DANIEL GRAVES

Artist and Founder of The Florence Academy of Art

Born in 1949, in Rochester, New York, Daniel Graves graduated from the Maryland Art Institute of Art in 1972 where he studied with Joseph Sheppard and Frank Russell. He continued his studies at the Villa Schifanoia Graduate School of Fine Art in Florence, Italy, with Richard Serrin. Following a course of training with Richard Lack in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he taught at the Atelier Lack Studio of Fine Art. In the late 1970s, Graves returned to Florence and undertook individual study with Nerina Simi, who maintained a classical nineteenth-century studio. Ms. Simi was the daughter of the Florentine painter Filadelfo Simi, who had studied with Jean-Léon Gérôme, the head of the French Academy in Paris in the 1870s.

With such a rich background of training, Graves has created a style of oil painting that blends the Florentine tradition of Simi and the realist painter, Pietro Annigoni, with the draftsmanship of the French artist, Charles Bargue.

Daniel Graves joined Charles Cecil to found Studio Cecil-Graves in Florence, which for nearly a decade trained many practitioners of classical realism. In 1991, Graves established The Florence Academy of Art (FAA). His philosophy, which underlies the Academy's curriculum and method of instruction, demands a return to discipline in art, to canons of beauty, and to the direct study of nature. He was the first to discover Bargue's, *Cours des Dessins,* and integrate this masterwork into the Academy's teaching curriculum. Under Graves' direction, The Florence Academy of Art has continued at the forefront of classical realist art education for over thirty years.

The Academy's programs in Florence and Sweden earned accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) in 2013. Diplomas issued at the end of their 3-year course in painting and sculpture are at a University level.

In "Tradition in the 21st Century," an essay published in the exhibition catalogue, *Realism Revisited: The Florence Academy of Art (2003),* Graves described his training in Old Masters techniques and heralded the classical realist renaissance in aesthetics and art education. The exhibition traveled throughout Europe and the United States. Practitioners, connoisseurs, and scholars of modern representational art recognize "Realism Revisited" and its accompanying catalogue as defining moments in the appreciation of classical realist art.

In April 2008, Daniel Graves and The Florence Academy of Art received the *Excellence in Art Education* Award from the Portrait Society of America. Daniel is a regularly invited jury panelist for The Foundation of Arts and Artists' *International Figurativas Painting & Sculpture Competition*. One of the first to receive Art Renewal Center's *ARC Living Master™* designation, Graves serves as a juror for their annual *International ARC Salon*.

Daniel Graves is a painter of figures and portraits, landscapes and still life, and is an etcher. His artwork can be found in both public and private collections throughout Europe, the U.S., and Japan. Selected works, published writings, and contact information can be found at danielgravesart.com.

Self Portrait, 23 x 19" oil on panel