Working With Raw Materials

Pete Gershon
Jeff McKissack, the Orange Show, 1966-1979, mixed media, variable
Creating a Living Legacy is a program of the Joan Mitchell Foundation that provides support to visual artists in creating, through organizing and inventorying, comprehensive documentation of their artworks and careers.
Texas Art Project
1977-1983
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
Funded by the Brown Foundation
400+ artists, galleries, organizations
More than 700 reels of information
Cluttered Studio Pleases This Artist Who Talks of Youth and Newer Ideas

Tidy Room Hampers Work, Houstonian Declares

In a wash-she'd studio, cluttered with tools of her craft, an artist talked of modernism.

The artist is McNell Davidson. And if anyone should have misgivings about the present-day trend, it is she.

That very quality once caused her canvases to be hung behind a museum door. But McNell just laughed—called the hanging "adorable"—and went on her way.

That's the thing you like best about this dynamic woman. She has the courage of her convictions.

You see it in the whitewashed studio she made from a wash-she'd because she felt a tidy indoor room hampered her.

"Orders? She Don't Mind
You see it in her turning from "academic" to scientific formulas in painting.

Most of all, you see it in her unshaken belief in the need for something that people can understand and use.

Flashy Water Colors Make Her Work Attractive

Balanced with precision both in color and in form.

"The academicians are left behind in this change—politically, for behind them is the evolution of the modern—scientific, rational, vital—water color in place of the more profound oil.

"Quills Old Fare
"Art, decoration, style, and more than anything else, should make people realize that the permanent thing in life is change.

McNell Davidson has changed a lot.
She's still seeing to a large extent, the big landscapes, still lifes, and nude studies in oil that have won her repeated honorable mention.

She's turning to water color—oil, watercolor inspired by no more than a purple iris and a saffron lily set in a bowl of boiling water.