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By

June Star Vogt

B.F.A., University of Arizona, 1971

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the Graduate
School of the University of Colorado in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

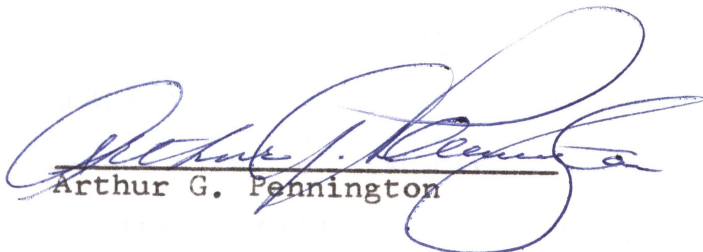
Master of Fine Arts

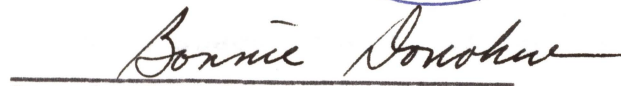
Department of Fine Arts, Creative Art

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This thesis for the Master of Fine Arts Degree by
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Facades

The works in my thesis exhibition represent a chronological development and exploration of one concept over the past year and a half; the concept of facades or fronts and their relationships to adjacent planes. In conjunction with pursuing this concept, a new medium has also been utilized resulting in the simultaneous development of both mental and technical processes. Most of the jewelry designs have been governed by the concept being expressed, but in certain cases the medium allowed further manipulation of the facades and a broadening of the original perception.

The term facade inherently connotes that a relationship exists between the face of something and that which lies behind or underneath. Without this relationship there would be no facade, nothing underlying to give initial importance to the specific face. Sometimes it can be the relationship to space itself, as in the building facades of stage sets. Nothing materially exists behind the set, but a relationship is established between the facade and the space by the focal point of the viewer. Predominantly, however, my examination of facades has focused on the execution of two or more material planes and the relationship created by their proximity.

The concept of a facadel relationship first became evident in pieces where I had created an inside and an

outside and where the surface indicated what was structurally happening behind. The facade was primary to understanding the entire piece, just as the face of a building relates information of its architecture. But what if this information was changed? Does a relationship still exist and, if so, what importance remains with the face?

With these questions in the back of my mind, I instinctively proceeded to execute multiple surfaces within one piece by using many layers that could all be seen at once. There were no openings or inner volumes beyond the surface, but the information of the facade gave the feeling of something behind. A facade, therefore, could be deceptive with its information. Each layer, in essence, became the facade for the next layer and the thickness created by these multiples created a seeming volume to be opened.

And just as a facade could create deception for the viewer, it could also give no information except to exist as a tangible face or barrier. This aspect emanated from the physical properties of the plastic, namely its translucency. A facade could become simply a surface with no information beyond its existence and its existence would be evident only by its coloring and reflection of light. The translucency allowed the secondary level to become the primary information layer. The role of the face was reversed and, by using specific

smokey colors, began to add mystery to the overall piece. The transposing of information from the surface to the inside also created an in-and-out movement, an uncertainty of where the focal point should be. But, also, it created an invitation for the viewer to look more closely. At a distance these pieces can be read as a single unified work, but the "fuzziness" of the second layer attracts the viewer.

From this phase I wanted to create pieces which did have an inside and outside, a definitive front and back, both relating information, but which did not necessarily have a logical relationship based on the information of the facade. It was also with this aspect of a facade relationship that I became aware of how relative the concept was to human personalities. People all have similar facades in daily living which do not necessarily give correct information as to what lies deeper. When I designed these pieces I attempted to adhere to personalities familiar to me and to utilize a mixture of mediums (fabrics, thread, etc.) to create contrast and to create images relating to the personalities. In these works, the backs began to develop further to a point where they became a second facade, with just as much significance as the front. In most cases I did try to create a cue on the facade to indicate that the piece should be turned over, but whether the viewer does this is not imperative.

It must also be mentioned that the jewelry itself can be considered a facade to the wearer. The fabric neckcloths were executed with this aspect in mind. They almost cover the front of a person and become closely related to clothing; clothing being our daily physical facade. They are still decorative and accessory oriented, but create a facadel relationship to the wearer in the proportionate size.

The fabric sculptures included in the exhibition are also examples of facadel relationships. The sculpture, "Four Cylinders", illustrates how a facade or surface can inform or misinform the viewer. The surface appears to be birch bark, but the stripped areas contradict the known information of what lies underneath tree bark. Are they trees? The facade partially tricks the viewer by displaying a common and known image, but a tension is created by the relationship to the inside. It is not a logical relationship in our world and imparts a slightly disturbing feeling. It breaks the security of one of the common facadel relationships.

Beyond dealing with the idea of facades, the works in the exhibit also incorporate a number of other perceptions about jewelry as an art form. The choice of plastics as a medium furnished a material that was far less precious than traditionally used metals. Being a man-made substance, plastic reflects our technological society while also

affording the workable properties for construction, and provides a connotative response far different than that of gold. Most importantly, I want my jewelry to be viewed more as a decorative adornment, expressing my thoughts and ideas, than as an expensive and precious possession to be valued mostly by its monetary worth. Plastic is less precious in cost, but I'm not certain that my works have totally accomplished a less precious feeling. The intricacy of design and the obviously time-consuming details all lead to a more precious feeling than desired. However, another aspect of this idea is successful. None of the works give a sense of longevity; none will physically last a long time. They are short-lived artifacts incorporating a sense of planned obsolescence, and this in itself lessens the feeling of a precious possession and again reflects the world around us.

The design style throughout is, of course, the most personally reflective aspect of the work. The imagery used is taken from nature sources, then rearranged and compiled into undefineable forms which still remain organic. And, because I work with many ideas at once and feel the need to express them all at once, the designs grow in complexity during the production. The end results are always more intricate than the original design or sketch and this tendency seems to be an aspect which

I have little control over. The designs grow during almost every stage and reflect a playing with detail form relationships and textures. The works are playful in a sense and, most of all, they are decorative and to be enjoyed.

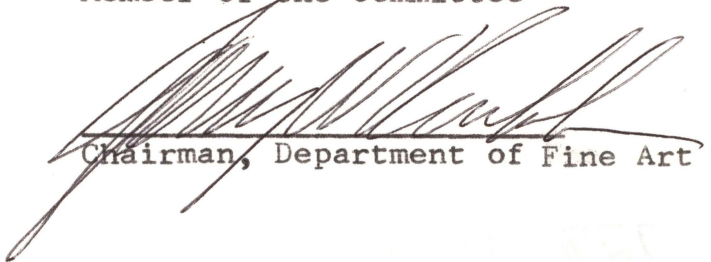
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Fine Arts
June Star Vogt
has submitted this written thesis
as a supplement to the creative thesis
and 10 slides
which are in the permanent possession of the
University of Colorado and recorded with the
Department of Fine Arts

Approved by


Chairman of the Committee


Member of the Committee


Member of the Committee


Chairman, Department of Fine Art

