

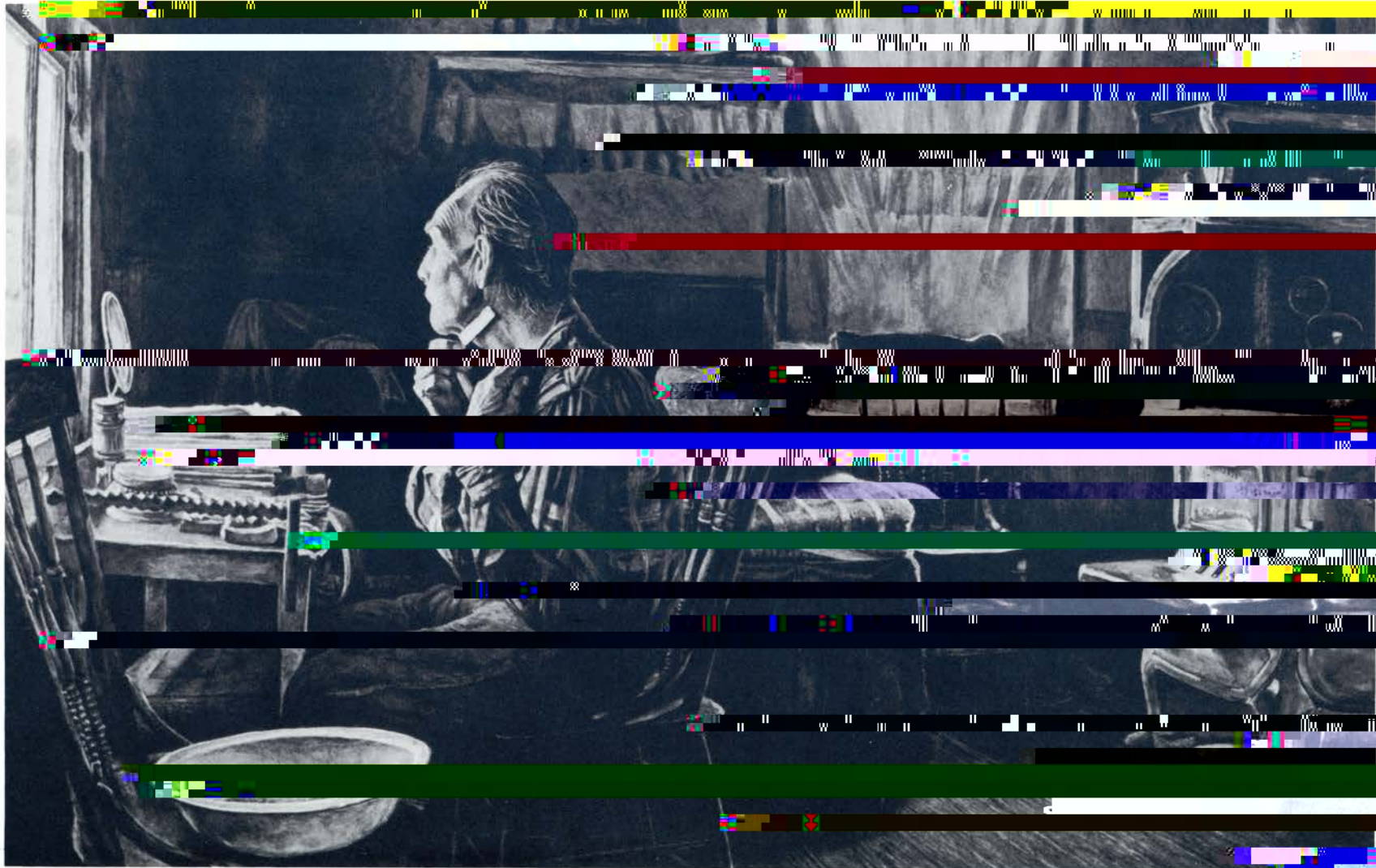
DAVID ARMSTRONG



Country Furniture Maker, *watercolor*, 14½ x 22 inches

DAVID H. ARMSTRONG
PAINTINGS

APRIL 21 - MAY 20, 1904
SORDOBY GALLERY
WILKES



Lester (The Handyman), watercolor and pencil, 12 x 14

Introduction

David Armstrong paints almost daily, out-of-doors, in all seasons, usually on his farm in the rolling hills of Lycoming County, Pennsylvania. Through the clean naturalism of his style, he registers a self-effacing commitment to the land. He does not live in harmony with mechanized living and urbanized culture, he does not regard himself as a throwback to a lost era of rural life. Instead, he seeks to reaffirm the values and beauties inherent in that life which are still vital, but which are too often neglected.

His continuing series of portraits called "The Vanishing American" are an example of this. He has painted portraits of women which might soon pass into history, along with the clean air and water he portrays in his landscapes. These paintings attempt to preserve not so much the crafts themselves, but the crafts as they represent.

No mean craftsman himself, Armstrong uses the dignity and beauty of his craftsmen's labors in firmly structured watercolors. As a medium technically suited to the kind of on-the-spot painting he does, watercolor is ideal for him. The clear light which reinforces the freshness of his scenes, although the texture is denser than usual in watercolor. Beyond their penetrating description of form, these paintings echo the tempo of life lived close to the land. Quiet of mood, precise in composition, they beckon us to enter a world which still holds much of value for modern man.

The present exhibition, in which the David Armstrong to the Wyoming Valley. He will already be well-known to those who saw his one-man show at the Everhart Museum last year, or his large retrospective at the William Per

at the Hammer Galleries in New York, beginning in 1976, he has already had many collections throughout the United States.

Both his works are shown in the present exhibition, but special emphasis has been given to the "Craftsmen," a project to which the artist

his energy are particularly grateful to Mr. Harold H. Steam, III, for his generous cooperation in loaning the "Craftsmen" also wish to thank the artist for his commentaries on the "Craftsmen" subjects. Marlin Wagner for his photographs, and assembled the show.

W. H. Sterling
Director

Vanishing American Craftsmen

In many cases a "craftsman" is an "artist". For the artist, of the craftsman begins his work with a sense of what beauty is. He strives to achieve that quality through

work. The true craftsman has the knowledge, appreciation, and ability to stand back from

admire the work according to his or her own high standards of excellence. Fine craftsmen

have a characteristic that distinguishes them above the rest. It is a "journeyman" next to a

communication. The craftsman's hands, tools and materials are passed the spirit, the will, the intellect and personality, sensitivity, and the soul of the artisan into

and as long as there are men who take satisfaction and pride in a good job well done, the spirit of fine craftsmanship will survive.

Country Doctor

Today, as in the past, the practice of medicine is still "artistic", depending to a large degree on the knowledge, manual dexterity, and very often, the creative resourcefulness of the doctor himself. Some doctors still design their own instruments, which make them finer and more effective artisans in their specialized fields. In the very past doctors designed their own medicines for the patients as well. (There was no F.D.A.)

The doctor was often called upon to perform a multitude of diverse and difficult surgical operations which today are specialized fields of medical practice in themselves. In a more decentralized and rural, a country doctor's practice covered a wide territory and he treated his patients in their homes as often as in his own office. This very special and vanishing breed of doctor had the pioneer's skin and silver mentality and indicated humaneness that literally shaped the medical world as we know it today. There were no x-ray machines or other mechanical devices available to him which help to prolong life today. Such devices were illegal, so, in order to further his own knowledge, he would surreptitiously bring in cadavers. There is no question that today's field of medicine owes a great deal to the early medical pioneer practitioners who remain a credit not only to their burdgeoning field but to the human race as well.

It may be of interest to know that this

self. Of the artist David Armstrong, the doctor also a relative who delivered David. The doctor's office (now historically preserved) was once the actual office of David's great-grandfather who practiced medicine in the then surrounding countryside of Washington, D.C.

The Farmer

The farmer has been considered the backbone of America. Certainly there is much love and even romance surrounding the self-employed pioneering man who produces a superior product by working with his hands harmoniously with the earth. However, the natural cycle of rebuilding and replenishing the soil. The organic nature of the energy-efficient horse has been replaced with the mechanical tractor which now grows our food with chemicals. The small family farms still comprise the "meat and potatoes" of American agriculture and industry, and the farmer still feels a special pride and satisfaction from producing his products with the coordination of his hands, materials, and tools. But I must say the noise, something very beautiful was lost from farming. Today the hard and excellence of the farmer's efforts are displayed every summer at county fairs across America. The farmer is not only a producer of food or was as artisan. But the farmer is loved lovingly and respectfully for the earth and who takes pride in the quality of his products is much more.

The Quilter

Although quilting died out in Europe, it was a new tradition as well as a new tradition in the colonies. Patching a quilt (repairing was more common) was a very common phenomenon. It passed down from great grandmother, grandmother, mother to daughter, individual quilts have always reflected the character, vision, and various artistic abilities of their creator or creators. Through various narmonies or can be said to be a true artistic interplay as to the quilt's birner. The quilting has served several women today than the individual artist going it alone. The quilt has become a symbol of American folk art at its finest.

DAVID ARMSTRONG

Birth Date: January 29, 1947

Country Furniture Maker

The art of the well-worn and traditional grooves or other creative forms of expression. The style, design, and character of the product is as diverse and numerous as the hands, minds, and materials which create it. The field of furniture making also varies from those who wish to initiate or modify styles and patterns of the past, to craftsmen who innovate new forms of furniture, thus giving a new dimension to our existing ideals of beauty and art. The fine furniture craftsman strives to create a piece that will not only provide its owner with comfort and durability, but also exist on a higher level as a visually pleasing finely wrought and crafted object. The artist must consider the character and uses of the individual kinds of woods he uses in the inherent design. Wood grain, color, and color can be aesthetically pleasing in themselves but it takes the loving and skilled hands of the craftsman to put it all together and to bring the piece or furniture to life.

Automation has all but put the handcrafted furniture maker out of business. Most furniture makers today specialize in making one or two kinds of pieces of furniture, but most of them are finding it is becoming harder and harder to find a furniture maker who will devote his life and talents to providing for his neighbor's furniture needs while satisfying his own artistic ones. The diversified country furniture maker who still handcrafts a multitude of beautiful items, everything from an axe handle to a love seat, from a baby's cradle to a porch swing, is indeed a very vanishing American craftsman.

EDUCATION:

High School: The Central High School, Williamsport, Pa.
College: B.A. Degree from Bucknell University
Graduate: M.F.A. degree in Art (Fellowship, teaching assistant)
Indiana University, Bloomington, In., 1971

ONE-MAN EXHIBITIONS:

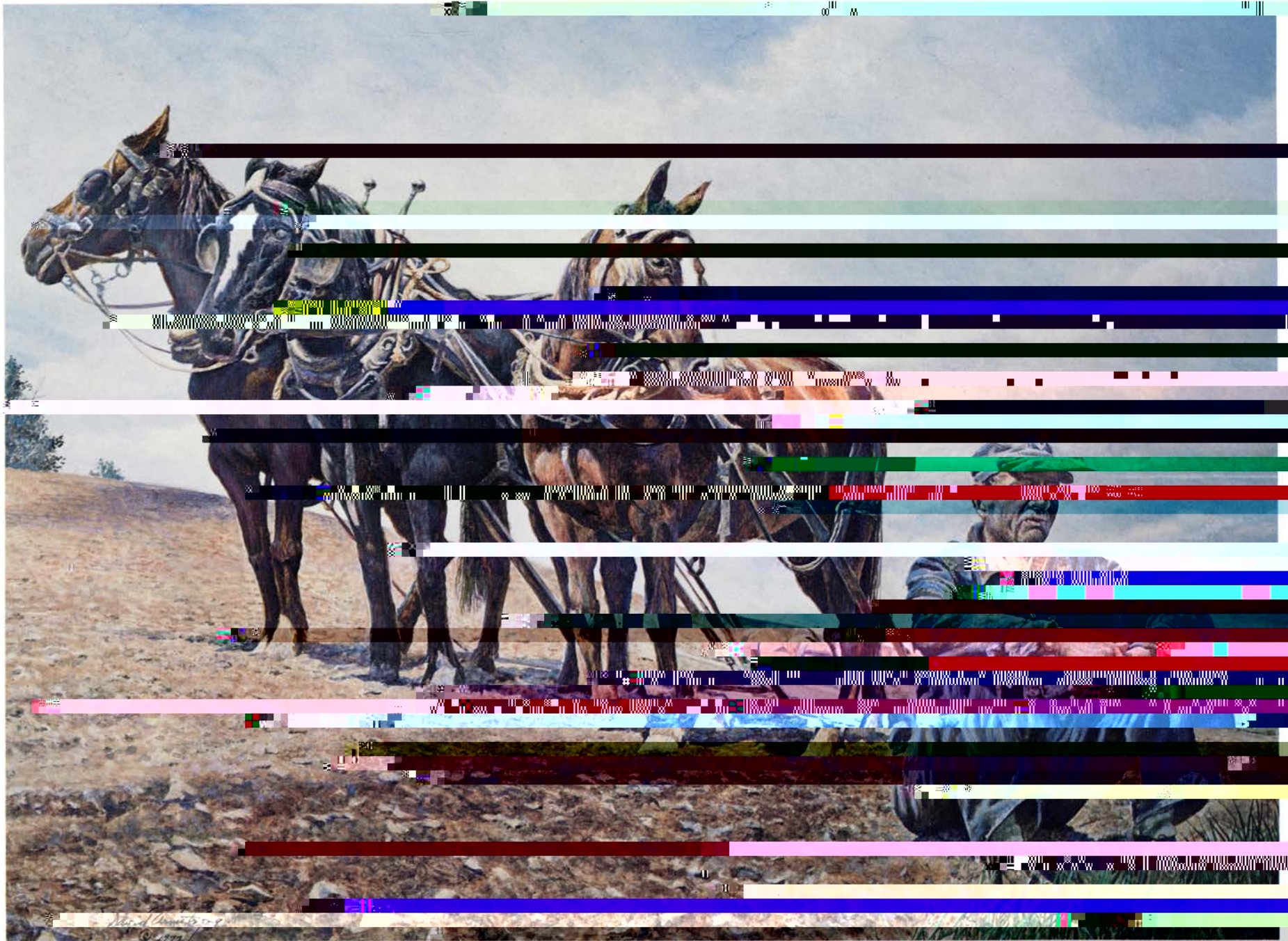
Sordani Gallery, Williamsport, Pa.
Everhart Museum, Scranton, Pa. June-July 1981
Hammer Galleries, New York City, 1974, 1976, 1978
Westmoreland County Museum, Greensburg, Pa., Oct. 1984, Catalogue - 96 pieces
Rockville Historical Society, Rockville, Md., Sept., 1980
Kenan Art Center, Lockport, N.Y., 1979
William Penn Memorial Museum, Harrisburg, Pa., Aug. 1978, Catalogue - 150 pieces
York-Northwestern Museum, College Park, Pa., 1979
Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pa., 1977
Lycoming College, Williamsport, Pa., 1973

GROUP SHOWS:

"The Way We See It," Two-Man show of watercolors and photographs with John Denver, at Hammer Galleries, N.Y., Dec. Jan. 1980, poster
"Pennsylvania Artists Paint Pennsylvania," Central Pa. Art Association, Williamsport, Pa., July, 1979
"The New American Still Life," Westmoreland County Museum, July, 1979
"Americana" Exhibit, Greenwich Workshop Galleries, Conn., 1978
"Artists Salute Skowhegan," Kennedy Center, N.Y., 1977
Audubon Artists, N.Y., 1976
Allied Artists, N.Y., 1975
Banter Galleries, N.Y., 1972

TEACHING:

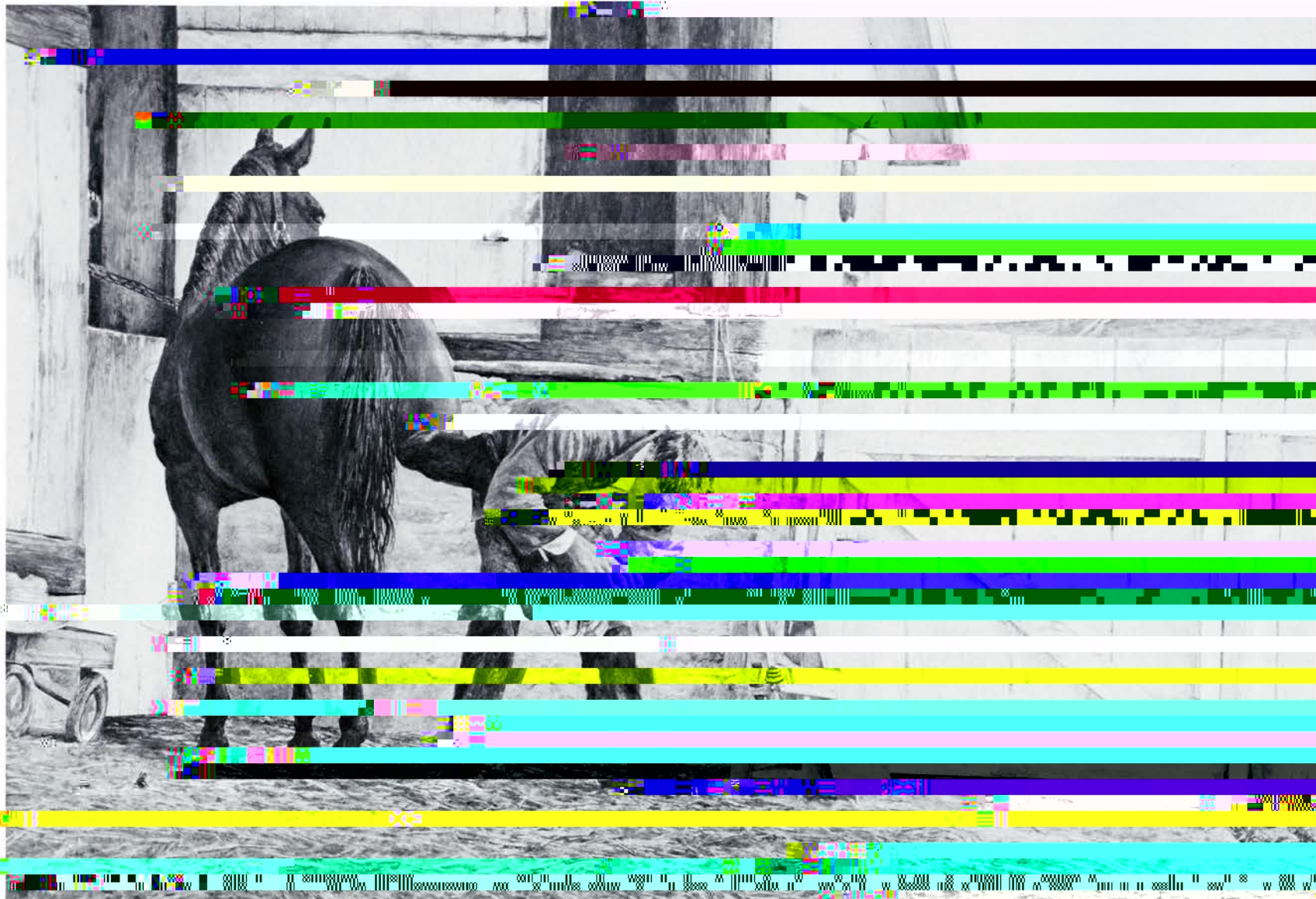
ESOP, The Pennsylvania State University, Pa., 1969-1968
Inward Bound, Lewisburg, Pa., 1972
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1969-1970, teaching fellowship in drawing and design
Muncy Correctional Institution, Muncy, Pa., 1972
Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary, Lewisburg, Pa., 1974
Penn State Continuing Education, Williamsport, Pa., 1974-1975
Career Day, Hughesville High School, 1979, 80, 81



The Fall



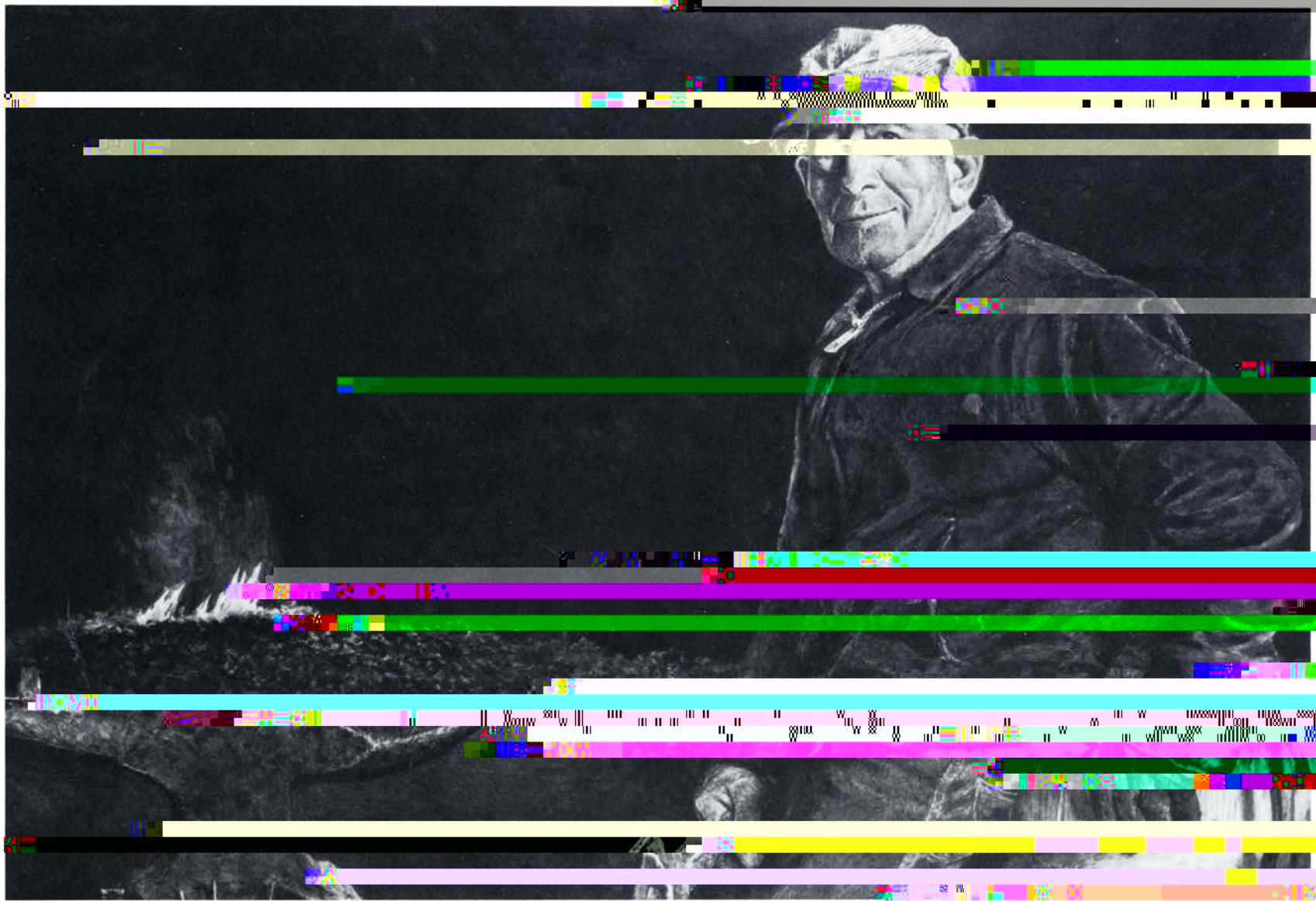
The Quilter, watercolor, 22 x 29 inches



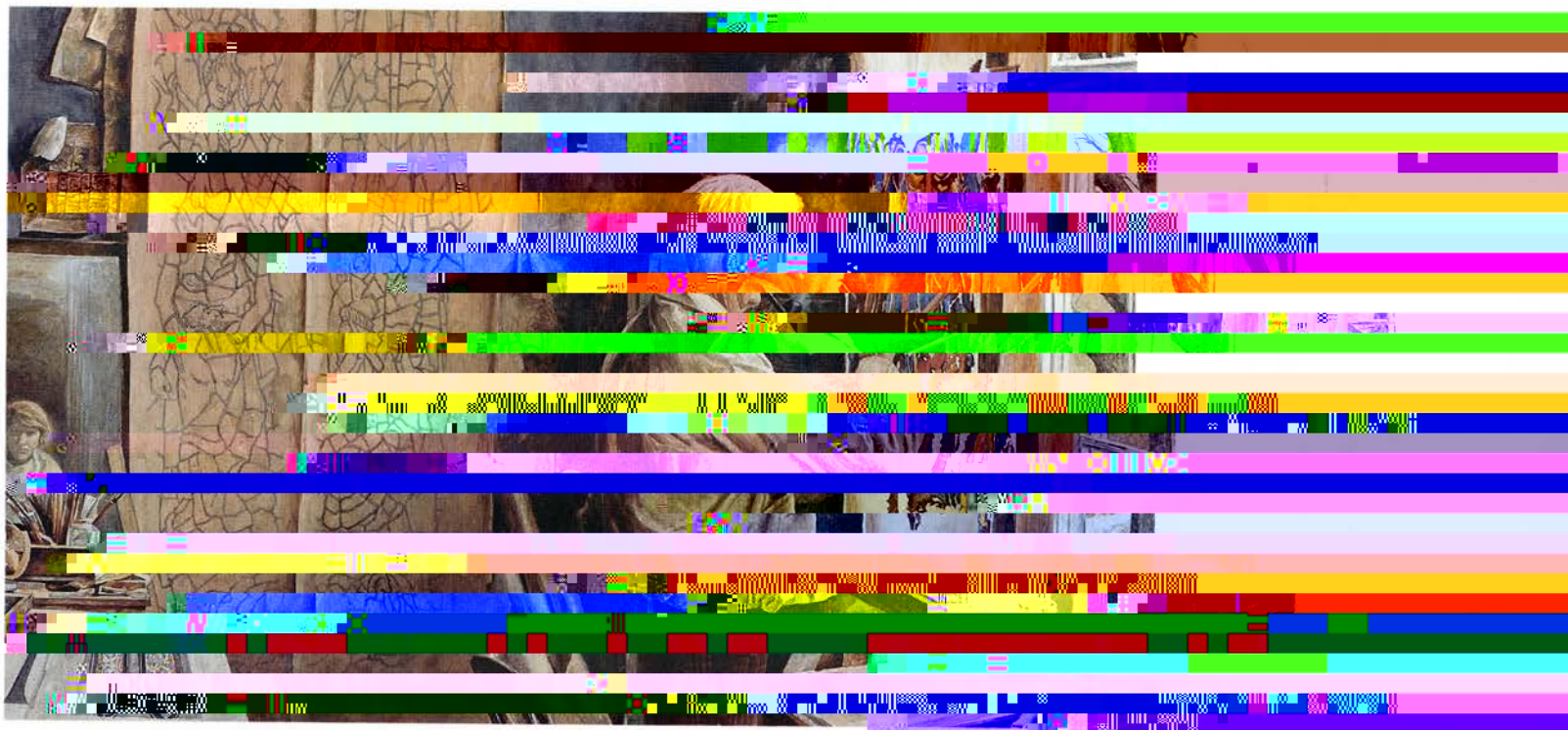
Young Artist, watercolor



Farrier, watercolor, 21½ x 29 inches



Blacksmith, *watercolor*



Stained Glass Maker, watercolor, 25 x 39 inches



Stonewallers, *watercolor*, 13 x 29 inches

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