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The seven artists in this exhibition pursue watercolor independently, but each have precedents in this long line of America's and North Carolina's watercolor painters. The work of Jonathan Summit and Missie Dickens are poles apart in terms of style, but share a sensuousness of color that is reminiscent of Prendergast. Kathleen Jardine's and Roy Nydorf's imagery, at first glance easily read as portraits and figures, evoke complex, mysterious, and poetic responses. Deborah Cavenaugh, seeking a fluid intensity, approaches the ecstatic clarity of Walter Anderson or Minnie Evans. Seemingly opposites, Beth Stafford's gouache landscapes and Roxanne Reep's watermedia abstractions are densely packed with boldly and solidly designed color passages.

Frankly, it is the energy of expression, the very intensity of spirit running through them, which draws my attention to these artists' works. The nearly primitive directness of Deborah Cavenaugh and the ornately worked compositions of Kathleen Jardine speak in very different dialects. But both, and the work of each of the other artists in Watermarks: Contemporary Watercolor, resonate with sincerity and honesty. That is always rare, in any medium.

John A. Hancock
Assistant Professor of Art, Barton College
March 1997



Contemporary Watercolors

May 8th - June 20th, 1997

Annie Boykin Gallery
Wilson Arts Center



I Am Opening My Eyes to the Blessings
That Are Mine

Watercolor
29x34