IDELLE WEBER

THE POP YEARS


BEWARE OF
ATTACK ARTIST

IDELLE WEBER

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March 28 through April 25, 2013

Essay by Sid Sachs

HOLLIS TAGGART GALLERIES

958 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021

This catalogue has been published on the occasion of the exhibition "Idelle Weber: The Pop Years," organized by Hollis Taggart Galleries, New York, and presented from 28 March through 25 April 2013.

ISBN: 978-0-9889139-0-5
Library of Congress Control Number: 2013932632

Cover: *Munchkins I, II, & III,* 1964. (pl. 5)
Page 1: Idelle Weber at her Brooklyn Heights studio, 1958
Frontispiece: Weber's studio wall, featuring studies for silhouette paintings, 1960s to the present
Inside back cover: Idelle Weber on a trip to China, 2007

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Catalogue production: Jessie Sentivan
Editing: Kirsten Olds
Design: Russell Hassell, New York
Printing: Spire, Boston, MA
Photography: Color plates by Joshua Nefsky;
Other Selections by Kara Spellman

FOREWORD

"Nuance, Andy, nuance." —Idelle Weber to Andy Warhol

The Pop art of Idelle Weber is a remarkable body of work which depicts the mainstream culture of the 1950s, '60s and '70s through a distilled and nuanced economy of form. Hollis Taggart Galleries is proud to present the current exhibition of Weber's Pop works that represent a great contribution to this art idiom. Weber's conversational retort to Warhol suggests so much about her work and her practice: her thoughtful approach to her subject, her painstaking process of hand-limning her patterning and her measured demeanor.

Unlike the works of artists such as Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, who took up ready-made imagery of postwar America's consumer boom, Idelle Weber's outlines and silhouettes pass through sparer lenses of "everyday" events; she distills the core behaviors and "look" of her subjects, evoking the fleeting and the timeless. Her distanced engagement, whether the corporate culture of the day—the grey suited corporate "Mad Men" of the time, the hip Mod fashion scene or the turbulent politically tragic times of the burgeoning Vietnam era and Kennedy assassination—belies a very personal reaction to the events.

Idelle's passion and tireless commitment to her art truly inspire us. She has been so generous with her time, in sharing memories, in opening her studio to us, and we are so honored to be able to share with you this glimpse into her world.

Sid Sachs, Gallery Director at The University of the Arts in Philadelphia, has helped shed light on the significance of female artists in the Pop movement. His award-winning exhibition, *Seductive Subversion: Women Pop Artists 1958–1968,* at venues including the Brooklyn Museum, featured Weber's paintings and laminated plastic forms among its considerable roster of artists. His essay in this volume explores Weber's childhood inspirations, the vibrant California and New York art scenes in which she participated and her impact on our understanding of Pop art.

Hollis Taggart Galleries is most fortunate to work with a very dedicated staff without whom these complex exhibitions would not be possible. Suzanne Douglas, Idelle's studio assistant, has been an immeasurable help throughout the organization of the exhibition and this catalogue. We also wish to acknowledge Kirsten Olds for her thoughtful and invaluable editing and Jessie Sentivan for her dedication to the production of this catalogue.

Photographic material was supplied by Kerry Gaertner, Art Resource. We also appreciate the help of J'Aimee Cronin, Artist Rights Society, for her assistance obtaining reproduction rights.

For their efforts in bringing all aspects of the exhibition together, we also thank Stacey Epstein, Martin Friedrichs, Jeph Gurecka, Letty Holty, Debra Pesci, Gillian Pistell and Kara Spellman. Much gratitude goes to our exceptional creative team who continue to be instrumental in the production of our catalogues: Russell Hassell, designer; and our printer John Dreyer of Spire. Their many talents have resulted in another fine publication.

Hollis Taggart, President
Vivian Bullaudy, Director

IDELLE WEBER: NEW REALIST

by Sid Sachs

"One of the best presents I ever received from my parents was a giant magnifying glass," Idelle Weber reminisces. Indeed, the magnifying glass is an apt metaphor for this wide ranging and ever curious artist's approach: it focuses on items within its field and it opens up new worlds from the familiar. It suggests an attention to looking, to observation, qualities that ground Weber's practice throughout her career.

In ambitious paintings from the 1960s and early '70s, figure silhouettes, sharply outlined in pink and blue, pop against vividly patterned backgrounds. Iconic social types—the 1960s ad man, the fashionable society couple—and familiar cultural references—Jack Ruby, Ben Casey—touch on issues both domestic and national in scope. Modernist flatness addresses the realism of urban life in a very new and truthful way. Weber tackles themes of contemporary gender roles (for men and women alike), corporate culture, mass media, politics, and everyday life, through the close observation of the rituals of modern life.

Her artworks exemplify many of the characteristics associated with Pop art: graphic flatness, urban figurative motifs, large scale, bright areas of color and references to mainstream culture and product branding. As an art historical category, Pop art has been malleable, accommodating the work of artists closely associated with the movement such Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, and Tom Wesselmann, as well as those with more diverse approaches such as Richard Artschwager, Robert Watts, Alex Hay, Ray Johnson and Jess. Along with their and others' practices, Weber's art expanded the notion of what "Pop" could be.

Marked by a remarkable pictorial economy, her paintings and sculptures allude to popular imagery and products, rather than appropriating them outright. Her figures invoke social and political issues in complex and ambivalent ways. And her imagery is equally of its moment and universal, both mod and classical. She evokes not camp fan icons but everyday types; her eloquent silhouettes recall ancient Attic pottery *and* 18th-century portraiture. Her observation of the social roles that shape men as well as those for women was especially fresh and forward-thinking.

For a woman of Weber's generation to have a profession was not normative; to have a career showing in major galleries and museums on both coasts and reviews in important international art publications was exceptional. That Weber continued her practice and teaching for six decades is testament to her dedication and talent—she just "had to keep working," even when faced with setbacks. She did not limit herself to one signature style but conscientiously developed with an eye to her personal concerns, to document what she saw and loved. After half a century of painting, it is time to fully recognize both the continuity and quality of this exceptional artist.

EARLY YEARS: CHICAGO AND BEVERLY HILLS

Weber's childhood experiences would shape so much of her approach to her art, from her exposure to a wide artistic history and tradition and her voracious reading to designing clothes for paper dolls and her vivid memories of the urban landscape. Her family actively nurtured her pursuit of the arts, purchasing supplies and equipment (such as a Brownie camera and her first set of oil paints when she was eight).

Adopted during infancy by the very loving and supportive Feinberg family, Weber spent her early childhood in Wilmette, Illinois, a bedroom suburb 14 miles north of Chicago. Her father was a successful businessman and her mother was singularly committed to providing her daughter with a rich cultural background. A stylish and worldly woman, her mother had lived in the Philippines and had brought back clothing, ivories, and wall hangings, exposing Weber to Asian cultural forms. She also taught Weber how to knit, make crafts, cook and appreciate gardens.

When she was in elementary school, Weber and her mother would visit the Art Institute of Chicago via the North Shore Line every week. There she especially enjoyed the Thorne miniature rooms, which were 68 period dioramas created in the 1930s by socialite Narcissa Ward Thorne, as well as Rembrandt's *Young Woman at an Open Half-Door* and Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*. Hopper would remain a touchstone and major influence on Weber the rest of her career. Particularly captivating was seeing the city—and its denizens—through the windows of the train: frequently silhouettes, backlit, highlighted against the buildings, moving through the urban space.

These museum excursions sparked Weber's early awareness of fine art, which was then reinforced by books that she read, almost compulsively. In trips to the library, Weber eagerly sought out books on sewing and crafts, sources that fueled her initial scrapbook projects that incorporated newspaper cut-outs, advertising images, and photographs. In kindergarten, she sketched the cartoon characters Brenda Starr and Dick Tracy, presaging another preoccupation—with mass media—that would also be explored in her later work. These early experiences imprinted on her conscience, even if she did not immediately recognize the significance they would have for her work.

In an unsuccessful attempt to alleviate Weber's severe allergies, her family moved when she was eight to southern California. Her privileged milieu located her one block away from Elizabeth Taylor's and Edward G. Robinson's Beverly Hills residences. Although California's museum culture at that date was not yet as sophisticated as Chicago's, private collections would further fuel her passion for art. She would ride her bicycle to Frank Perls' gallery, carrying her recent work in her basket to invite his honest critique. Through Perls, Weber gained access to Robinson's sky-lit salon

Idelle Weber, *Dictation*, 1962.
Ink and graphite on paper, 7½ x 10 inches.
Initialed lower left: "IW"

that contained important examples of modern art masters, among them Cézanne, Soutine, Monet and Matisse. During this period, she was invited to see the collection of the actor Vincent Price, who was also an art consultant for Sears.[1] Weber reflected on this formative environment:

> Right after the war, they had few museums [in Southern California] that were very good. I saw a number of movie star's collections. I remember going into the [home] of a friend and right at the end of this hallway there [was] a big picture. I finally asked who the artist was that made [it] . . . and it was a Matisse. It was the first one I'd ever seen. Then I realized that the casts on the table were Degas and Rodin and the tables were Renaissance. . . . In the kitchen they had a Rivera and Frida Kahlo and they had the first television set too.[2]

Some years later she proceeded to study and find out about the pieces she had seen; the works always stayed with her and their level of artistic endeavor and invention was always fresh in her mind. These reminiscences encapsulate the concerns that would shape Weber's art: the close and sustained interaction with examples from the tradition of Western and Asian art, and the exposure to television, which provided source material for several of her early Pop paintings and beyond.

ART EDUCATION

Weber studied art at Scripps College, where she received a full-tuition scholarship, and UCLA, where she earned her bachelor's and master's degrees. While a freshman, she briefly attended the Aspen Design Conference with good friend Bob Kelly, an experience that would leave an indelible mark on Weber's aesthetic track. The Aspen Conference sought to bring graphic and industrial designers and business leaders together to encourage an understanding of what design could accomplish in society.[3] It was developed by Lazló Moholy-Nagy, Mortimer Adler (of the Great Books program), and Walter Paepcke as a product of progressive education reform at the University of Chicago. Conflating Cold War cultural policies and industry, Aspen's program was thoroughly embraced and publicized by Henry Luce through his magazines. The Chicago association, plus direct access to the ideas of noted industrial designers such as Harry Bertoia and Marcel Breuer, resonated deeply with Weber when she later relocated to New York.

The clean design ethos disseminated by the Aspen Conferences struck a chord with Weber in another way too. The bright colored plastics and neon of Weber's works during the next decade were not merely an adaptation of these modernist design sensibilities nor an absorption of Southern California aesthetics such as the finish fetish, but were actually indebted more to her biography. Her biological brother, whom she met when she was about seventeen years old, was a tool and die maker whose products were exquisitely finished in exotic woods and Weber's fascination with industrial contours arises from her brother's profession in the aerospace industry. The beauty and precision of his craft resonated with Weber, and this is where she realized the importance of perfection and care in her own work.

Weber studied at UCLA with professors William Brice, Frederick S. Wight, Stanton MacDonald-Wright and Gibb Danes. Immediately after graduation, she shared a Brentwood studio with Craig Kauffman. The studio situation was a negotiated economic necessity; Weber had to draw a line of demarcation down the floor in order to gain privacy and personal space. Their atelier exchanges provided valuable introductions to recent art trends. Walter Hopps, Kauffman's childhood friend, slept in the back of their studio; he would become an important figure in the Los Angeles arts scene, co-founding the influential Ferus Gallery with artist Edward Kienholz. Kauffman's father, a L.A. County Superior Court Judge, returned from trips to Manhattan with current Rothko and Sam Francis slides that the trio projected and thoroughly analyzed. Abstraction particularly captivated her, and the exciting innovations of the New York School were one important impetus for Weber's move east.

EAST COAST: ON THE NEW YORK SCENE

Another catalyst for relocation came soon. In 1956, the year after the completion of her master's degree, Weber's work was included in the exhibit *Recent Drawings USA* at the Museum of Modern Art (illustrated in the catalogue for the show under her maiden name, Feinberg). Her charcoal *Observation of Sound* (1955) is a moving portrait like a Redon homunculus, solemnly radiant, almost Symbolist. The skull is not anatomically accurate, but an orb, equally representational and yet uncannily abstract, almost foreshadowing the hybridity her work would soon take in the next decade.

Prominent curator William S. Lieberman juried this exhibition from more than 5,000 submissions; it not only marked Weber's first professional appearance in New York but also Ellsworth Kelly's. Among the 150 artists from 27 states, the District of Columbia and Hawaii, Weber shared the walls with Josef Albers, Leonard Baskin, Herbert Bayer, Edward Corbett, Jane Freilicher, Morris Graves, John Hultberg, Paul Jenkins, the architect Frederic Kiesler, Larry Rivers and her teachers William Brice and Tony Rosenthal. Her acceptance into this notable exhibition encouraged Weber to move to New York. She resigned her teaching position at Hollywood High School and struck out for the East Coast, feeling little career potential left in Southern California.

During the late 1950s abstraction still dominated California. In New York, Weber lived through the heady transitional period from Abstract Expressionism to Pop Art. During her first days in Manhattan, she roomed with two Rockettes, babysat for Mark Rothko's daughter Kate, and met Julian Weber, who would become her husband.

Feeling the need to continue her education in some fashion, Weber unsuccessfully applied to audit classes under Robert Motherwell. Weber recalls her interaction with the artist:

> Motherwell was teaching at Hunter and in those years you could really audit almost anything. All the instructors let people in just to sit for whatever it was. So I went to him and he looked at the portfolio and he said this is terrific, that's terrific. He asked me if I was married or if I was going to get married. And I said yes! Of course I was planning that immediately, you know, when I came to New York. And he [asked] are you going to have any children? And I said sure! Everybody has children. He looked at me and he said, it's too bad, you'll never keep working. And he didn't let me in the class.

This experience dramatizes the then still-difficult path for women to gain acceptance as serious artists.

Undeterred, she soon enrolled in a class taught by Theodoros Stamos and his assistant Ralph Humphrey at the Art Students League. Weber credits Stamos with "clarifying" Abstract Expressionism for her, and her works from this period retain the painterly qualities of Second Generation New York School painters, such as Lester Johnson and Jan Müller. These experiences prompted her to consider color in a way she had not previously, to explore deeply the fundamentals of intensity and value, and resulted in a series of thickly painted all-over grey canvases. The fact that Weber came from this environment makes her transition to hard edge painting even more remarkable. By removing all residual expressionist gestures, Weber soon entered the 1960s with the pared down facture of most of the Pop artists.

The early 1960s would be a defining moment for Weber's art. In 1960 or 1961, Weber met Ivan Karp, who had been the original art critic for the *Village Voice* and had co-directed the Hansa Gallery with Richard Bellamy. He became a great personal friend of the Webers and an important mentor of sorts for Idelle. This relationship was important in the development of Weber's career, as Karp was then the director of Leo Castelli Gallery, which was quickly becoming the major force in the New York art world. "Ivan [Karp] wouldn't say Pop Art at all," Weber recalled.

> He called it Commodity [Art]. He's the one that said that it was very clean cut and very commercial and sometimes very simple and easily readable. You know that's commercial art. I remember one of my friends went to Art Center [as a designer] and I learned a lot from him. [Designers have] all of the tricks you know? [He] told me if you can't read it in three seconds, it's no good. Pop Art was like that; it was easily read. Not so easily read when you get down to it. But in those days, it was just blatant.

In Weber's generation the clear boundaries between art and commerce were blurred. Weber's version of Pop was less a philosophic reaction than Karp's, as she herself had directly participated in commercial art. After a class with the noted graphic designer Alexander Liberman, she contributed illustrations for *Esquire* and *Vogue* magazines.

In 1962, a group of young artists gathered to discuss the formation of a new cooperative gallery in Brooklyn.[4] Both Karp and Richard Bellamy, the best eyes in New York at the time, were also involved in the negotiations. The diverse members included Weber, minimalists Dan Flavin and Donald Judd, abstract painter Cora Ward, Sheldon Macklin, Tom Wesselmann and Rafael Ortiz. Weber explains "we'd go around once a week, once a month, to the various galleries, and [looked at] other artists to see if we wanted other people in our group. By the time we were ready to get together, everyone had gotten a gallery." Although this co-op never developed beyond the planning stage, through the process Judd and Flavin became close friends and soon were represented by the Green Gallery, the important venue run by Bellamy from 1960 to 1965 that was backed by the collector and taxicab mogul Robert Scull. In addition to Judd and Flavin, Bellamy showed Robert Morris's minimalist slabs, Kusama's accretions and Oldenburg's *Store*, which included his first examples of soft sculpture.

Idelle married Julian Weber in 1957. He was sharp, in every sense of the word—intelligent, witty, well-dressed, and possessing a keen eye. Together they were active participants in many aspects of the Pop art scene and socialized with many of these same artists. "We just knew the people in New York," she explains. "It was just a small group of people. Everybody went to everybody's openings. Thursdays and Saturdays." Julian participated in Ivan Karp's lively Monday night poker games, and she partied at George Sugarman's shindig thrown at Al Held's loft to celebrate his Guggenheim award—"it represented a changing of the guard, of sorts, as the young people were all doing the twist," Weber laughs. On May 19, 1963, the Webers attended Yam Day with Judd and LeWitt held at George Segal's farm in South Brunswick, New Jersey. Organized through Smolin Gallery and part of the month-long Yam Festival of Bob Watts and George Brecht, Yam Day consisted of events, dances and happenings by Allan Kaprow, Wolf Vostell, Yvonne Rainer, Tricia Brown and Charles Ginnever. Photographs taken by Julian Weber document attendance by Donald Judd, Robert Morris, the Oldenburgs, and Henry

Opposite: Idelle Weber, *Second Marriage,* 1965. Ink and graphite on paper, 7¼ x 10 inches

Top: Julian and Idelle Weber on the S.S. da Vinci, August 16, 1960

Center: Gathering at George Segal's farm for the Allan Kaprow happening, part of the Yam Day festivities, 1963

Bottom: Dan Flavin and his wife at George Segal's farm for the Allan Kaprow happening, 1963

Geldzahler. Tom Wesselmann and Andy Warhol came to every one of Weber's exhibits and she traded artworks with Richard Artschwager, Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. Others in their circle included Yayoi Kusama, Lucas Samaras, Lee Bontecou and Stephen Antonakos.

That same year, Daniel Robbins, a Guggenheim curator, presented her to his colleague Lawrence Alloway. The influential critic Alloway had been a core member of the Independent Group of London's ICA and coined the term "Pop Art" in 1954. Alloway, in turn, introduced her to Robert Scull and penned an early text on her work for the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York.[5] Weber also presented her work to the authoritative art historian H.H. Janson, who was enthusiastic about it, even though he never included a female artist in his canonic survey. Betty Parsons was noncommittal. The director of Eleanor Ward's Stable Gallery also loved Weber's paintings but said Ward didn't show women, though a few months later she was exhibiting Marisol's sculptures. Wanting a commercial gallery rather than a cooperative, Weber signed up for representation by Bertha Schaefer Gallery in July 1962. Less than two months after Warhol's Stable Gallery debut, in January 1963 Bertha Schaefer showed Weber's first silhouette paintings. The prescient Albright-Knox Gallery purchased Weber's *Reflections* from this initial exhibit. The importance of Weber's innovative use of the silhouette in a Pop context cannot be overstated.

OUTLINING MODERN LIFE: WEBER'S SILHOUETTES

These dark profiles harkened back to Weber's childhood recollections through the train windows. In New York the tremendous expansion of International Style architecture exemplified a novel spatial transparency that amplified these memories.[6] These sleek environments mirrored new advertising models, where stripped down ads hawked products floating upon the page as on a seamless paper backdrop. Weber responded immediately to her new surroundings, such as the Lever, Pan Am and Seagram buildings and the clarity of their glass facades. Paintings such as *Lever Building 1* and *2* evoke the familiar New York sights of workers visible in their midtown offices, the iconic architecture framing their actions. Weber took up these motifs in her first mature works.

She fully captured the urban visual zeitgeist of the 1960s with her silhouettes. Her urban populations capture the Swinging Sixties in New York in wonderfully stylish, kicky ways. Somehow you can almost hear the conversations between the figures and the whir of the city. Works such as *Swingers* aptly give shape to the visual sensibility of the era. On a business trip to London Julian brought Idelle back the latest fashions—three or four outfits—from Carnaby Street, "sensational clothes," she exclaims, that reflected the aesthetic of the era.

KODAK TRI X PAN FILM
KODAK SAFETY FILM
SWEETHEART OF THE NAVY

Opposite: Dorothy and Roy Lichtenstein as Andy Warhol and Edie Sedgwick for a Halloween party at Weber's apartment in Brooklyn Heights, 1964. The female nude on the wall behind them is by Idelle Weber. Julian Weber is dressed as Lucas Samaras in the seersucker suit dipped in plaster.

Left: Edward Hopper, *New York Movie*, 1939. Oil on canvas, 32¼ x 40⅛ inches. The Museum of Modern Art, New York: Given anonymously (396.1941). Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY

The forces of modernity forged these figures. Her featureless personas are like die-cut holes into the flat picture plane, asserting a serial cookie cutter absence; her images suggest both representation and abstraction. The people in her paintings are simultaneously anonymous ciphers and specific social types, a hybrid bending of the boundaries of what is real and what is non-objective. Like Ellsworth Kelly's abstractions, Weber's shadowy black cut-outs come from careful observation of the world.

Weber is even more psychologically detached than much Pop art. Douglas MacAgy, reviewing her work in 1965, perceptively observes: "She plays a game of psychic distance, not so much to put the image itself out of everyday reach as to minimize her role in its revelation."[7] Her intensely isolated estrangement aligns with the politically neutral realism of Edward Hopper, whom she loved since her Chicago days. As Weber describes, "like Hopper, I enjoyed looking into interiors that were separated or distanced from the viewer by some architectural element—walls, windows, or glass."[8] She remembers being struck by Edward Hopper's *New York Movie* (1939, above) at the Museum of Modern Art, a painting that depicts a theater usherette off to the right side of the mezzanine, head down, lost in thought. As in all of his works, Hopper constructs a visual barrier so that the viewer's reaction to the disconnected anomie within to the protagonist is almost painfully palpable.

Weber pushed the alienation of Hopper infinitely further. She puts a distance between her subjects and the viewer by reducing the figures to silhouettes. Reductive means do not necessarily mean reduced subject matter. Contour and content are telegraphed through a delightful economy of form. The figures' inner lives are subtly hinted at by their body language, and the social heraldry signaled by the contours of attire. They are what they wear and where they reside in space. Social hierarchies are designated by unnatural size like the corner office real estate or early Renaissance Madonnas surrounded by lesser saints. The senior partners are the largest figures in the office ensembles. This is a courageous position; Weber straddling the knife-edge of abstraction/representation with a kind of conceptual realism.

Floating figures as exemplified by Weber's *What Is It Like to Fall (Fall from Heaven)*, from 1961, show the artist trying out new spatial relationships reminiscent of Lachaise's *"Acrobat" Upside Down Figure* (1926) or Aaron Siskind's photographs from *The Pleasures and Terrors of Levitation* series (1953).[9] Although she was not aware of his work, in Siskind's compositions dark airborne divers are projected against the blank white sky, evocative of the Icarus myth. Similarly Yves Klein's *Leap into the Void* (1960) or Gerhard Richter's *High Diver I* (1965) isolates floating bodies that seem sublimely adrift in the cosmos, metaphorically suggesting existential states, autonomous and temporally frozen. As in Weber, these artists use the figure almost abstractly. Such levitation meshes with imagery in the popular domain like astronaut zero gravity. Weber approximates emotional states of being, numbed by urban anomie or embodying the dreamy ecstatic bliss of fetal life. Her personages neither rise as in an assumption nor fall; they are always present, in immanent equilibrium, hovering in time and in space. Although more weighted, Weber's *Reflection* (1961–2) in the Albright-Knox Gallery shares some of the same qualities.

Indeed, Weber often encapsulated her figures with auras of color contours, as in *Pink Line* and *Blue Monday Man*. These bands modulate the stark value contrast between figure and ground, softening the initial austerity of her vision. These color borders not only soften the edges but make the color pop. Her use of fluorescent colors and metallic papers, as in several Color-aid collages, borders on the psychedelic. Invented in 1948, Color-aid paper was first utilized as a photographic backdrop but later discovered by the influential color theorist Josef Albers, becoming an essential tool for designers until the advent of computers and digital printing. Its vivid palette of 220 saturated hues was used to full advantage by Weber in many collages, such as the study *Jump Rope Lady* that mimics the radiance of neon.

In addition to her techniques of outlining and silhouetting, and using bright color, Weber also employs scale as an important formal consideration. By that I mean the proportion of the figure to the outer edge of the support, be it a modest sheet of Color-aid paper, a mammoth canvas or a small yet solid block of Plexiglas. The figures press up against borders within the picture plane, creating visceral, almost electric tensions. For example, the head of the left figure in *Step Sisters* (1964) merges visually into the negative space above her. This creates a downward pressure, amplifies the movement to the upper reach of the escalator, and makes the triangular band between the escalator and ceiling seem even more narrow. Her thoughtful approach to scale often prompts a claustrophobic reaction in the viewer, which makes even a small work have a large presence.

The pictorial facts that Weber presents are immediately clear, like the best of modernist painting. Clement Greenberg, though not a fan of Pop Art, might have appreciated Weber's approach when he wrote (thinking of abstraction) that "ideally the whole of a picture should be taken in at a glance; its unity should be immediately evident, and the supreme quality of a picture, the highest measure of its power to move and control the visual imagination, should reside in its unity. And this is something to be grasped only in an indivisible instant of time."[10] If we don't grasp these specific identities in her silhouettes like traditional portraiture, we absorb their messages immediately like traffic signs. This spontaneous assimilation is akin to one's acceptance of commercial art, where contrasting colors provide gestalts, like logos, that we recognize as entire units.

Weber's realism, couched of its time, was tempered with abstraction. Many of its inhabitants do not reside in real space; rooms do not contain them, nor do horizons define their vistas. The flat figures situate themselves in a space parallel to the picture plane, frontally interacting with emblematic patterns, much as in pictorial quilts. They are tableaux of symbolic people as blank as traffic crossing signs, Balinese shadow puppets or Seurat's conté crayon effigies. As such, their address is consciously a more graphic interface than an illusionistic space of realism. Her negative spaces, which she defines by patterns of vivid hues, announce to the viewer that the space depicted is an arena of consumer endeavors. This is not real space; it is advertising space.

Thus Weber's cut-outs seem to anticipate our contemporary design icons. What Weber accomplished sui generis during the Kennedy era forecast the recent epitome of hip Retro culture: the falling man across the International Style skyscrapers in the title sequence for the present-day television program *Mad Men* and the postmodern animated dancing figures in Apple's iPod advertisements. Moreover, these Mad Men metaphors are not just visual correspondences; her husband Julian was a lawyer and Weber often depicted the members of the white collar managerial class, cloaked in grey flannel suits and white shirts, seated in Eames recliners as in the drawing *Plan*, lighting cigarettes and presenting position papers around the conference tables. At the time Weber's commentary was directed at the conformity of businessmen in New York, as opposed to dress informality in Southern California. Her subtle commentaries on Grey Flannel and Organization Businessmen never reach the level of political satire per se but are closer to an encoded document of her own life with a corporate lawyer.

MUNCHKINS I, II & III: POP MASTERPIECE

Munchkins I, II & III is Weber's largest painting and her masterpiece of the era. It is the culmination of her office worker series where figures navigate escalators as in *Step Sisters*. *Munchkins* is an oblique reference to the film *The Wizard of Oz*, portraying business employees dwarfed within the mammoth maw of skyscrapers. These workers are caught in time, in a decisive moment in which the next second the rhythms of the voyagers and the city will change inexorably. The strong diagonals in both *Munchkins* and *Step Sisters* are brilliant compositional elements (often used by Weber even in her later photo-derived paintings) adding dynamic gravitas to compositions that would otherwise float on the picture plane.

At seventeen feet *Munchkins I, II & III* is seven-and-a-half feet longer than Warhol's *Marilyn Diptych* (1962, opposite) at the Tate Modern. To generate such size, Weber used a New York School-innovation little mentioned in history; she butted three large canvases together retaining visual continuity and width, while still easily dismantled for storage and shipping. Rauschenberg, Johns, Rosenquist and others used this same method after hearing of Abstract Expressionist murals becoming unmanageable and not easily portable. Weber painted the *Munchkin* panels in each of three rooms in her tiny apartment, even storing them under the kitchen table. Because she had no assistants and a limited apartment work space during this period, expediency produced a rational solution.

In 1965, *Munchkins* was highly praised in an extensive article by art critic Douglas MacAgy. He describes *Munchkins*' evocative visual "dazzle," its "apt economy" but also its anomic absence, likening Weber's individuals to cut-out targets in a shooting gallery.[11] *Munchkins* was generously displayed across two pages in MacAgy's review, although only the right third of this painting was illustrated in Lippard's *Pop Art* published the next year. As the only artwork presented as a detail in Lippard's groundbreaking book, one surmises there were printing difficulties with moiré patterning when the background grid in *Munchkins* was reduced in size. This was unfortunate because the graphic zigzag composition was lost to those who had never seen the painting in person.

Those diagonals are crucial to a meaningful reading of the painting. As office workers ascend and descend the escalators, an astonishing geometry is generated by the organic contours of the people playing against the stark mechanism of the lift. Weber comments, "The checkerboard really leads you along the picture as well as the diagonals, which are escalators. I like the idea of that structure." To modulate and moderate the intense contrast between the inky black and brilliant yellow, Weber came up with the solution of tiny alternating squares. This grid generated a third value between black and yellow, much like how Lichtenstein created the illusion of "flesh" tones from red Ben-Day dots against white grounds. In Weber's triptych the yellow is so bright it reads as fluorescent against black.

SOCIAL TYPES AND POLITICAL REALITIES: ORGANIZATION MEN, TIFFANY WOMEN, AND THE MASS MEDIA

Weber created a unique meta-figuration via the silhouette. Its very nature was both metaphysical in its bold, shadowy absence yet concretely connected to representational codes. By enlarging the silhouettes, Weber changed the history of this heretofore modest genre that decorated 18th-century drawing rooms. Much as Lichtenstein's blown-up cartoon strips tweaked found compositions to enhance their presence, Weber's original configurations make the viewer comprehend the silhouette in a new way.

Depicted in Weber's paintings are recognizable types such as the "bride and groom," "businessman," and "corpse." Her blank figures generate more than anonymity; their grand neutrality implies archetypes—a populace of generic Everymen as stand-ins for social types.

Opposite: Idelle Weber, *Munchkins I, II & III,* 1964. Acrylic on linen, 72 x 214 inches

Left: Idelle Weber, *Off to See the Wizard,* 1967. Tempera on paper, 18 x 12 inches

Right: Andy Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych,* 1962. Synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas, 82 x 57 inches. Tate, London: Purchased 1980 (T03093). Digital Image © Tate, London / Art Resource, NY. © 2013 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

A *New York Herald-Tribune* review from 1964 extolls the "skill and imagination" of Weber's silhouettes, in particular her "preoccupation with the attitudes and postures of 20th-century man."[12] She observed acutely the people around her, whether at department store sales, Grand Central station, or her husband's law firm.

As Weber drew inspiration from observing the people she saw everyday on the New York streets, she also found ripe fodder in the mass media. Populating her series *Ben Casey* are horizontal figures, as if they were bodies lying on a mortuary slab from the popular medical drama. The title character in the ABC program was portrayed by dour actor Vince Edwards, whose patients often died as "every episode in the first season of Ben Casey involved a patient with a brain tumor."[13] Weber relates how the show piqued her interest,

> It was one of the first [television programs] that had...doctors and there'd always be bodies. I was fascinated by the way that a body lies on a surface so I started doing some of those—I called them the *Ben Casey* series because I could see enough of them and didn't even have a model so I did some of the hard edge design stripes behind some and worked on grays behind some, some of the other—doing that one image many times and it was interesting.

Indeed, Weber's series revolves around the prone figure of the "corpse," in both paintings and sculpture (the Brooklyn Museum holds at least one extant Plexiglas bas-relief). *Ben Casey II* portrays twin figures lying upon slabs surrounded by horizontal bands echoing the morgue tables, similar to the way raster lines define images taken from television. These sepulchral figures pop with references to Pompeian sculpture as well as contemporary George Segal's plaster people. They also remind one of the rotund profile in the opening credits of the television series *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. Before Truffaut and auteur theory canonized his position, Hitchcock was considered merely a popular B-level filmmaker, who not only produced half-hour television programs but also a series of pulp anthologies of paperbacks. What could be more Pop than quoting, if only subliminally, film noir broadcasts from the great wasteland?

Weber's *Bride and Groom* (1963) is perhaps the most socially critical work of her oeuvre. As domesticity encroached on the lives of women, it framed a subset of Pop imagery; weddings, families and babies were subjected to its clichés. Weddings as subject matter inform Oldenburg's *Bride Mannikin, Grand Street Brides* of proto-pop Grace Hartigan, D'Arcangelo's *The Bride* and *Madonna and Child*, and has obvious foreshadowing in Lichtenstein's *The Engagement Ring* and Jann Haworth's various sewn rings.[14] This reflects the personal involvements of these artists, many of whom were parents of Baby Boom generation offspring. Between 1950 and 1960, over 29.3 million babies were born in the US, representing the largest population increase in any single decade to that time.

Weber's *Bride and Groom* portrays the eponymous couple against a Tiffany blue backdrop, as if mimicking a stylish advertisement for the jewelry store.[15] The artist describes the impetus for the painting:

> I was getting wedding invitations from everybody. And you know the New York [Times] wedding section. [In] those years you'd see the whole picture of the bride or the whole thing. It just seemed. . . . There was something about the formality and Tiffany and the bridal gowns. The men were dressed formally in many instances. It was just part of our culture and you'd always see them coming out of the cathedral on Fifth Avenue. I had friends and they all would go through this and they'd end up looking at your finger to see what ring you had. I wasn't damning it but it just seemed to me it had just become a cliché. I just thought it would be a pretty good image. So I did it. That's Tiffany blue behind the figures. Which is more of a Chinese blue than a Tiffany.

This mating of the public language of Pop with the private language of subjectivity gives an air of private poignancy to Weber's endeavors. *Geometric Painter at Home* (1964) combines Weber's self-portrait with an image of Julian in the bathroom shaving over the sink. *Geometric Painter* was shown at Dwan Gallery's *Arena of Love* exhibition and can be prominently seen in the *Artforum* review of the show, among major artworks by Martial Raysse, Warhol, Marjorie Strider, D'Arcangelo, Yves Klein and Wayne Thiebaud.[16] This painting shares an uncommon domestic trope with Rosalyn Drexler's *God Shaves* (1961–2) and George Segal's *Woman Shaving Her Leg* (1963) and *The Artist in His Loft* (1969), instances of their departure from hard core, commercial Pop.

Though Weber's works of this period are extremely stark, they retain elements of social commentary. Whether deduced from her personal life as in *Geometric Painter at Home*, taken from media (such as her *Ben Casey* series) or a more generalized motif, Weber's Pop works quietly project thoughtful critique. It is as if by removing details, elements such as contour, gesture and background take on added significance. During this era, critical attention became focused at the subtleties of body language as conveyances of meaning. Both Ray Birdwhistle and Erving Goffman published considered academic studies on subliminal messages and suggestive postures in society and advertising. Although it would be an exaggeration to say that Weber was directed by these publications (indeed most of her work precedes this research), she was intuitively developing her imagery along parallel directions.

As Weber represents her figures upon the *mise-en scene* of the plane, she also delineates the social construction of identity of her personages.

Left: Idelle Weber, *Economist,* 1966. Collage on paper, 11 x 8½ inches

Right: Idelle Weber, *Sequence,* 1965. Tempera and graphite on paper, 13½ x 9¼ inches

Background color significantly enters into the equation of meaning. The brilliant yellow background *of Munchkins I, II & III* mimics the bright illumination of the architectural atrium environment, the blue ground of *Bride and Groom* alludes to a certain urban class that would immediately recognize the distinctive status of Tiffany gifts. Titles provide additional interpretative tools. For example, in *Plan* (1962) a businessman is seated in the Eames 670 model lounge chair. This luxurious design icon, first produced in 1956, defines this sitter as a member of the managerial class by dint of its manufacturing cost. One wonders if Weber also identified with the hometown origins of this chair, first planned by Charles and Ray Eames with their friend the film producer Billy Wilder in mind.

Weber addresses contemporary events in her works as well as the everyday themes for which she became perhaps better known. Among these are drawings and paintings that reference Jack Ruby and the Kennedy assassination, events that she had watched unfold on television with her young son and the rest of the country, as well as Eddie Adams's riveting capture of Colonel Nguyên Ngọc Loan's execution of a Vietcong soldier. The gouache *What's Going On?* (circa 1965) juxtaposes a Western businessman towering over a ghostly gang of soldiers in the background, a scene prompted by Weber's reaction to accounts of police battling protestors at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco. The title recalls Marvin Gaye's song evoking the uncertainty of the era. The composition of the gouache perfectly captures the paradox of TV—the contradictory sense that, in introducing images of contemporary events into living rooms, it makes those scenes seem so present, and yet at the same time, seem so removed from one's daily reality. In other works, even essentialist feminist politics are forecast; a female figure with arms akimbo is decorated by a suggestive orchid in one notable collage from 1960, far earlier than any citation by, for example, Judy Chicago.

Weber's art examines the harsh social realities of women's roles during the Cold War in the 1960s, realities that restricted many of the female Pop artists. Due to overwhelming societal pressures, gallery sales and and prices of the work of female artists did and still do lag behind comparable statistics for male artists. Such conditions did not deter Weber from steady studio output and incredible creative growth and evolution. As a mother and wife, Weber naturally reacted to her situation differently than did the male or childless female Pop artists (or those who ostensibly abandoned their offspring for careers). Weber did neither; a drawing of her son Todd that she made in the hospital only hours after giving birth offers us an almost shocking and touching index of Weber's commitment and work ethic. Adjusting to her working conditions, she carved out schedules to paint in order to juggle the positions of wife, mother and artist.

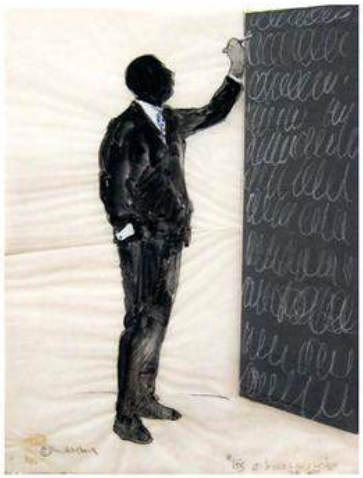
Consider American Pop art as a weapon for the Cold War, as a total immersion of domestic containment policies that situated women in fixed roles. Look at the iconography of American Pop: Lichtenstein's tearful glamour girls, Wesselmann's kitchen still lifes, Oldenburg's oversized foodstuffs, Warhol's coke bottles and S & H Green Stamps and Rosenquist's fractured Cubist billboard pastiches of Pond's cold crème and Chef Boyardee. As Madison Avenue sales pitches for commercial goods were directed at the home, what gender do you think was most targeted by its advertisements?

Yet Weber's paintings seem to diffuse this binary pairing, of domestic and corporate spheres, showing Organization Men in grey flannel as also subject to unstated social rules of conformity. *Blue Monday Man, Plan, Three Suits,* and *Press Type Law Firm* each capture the iconography of the masculine corporate world: the *de rigueur* suits, characteristic gestures and accompanying props such as the conference table and meeting documents. Never strident or finger-wagging, her works pose thoughtful, striking and sometimes funny issues for her viewers to consider, about the social roles for men and women.

GRIDS, PATTERNS AND FASHION: MODERN DESIGN MEETS CHILDHOOD CRAFTS

Even the background patterns of Weber's paintings derived from many sources in her immediate urban environment and other vernacular references, often calling to mind technological developments and modern design principles. Checkerboards, horizontal stripes and concentric color bands were very common in art and design during the 1960s. For example, grids became ubiquitous in much minimalist art but they were also used in the checkered border designs of New York taxi cabs during this period.[17] These commercial sources are paired with personal associations, from Weber's childhood days poring over library books on sewing, crafts and patterning, or to the simple, fashionable and vivid garments of designer John Kloss, a friend of Weber's who was part of the larger circle of Pop artists and their wives. They would exchange artworks with him for custom-made clothes—"truly knockouts," Weber remembers.

A grid is a way of distributing space uniformly. The non-hierarchical divisions of space in postwar American painting retain democratic overtones, wherein each part of the painting retains equal representation and power. Derived from Abstract Expressionism, this uniform figure/ground grid of overall space was dispassionately applied to Warhol's early product and film star canvases as well as Weber's large versions of *Uptown, Downtown*. Moreover, Weber's grid is not without implications. In *Uptown, Downtown* depictions of two social types, bohemian and professional, are segregated on separate canvases. Like mug shots, each profile con-



Left: Idelle Weber, *High Ceiling —You Won't Get This,* 1964. Tempera and graphite on vellum, 10 x 7½ inches

Right: Idelle Weber, *It's a Business,* circa late 1960s. Watercolor, collage, and chalk on vellum, 11 x 8½ inches

tains a physiognomy of difference so that instead of being mere neutral pattern like wallpaper, the array catalogs a network of societal ordering.

Checkerboards also carry Weber's recollections of cross-country trips with her parents. "I did a silhouette [painting] with a very heavy woman in a diner called *Lorna Doone*, after the cookies. My parents and I had driven cross country many times from Chicago and we'd stop at these diners. And a lot of them had that checkerboard [tablecloth] so I put that behind [Lorna Doone] and it sort of served to lock this big form into the picture and gave a sense of place. There was something very interesting because you have a clean-cut silhouette but these checkerboards really move that thing around an implied movement." As a pattern, checkerboards both contain the figure, and, through their simultaneous color contrast, create the sense of optical movement as well.

The patterns Weber used are also evidence of her formal concerns, with the grid modulating the blanket flatness of her figures, introducing a third, "soft" pictorial value that negotiated between figure and ground. Weber's interest in alternative models to traditional realism can be illustrated by her drawing *Moire Heads* (1963). The background of overlaid orange and black bars was appropriated from an article on moiré patterns in *Scientific American* in May of 1963; moiré patterns result from the slightly offset registration of overlaid designs, whether on textiles or on television.[18] Similarly vertical stripes are echoed in Weber's collage *Joralemon St. Guests*, named for the street where the Webers lived in Brooklyn. In addition to *Scientific American*, other popular sources used by Weber included *Life* magazine, *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *National Geographic*.

There are literally more homespun origins to these grids also. One sees quilt-like designs in the backgrounds of several of Weber's studies, such as *Mr. Chrysler* or *Pan Am Man* (both from 1970). In one drawing four repeated couples play a board game around the peripheral axes of a larger blue and black checkerboard. Images that project from four sides create configurations counter to Renaissance painting space, with its geotropic sense of up and down; these understandings of space are quite common in folk artifacts such as quilts. There was a revival of interest in American quilts during the early 1970s, including exhibits at the Whitney Museum and Philadelphia's ICA. In 1974 Weber contributed to *The Great Quilt,* an actual quilt in the International Quilt Study Center and Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska, a project involving 48 artists, including Artschwager, Robert Bechtle, John Clem Clarke, Robert Cottingham, Richard Estes, Ralph Goings, Duane Hanson and Tom Wesselmann.

Perhaps seemingly neutral or even decorative choices, these patterned backgrounds in Weber's paintings evoke complex associations. In *Ben Casey II*, the horizontal patterns relate to television scan lines, revealing another correlation with the consumer world. And the "Tiffany Blue" in the background of *Bride and Groom* is a recognizable trademark, signaling consumerism as succinctly as Lichtenstein's RYB colors point to crude printing ink colors. In defining figuration via codes of commercial flatness, Weber positioned herself in the forefront of representation in the Pop era.

Some of the geometric designs Weber used call to mind commercial products and consumer technology, which align her with some Pop artists' predilection for mass-production techniques. Products like Prestype, Zipatone, and Letraset were the brand names of commercial aids used to mechanically define flat passages for advertisements. These products reduced the workload of graphic designers; however Weber's designs were limned by hand, and thus she recreated a similar look through arduous manual effort.[19]

Stoic in her practice, she felt that an artist's diligent studio methods could not be streamlined. There has always been a sense in Weber's work that the act of painting, composing and choice of medium, no matter how minimal its surface effect or outcome, derives entirely from principled working process. This integrity of studio practice was the subject of a collegial interchange with Agnes Martin. Visiting Martin's fourth floor walk-up studio at 27 Coenties Slip in lower Manhattan to buy a $150 drawing (in payments over time) as an anniversary present to Julian, the artist questioned Weber about her painting practice.

> [Martin] said, how do you do your squares? I was wondering why but I said well I just use a ruler and draw it out as I go and she said, you need a big ruler. She said here and she gave me one of her four or five foot rulers. Which I used ever after and I still have. She was amazing and a wonderful artist.

Weber was flattered that Martin liked her work. Interacting with Martin also put Weber in close proximity with Ellsworth Kelly and Jack Youngerman, who lived in the same loft building and whose hard-edged achievements would have reinforced Weber's resolve to work in a flat manner.

Andy Warhol also commented on Weber's obsessive manual process during this period. When he realized that Weber was actually generating pattern by hand, he suggested a rubber paint roller to transfer grids, stressing machine-like efficiency in keeping with his own approach. To which Weber retorted "Nuance, Andy, nuance."

As her comment to Warhol might suggest, her clean patterned facture suited Weber's temperament, allying her work with cool paintings by artists like Robert Indiana. This commitment to surface purity seems less an aesthetic matter and more a personal response to an internal compass. Weber has a predilection for clarity as a projection of her being. Her loft, studio and archives are still organized and neat, a clean well-lighted place.

Center: Idelle Weber, *Nine Cubes,* circa 1968–70. Silkscreened Lucite, 16 x 20 x 8 inches

Bottom: Idelle Weber, *Woman with Jump Rope,* circa. 1964–5. Plexiglas and neon, 93 x 48 x 18 inches

FROM TWO DIMENSIONS TO THREE: WEBER'S PLASTIC SCULPTURES

In the mid 1960s, Weber began to explore the formal principles from her paintings and drawings in three-dimensional sculptural forms. Her interests were encouraged by her association with Experiments in Art and Technology (EAT), the engineer-artist interface developed by Bell Laboratory polymath Billy Klüver. EAT was perhaps most famous for its Nine Evenings at the New York Armory in 1966, a series of performances with Robert Rauschenberg, Simone Forti, Frank Stella, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Whitman and others. Weber went to several EAT functions, specifically remembering a lecture with Edwin Land speaking on the Polaroid process. EAT also invited artists to work on projects with their volunteer engineers and Weber investigated making Plexiglas with less static, in order to keep her new sculptures dust free and pristine.

With the assistance of a model maker who worked with Claes Oldenburg, Weber fabricated a striking plastic silhouette of a girl jumping rope (ca. 1964–5). Armed with additional advice from her neighbor Stephen Antonakos, she consulted a sign maker for the neon loop. Initially she hoped to make the rope glow with ultraviolet, but the sign maker convinced her that those wavelengths might damage viewers' eyes. Even with the modification to yellow tubing, the contrasting neon and black plastic are as visually spectacular as *Munchkins*. The line of the jump rope elegantly extends the contour of the black plastic figure into negative space. In its radiant simplicity, *Woman with Jump Rope* (1964–5) is as vibrant as any of Martial Raysse's works or Nicholas Krushenick's Pop abstractions, and is one of the most successful Pop sculptures ever made.

She produced a number of three-dimensional plastic works during this period in the mid to late 1960s. *Kiss Box,* a Hershey's candy-filled box bedecked with silhouetted nudes, was exhibited at the Dwan Gallery in Los Angeles, and she produced the low-relief *Ben Casey* box, recalling themes she explored in her paintings. In *Sunny*, Weber depicts two figures surrounded by a spectacular matrix of mirrored tesserae; the work's title alludes to the upbeat musical hit by Bobby Hebb (one that has a darker side, penned as it was after the Kennedy assassination and the stabbing death of Hebb's brother). Weber's connection to the title is personal as well, referring to a maddening cruise ship experience where the house band played this popular song much too frequently. Other successful sculptures from this time include the series of elegant black office workers limned on each side of solid Lucite cubes (*Nine Cubes,* from 1968–70) and the busts such as *City Mitre*, which riff on art deco motifs of the Chrysler building.

A collaboration planned with Richard Artschwager would have seated Weber's plastic figures on Artschwager's chairs. Although this project did not go forward, the two shared sensibilities, with Artschwager later creating inlaid silhouettes embedded within textured surfaces of Celotex.

LATER WORK: STILL AND STREET LIFES

Due to technical difficulties with sculptures, the demands of a growing family and her gallery's closure after Bertha Schaefer's death in 1971, Weber granted herself the time to thoroughly rethink her practice, reformulating the fortuitous shift to painting urban landscapes. Weber had

been photographing for years and now painstakingly painted photorealist paintings blossomed forth from these studies.

Supporting this new direction was her old colleague Ivan Karp, who, with director Barbara Toll, opened Hundred Acres in the new gallery district of SoHo. Weber's subjects ranged from cluttered fruit stands to bright trash layered on the ground. After years of austere minimal surfaces, these new photo-derived paintings looked oddly lush.

Just as "Pop art" doesn't completely describe Weber's early body of work, "photorealism" doesn't exactly clarify the later paintings either. Though derived from photographic information, the images do not slavishly duplicate Kodachrome colors or a mechanistic camera vision, but utilize the photograph as a point of departure. Closely observed, Weber's photorealist canvases are painted with the accuracy of Chardin yet more aloof, as always, like her role model Edward Hopper. This later development was critically noted thus:

> Idelle Weber's meticulously painted still life of collected refuse (*Vampirella—East 2nd Street* [1975]) glistens and shines with convincing verisimilitude; each object is set forth with dazzling, almost feverish, clarity. The shrewdly organized play of color and form is carefully disguised by the seemingly accidental character of the assembled waste. Yet the more one looks the more conscious he becomes that a distance intervenes to make the thought of direct physical contact impossible. Everything is so near and yet so far, vivid to the sight but imprisoned in the mind. This puzzling quality is made more evident if the painting is compared to a still life by Henri Fantin-Latour from the late nineteenth century. Here the precise forms existing smartly in crystalline space are an unquestioned delight to the eye and sharpen our awareness of the precise character of objects around us. Tantalizingly, Idelle Weber's paintings suggest that no matter how closely we assess the details of our surroundings, we remain spectators, isolated from them.[20]

The use of vernacular urban detritus as a subject, especially one involving comic book characters and tin can labels traces a staunch continuity of subject matter from Pop to photorealism. This downward gaze upon the flatbed picture plane uses representational means to achieve illusion and intent.

Weber is naturally a classic Poussinist painter whose work deals with immaculate contours, position and body language in order to develop a clarity of space. Her images function as empty ciphers upon which we can project our subjective feelings. Weber's realism was more universal than Pop art is sometimes understood, and was connected to a public quest for an ultra-classical urban and quotidian genre painting. Whether carefully honing in on businessman scuttling in between meetings, photographs in the glossy magazines or comics, she captures, with stunning eloquence, the fundamental and meaningful gestures, attitudes and movements of life, placing her viewers as witness to all of it alongside her.

Notes

1. Price studied Art History at Yale and the Courtauld Institute. In 1951, he and his wife Mary established the first American "teaching art collection" at East Los Angeles College in Monterey Park, California. Other Hollywood collectors included Charles Laughton and Billy Wilder.

2. Edited, with input from the artist in 2013, from an interview with the artist conducted by Glen Holsten for the film *Seductive Subversion*, Philadelphia 2010. All Weber quotations not otherwise credited are from this interview with details added from 2013.

3. For more information on the Aspen Conferences see James Sloan Allen, *The Romance of Commerce and Culture: Capitalism, Modernism and the Chicago-Aspen Crusade for Cultural Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Henry Luce popularized the Aspen Conference in articles in *Life*, such as "Work, Fun for Bosses; They Study at Aspen," *Life*, 24 June 1957, 161–2.

4. On idea of the co-op see James Meyer, *Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 34–5. Cora Ward's name was provided from interviews with Idelle Weber, and Wesselmann is only listed in some accounts. The date of the discussions varies, with some accounts placing them at the beginning of the year, and others, at the end. For information on the Green Gallery see Judith Golden, *Robert Scull & Ethel Scull: Portrait of a Collection* (New York: Acquavella Gallery, 2010).

5. Lawrence Alloway, *Notes on Five New York Painters* (Buffalo: Albright-Knox Gallery, 1963).

6. Joshua Shannon, *The Disappearance of Objects: New York Art and the Rise of the Postmodern City* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

7. Douglas MacAgy, "City Idyll," *Lugano Review* 1, no. 1 (1965): 138.

8. Gail Levin, "Edward Hopper: His Legacy for Artists," in Adam Weinberg, *Edward Hopper and the American Imagination* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1995), 115.

9. See *At the Crossroads of American Photography: Callahan, Siskind, Sommer* (Santa Fe: Radius, 2009). As Siskind was an associate of the Abstract Expressionists, his images should be seen as nonfigurative parallels with dark forms arranged against the sky much like Motherwell in his Spanish Elegies. Silhouettes afloat were also found in Muybridge, Marey, Duchamp, Francis Bacon and even Sol Lewitt.

10. Greenberg, "The Case For Abstract Art" (1959) in John O'Brian, ed., *Clement Greenberg, The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 4 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 80.

11. MacAgy, "City Idyll," 138–40, 145.

12. "A Tour of the Art Galleries," *New York Herald Tribune*, 30 May 1964, 5.

13. John Cooper, "Ben Casey," *Encyclopedia of Television*, vol. 1 (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), 230.

14. Grace Hartigan reiterated the significance of weddings for women: "I was married four times and never had a white wedding, but I am fascinated with how much it means—and how little the groom means. You can see that interest in the painting *Wedding Fashions*. In the paper doll book of wedding fashions, every page is devoted to women: the bride, the bride's maids, the maid of honor, and all their clothes. The poor groom had his underwear and one outfit." Jonathan Van Dyke, *Grace Hartigan: Painting From Popular Culture, Three Decades* (Harrisburg: Susquehanna Art Museum, 2000).

15. The blue branding in Tiffany packaging was initiated by Charles Lewis in the nineteenth century. In the 1960s, Tiffany & Company expanded beyond its Fifth Avenue New York flagship store to San Francisco (1963), Beverly Hills and Houston (1964). Sales increased through the decades with net sales reaching $60.2 million by 1978. Truman Capote's novella *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, published first in the November 1958 issue of *Esquire* and made into the award-winning movie in 1961, also boosted the popularity of the franchise.

16. *The Arena of Love*, Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 5 January–6 February 1965.

17. See Rosalind Krauss, *Grids: Format and Image in 20th-Century Art* (Akron: The Akron Art Institute, 1979); *Grids* (New York: Pace Gallery 1979) and *Grids, Grids, Grids, Grids, Grids, Grids, Grids, Grids* (Philadelphia: ICA, 1972).

18. See Gerald Oster and Yasunori Nishijima "Moiré Patterns," *Scientific American* 208 (May 1963): 54–63. Oster's discoveries had an important influence on art of the 1960s and he in turn created art. An Oster serigraphic construction was photographed by Irving Penn for the June 1965 cover of *Vogue* and his paintings were shown at Howard Wise Gallery in 1966. Weber was not alone in adapting visual information from *Scientific American*. Jasper Johns read the magazine in the early 1950s and Vija Celmins and Mel Bochner have also noted its influence. See Douglas Druick, *Jasper Johns: Gray* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) 103, note 79.

19. A few of Weber's drawings as early as 1960 did incorporate Prestype.

20. Joshua C. Taylor, *Learning to Look; A Handbook for the Visual Arts*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 157–8.The comic book series *Vampirella* ran from September 1969 until March 1983 and was designed by Trina Robbins, one of the only female underground comix artists.

PLATES

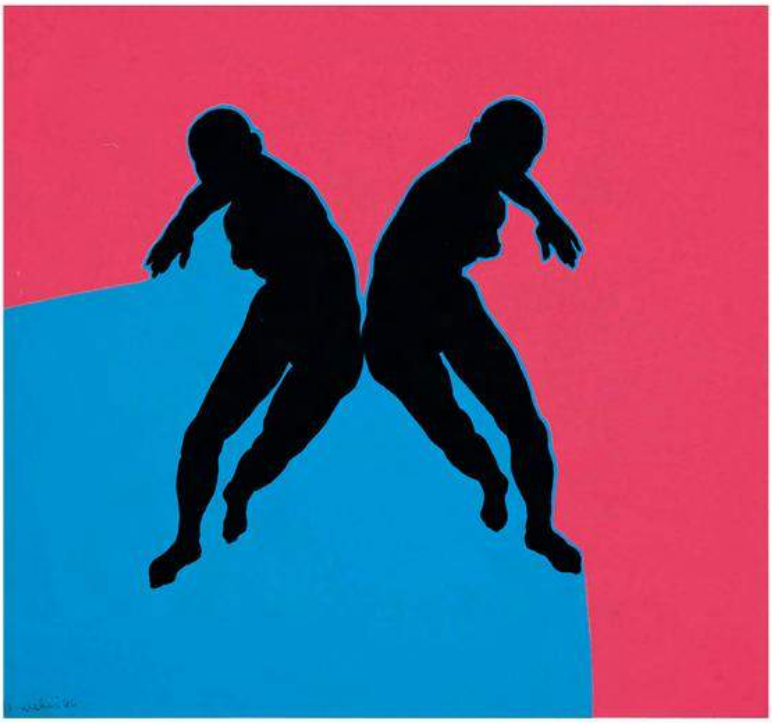
Idelle Weber with *Woman with Jump Rope*, circa 1964–5

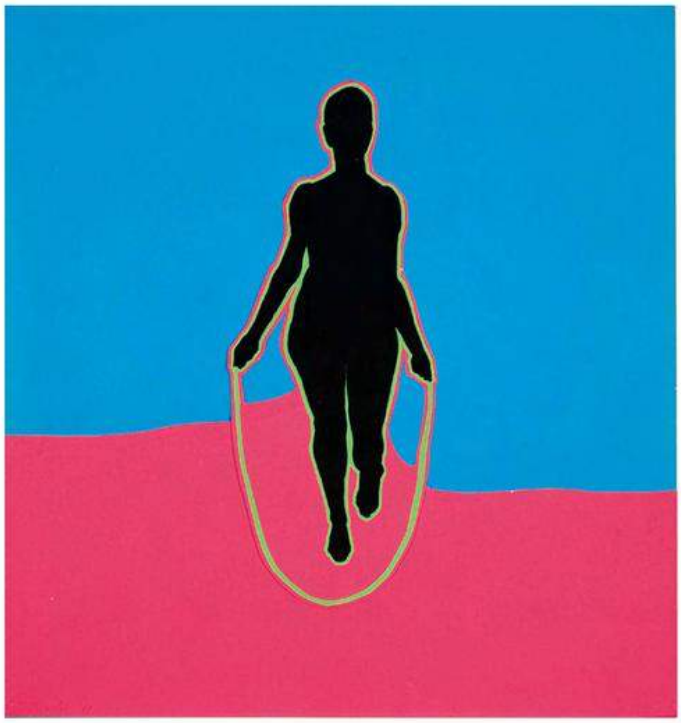
1
Everyone Needs a Teddy, 1969
Ink on paper, 12 x 9 inches
Initialed lower left: "© IW"
Dated lower right: "69"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'Everyone Needs a Teddy EW 69' 12" x 9" ink/paper"

2
What Is It Like to Fall (Fall from Heaven), 1961
Ink on paper, 17 x 13¼ inches
Titled, signed, and dated lower right: "WHAT IS IT LIKE TO FALL? / © I Weber 1961"

3
Two Figures, 1966
Collage with Color-aid paper, 12 x 12⅝ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "i. weber '66"

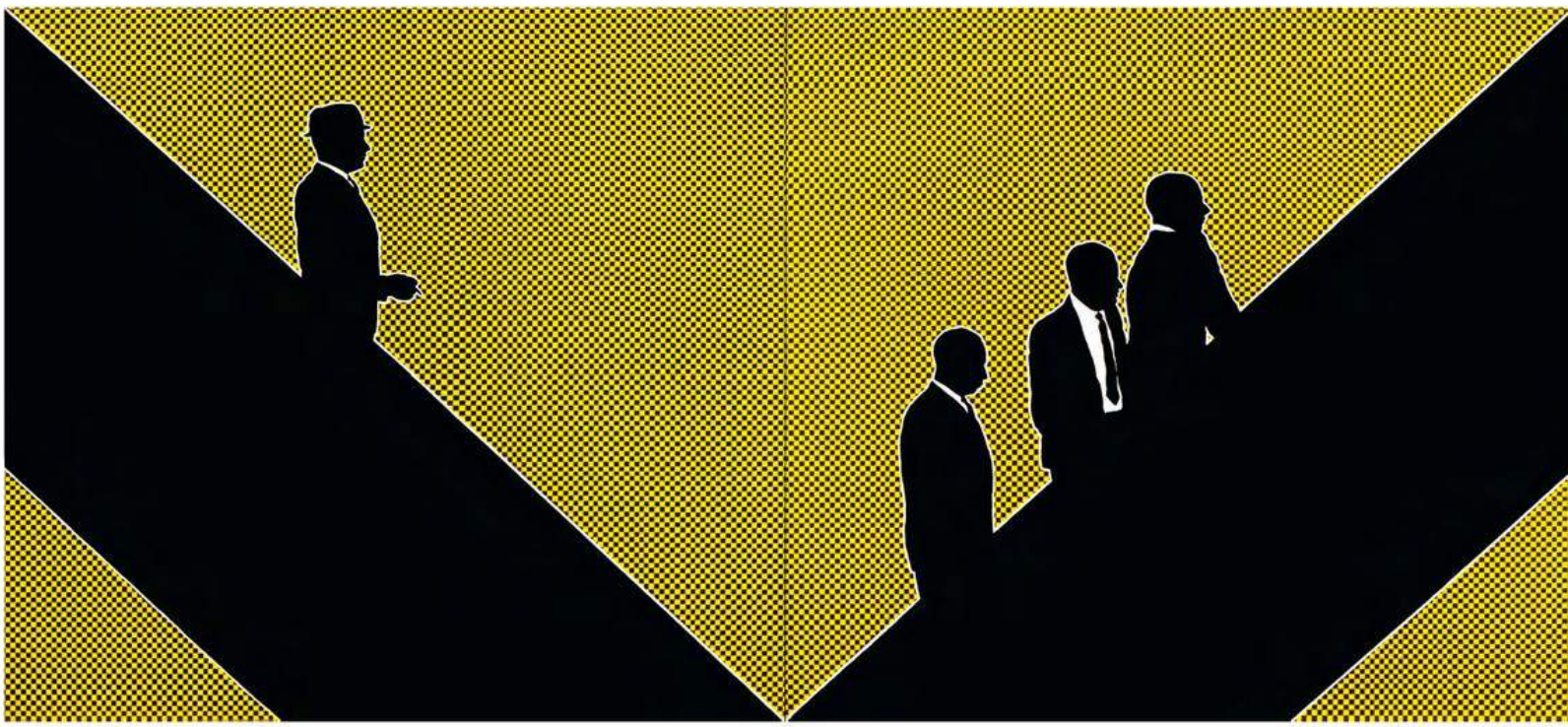
4
Jump Rope Lady, 1966
Collage with Color-aid paper, 12⅝ x 12 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "i. weber '66"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "jump rope lady / cutout / coloraid paper / EW 19.66 12⅝ x 12 in"

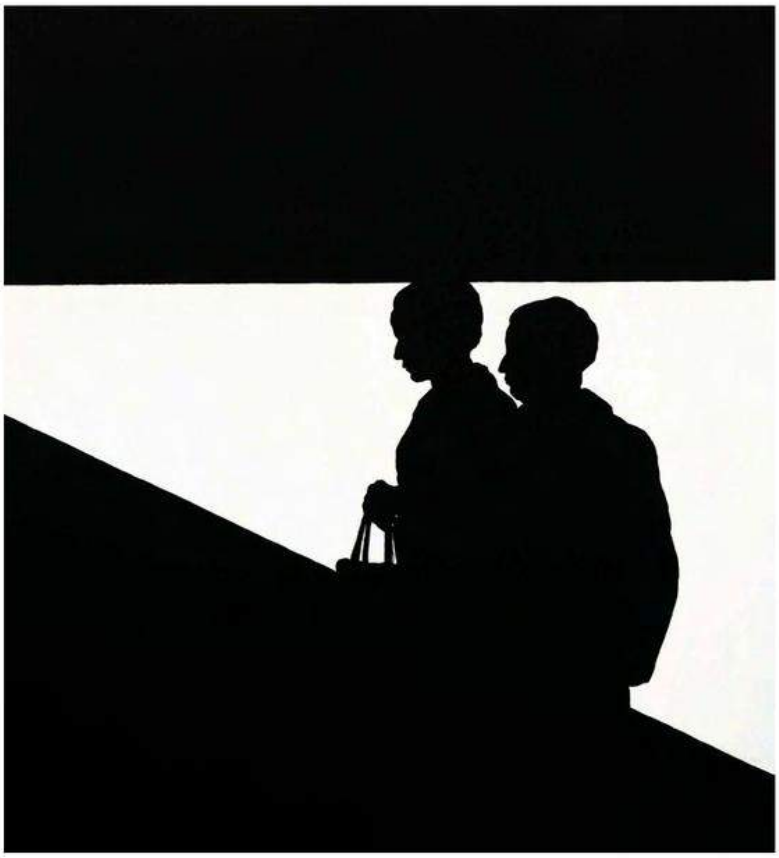




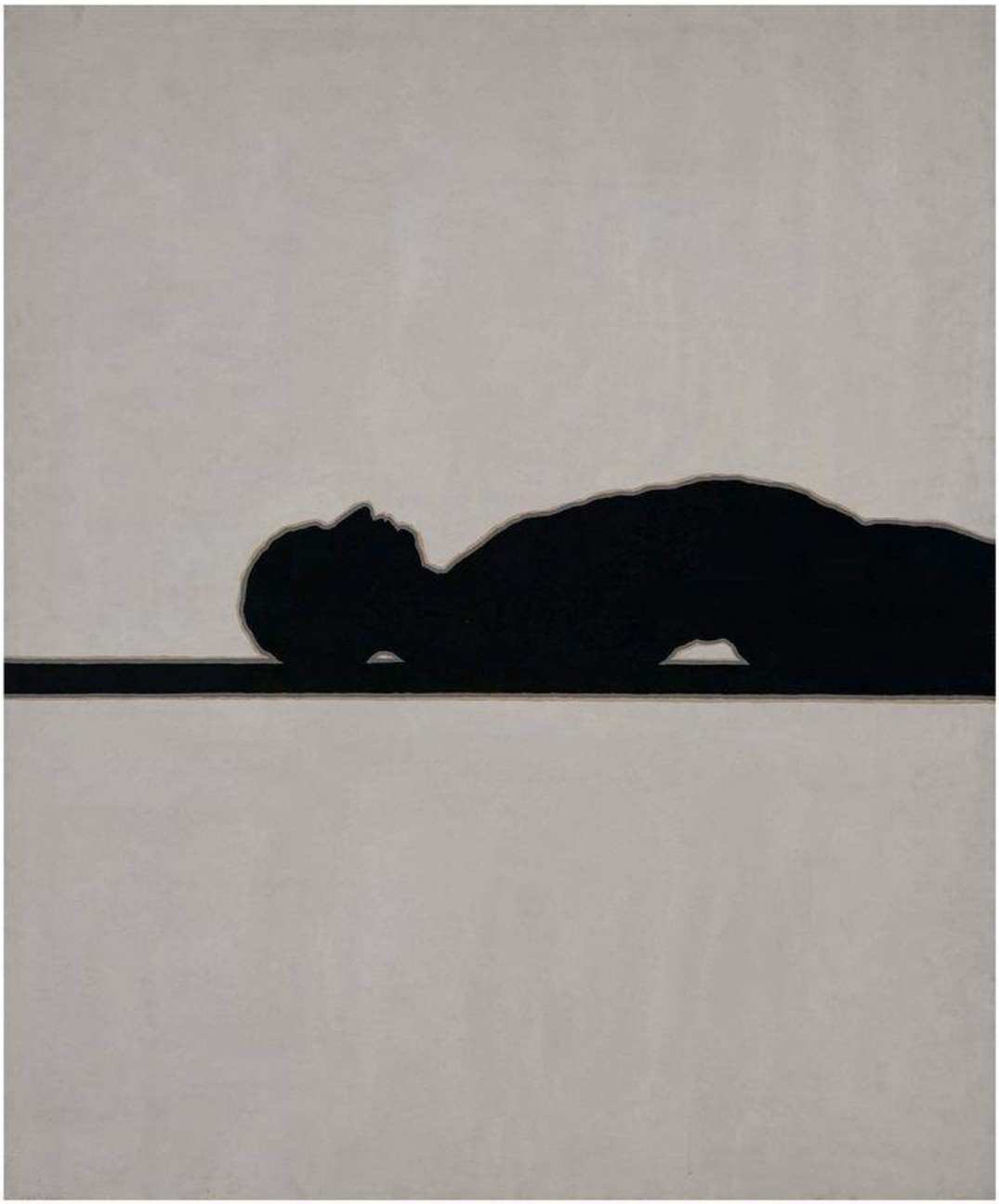
5
Munchkins I, II & III, 1964
Acrylic on linen, 72 x 214 inches (triptych)

6
Step Sisters, 1964
Acrylic on linen, 77 x 70 inches
Signed and dated lower right: "i weber '64"
Signed, dated, and titled on stretcher verso: "IDELLE WEBER 1964 'STEP SISTERS'"

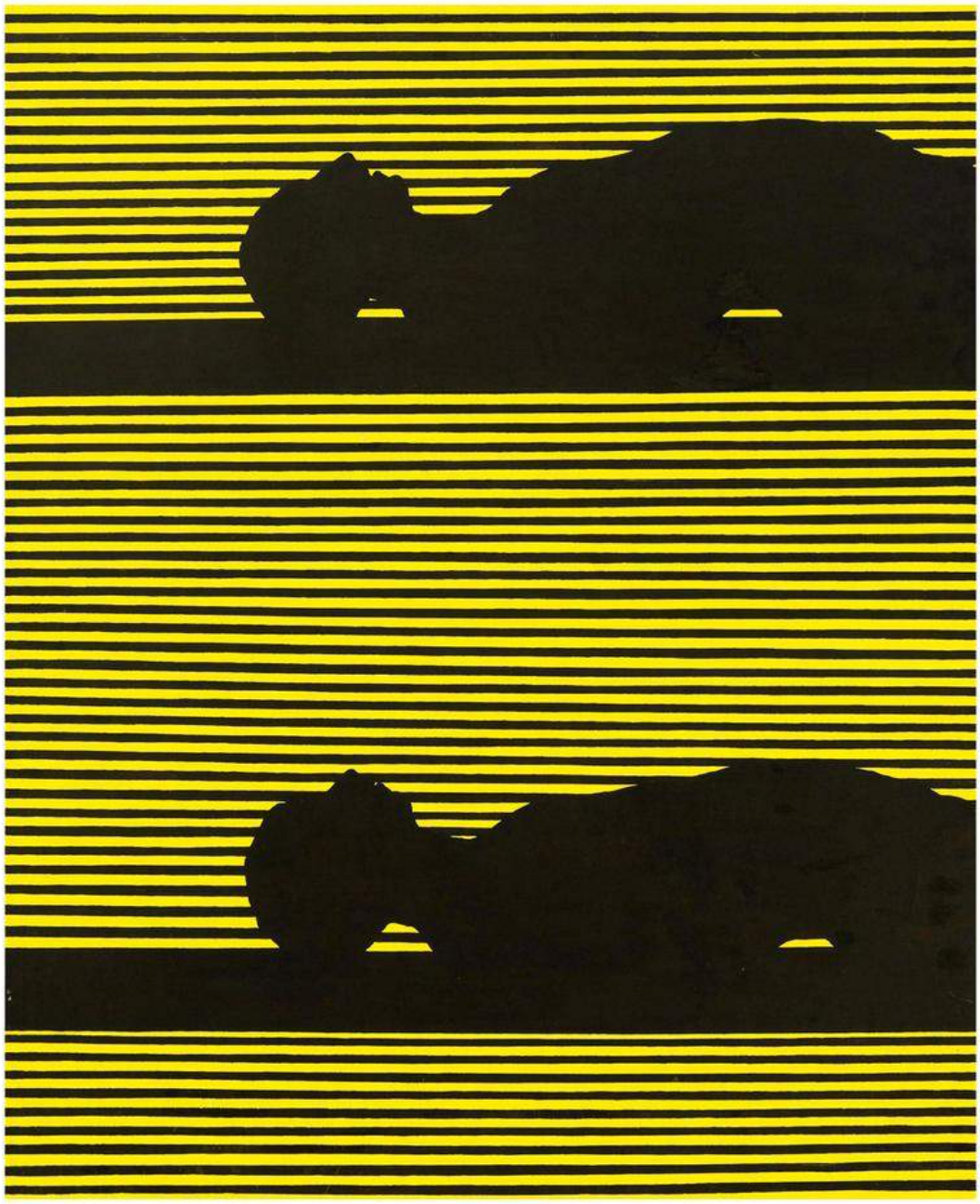




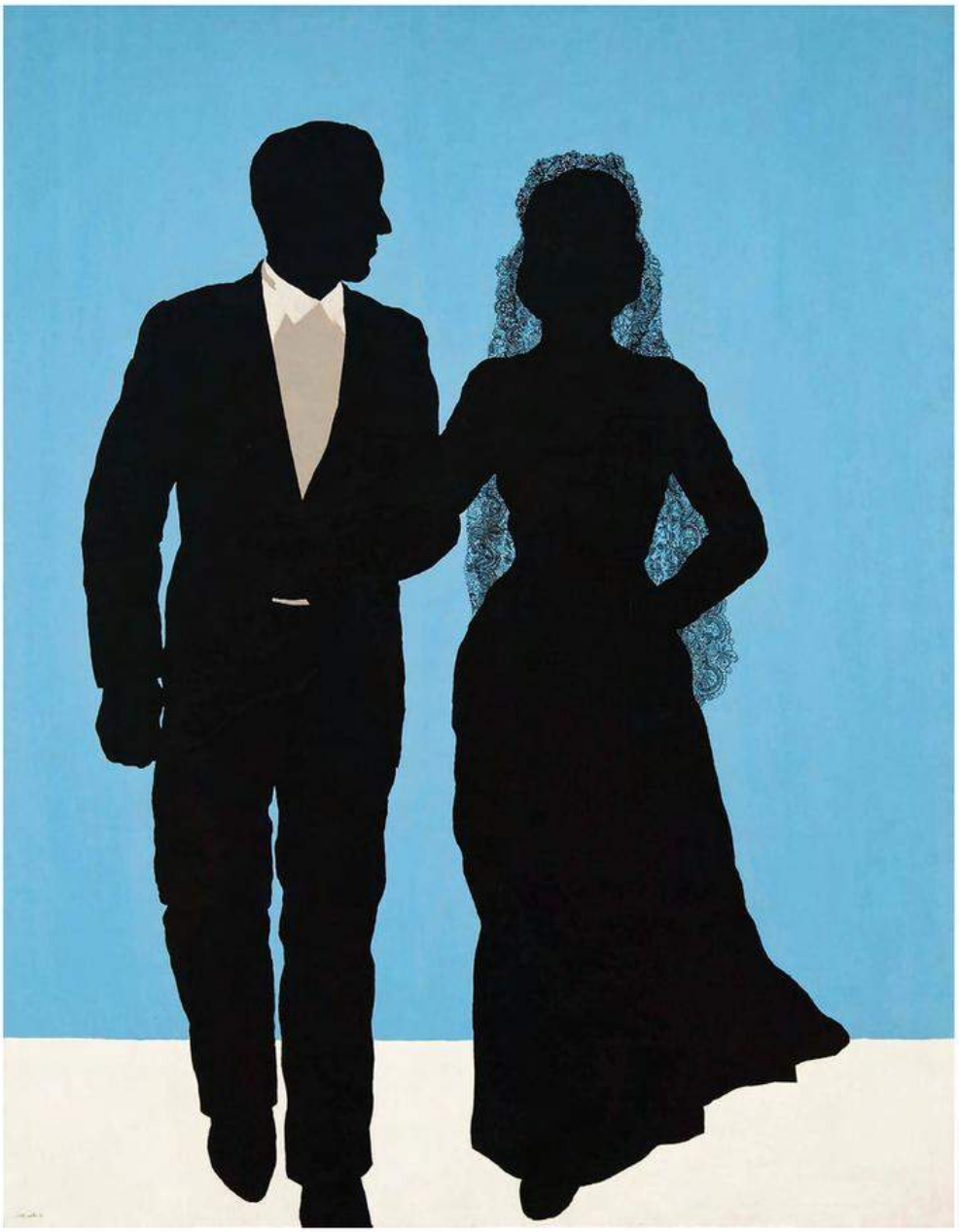
7
Ben Casey IV, 1962
Acrylic on linen, 60 x 50 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "I Weber 1962"
Signed, inscribed, dated and titled verso: "'IDELLE WEBER' /
60" x 50" / 1962 BEN CASEY IV"



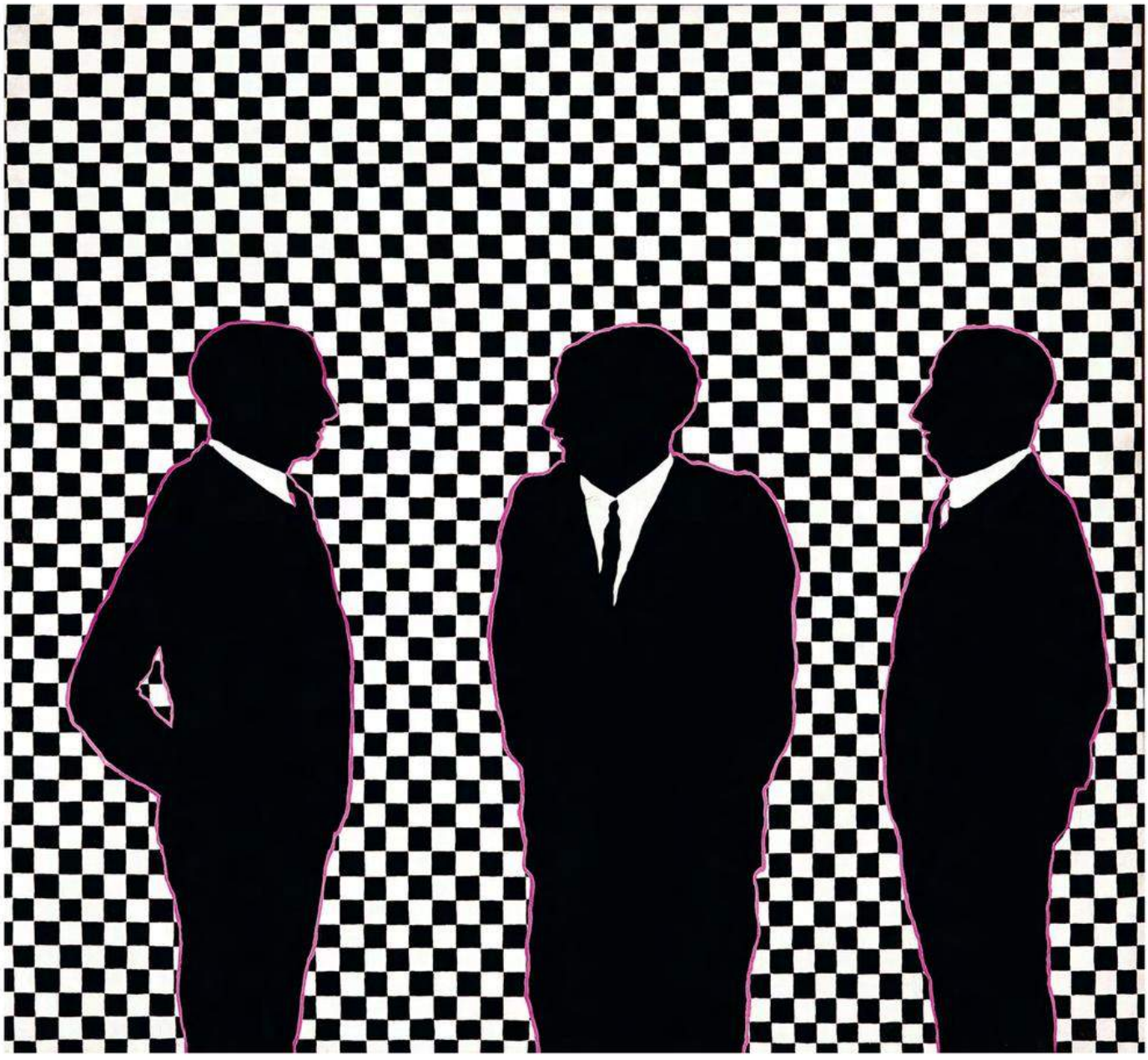
8
Ben Casey II, 1962
Oil on linen, 60 x 49 inches
Initialed and dated lower left: "IW '62"



9
Bride and Groom, 1963-64
Oil and acrylic on linen, 77 x 61 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "idelle weber '63"
Titled and dated on stretcher verso: "'BRIDE AND GROOM E.W 63 OIL"



10
Pink Line, 1961
Acrylic on linen, 45¼ x 49¼ inches
Signed and dated upper right: "i weber '61"
Signed on stretcher verso: "IDELLE WEBER"
Private collection

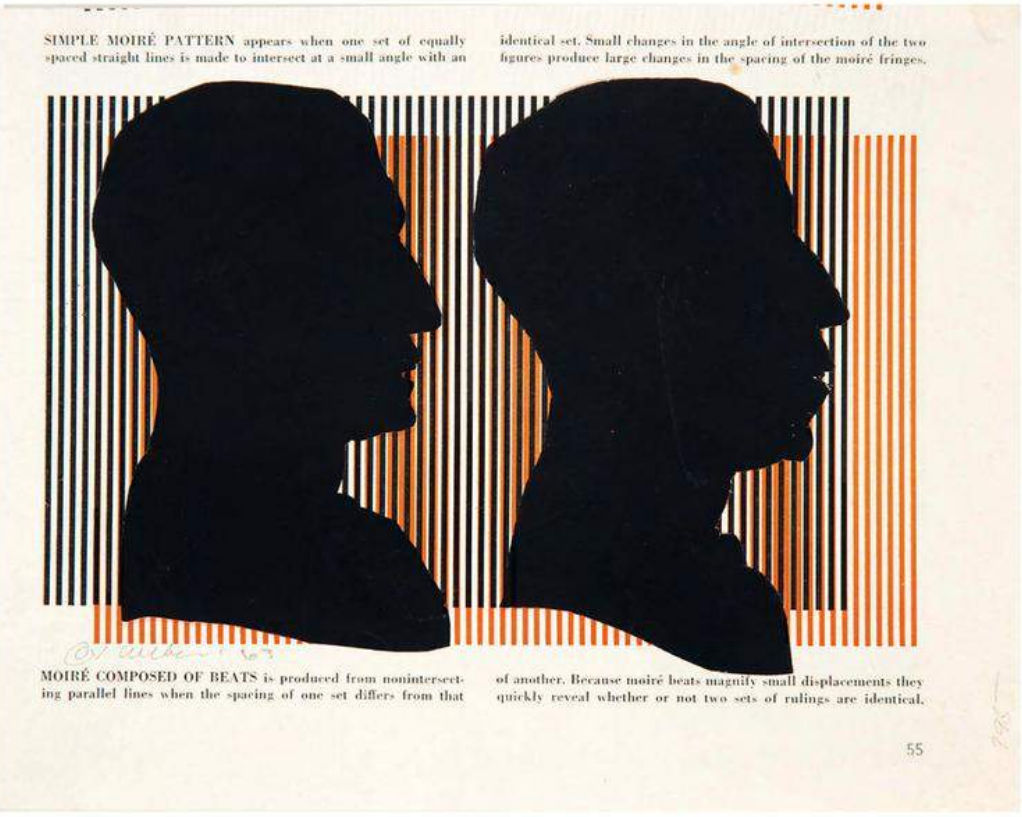


11
Swingers, 1960
Black plastic, silver paper, and Color-aid paper, 15 x 7 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© i weber 60"
Signed, titled, and dated verso: "IDELLE WEBER / 'Swingers EW 60'"

12
Doorway Madonna, 1966
Plastic and silver Color-aid paper, 18 x 11½ inches

13
Beauty Parlor, 1960s
Ink on vellum, 6 x 11½ inches
Singed and inscribed lower right: "© i weber / BEAUTY SHOP"
Signed, titled, and dated verso: "© i weber 'Beauty Parlor EW 60's'"

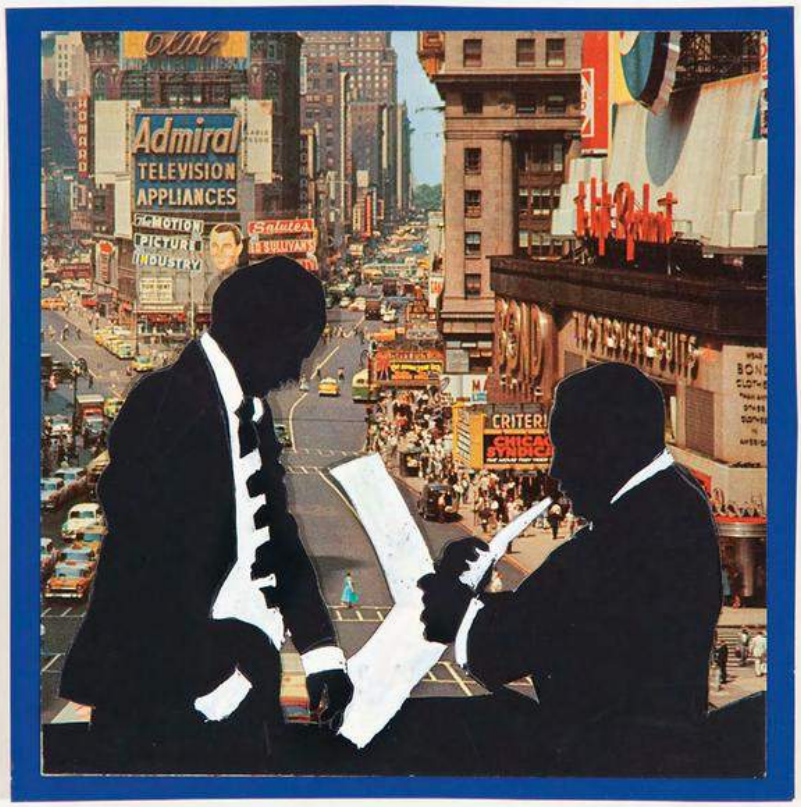
14
Moire Heads, 1963
Collage, 6½ x 8¼ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© i weber '63"
Titled and dated verso: "'MOIRE HEADS EW / 60's'"



SIMPLE MOIRÉ PATTERN appears when one set of equally spaced straight lines is made to intersect at a small angle with an identical set. Small changes in the angle of intersection of the two figures produce large changes in the spacing of the moiré fringes.

MOIRÉ COMPOSED OF BEATS is produced from nonintersecting parallel lines when the spacing of one set differs from that of another. Because moiré beats magnify small displacements they quickly reveal whether or not two sets of rulings are identical.

55


Admiral
TELEVISION
APPLIANCES
MOTION
PICTURE
INDUSTRY
Salutes
ED SULLIVAN


PANAM
PANAM

15
Uptown, 1964–65
Color-aid paper, tempera, and collage on paper
6 x 6 inches, 19¼ x 15¼ inches (sheet)
Initialed and dated lower right: "IW 65.8"
Titled and dated verso: "'UPTOWN EW 64 / 65'"

16
Dawn Draft, 1970
Collage and Color-aid paper, 16½ x 20 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "i weber - 70"
Titled and dated verso: "'DAWN DRAFT EW-8.70'"

17
Livingston Street, 1964
Watercolor on paper, 7¼ x 9¾ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "I Weber 64"

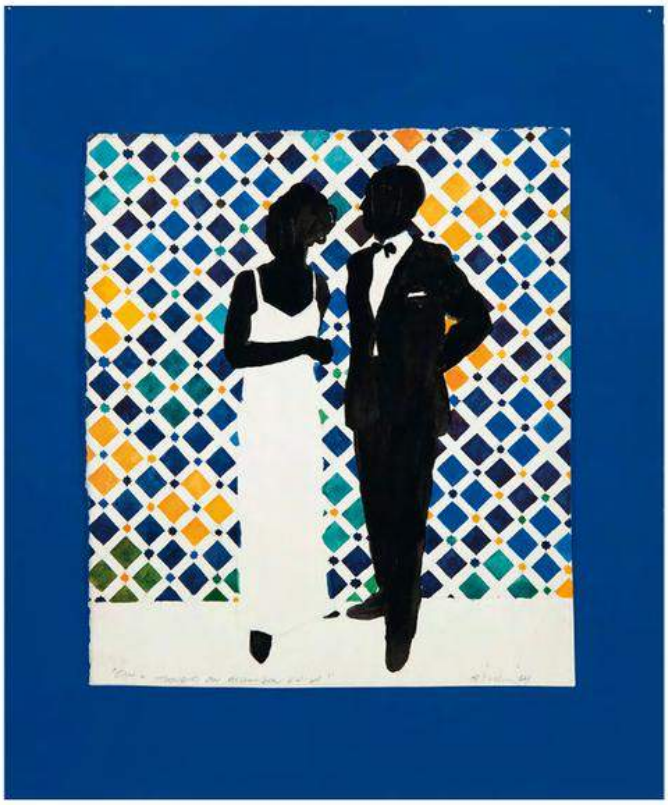
18
Wingspan, 1965
Collage with Color-aid paper, 18 x 14⅝ inches
Inscribed, signed, and dated lower center: "© i weber 65"

19
Checkers, 1971
Gouache and Color-aid paper, 21 x 21 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© i weber '71

20
Lever Building 2, 1970
Collage and gouache on Color-aid paper, 24½ x 18 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "i weber '70"

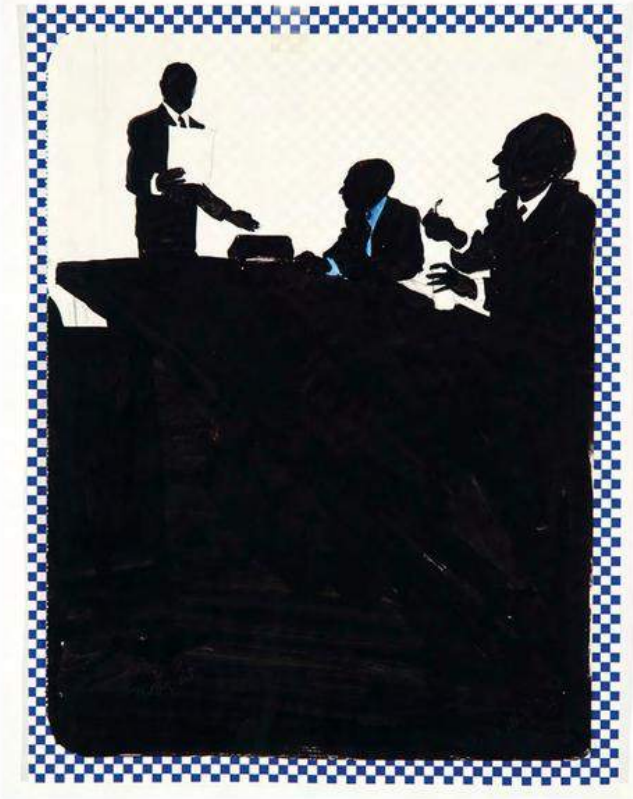
21
Thoughts on Alhambra, 1964
Watercolor and tempera on paper, 14⅜ x 12 inches
Titled, inscribed, and dated lower left: "'EW - THOUGHTS ON ALHAMBRA EW '64"
Inscribed, signed, and dated lower right: "© i weber 64"

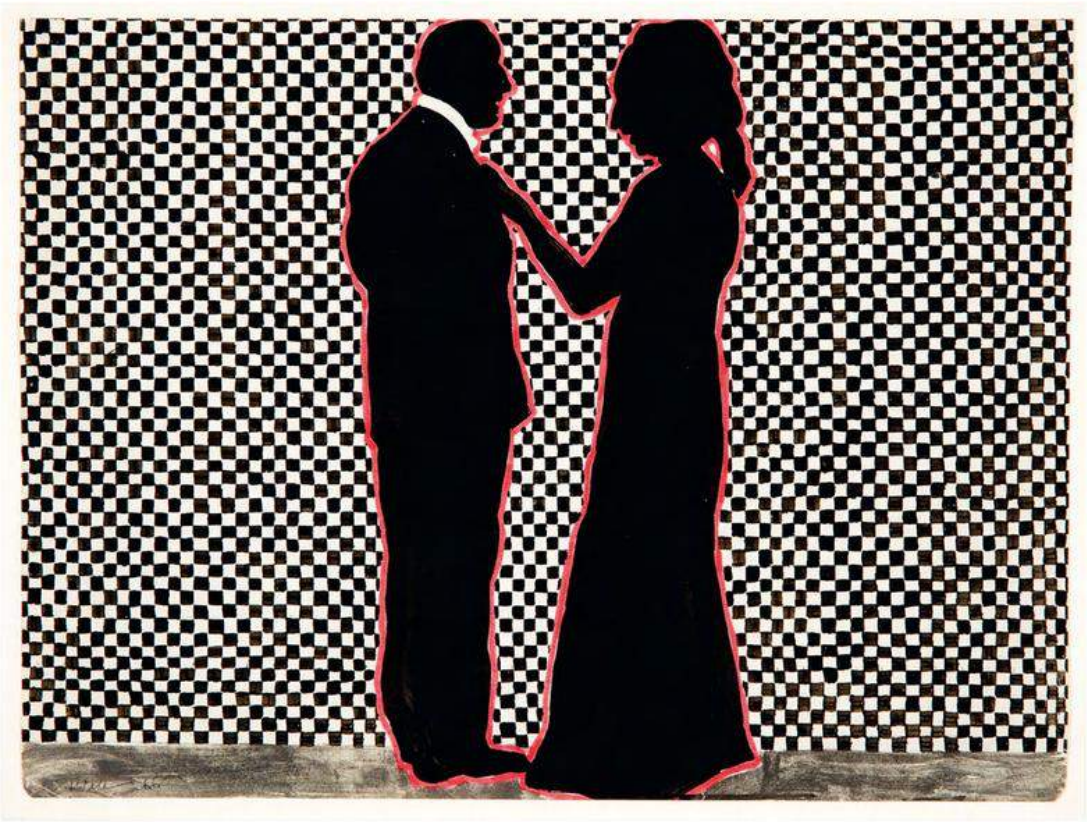
22
Future Ford, 1966
Watercolor on paper with silver leaf paint, 7½ x 10 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "I Weber 66"



23
Three Suits, 1962
Tempera on paper, 10½ x 8 inches
Signed and dated upper right: "i weber '62"
Titled and dated verso: "'THREE SUITS EW 62'"

24
Press Type Law Firm, 1965-66
Tempera on press type paper, 5¾ x 7½ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "I. Weber 65-6"





25
Did Ruby Have a Hat?, 1964
Gouache and tempera on paper, 12¼ x 9 inches
Inscribed, initialed, and dated lower left: "© IW 64"
Inscribed, titled, and dated verso: "silver gouache, tempera / paper / '2 RUBY'S CHECKED OUT EW 64' / tempera / paper"

26
Economist, 1966
Collage on paper, 11 x 8½ inches
Initialed lower left: "© iw"
Signed, titled, inscribed and dated verso: "© IW 'Economist EW POP EW 66'"

27
What's Going On?, 1960s
Gouache on paper, 20¼ x 16 inches
Signed lower left: "i weber"
Titled and dated verso: "'WHAT'S GOING ON? EW WC 60's'"

28
Plan, 1962
Silkscreen and pencil on acetate, 8 x 11 inches
Dated lower left: "'62"
Initialed lower right: "IW"
Signed, titled, and dated verso: "© IDELLE WEBER / 'PLAN EW' OD.19.62"

29
Mr. Chrysler, 1970
Collage, 11 x 13 inches
Signed and dated lower right: "i weber 70"
Signed, titled, and dated verso: "© i weber / Mr. Chrysler EW 70"

30
Pan Am Man, 1970
Ink on paper and printed paper, 5½ x 4¾ inches
Signed and dated lower right: "i weber 70"
Inscribed and dated verso: "EW '70"

31
Aztec Headpiece, 1960s
Color-aid paper and silver paper, 19 x 11½ inches (flat)
Titled and dated verso: "'AZTEC HEAD PIECE EW / '60's'"

32
City Mitre, 1971
Color-aid paper and mylar on paper, 18½ x 9 x 6½ inches
Signed on back: "© i weber"

33
Pomp & Carnaby St., 1966
Watercolor and magic marker on paper, 10 x 7½ inches
Signed lower right: "© I Weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'POMP & CARNABY ST' / POP. 66"

34
We Got Them, 1972
Ink on paper, 11½ x 8 inches
Initialed lower left: "IW ©"
Titled and dated verso: "'we got them EW 72'"

35
Flower Girl, 1960
Collage and ink on paper, 12½ x 9¾ inches
Signed and dated lower right: "I Weber 60"
Titled, initialed, and dated on verso: "'Flower Girl' / EW 60's"

OTHER SELECTIONS

36
Where's My Office?, 1958
Tempera and collage on checker board paper, 11 x 8½ inches
Initialed and dated center left: "© IW '.57"
Titled and dated verso: "Where's my office? 1958"

37
40 Wall Afternoon, 1960s
Tempera and graphite on paper, 7½ x 5¼ inches
Signed lower right: "i weber"
Titled verso: "40 WALL AFTERNOON"

38
Office Due, 1960s
Ink on paper, 14 x 9½ inches
Signed lower left: "I Weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'OFFICE DUE D EW 60s'"

39
Admiral on Blue Grey, 1960
Tempera and collage on Color-aid paper mounted on board, 8½ x 11 inches
Initialed and dated lower left: "IW - 60's"

40
Escorts, 1960
Watercolor and collage on Color-aid paper mounted on board, 11¾ x 11¾ inches
Signed lower left: "© I Weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'ESCORTS EW. 60s'"

41
Grey Man on Red, 1960s
Collage and graphite on Color-aid paper, 16 x 12 inches
Signed lower right: "© i weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated lower left: "'GREY MAN ON RED EW POP 60's'"
Initialed lower center: "IW"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'Grey Man on Red EW 60s'"

42
Joralemon St. Guests, 1960s
Collage on paper, 7¾ x 6¾ inches
Signed and dated right left: "© i weber 60's"

43
Pan Am, 1960s
Tempera on paper, 10 x 7½ inches
Signed upper left: "© I Weber"
Titled and initialed lower center: "Pan Am © iw"


36


37


38


39


40


41


42


43

44
Sparkled Pop, 1960s
Found objects and collage on paper, 11 x 8 inches
Initialed lower right: "© IW"

45
It's a Business, circa late 1960s
Watercolor, collage, and chalk on vellum, 11 x 8½ inches
Signed lower left: "© I Weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated lower right: "'It's a business' WC / late 60s ?"

46
The Admiral, 1960s
Tempera and collage on Color-aid paper mounted paper, 12½ x 9½ inches
Initialed and dated lower right: "IW 60's"
Signed verso: "IDELLE WEBER"

47
Red Outline Figure, 1960s
Tempera, ink, and magic marker on paper, 10 x 7½ inches
Signed lower left: "© I Weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'RED OUTLINE FIGURE EW 60'"

48
Raised Man (Architect), 1961
Color-aid paper and ink , 17 x 10¾ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© i weber 61"
Titled and dated verso: "RAISED MAN EW.9 61"

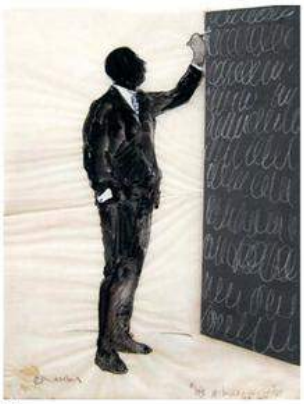
49
Reflection, 1962
Tempera and graphite on paper, 9¼ x 7½ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "I Weber 62 ?"
Titled, inscribed, dated, and initialed verso: "'REFLECTION' EW-#-62 / IW-62 / SKETCH FOR / ALBRIGHT KNOX COLLECTION / EW.62"

50
Dictation, 1962
Ink and graphite on paper, 7½ x 10 inches
Initialed lower left: "IW"

51
Law Man, 1963
Tempera on paper, 12 x 14 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© i weber '63"
Inscribed lower right: "644"
Signed, titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "© IDELLE WEBER / 'LAW MAN EWD 5A 63'"

52
Red Cross, 1963
Collage on press type paper mounted on board, 16 x 16 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© I Weber 63"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'RED CROSS / GREY MAN EW 10-63'"


44


45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53
High Ceiling—You Won't Get This, 1964
Tempera and graphite on vellum, 10 x 7½ inches
Initialed, titled, and dated lower left: "© iw High ceiling—you won't get this 64"

54
Blue Monday Square, 1964
Watercolor on press type paper mounted on board, 18 x 15 inches
Signed and dated lower right: "© i weber 64"
Inscribed, titled, and dated lower left: "PRESS TYPE BLUE MONDAY EW WC- 64"
Titled and dated verso: "'BLUE MONDAY SQUARE WD-64'"

55
Munchkin—Study, 1964
Ink on paper, 7½ x 10 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "i weber '64"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'MUNCHKIN STUDY EW WC 64'"

56
Sequence, 1965
Tempera and graphite on paper, 13½ x 9¼ inches
Initialed lower left: "IW © ?"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'SEQUENCE EW POP D 65-72?'"

57
Big A, 1965
Magic marker on paper, 10 x 7½ inches
Signed and dated lower right: "i weber 65"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'BIG A.EW.62'"

58
Second Marriage, 1965
Ink and graphite on paper, 7¼ x 10 inches
Initialed and dated lower left: "IW 65"
Signed, titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "© IDELLE WEBER / SECOND MARRIAGE EW 65"

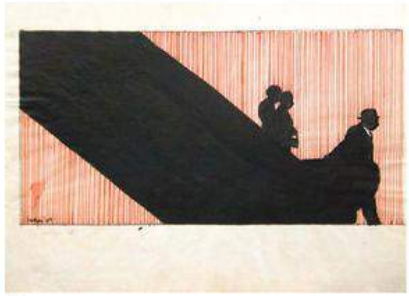
59
Zippo and Ashes, 1966
Tempera on Color-aid paper, 6¼ x 13¾ inches
Initialed and dated lower left: "© IW '66"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'ZIPPO AND ASHES EW. 18-66'"

60
You're Not in this Discussion, 1966
Tempera and collage on Color-aid paper, 10 x 13¾ inches
Signed lower right: "i weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'YOU'RE NOT IN THIS DISCUSSION D.EW POP16-66'"

61
Falling Figures, 1966
Tempera and collage on Color-aid paper, 22½ x 18 inches
Signed and dated lower right: "© i weber 66"
Titled, inscribed, and dated lower left: "'FALLING FIGURES EW 20-66'"


53


54


55


56


57


58


59


60


61

62
Me and My Shadow, 1967
Tempera and Color-aid paper on printed matter paper
10 x 8 1/2 inches
Signed lower left: "I Weber"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso:
"'ME AND MY SHADOW / EW 8.67'"

63
Off to See the Wizard, 1967
Tempera on paper, 18 x 12 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "I Weber 67"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD EW 5-67'"

64
Office Test, 1968
Tempera and collage on Color-aid paper
8 x 18 inches, Initialed lower left: "© IW"
Titled, inscribed, dated, and signed verso: "'OFFICE TEST EW Pop 7-68' / © i weber"

65
Book Her, 1968
Ink and Letraset on vellum, 12 x 16 inches
Signed and dated lower left: "© I Weber 68"
Inscribed, initialed, and dated upper right: "Times / Roman / iw late / 60s"

66
I Don't Love You, 1970
Watercolor and collage on paper, 16 x 12¾ inches
Signed and dated lower right: "i weber 70"
Titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "'I DON'T LOVE YOU' / EW 70"

67
Color-Aid Head Dress, 1971
Collage and graphite on Color-aid paper, 18 x 24 inches
Signed, dated, and inscribed lower left: "I Weber 71 634"
Signed, titled, inscribed, and dated verso: "© IDELLE WEBER / 'COLOR-AID HEAD DRESS D.8.71'"

68
Swing Time, 1971
Silver paper on matte board, 13¾ x 10¾ inches
Signed and dated lower right: "© I Weber 71"
Titled verso: "SWING TIME"

69
Didn't Make Partner, 1971
Collage on paper, 18½ x 18¾ inches
Signed and dated lower right: "i weber 71"

70
Hays, Sklar, 1971
Collage and tempera on paper, 19½ x 19½ inches
Signed and dated lower left: "i weber 71"
Titled, inscribed, dated, and signed verso: "HAYS, SKLAR EW 71 / i weber 71"


62


63


64


65


66


67


68


69


70

IDELLE WEBER (B. 1932, Chicago, Illinois)

1937–40

Attends Central Grammar School, Wilmette, Illinois.

Visits Art Institute and Field Museum in Chicago every week.

1941–46

Attends Swift School, Chicago.

Her family moves to California.

Attends Hawthorne Grammar School, Beverly Hills. Enters a program for young students under Ms. Frances Nugent, director of education at the Los Angeles County Museum.

Takes private lessons with artist Elsie Palmer Payne (1884–1971).

1946–50

Private art lessons with artist Theodore Lukits (1897–1992).

Attends and graduates from Beverly Hills High School, writing high school thesis on Edward Hopper and Jackson Pollock. Art instructors of influence were Mrs. Lucille Roberts and Mrs. Marjorie View.

Studies with Millard Sheets at Otis Art Institute and takes figurative classes at Chouinard Art Institute.

Enters Scholastic Art Awards; awarded regional and national Gold Keys; enters juried shows, among them Carmel Art Association, California (awarded first prize), and the Marquis Gallery, Beverly Hills, California (awarded third prize).

Attends Scripps College, Claremont, California; studies with Henry Lee McFee and informally with Millard Sheets.

1950–51

Exhibits figurative imagery in group show at Scripps.

On her first trip to New York City, visits the Metropolitan Museum, the Frick Collection, and others.

Attends UCLA and studies with William Brice, Jan Stussy, Fredrick Wright, Stanton MacDonald Wright, Gibson Danes, Karl Vith, Laura Anderson and Tony Rosenthal; occasional private critiques from Rico Lebrun. Shares studio off San Vicente Blvd in Brentwood with Craig Kauffman.

Takes a drawing class at Center for the Arts with Mary Vartikian. Enters college traveling exchange of student exhibitions. Awarded student teaching assistantship.

1953–55

Attends Aspen Design Conference, Colorado.

1956

Receives MA degree from UCLA, after completing a solo show, a thesis on Odilon Redon and oral exams. Receives California teaching certificate, and student teaches at Los Angeles High School and Emerson Junior High School.

1957

Drawing *Observation of Sound* included in show *Recent Drawings U.S.A.* at the Museum of Modern Art; Gertrude Mellon purchases drawing.

Remains in New York City, where she paints and takes temporary office jobs in New York.

Awarded 3rd prize in Bodley Gallery juried show; Warhol also wins a prize.

Included in "New Talent U.S.A." issue of *Art in America.*

Included in *152 Annual Exhibition of Watercolors, Prints, Drawings* at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (juried show), the *38th Annual Jury Exhibition* at the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts; awarded "Century Foundation Award."

Charcoal drawing in American Federation of Arts traveling exhibit.

Illustrations commissioned by *Scholastic* and *Esquire* magazines.

Attends an illustration and design class taught by Alexander Liberman at School of Visual Arts.

1958

Attends classes at Brooklyn Museum of Art and Art Students League.

Exhibits early paintings in Brooklyn Museum show juried by Ruben Tam and Augustus Peck.

Works with Theodoros Stamos and takes classes with Robert Beverly Hale.

Creates silhouette drawings and sketches of nudes and business men.

Spends part of summer, and subsequent summers, in Santa Monica, California.

Rents a studio at Ovington Building in Brooklyn Heights.

1959

Steven Raditch, director of Widdifield Gallery, visits studio; exhibits work in group drawing show.

Tibor de Nagy visits studio and suggests contacting J. Meyers the following fall.

Included in juried shows in New York City at City Center, Art Directions Gallery and Art Students League.

1962

Danny Robbins, assistant curator at the Guggenheim, buys *Cherubs/Silhouettes* and *What's Big, Black, and Blue?*

Shows work to Martha Jackson, John Weber (no relation), Ivan Karp and Robert Elkon.

Beginning of friendship with Yayoi Kusuma, Lucas Samaras, Claes Oldenburg, and Steve Antonakos.

Art historian Peter Seltz and gallerist Bertha Schaefer visit Ovington Studio. Signs with Bertha Schaefer Gallery in July.

1963

Solo show of silhouette paintings at Bertha Schaefer Gallery in early January; Albright-Knox Museum purchases *Reflection.*

Rents studio on Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn.

Discusses acrylic paint surfaces and grounds with Leonard Bocour.

Orin Riley, conservation curator at the Guggenheim, seeks consultation on the use of acrylic on linen and protective varnishes.

Visits Ivan Karp in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Shows a piece in Ivan's first OK Harris Gallery, Provincetown.

1964

Second solo show, of business men silhouettes, at Bertha Schaefer.

Continues to work without a solo show for the next eight years. Creates sketches for large, plastic, wall-mounted silhouette figures.

Moves to Livingston Street in Brooklyn Heights.

Kiss Box (a plastic box filled with Hershey Kisses) exhibited at Dwan Gallery in Los Angeles (later shown at the Rhode Island School of Design Galleries).

Halloween party at Livingston Street apartment, with attendees arriving in costumes: Roy and Dorothy Lichtenstein as Andy Warhol and Edie Sedgwick, Julian Weber as Samaras, and Patty Oldenburg in a baseball suit with a long, enormous bat made of stuffed material by Claes.

1965

Following a trip to Paris, increases use of photographs and drawings to develop source material for future work.

Rents studio in office building on Fulton Street, Brooklyn.

Joins EAT (Engineers, Artists, and Technology) and attends all of their lectures.

Continues with ideas and models for large scale Plexiglas silhouettes. Discusses use of neon with Steve Antonakos. Constructs *Woman with Jump Rope.*

1966–72

Model maker Ed Geiger assists with Weber's three-dimensional Plexiglas silhouette wall sculptures.

Returns to easel painting, starting with a series of small paintings of New York storefronts from slides taken from first days in New York City. Works on both silhouettes and realist paintings of various fruit stands.

1969

Purchases and moves to brownstone townhouse at 35 Sidney Place in Brooklyn Heights with studio on top floor.

Trades silhouette fan with Roy Lichtenstein for his *Sunrise* metal multiple, which was placed in the back yard.

1973–76

Joins Hundred Acres Gallery, where Barbara Toll is director. Receives solo show of fruit-stand paintings at Hundred Acres. Doris and Charles Saatchi purchase a painting from this show.

Continues work on fruit-stand paintings as well as some trash and litter works.

1977

Hundred Acres exhibits trash and litter works in solo show.

1978

Hundred Acres Gallery closes. Joins OK Harris Gallery.

Works on edition of etchings of trash as subject matter.

1979

Moves residence and studio to a loft on West Broadway, New York City.

OK Harris exhibits trash paintings in solo show.

Travels to St. Martin in the Caribbean; produces watercolors of typical resort area scenes.

1982

Travels to Bermuda and Tortola, British Virgin Islands, to visit John and Jane Clem Clarke. OK Harris exhibits resort pieces in solo show.

1983

Joins Ruth Siegel Gallery and shows foliage, flower work, mirror images and architectural elements.

1984

Trip to France forms the basis for solo show at Ruth Siegel Gallery: *Paintings and Works on Paper, 1982–1983,* on French gardens.

1985

Ruth Siegel Gallery exhibits *Paintings and Works on Paper, 1984–1985,* a solo show of grass, pebbles and water paintings.

1986

Arts Club of Chicago presents the solo show *Painting and Works on Paper, 1982–1985,* of garden and flower pictures.

1989

Anthony Ralph Gallery exhibits *Botanical References,* a solo show of flower watercolors and drawings.

1989–92

Leaves Ruth Siegel Gallery and joins Anthony Ralph Gallery.

1990

Australian artist Jan Senbergs introduces Weber to Garner Tullis, with whom she completes a landscape series.

Anthony Ralph Gallery exhibits *East End Paintings,* grass paintings and trash paintings in solo show for Weber.

1992

Sketches and takes photographs during travels to Egypt.

Takes Garner Tullis' workshop.

Does forty 41 x 41-inch monotypes in black with one-color background landscapes.

In a solo show Anthony Ralph Gallery exhibits The Golden Bough Series, including tree drawings and monotypes based on words from the "Golden Bough" in Seamus Heaney's *Seeing Things.*

1994

Joins Schmidt-Bingham Gallery.

Solo shows include Schmidt-Bingham, New York City; Jean Albano Gallery, Chicago; Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe; and Colorado State College.

1995

Workshop with Richard Tullis in Santa Barbara, California.

Solo show at Contemporary Arts Forum, Santa Barbara.

Becomes artist-in-residence and teaches at Melbourne University, Victorian School of the Arts (VSA), Australia. Sketches and photographs New Zealand, Australian outback, Great Barrier Reef, and treks to Ayers Rock.

Solo show at VSA: *First Shots: Idelle Weber* includes landscape monotypes.

Stops working in oils due to serious allergy to solvents.

1996

Exhibits *Shells* in solo show at Schmidt Bingham, New York City.

1998

Exhibits *Trees* in solo show at Schmidt Bingham.

2000

Takes a trip around the world photographing and drawing frequently.

2001–02

Witnesses September 11th from West Broadway. Halts work for several months, but collects and fills a wall with newspaper clippings and images.

Works on *Head Room,* first installation of over 500 paintings, drawings, watercolors and prints of heads done between 1947 and 2002.

Elected for membership in the National Academy of Design. Receives Elin P. Speyer Award in membership exhibition.

2003–04

Head Room exhibited at The Nassau County Museum of Art in Roslyn, New York.

Serves as member of the National Academy Museum Council.

2010

One month's summer residency, Acadia Art's Foundation, Mount Desert Island, Maine.

Sid Sachs, curator, installs *Beyond the Surface: Women and Pop Art 1958–1968,* Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery, The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 2010.

Catherine Morris organizes *Seductive Subversion: Women Pop Artists, 1958–1968,* at the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art and Morris A. and Meyer Schapiro Wing, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York, October 15, 2010–January 9, 2011.