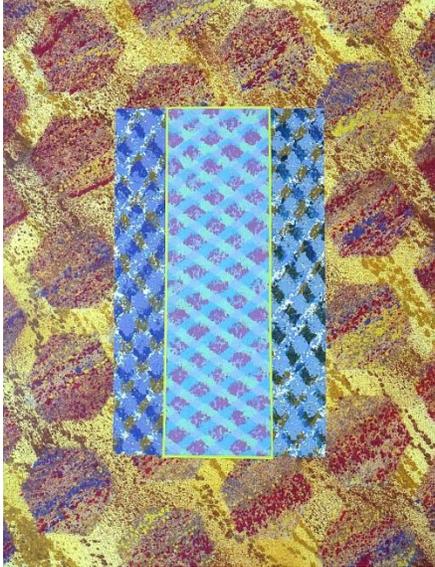


Tony Robbin at the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville: the Roth donation from a 45 year span of his paintings, now on exhibit until January 3, 2016.



1970 (table), 70 x 56 inches, acrylic on canvas.

All over the world people make patterns: Japanese kimono, Indian paintings, Persian rugs, Venetian mosaics, American quilts, Mayan brickwork, are a few among many. 1970 was a time when such patterns came to New York, and a time when Robbin went to them. The women's movement taught Robbin and other fine artists to value the decorative arts. Also at this time, the study of tessellation (symmetry in pattern) began to be a serious topic for mathematicians. And in 1979, the great art historian E.H. Gombrich argued that the bicameral brain explained the universality of pattern: the right half grasps information holistically, not sequentially as in the left brain. These sources inspired Robbin. This influential Pattern Painting was one of the very first, and one of the first to be seen by colleagues.



1978-7, 56 x 70 inches, acrylic on canvas.

Even flat patterns rarely appear singly. Eight years later, Robbin laid linear and transparent patterns over other patterns to make a complicated, multiple space. In doing so, he set the artistic goal of making

many spaces in the same space, and studied Einstein's theory of Special Relativity to understand how this subjective reality could be manifest in the objective world. Paintings from this period were widely accepted, shown, and sold in Europe, where the decorative and the profound were not seen as mutually exclusive. In the U.S., Norma and Bill Roth collected Pattern Painting in depth.



2005-3, 56 x 70 inches, acrylic on canvas.

After a decade-long detour through computer art, sculpture, public art, and the study of mathematics and engineering, Robbin returned to painting in 1994. In this painting, after another decade of concentrated effort, the patterns are three-dimensional lattices that are braided together in a higher-dimensional space. The "space braid" paintings of this period reach a high degree of complexity and mathematical sophistication while retaining a special, glowing lyricism.



2014-0-5, 56 x 70 inches, oil on canvas.

Life intercedes. In 2006, tragedy came to the Robbin household, and soon after, he himself became critically ill. After two years of convalescence, Robbin began painting in oil, not acrylic. In 1958, when he

was 14, Lillian Robbin took her son from Teheran, where the family was living, to Europe to see the great paintings she loved in reproduction. On that visit, in Paris, Robbin saw Monet's series of the Rouen Cathedral, and as he later wrote, he became a painter that day, painting Impressionist landscapes in oil well into his graduate school days. Robbin now thought: Monet at the beginning, so Monet now. The luminous, recent paintings, emphasizing color and texture, are in part the result of a long visit to Paris in the winter of 2013, for another careful, loving look at Monet's last period.

The Roth donation records and celebrates 45 years of Robbin's creativity.