

DAVID LIGARE

TO DRAW IS TO SEE



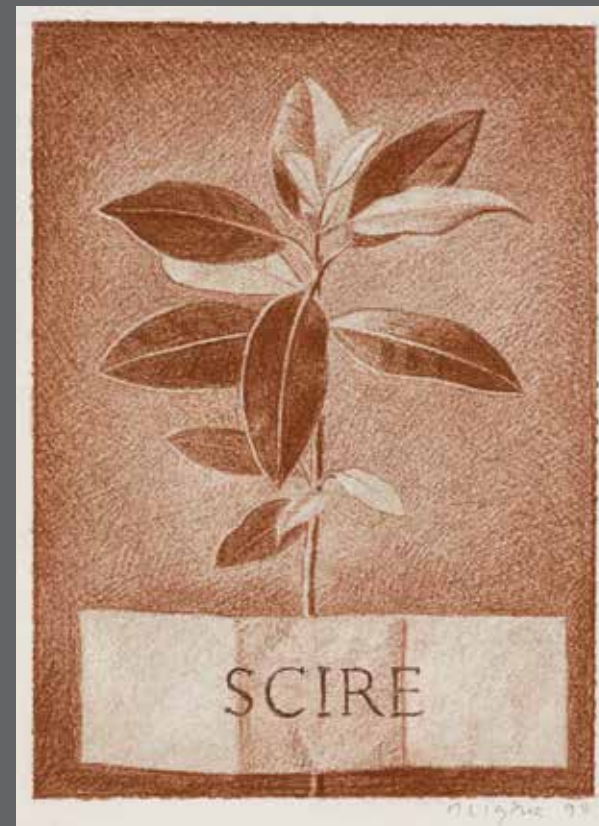


Drawing is the bones of art; it acts as the structure on which all embellishment rests. As prestigious Monterey Bay artist David Ligare puts it, “to draw is to see, and to look very carefully at something, analyze it, and then recreate it is an important activity in drawing, in painting, or in life.” Working from models or from the landscape, from photographs or his imagination, drawing is clearly integral to Ligare’s artistic practice. At the Art Center School in Pasadena where he was a student, he learned to make a series of thumbnail sketches to help develop ideas and exercise his imagination. He still uses this technique, which he considers “thinking on paper.”

In addition to preparatory drawings for paintings, Ligare draws to see the look of a subject in a particular medium. One medium may capture him for a time, or it may suit a particular situation, like the pen and ink he

favors for traveling. The selection on display at the Winfield Gallery reveals his facility in a range of media, including Conté crayon, graphite, pastel, and ink. Ligare’s preference for shades of browns and dark reds plus white and black, and his use of toned or textured papers reflects his interest in historical models, and connects him to modes and ideals of the past, which he studies and admires.

Ligare’s gem-like pastoral scenes of the Italian countryside, often with figures or historic buildings included, act as personal mementos of annual sojourns. In an ink landscape, his assured line picks out a foreground figure, the sweep of the stream, a simple bridge and the remains of an ancient ruin. He unites the scene with trees, enlivened by short curving strokes—a sophisticated composition made lighthearted by his command with the pen. In contrast to the landscape,



Ligare’s drawing of a young man in a complex pose that relies on the balancing of staff, arms, and one straight leg is accomplished primarily by tonal range. The contrasting shadows and light on his skin and the flowing folds of his garment are achieved through definitive handling of graphite.

In an indication of his esteem for Classical aesthetics, Ligare often incorporates text into his drawings. Another work in ink depicts a rock arch, bordered on three sides by the Italian words for structure, surface, and content. The stability of the subject, its depiction, and its visual message exemplify the ancient tripartite ideals of harmony, balance, and proportion. United with language, it’s a theme that underlies the majority of Ligare’s work. Whether portraiture, still life, landscape, or narrative subject, it’s clear that his eye sees truly.



David Ligare is currently the subject of a major retrospective exhibition on display at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento. Organized by Chief Curator Scott Shields, PhD, the exhibition runs through September 20, 2015 at the Crocker then continues on to additional venues. The retrospective consists of a broad range of work including a number of his exquisite works on paper. Because Ligare’s paintings are so striking, much of this other work had been largely overlooked until now. But once seen, these rediscovered drawings become impossible to ignore. With this in mind, Chris Winfield has seized the opportunity to display this superb selection at his Carmel Gallery.

Helaine Glick
Curatorial Advisor



Cover:

Woman Tying Her Saddle, graphite on paper, 10 1/2" diameter, 1987

Inside Panels:

Study of a Young Man with a Staff, graphite on paper, 15 1/2" x 12", 1985

Scire, conte on paper, 9 1/2" x 7", 1997

Landscape with a Broken Column, sanguine ink on tan paper, 4" x 5 1/2", 1987

Back Cover:

Criteria: Structure, Surface, Meaning, ink on paper, 8 3/4" x 11 1/4", 1989



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