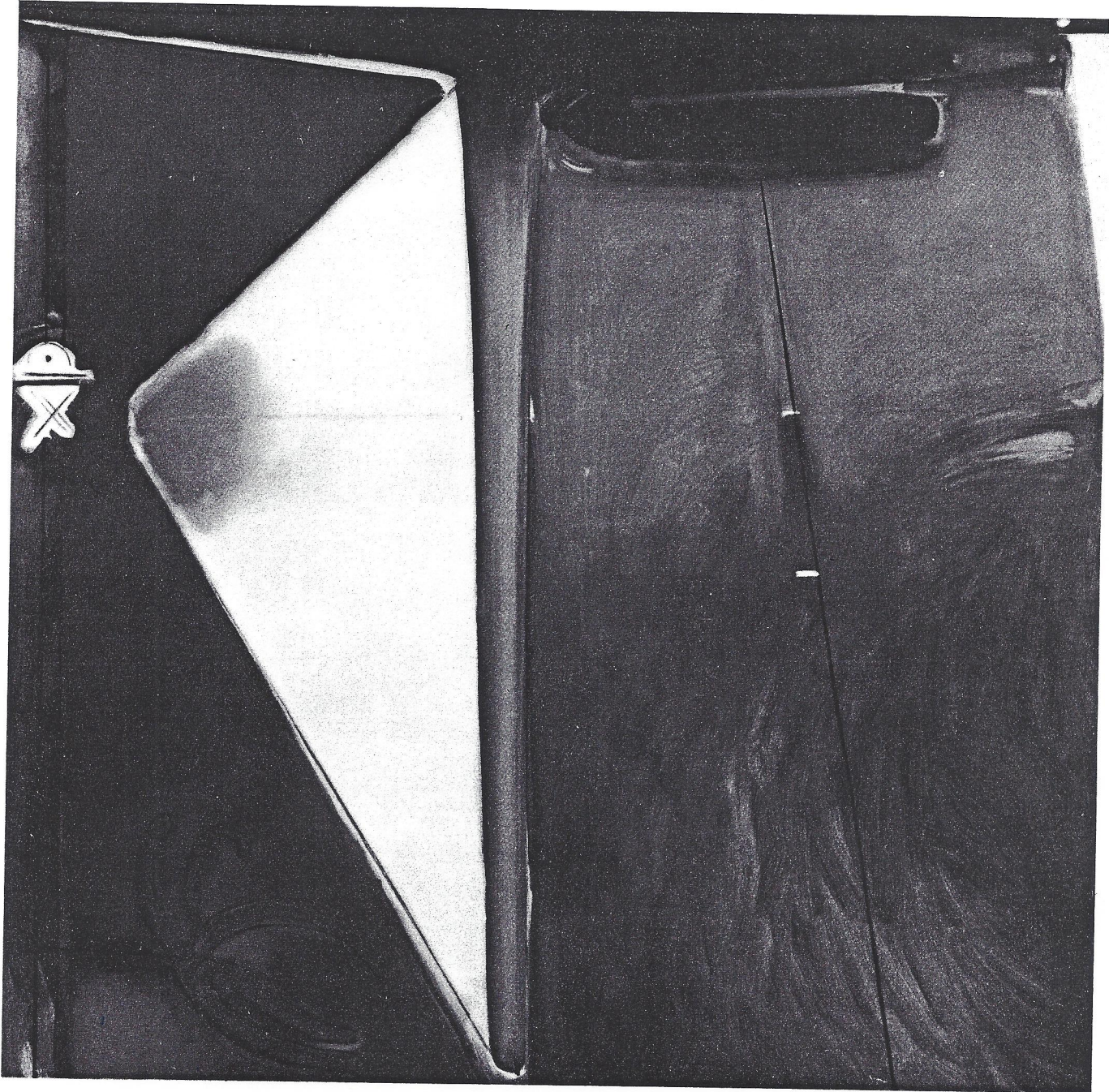

stephen greene

A retrospective exhibition
of work produced
from 1963 to 1973

October 18 through November 17, 1974

Tyler School of Art, Temple University
of the commonwealth system of higher education
Beech & Penrose Avenues
Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

The Garden of Night, 49 1/2" x 49 1/2", oil on canvas, 1972



"Stephen Greene has never fitted comfortably into any particular movement, but he has remained a highly individual, idiosyncratic painter . . . the unrest and discomfort communicated by Stephen Greene's recent work derives from purely visual means. In Greene's paintings, however, the opposition of darkness and light is not equated with black and white but with extraordinary color. Greene has always been a superb draughtsman, from his painfully beautiful figurative drawings to the more austere Pictographs. One can find similarities between Stephen Greene's work and late Gorky; Matisse, too, as we have indicated, has influenced him, and his early works relate to early Renaissance paintings. Ultimately of course, the statement is Greene's own, a disquieting and lyrical series of evocative images."

Karen Wilkin: Art International February, 1973

The paintings and drawings in Stephen Greene's current exhibition at Tyler represent work that has been done during the past ten years. During most of that period Steve has been a member of the painting faculty at Tyler and we, his colleagues on the faculty and students, have been able to share in his insights and discoveries as an artist. It is impossible for an artist's teaching to be unaffected by the concerns in his own work and the issues and values visible in Greene's work make the viewer confident that his students have been exposed to valuable and useful lessons.

This exhibition presents the work of an artist who is totally committed to the *idea* as well as the craft inherent in art. The work achieves that uniquely personal point of view all artists hope for but which not all are successful in discovering. In Greene's case his point of view is guided and informed, not by temporary taste or trends, but by strongly held long-term convictions about the nature of art. These are tough and aggressive paintings but they are also beautiful at a time when beauty is seldom discussed as a value in art. They are paintings concerned with visual impact but they also contain passages of great subtlety. They are paintings seemingly unconcerned with many of the central issues of the period during which they were painted. They succeed because of the energy and authority they bring to the act of painting.

An artist, no matter how extensive his training and experience, is never sure of success when he walks into his studio to begin work. The consistency and high level of accomplishment in this exhibition is a tribute to Greene's intelligence, instincts and persistence as an artist. What it finally comes down to is that the exhibition presents more than a fine collection of paintings and drawings—it presents the evidence of a professional at work.

David Pease
Chairman, Department of
Painting, Drawing and Sculpture
October 1974

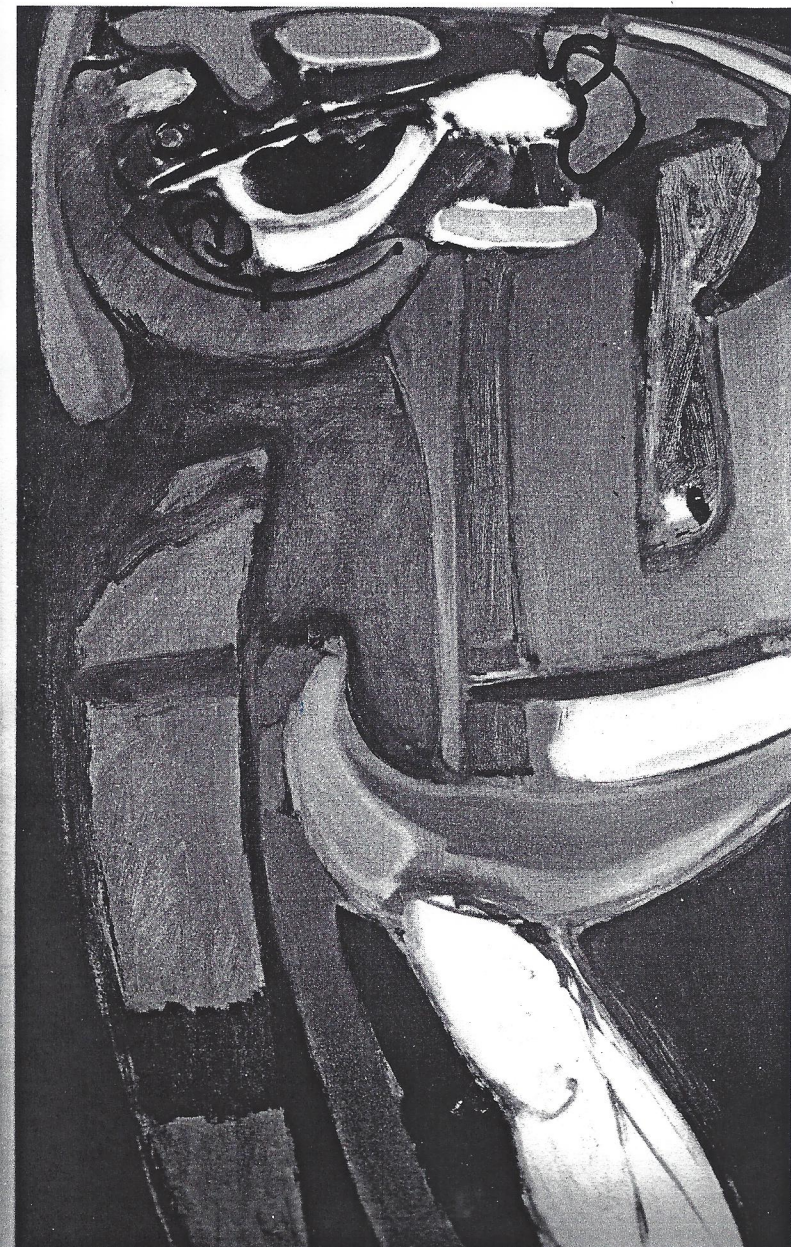
Models, 50" x 29", pencil, 1963



"Stephen Greene is by temperament a meditative painter, a symbolist whose concern with ideas is reflexive and inevitable. His taste for the dream world, his attraction to the marvelous and the terrible, his passion for the equivocal all characteristic of the symbolist temperament. Since his is the tragic view, the paintings are without exception uneasy, filled with allusions to isolation, violence and terror.

**Dore Ashton:
Exhibition catalogue
"Stephen Greene,
A Retrospective Exhibition
of Paintings and Drawings"
Corcoran Gallery of Art,
March, 1963**

Encirclement, 50" x 29", oil on canvas, 1964



"Stephen Greene whose exhibition makes the word "artist" take on its fullest meaning. His style is one of the most perfect in American art, utilizing all the skills of a consummate picture maker. The impression is of a febrile sensibility, constantly absorbing the shocks at its nerve endings by totally sophisticated means. Mr. Greene is a perfectionist with a marvelous obsessive flaw that keeps him continually wounding the exquisite. It is a very self-conscious art, perfect in form, painfully sensitive, reminiscent of some French symbolist poets."

**Brian O'Doherty:
The New York Times, May 16, 1964**

"Greene is a powerful colorist who owes nothing to the transparent brilliance and optical shock of color field painting; conversely, he explores a kind of mythic imagery (though he is by no means representational) which is a generation removed from the mythology of the commercial product in Pop art. Now, 46, Greene simply had to go his own way, unperturbed by Neo Cubism, Abstract Expressionism or the latest installments in historical necessity. In retrospect, this seems a small miracle. For the present, he has given us an exhibition of invigorating beauty."

**Max Kozloff:
The Nation, June 1, 1964**