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1973

COVER:

12. CLASSIC SERIES: Tan—Green—Grey—1973
(Detail)

MICHAEL CLARK

JANUARY 16—FEBRUARY 2

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6537
.CS37
A4
1973

ANDREW CRISPO GALLERY

41 EAST 57 STREET NEW YORK CITY 758-9190 2nd floor

CATALOGUE

GEORGE WASHINGTONS

1. Black George Washington—1972
(Collection: Paul Richard, Washington, D.C.)
2. Orange George Washington—1973
(Collection: Michael Valentine, Boston, Mass.)
3. Blue George Washington—1973
4. Green George Washington—1973
5. Yellow George Washington—1973

SEASCAPES

6. Cape Cod Seascape—September, 1973
7. North Haven Seascape—July, 1973
8. Coney Island Seascape—October, 1973
9. Coney Island Seascape—November, 1973
10. Coney Island Seascape—December, 1973
11. Coney Island Seascape—April, 1971
(Collection: Maggie Roth, San Francisco, Cal.)

CLASSICS

12. Tan—green—grey—1973
13. Tan—ochre—yellow—1973
14. Grey—yellow—brown—1973
(Collection: Gene Baro, Washington, D.C.)
15. Black—blue—yellow—1973
16. Tan—red—yellow—1973
17. Grey—yellow—brown—1973
(Collection: Stephen Reichard, New York, N.Y.)

PROJECT SERIES

18. Tan—red—blue—1973

SERIES OF SIX

19. I Black—grey—white—1973
20. II Black—grey—white—1973
21. III Black—grey—white—1973
22. IV Black—grey—white—1973
23. V Black—grey—white—1973
24. VI Black—grey—white—1973

All the above paintings measure 14 by 14 inches (35.5 cm. by 35.5 cm.) except number #36 which measures 36 by 36 inches (91.5 by 91.5 cm.) All of the paintings are in acrylics.



BIOGRAPHY

- 1946 Born in Denver, Colorado
- 1965-
'66 Studied at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y.
- 1966 Group Show—United States Department of State, Washington, D.C.
- 1967 Eight Young Washington Painters—Jewish Community Center
Washington, D.C.
- 1967 "18h Area Exhibition", Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
- 1967 "Five Young Artists", The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
- 1968 "The Art of Organic Forms", Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
- 1968 "Washington, 1968, New Painting and Structure", Corcoran Gallery of
Art, Washington, D.C.
- 1968 One-man Show, Jefferson Place Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1969 "Washington Painters", Ringling Museum, Sarasota, Florida.
- 1969 "Washington Painters", Museum of Art, Jacksonville, Florida
- 1970 "20 Years, 10 Washington Artists, 1960-'70, Edmonton Art Gallery
Edmonton, Canada, organized by Andrew Hudson. This exhibition
was also shown at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, Maryland
- 1970 One-man Show, A C E Company, Washington, D.C.
- 1970 "New York Drawing Society Show", Philadelphia Museum of Art,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Regional) and Washington, D.C.
(National), New York City (National)
- 1971 One-man Show, Pyramid Gallery, Ltd., Washington, D.C.
- 1971 One-man Show, University of Pennsylvania Gallery, Philadelphia, Pa.
- 1971 One-man Show, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
- 1971 "Seven Young American Draftsmen", The Corcoran Gallery of Art
Washington, D.C.
- 1971 "Pyramid Gallery Artist", Westmoreland County Museum, Westmoreland
Pennsylvania
- 1972 "Washington Artists", Institute Guatemaltero Americano, Guatemala
City, Guatemala
- 1972 "Realists", Pyramid Gallery, Ltd., Washington, D.C.
- 1973 One-man Show, Lunn Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1973 "Twentieth Century Americans", Andrew Cripso Galleries,
New York, N.Y.
- 1973 One-man Show, Everson Museum, Syracuse, N.Y.
- 1974 One-man Show, Andrew Crispo Gallery, New York, N.Y.

WORK IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

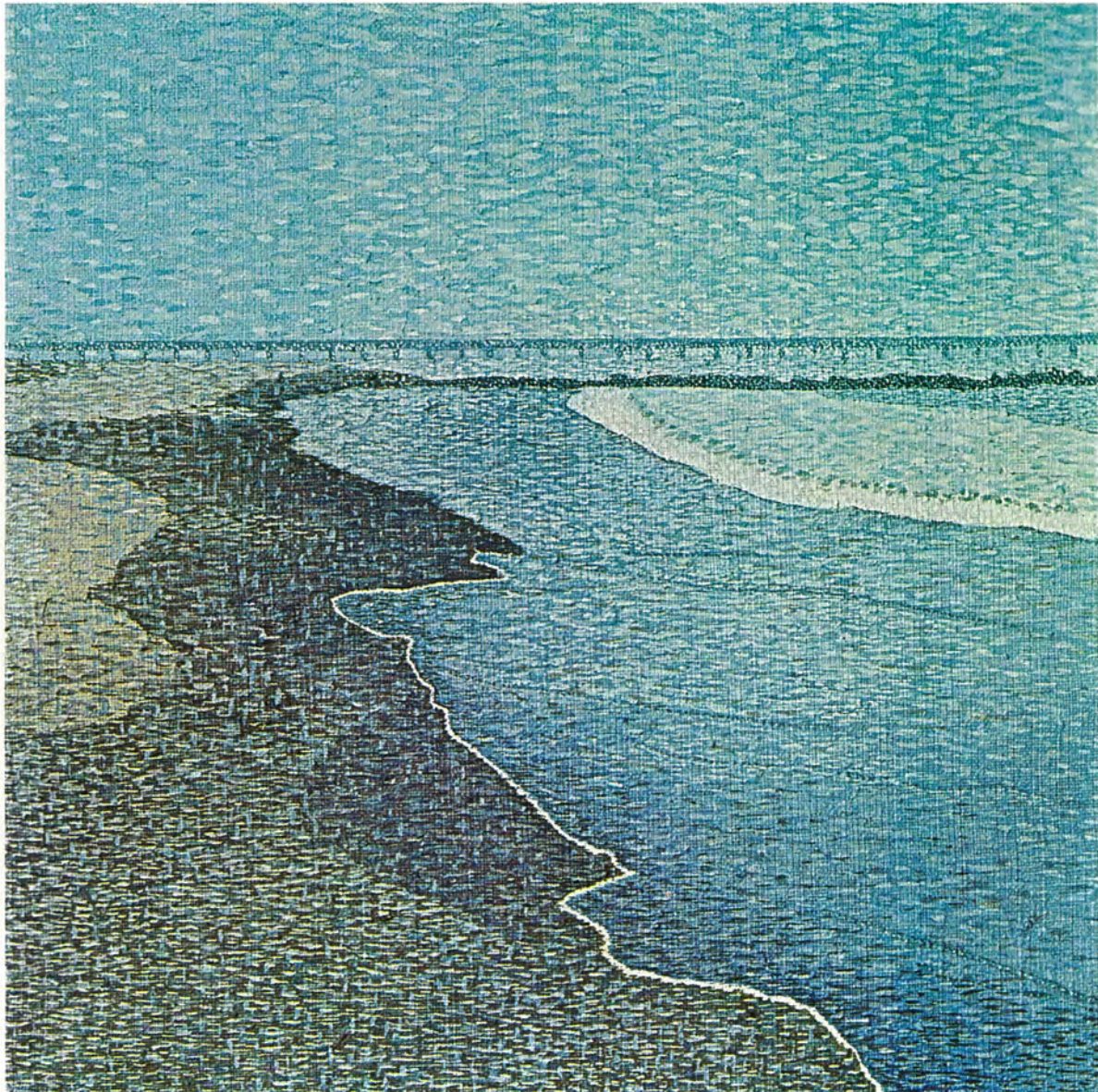
- The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
The Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York
The Washington Post, Washington, D.C.

The Andrew Crispo Gallery presents for the first time in New York City, a one-man show of paintings by a young man who has distinguished himself in Washington, D. C. Mr. Michael Clark has not sprung rapidly into prominence, but rather by constant application has established a reputation.

Elsewhere in this catalogue we have included a conversation between the artist and Mr. Gene Baro, Art Historian and Critic; in which the artist and Mr. Baro evoke the thought processes of the artist.

At this time I wish to thank the artist and Mr. Baro for permission to publish this document, and to those collectors who have lent paintings to the exhibition.

Andrew J. Crispo, Director



8. CONEY ISLAND SEASCAPE.—1973

FROM A CONVERSATION: MICHAEL CLARK AND GENE BARO

GB: Would it be fair to say that draughtsmanship—drawing—is at the heart of your activity as artist?

MC: Correct. When I started out, I looked at paintings in the museums and tried to paint directly in imitation, but I couldn't do it. What I started then was to figure out how I could make paintings like those. I began copying paintings in the museums by reproduction in pencil. I copied all the masters from Piero della Francesca to the Impressionists. I think I drew from about 1960 to about 1971 without doing any paintings—that is, anything but student work. The serious effort was in the drawings. When I really got into drawing and knew what I wanted to make—about 1966—I got on to Ingres. About 1967, Gene Davis gave me a big Praeger book on Ingres, and I copied everything in the book. Ingres was my master.

GB: You say you got to know what you wanted to make. What was this? What do you consider to have been the first drawings that were a personal statement of yours rather than a copy or takeoff of some else's work?

MC: Architecture. That was because I traveled all over the United States and ended up in Washington, D.C., which has every type of architecture ever done—just about. The last gothic cathedral built is still being built in Washington. They've been working at it since before 1900.

GB: But why architecture rather than another subject?

MC: Well, I thought still life boring. Everyone had done some of those. Doing people from life takes even longer—to get someone down truthfully. You have to have something in your own head before you can get another person down on paper or canvas. Buildings provided permanent models; they didn't move. They were complex subjects. Movement of sunlight, weather in general, could shift what you perceived. You had also the human element. Looking at windows, for example, the appearance of the shades, the position of the curtains and the blinds, suggested something about the life inside.

GB: So your concern wasn't dominantly with form—with copying form any longer—but also with the internal life of the subject or with your own feelings about it?

MC: Right.

GB: Is ambiguity of feeling, the changing atmosphere of the architectural subjects, the reason you do them in variations or series?

MC: In most architectures, there is repetition of buildings, the same forms, the same elements and details, sometimes in differing combinations in different places. It's the same thing as there being no two people the same. I don't think there's any particular virtue in diversity. But also, in series, I try to synthesize, to achieve some essential of form. If you have a good model, why go to another model; if you have a beautiful one, why go to an ugly one? Art probably has to do with perfection more than with anything else.

GB: The attempt then is to refine the subject and to refine your feelings about it, and to accommodate also to the sense of change implicit in a living situation. But how do you choose the particular subject, and do you work from sketches, photographs, or what?

MC: I look for subjects that have a classical feeling, a linear and surface quality that seems timeless. Depending upon the type of perspective I want to use or how much time I feel I must spend, I'll either work from life or take a snapshot. My photographs are terrible, by the way; they simply provide general data. I work toward the aesthetic of what I see; I'm not interested in anything else. That's why you'll sometimes find so much virgin paper around the subject.

My way of doing representational art is different from photo-realism. I don't put accidental trash around the scene. I'm after a more classical statement—the maximum statement through an essentialized image. In most composed master painting, even in Seurat's work, the Golden Section is used; I tend to use the aesthetic behind the Golden Section.

GB: We've talked about the drawings and touched on the paintings. The paintings depend heavily upon draughtsmanship, but they are also committed to color. Do you think of your color as decorative or structural, as being as important as the drawing element or as less important?

MC: The color is totally structural. I've studied all the great color theories from Chevreaul to Itten. The paintings are an exploration of color. What I'm trying to achieve in painting is a firm sense of formal structure plus a quality of light, an emanation of the form itself, the light and form as a single embodiment.

I can't verbalize very adequately what are aesthetic sensations. Take my portrait of George Washington with the light blue background. Washington was born during the Rococo Age, but you never see a Rococo painting of Washington. My obsession was to see Washington in a Rococo setting. I'm trying to see Washington as if I were walking around in 1770 or so; but there is no attempt at literalness. I'm interested in the sensation of the coloring of the period, in the light cast, in the Gallicism of the aesthetic of the time. My interest is neo-classical. Most of the time my artistic eye is in the 17th or 18th centuries.

GB: If that's true, how do you account for yourself as a contemporary artist?

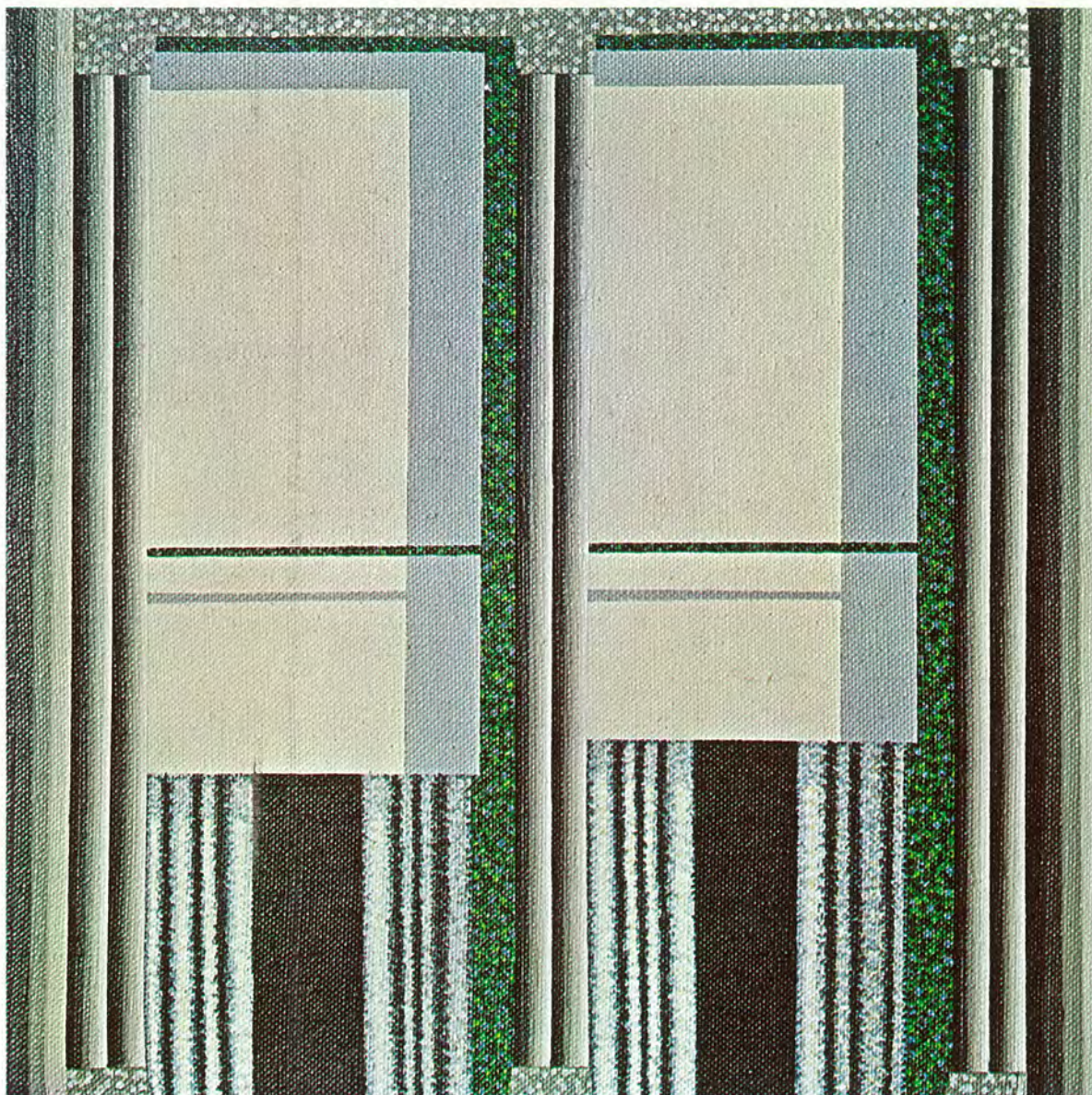
MC: I'm here—and technically and in breadth of interest, I'm certainly of today. You might say contemporary artists have the whole past before them—the art of all centuries and civilizations—and they use the past to refresh the present. That's my bag. The people racing the future are another matter.

GB: How do you proceed technically?

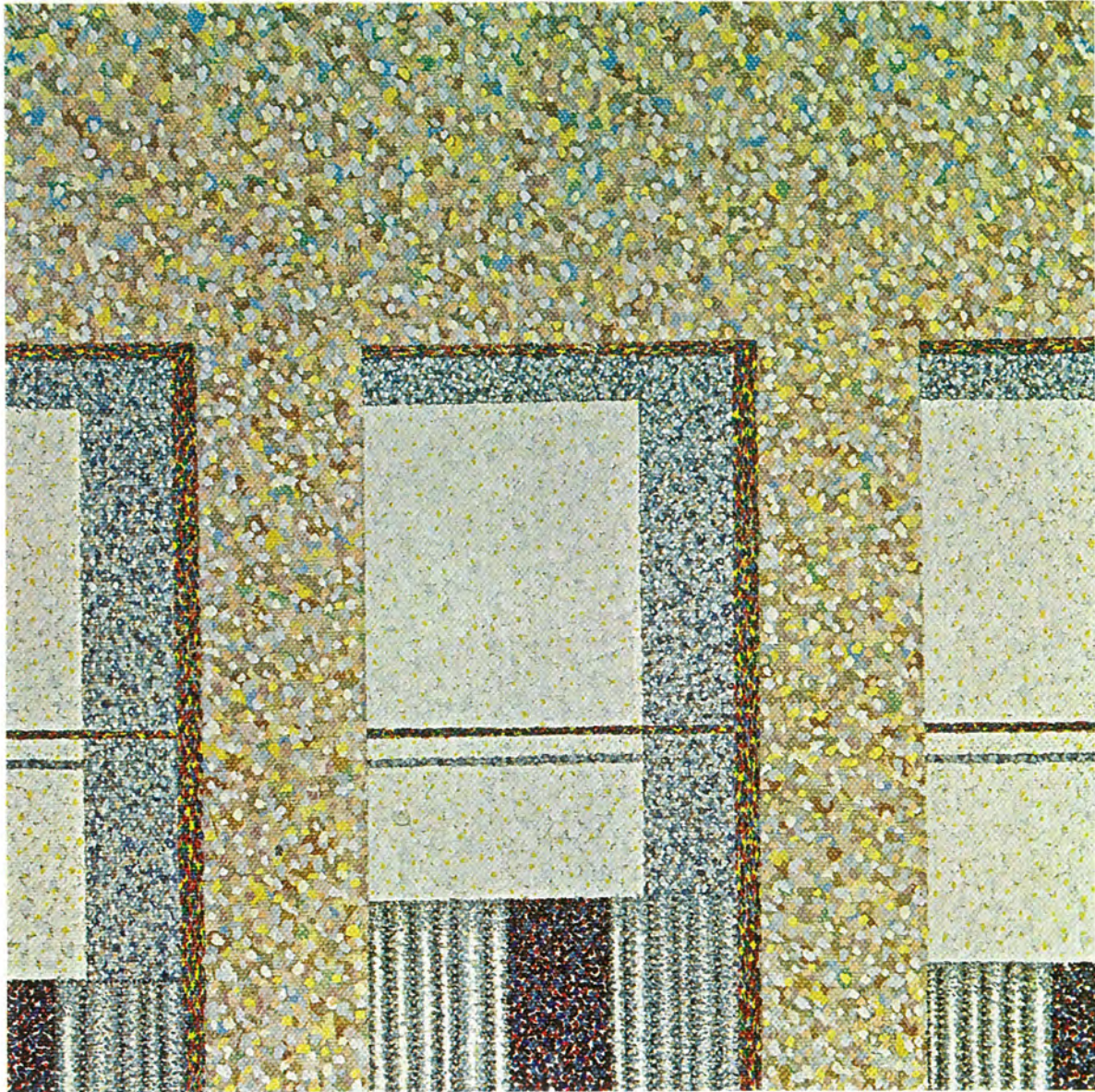
MC: I lay out and measure the motif. Sometimes I work from photos, sometimes from other works of mine, sometimes from memory. The color is all and always memory. Often, the color will relate to a fleeting moment, to a quality of light registered in passing, something seen out of the window of a bus. For the rest of it, I work with masking tape and plastic paint. The way my color is set down—small strokes and dots of color to merge into a finished surface—has to do with printing technique. It has nothing to do with pointillism. Often, half of the painting will involve hard-edge concepts.

GB: You have continued to do architectural drawings and paintings but have moved on to other subjects.

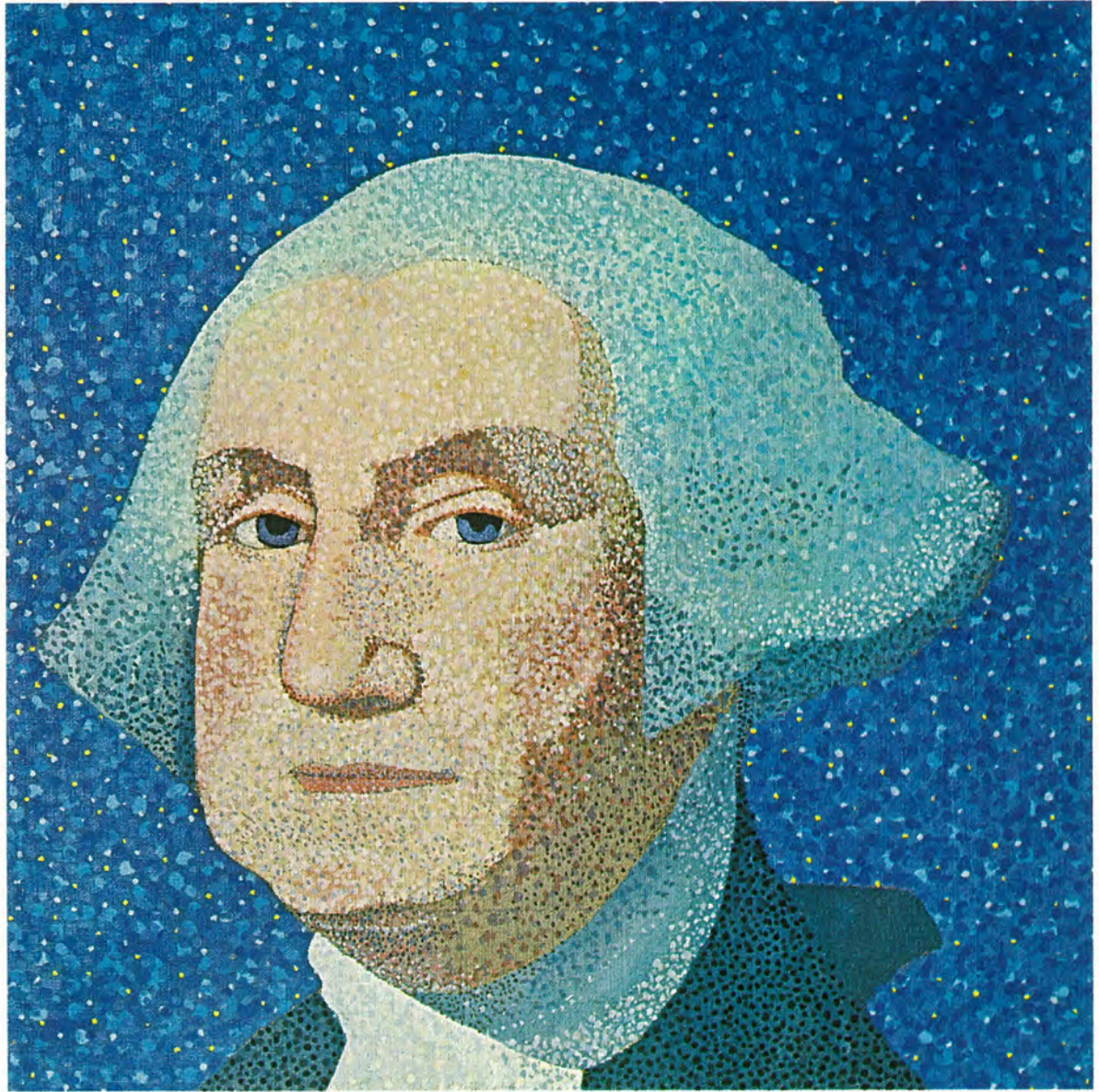
MC: Yes, I've been involved since 1969 with portraits. I haven't shown many of them; they've mainly been done privately. In 1970, I began doing landscapes and seascapes. There are also other subjects, the Cadillac series, for instance. It keeps me busy.



12. CLASSIC SERIES: Tan—Green—Grey—1973



18. PROJECT SERIES: Tan—Red—Blue—1973



3. BLUE GEORGE WASHINGTON.—1973

$$\frac{12}{35}$$

$$35 \times \frac{2}{1}$$

$$35 \div \frac{2}{6}$$

$$\frac{6}{1}$$

$$\frac{1}{6} \times \frac{6}{1}$$

$$17 \frac{1}{2} \div 6$$

$$\frac{1}{2}$$

$$211$$

$$211$$

$$211$$

$$211$$

$$211$$

$$\sqrt{1.2}$$

$$1' 2'' \div 7 = N$$

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41 EAST 57 STREET NEW YORK CITY 758-9190 2nd floor