

Prize winners at Brandeis

ART OF THE STATE — *Paintings, drawings and prints by finalists and recipients of the 1979 Artists Fellowship Program, awarded by the Artists Foundation and sponsored by the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, July 20 to Aug. 26.*

By Jill Janows
Special to The Globe

This exhibit of works by artists judged to be among the best in Massachusetts shows obvious talent and sophistication. The effect is a panorama of contemporary styles and visual interests. Abstract, realist and surrealist pieces are included, their materials ranging from neon and wood to cloth constructions.

Whether this exhibit suggests the state of art moving into the 1980s is another question. Most of the awards recognize well-mastered techniques rather than innovation or even experimentation.

This year's judges — artists Richard Haas, Sylvia Mangold and Robert Reed, all from out of state — chose 17 fellowship recipients from 693 painters and 375 print-makers who submitted work. This year's group comprises the largest number of art recipients, since the program began awarding fellowships in 1975. Each grant is \$3500.

In the exhibit of work by 46 artists, realist painters and highly visible: Paul Rahilly's large-scale female tableau, Jane

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Lund's confrontative nude portrait of a pregnant woman and Scott Prior's studies of pop-culture consumer icons and electrical transformers are among the works casting a cold, unromantic eye on everyday scenes. There are abstract, more meditative pieces by Gregory Amenoff and Tom Shooter as well as Jerry Williams' mixed-medium boxes — minitheaters of Southwest highway-strip paraphernalia. The strength of all the works derives more from the realization of a style than from emotional distinctiveness.

Works that linger include pieces with unusual imagery, among other accomplishments: Mira Cantor's wonderful graphite drawings with a horizontal smudging method, the figures reverberating as if underwater; Joel Janowitz's spare, elegant, moody scenes of dogs at the beach, the impulse almost Oriental; Catherine Bertulli's Matisse-like watercolors, humorous and vibrant; the cloth circus paintings by Alison Cann-Clift which place tiny figures juggling and balancing in metaphysical big-tops; Elaine Rabinowitz's sensual, lurid interiors reminiscent of Cocteau fantasies.

Work by the 17 fellowship recipients will travel to the Provincetown Art Center for an exhibit Sept. 7 to 24.