



Thomas Frank Akawie

February 22, 1935 - January 18, 2019

Thomas Frank Akawie died January 18, 2019, in Berkeley CA. Tom was born Feb 22, 1935 in New York City and was the son of Bessie Cohen Akawie, and Nathan Akawie. He graduated John Marshall High School, Los Angeles in 1953. He attended University of California, Berkeley (B.A. 1959, M.A. 1963). Tom was Guest Faculty & Instructor at University of California, Berkeley, Assistant Professor California State University Los Angeles, and a Professor of Fine Art at San Francisco Art Institute 1966-1999.

From the 1980 book by Thomas Albright, *Art in the San Francisco Bay Area 1945-1980*:

"...From origins in Abstract Expressionism, he developed a form of abstraction in which rigidly symmetrical forms, initially inspired by floor plans of historic European cathedrals, were set in etherealized fields that implied vast spaces; meticulously airbrushed, they suggested both precision machine parts and primitively stylized figures and were frequently exhibited with the work of the Visionaries. Akawie later turned to landscape-Magic Realist deserts and skies, "moonscapes" airbrushed to suggest trompe l'oeil reliefs of ridges and craters- and to figurative works inspired by the symbolism and imagery of the Tarot, astrology, and ancient Egyptian art. In the late 1970's he emphasized more conventional Photo Realist subjects."

Tom's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally including the San Francisco Museum Of Modern Art, Oakland Museum, Whitney Museum NY,

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Jose Museum of Art, Smithsonian Washington D.C., Institute of Contemporary Art Philadelphia, Museum Of Contemporary Art Chicago, Milwaukee Art Center, DeYoung Memorial Museum San Francisco, Denver Art Museum, Santa Barbara Museum Of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, numerous fine art galleries in Los Angeles, Berkeley, and San Francisco, and is included in many private collections. He is considered to be a pioneer of Airbrush Painting.

Tom was extremely talented, smart, funny, cool, a jazz aficionado, interesting, and complicated. His art was his life.

He leaves his son David Akawie of Berkeley, sister Ellen Akawie Binkert Bledsoe-Rodriguez (Art) of Westlake Village, nephew Kevin Binkert of San Francisco, niece Jennifer Bledsoe Blackburn (Scott) of Los Angeles, grandnieces Carly Hedegard, and Ruby Blackburn, grandnephew Billy Hedegard, and many cousins and friends. He was predeceased by his parents, and his niece Deborah Binkert Hedegard (Stan) of Ventura CA. Services to be held at a later date.

Tribute Wall



“ Tom was a great artist and lifelong friend..everyday I enjoy the paintings I and my family collected over the years... I cannot imagine living in a home without one of his paintings on display... fortunately, I have nine of them... RIP Tom and thank you for the joy you bring into my life daily... Jeff Wagner AKA Comet Passingby

Jeffrey Wagner - July 15, 2019 at 09:42 PM