

NATHAN OLIVEIRA



Angel Rocker, 2005. Color sugar lift aquatint with aquatint and drypoint. Paper size: 52 x 41"; image size: 45 x 36". Edition 40. Printed by Emily York.

Angel Rocker

In the catalog text for Nathan Oliveira's 2005 exhibition at the D. C. Moore Gallery in New York City, art writer Dore Ashton speaks of "dreamed spaces that paradoxically acquire real presence." Several paintings in the exhibition are images in which a nude figure stands on a rocker. There is a resemblance between the aquatint *Angel Rocker* and a painting titled *Red Rocker*, but the figure in *Angel Rocker*, unlike the one in the painting, is an angel—she has wings. She stands motionless in an unstable place, looking down, a pillar of strength. Both *Red Rocker* and *Angel Rocker* are essentially red images, background and foreground but *Angel Rocker* is a more earthy red, saturated and rich as only an aquatint can be. Ashton quotes Oliveira in this way: "I'm actually interested in red, but also the whole world of red all the way back to the earth colors of the Southwest." Using aquatint and a touch of drypoint, Oliveira has created a radiant, glorious angel who is of the earth, glowing in sienna and ochre reds, touched with green, yellow and vermillion.



The Twin Runners, 2005. Color sugar lift, soap ground and spit bite aquatints with aquatint and soft ground etching. Paper size: 52 x 41"; image size: 45 x 36". Edition 40. Printed by Emily York

The Twin Runners

Several of Nathan Oliveira's recent paintings show doubled figures, "twins" as he calls them, though they are actually matching shadows of figures echoing the postures of one another. This may have more to do with companionship, support, and connection than with twin identities. Here the twin runners glide forward with straight bodies and an ease familiar to anyone who runs. Speaking of Oliveira as a metaphorical runner, Dore Ashton writes that "it is in an indeterminate direction that he runs, and he takes his spatial atmosphere with him. ... [Oliveira's] spaces seem to emanate from the figures rather than serve as backgrounds or enclosures." This work is an aquatint, luminous in umbers and ochres, with a surprising touch of soft ground etching in a green line under the runners' feet. The line anchors them—if it were not there, you feel they would float away, so light are they on their feet.