

Press conference: Preview of "Molecular Impressionism" Art Show

July 23, 1970

Place: Conference Room A, UCSD, located on Matthews Campus in group of buildings which houses the Chancellor's office.

Time: Friday, July 24, 1970, at 11 a.m.

The 18 works to be displayed were painted by a young artist who combines his special expertise as a scientist (Ph.D. in physical chemistry) with inborn artistic talent to produce a unique interpretative form which has been called "molecular impressionism."

Dr. Grant Delbert Venerable II, 28, presently is an Atomic Energy Commission postdoctoral fellow in radiobiology at UCLA's Laboratory of Nuclear Medicine and Radiation Biology. In 1962, while attending chemistry lectures at UCLA as a freshman, Venerable began to ponder the possibilities of communicating to others his deep feelings about the inherent beauty of molecular structures and their relationship to the real world.

His first attempts were simple and unsophisticated, taking form in some small renderings depicting phases of water, ice, liquid and steam. Then, after two years of study under famed UCLA professor Dr. Willard Libby, Venerable began to paint some of the work which has aroused widespread interest and comment.

Intrigued by Venerable's unusual art form, several UCLA professors commissioned him to produce paintings which symbolized their research projects. Dr. Robert L. Pecsok requested him to paint "Chromous Crab," to capture the essence of Pecsok's research in analytical chemistry and chromatography. The late Dr. Saul Winstein, an authority in physical-organic chemistry, commissioned "The Non-classical Ion, Homotropylium." In honor of Dr. Libby, Venerable produced "Abstract Impression of the First Controlled Nuclear Fission Chain Reaction."

These three works will be among the 18 paintings which Venerable will place on display at UCSD this weekend. The one-man show will open formally Saturday, July 25, in the first-floor cases of Urey Hall, Revelle College, and will end August 8. The special preview Friday, July 24, at 11 a.m. will be exclusively for the media.

Venerable, a Negro, was born in Los Angeles, California in 1942. His artistically inclined mother was an accomplished pianist and organist, and his father, a mathematician, was also a skilled musician. Venerable earned his B.S. in chemistry from UCLA in 1965, and was granted a Ph.D. in physical chemistry by the University of Chicago after the winter term of 1970. At age 14, Venerable received brief formal training in oil technique at the Los Angeles County Otis Art Institute on a P.T.A. scholarship. Even at that early age, he was painting ethereal scenes which were precursors of his "molecular impressionism."

Some 100 paintings by the scientist-artist are scattered throughout the United States. One hangs in Alberta, Canada and two are in West Germany. In these works, Venerable has attempted to "immortalize" the research work of scientists in several universities and in private industry.