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LILYGILDING AND MAGNOLIAS

by

Amy S. Adams

BFA Auburn University, 1984

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, Sculpture

1987

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This Thesis for the Master of Fine Arts Degree by

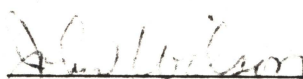
Amy S. Adams

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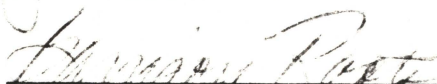
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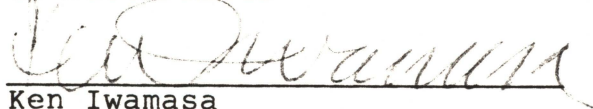
by



John Wilson



Garrison Roots



Ken Iwamasa

Date

4.25.52

The sculptural works for my thesis show represent what I wish to communicate to the viewer, a sense of humanity through recall of personal memory.

Through the use of formal design elements and architectural details the pieces on display mimic vernacular structures, stages and theaters, showcases and shrines. The formal foundation is furthered by the use of conventional construction methods and materials. From this foundation decisions on surface treatment, choice of finishes, and the selection of objects within were then made. These decisions were based on a spontaneous reaction to the pieces as they developed.

Each are narrative in nature though not in an obvious way. In an effort not to lead the viewer the storyline is left intentionally obscure. As opposed to an illustration, which I see as a limited and defined representation of an idea, these narratives are open-ended and interpretive providing a framework in which the viewer is

allowed the freedom to use his/her imagination. Narration in this way is a method of engaging the viewer.

To represent the idea of encasement and display of the precious I have drawn influence from showcases, shrines, house-like structures and wall shelves. The precious is represented symbolically by the object within the structure. These objects carry meaning due to their history and their common recognition; therefore, value is attached to the objects. I see this as a phenomena. These objects charged with feelings of security, sentiment and obsession are the things with which people surround themselves.

The use of the narrative is an extension of the idea of storytelling. Storytelling is a structured system of oral communication. The architectural frameworks and objects contained within are an extension of storytelling in three dimensional form. The objects within the architectural framework dictate the direction of the narratives. This is parallel to the placement of the ideas within the framework of a story. I have chosen to let the found objects, both man-made and natural, dictate the direction of the narratives because of the feelings associated

with the objects. Through this association, different objects are brought together to complete the narrative.

Themes represented in these three dimensional narratives are genre, fantasy, memories and dreams. During my career in art I have explored a variety of mediums including ceramics, metal and wood. In each of these mediums the development of the underlying concept has been consistent. This silver thread of consistency is the display of the precious, whether it be an attitude or an object. Within each of these mediums this concept was explored through the development of a series. It was through series that I chose to explore and establish my methodology. Working in series first helped me recognize existing working patterns. I found working in series also to be an excellent way to explore ideas and concepts. This method offered a chance for development not only of an immediate problem but also inspiration for subsequent work. As a result discipline and productivity became second nature to an established work approach.

The development of the series began with shrines and reliquaries, which were intended to evoke a sense of mystery. These pieces were made

of clay. I found working in clay though, to be inhibiting to a multimedia method of working. As a result I began making assembled settings constructed of wood. Once I made the decision to change mediums, the scale of my work changed dramatically.

I recognized a sense of display in my shrines and decided to play up the theatrics of display with the assembled setting theme. These settings consisted of three basic elements. A pedestal, mantle or table top, a centerpiece, and a backdrop. Each element within these pieces was handmade. This body of work had a very formal quality about it but lacked the sense of intimacy that my earlier work possessed. The absence of this quality was significant in realizing how vital this intimacy was to my way of expression.

Once I realized the importance of this quality I began my third series. The significance of this body of work was to explore the found object as a vital medium and its ability to convey a particular nostalgic mood. The found object was used in a series of pieces called "Nightlights", due to the fact that I was beginning to experiment with internal lighting. With these pieces I began pulling influences from

my personal resources such as dreams and memories. These nightlights were small, only about twelve inches tall and eight inches wide. They were wall hung and cast extraordinary shadows. Since these pieces developed quickly I began calling them three dimensional sketches. It was out of this series that my present work was greatly influenced.

The last of the "Nightlight" series became motorized and gave the feeling of a circus game-booth. Inspired by this notion, I decided to relocate the sense of scale I had established in the assembled settings and merge it with the concepts behind "Nightlights". The result is my thesis body of work. This group of works is a culmination of the methods and techniques developed since coming here. The composition of these pieces is regulated by guidelines established in "Dream Flower" which served as a prototype. These guidelines are: that the piece be wall hung, that it resemble a house with a porch-like display space and include found windows, that there be backlighting for illumination and shadowplay, that movement be used within the display space, and that a base serve to terminate the bottom. The composition of these

pieces is further guided by a concentration on layering, perspective, the hybridization of architectural elements and furniture, lighting, movement and color. Each of these methods is a means for charging the pieces with information. This information is meant to convey a sense of richness and variety.

There are layering qualities within the pieces that offer hints of information to the viewer. Examples include: the lattice and fabrics or prints around the base, the fish scaling shingles of the roofs, the screens that separate the viewer from the center space, the revolving disks partially obstructing the view through the windows. The occupied spaces behind the glass and the encapsulated spaces within spaces. By defining areas within the pieces I am attempting to enhance the viewers own sense of space. Even more, the physical assembly of the pieces is in stacked sections, the windows are removable and the motors dismount, which all reinforce the notion of layering. Surface treatment throughout is obtained by paint, shingles and moulding, to achieve a variety of patterns and designs.

I began concentrating on perspective. In

this thesis work I began trying to place literal meaning into an unrealistic setting, for instance, the naive quality in "Dream Flower" is established by placing forked branches along the back section of the piece. This evokes a naive sense of a backyard. In "Christmas in Savannah" I place an up-side-down fence at the base in order to imply the fencing around a house. The idea is to force a large scale notion, such as a house into a more concise order. All of the pieces are symbols of my desire to capture everything of a given moment.

The hybridization of architectural elements and furniture is the recombination and blending of interior and exterior elements. These are commonly found elements such as wall clocks, chifforobes, sideboards/breakfronts, fireplaces, porches, gable ends of roofs, niches, windows and doors. This hybridization further adds to the nonspecific character of the work that could channel the viewer into established trains of thought.

Two effective elements that serve to engage the viewer are lighting and mechanical movement. Lighting is a method used to evoke a feeling of theatrics and melodrama. Lighting is also used to

accent specific areas of the piece and simultaneously create shadows. Mechanical movement created by the use of motors is used to establish repetition, a rhythm and an internal sense of time. By comparison light and movement are the most engaging aspects of these pieces.

Color, is another important method of engaging the viewer. The choices of color are often dictated by the objects and fabric contained within the piece as well as being simply an aesthetic choice which later dictates the selection the of objects and fabrics. Flat and gloss paints and textures are used to treat surfaces throughout.

This thesis show represents a thorough review of the development of a current series of works. A progression has taken place through different mediums from clay to three dimensional narratives of mixed media. I feel positive about the direction of my work. A personal methodology has emerged based on an exploration of concepts, materials and techniques. The work has developed in a sound consistant manner and this evolution continues in ideas for new work.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Fine Arts

Amy S. Adams

has submitted this written thesis
as a supplement to the creative thesis
and 20 slides

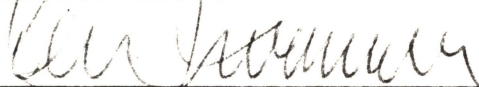
which are in the permanent possession of the
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Department of Fine Arts



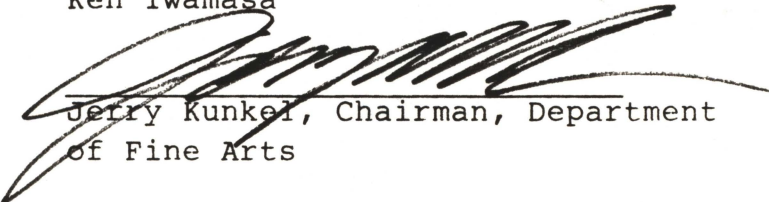
John Wilson



Garrison Roots



Ken Iwamasa



Jerry Kunkel, Chairman, Department
of Fine Arts

Twenty Slides, Mixed Media

Mixed Media	7'x2'x20"	Christmas in Savannah
Mixed Media	7'x2'x20"	Detail
Mixed Media	7'x2'x20"	Detail
Mixed Media	5'x2'x18"	Dream Flower
Mixed Media	5'x2'x18"	Detail
Mixed Media	5'x2'x18"	Detail
Mixed Media	6'x2'x18"	Hattie's Telling a Story
Mixed Media	6'x2'x18"	Detail
Mixed Media	6'x2'x18"	Detail
Mixed Media	6'x2'x20"	Me and Sister
Mixed Media	6'x2'x20"	Detail
Mixed Media	6'x2'x20"	Detail
Mixed Media	7'x3'x30"	Arizona Sea Fountain
Mixed Media	7'x3'x30"	Detail
Mixed Media	7'x3'x30"	Detail
Mixed Media	7'x3'x30"	Stairway to the Moon
Mixed Media	7'x3'x30"	Detail
Mixed Media	7'x2'x3'	Drinking Tropicana with the Angels
Mixed Media	7'x2'x3'	Detail
Mixed Media	7'x2'x3'	Detail



