

## In memoriam: Robert Reed, long-time faculty member at School of Art

January 5, 2015



Robert James Reed Jr.  
Robert James Reed Jr.

Art in 1969.

Robert James Reed Jr., a member of the faculty of the Yale School of Art's Department of Painting and Printmaking for almost 50 years, died on Dec. 26 at the age of 76 after a battle with cancer.

In an announcement to the School of Art community, Dean Robert Storr described Reed as "the beloved mentor of generations of young talents who benefited from and valued his 'tough love' pedagogy. ... He leaves an enormous hole in the heart of the school and a legacy unrivaled in the number of years he taught or the number of young people he initiated into the complexities and satisfactions of artistic practice and thereafter inspired in the pursuit and appreciation of art."

Reed was born in Charlottesville, Virginia on July 9, 1938, the son of the late Robert J. and Elsie Armstead Reed Sr. He received a B.S. from Morgan State College in 1958, and a B.F.A. and M.F.A. from the Yale University School of Art in 1960 and 1962, respectively. In the summer of 1960, he attended the art division of the Yale Summer School of Music and Art, a program he later directed from 1970 to 1974. He was appointed to the faculty of Yale University School of

Reed developed several intensive studio programs and was the founder and director of the Institute for Studio Studies in Auvillar, France, which is associated with the Yale Summer Session. He received numerous grants and awards, including a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1980, an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 2001, and the College Art Association's Distinguished Teaching of Art Award in 2004.

Reed lectured extensively in this country and taught at Skidmore College and the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, where he was head of the Foundation Studies Division in 1964. He was also a fellow at Yaddo and a board member for the McDowell Colony and the Virginia Center for Creative Arts. In 1980 he was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2000 he received the national award from the National Council of Art Administrators, and in 2001 he received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. In 2004 Reed received the Distinguished Teaching of Art award from the College Art Association, and in 2009 he was elected to the National Academy Fellowship in New York. He was a lifetime member of the Silvermine Arts Center, New Canaan, Connecticut and served on the Board of Lyme Academy of Fine Arts, Old Lyme, Connecticut.

Reed's own art works — boldly articulated and richly hued geometric abstractions — were widely exhibited and collected. Among the places they appeared in group shows were the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, the Biennial of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the Hirshhorn Museum and

Sculpture Garden in Washington D.C., the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Institute of Art, and the Yale University Art Gallery. Reed had solo shows at the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Bayly Museum in Charlottesville, Virginia; the Washburn Gallery in New York; and the McIntosh Gallery in Atlanta. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Hirshhorn Museum, the Walker Art Center, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Yale University Art Gallery, and the Bayly Museum.

Reed had been a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Alpha Iota Chapter, Morgan State since 1956.

He is survived by his children, Dr. Lisbeth Jordan, and Mark Armstead Reed and his wife Christina Buchanan Reed, both of Seattle, Washington; grandchildren Rachel Reed and Kamile and Monroe Jordan; and nephew Charles Taylor. He was predeceased by his sister, Fredericka Taylor.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Friends and colleagues can sign Reed's guest book online at [www.iovanne.com](http://www.iovanne.com) and may include their email address to be contacted with service information. The Iovanne Funeral Home Inc. is in charge of the arrangements.

The School of Art will hold a memorial for Reed in April. The Robert Reed Scholarship Fund is being established in his name. Send donations (made payable to the Yale School of Art) to: Yale University School of Art, c/o Monica Robinson, Office of Development, Box 2038, New Haven, CT 06521-2038; note that the donation is for the Reed Fund.



Copyright © 2015, Yale University. All rights reserved. [Privacy policy.](#)  
[Browse our archives](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Office of Public Affairs & Communications](#)

