

March 2009

TULLIS NEWS

The Italian Connection

Garner Tullis lives & works in Marche, Italy.



GARNER TULLIS: ENCAUSTIC, A SIREN'S SONG

After many years helping other artists with their craft, Garner explores his own artistic expressions.

A major exhibition of Garners encaustic paintings from 1991-2009 will open Sunday, 31st May 2009 at 5pm, "il Castellare" in Urbino, Italy.

Next Door in the Palazzo Ducale is a 500 year anniversary retrospective and celebration of Raffaello.

Finding his voice with the oldest painting medium known to man.

Garner has always taken a philosophy of his grandfather Jamison Handy to heart. Doing old things the new way.

After years expanding the horizons of paper making and pushing the boundaries of printmaking, it was time to reinvent himself once again.

In the early 1990's Garner decided to revisit an old flame he'd met early in his career as a foundry man and paint with wax.



**Garner Tullis
Opening Reception:
Sunday, 31st of May
at 5 PM**

**il Castellare,
the major museum of
Palazzo Ducale
Urbino, Italy**

GARNER TULLIS



Man of Many Talents

Top: Redwood City, California was the site of Garner's foundry in the late sixties.

Middle: Conversing with Louise Nevelson about their cast paper multiple projects For PACE Editions in the late 1970's.

Bottom: Garner's colored paper pulp painting, pushing the genera further in the 1980's

From A Fulbright Scholarship in a Florence Foundry to a Museum Show in Urbino Italy.

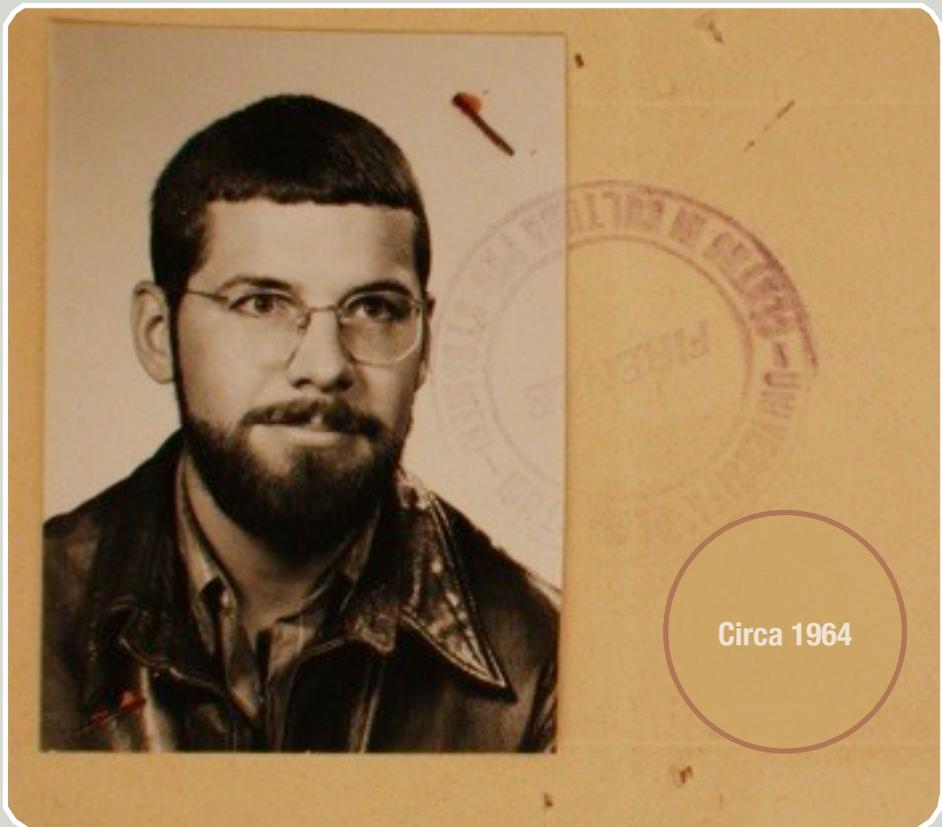
Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Garner Tullis became best known for his printmaking, especially monotypes, but has also done non-objective paintings with encaustic, still life with acrylic, bronze sculpture and innovative work with film. In the early 1970s, he experimented with a process of bonding thin films of titanium and quartz in a vacuum chamber to glass plates, and the effect was "mists of rainbow color spectra over mirror-like reflecting surfaces". (Albright 318)

Garner fell in love with Italy when his son Richard was a child. His art work was edgy and experimental, pushing the boundaries of printmaking and challenging the critics with his unorthodox approach to materials.

Once the student of such major figures as Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko, Robert Motherwell, Ad Reinhardt and David Smith. The son of a wealthy businessman, Garner did his

first painting in 1959, the style of Jackson Pollock (whom he is reported not to have heard about) and in 1961 he joined an arts program at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1963, he was thrown out of a printmaking class for making prints that were three inch deep. And in 1964, when he applied for a Fulbright Fellowship in printmaking, he got one in sculpture instead. David Carrier quotes Tullis as saying that "printmakers have always considered me as a sculptor, and sculptors have always seen me as a printmaker".

Of course, Tullis was a part of a general movement of the sixties, a movement that indicated a paradigm shift. Shaped by the movement of American abstract expressionism, Tullis belonged to a generation of artists that developed the performative, process-oriented and material aspects of abstract painting, thereby sometimes getting into a borderland between sculpture and painting, between the spatial and the temporal, between object and process. This is the borderland that was condemned by Michael Fried when he said: "everything between the arts is theater". This is the borderland of Rauschenberg's combines, of performance and happening, of Serra and



Circa 1964

Smithson -- and perhaps of the experimental printing of Garner Tullis.

This is not to say that Tullis explored this borderland in a very determined way, neither that he was generally very interested in erasing the borders between the arts. It seems that much of the various experimental activities that was in the sixties didn't interest him that much. His aim was that of a man who wanted to free printmaking the way New York School Painters freed painting in the 1960s. Tullis has also said that printing in the fifties was at the same level as painting was in the thirties -- and it's obvious that he measures the development of printing according to the standards of the New York School painting."

"Ever since he opened his first studio for experimental printing in San Francisco in 1967, major artists have been his customers and collaborators. His whole business is based on the idea of mutual collaboration - the artist and the printer splitting up the work in equal shares after a project is finished. Abstract painting -- expressionist or more geometrical -- has dominated the work carried out in Tullis' studios." The many full color illustrations in Carriers book represents works by older artists

such as Sam Francis, Emilio Vedova and Richard Diebenkorn, continuing with Sean Scully, David Reed, Paul Osipow and other "neo-abstractors" of the eighties, ending with younger figures such as the Austrian Martin Beck. Carrier writes illuminatingly about the artists and their collaboration with Tullis, using a rich material of interviews. It's text is illustrated by remarkable black-and-white photographs from Tullis's studios in San Francisco, Santa Barbara and New York. Most of them are taken by Tullis's son, Richard B. Tullis II, who is now the owner of the Santa Barbara studio. These photographs really make it easier to imagine the creative spirit that Carrier writes about. Carrier's account of Tullis's process orientation is also very revealing as a general account of visual thinking.

(excerpt from a book review by Fred Anderson. [Garner Tullis and the Art of Collaboration](#) by David Carrier).



ENCAUSTIC



Painting with Pigment in Wax

The history of encaustic dates back to the 5th century B.C. It was once ubiquitously used in ancient Greek painting and sculpture. In the centuries that followed the fall of Greek and Roman culture, it was all but forgotten. The revival of the process in the early 20th century was due to the advent of new tools and the ability to adapt the unique surface of encaustic to emerging art forms.

STUDIO: GARNER TULLIS, ITALY



Reinvention

After introducing a few of the art world's finest artists to the technique of encaustic painting, two planes crashed into the World Trade Center.

This tragic event changed the course of Garners life forever.



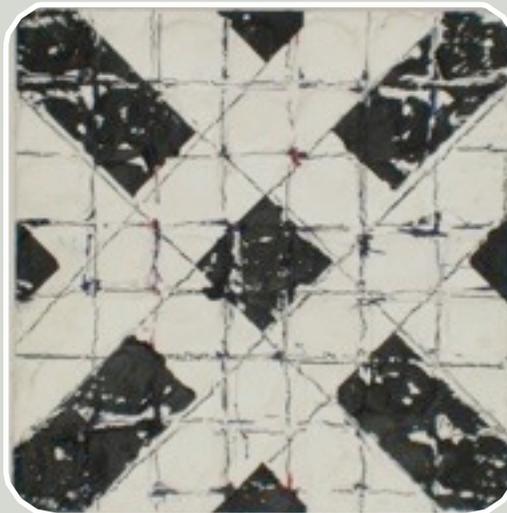
Rising from New York Ashes a New Dawn Shines on Garner in Italy's Marche Region.

In the early eighties a life long dream of Garners was realized. He'd adopted Italy as his home country during study in Florence starting in 1964 as a Fulbright Scholar. He longed to be a part of the great Italian culture, to revel in art and history, to live in a land steeped with tradition. Buying a house in Italy would fulfill a life long dream, an opportunity to establish roots in the country of his heart.

The chance of a life time was taken, Garner purchased a 15th century farm house in the unspoiled country side of Marche. Not far from the cultural center of Urbino, Garner would easily revisit the masters painting and drawings housed in the museums of Urbino, birth place of Raffaello.

His dream proved his life line after 9/11.

Enduring the horrors and destruction of the terrorist attacks made Garner yearn for a peaceful place, that place was his beloved home in the Italian country side, Villa Ca'Boso. He sold his studio on White Street in



the late summer of 2001 and returned to his adopted home land to start a new life where he could focus on his art.

The plan for years had been to have the Ca'Boso be a place to work with European Artist and collaborate with them on project much as he'd done in past studios over the course of four decades.

Times had changed and Garner heard his muse calling, his new mistress Encaustic was calling.

Seven years have gone by as Garner fervently painted in his Italian hideaway. His loving dogs often his only companions steadfastly by his side.

The pay off is here.

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