADAA Art Show marked his introduction in New York City.

### Biography

Byrd was born in 1926 and raised in Springfield, Illinois. During the Great Depression, after the tragic break up of his own family, Byrd and his siblings lived in various foster homes, documented in several paintings, done later from memory. As a young adult Byrd traveled the world as a Merchant Marine, studied on the G.I. Bill with the Ozenfant School of Fine Arts in New York City from 1949-51, drawing from live models, and gaining basic painting experience.