A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF LOSS THROUGH SCULPTURE

A Thesis

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by
Pamela Filippi Foster, B.S.

* * * *

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Master's Examination Committee:
David E. Black
Stephen Pentak
Todd Slaughter
Georgia Strange

Approved by
David E. Black
Adviser
Department of Art
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1986
In loving memory of my father,
Leno J. Filippi, who enjoyed
building, gardening and tinkering

and to

my mother, Olga, who is loving,
hard-working and energetic
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VITA

July 3, 1955 ...................... Born - Erie, Pennsylvania

1977 .......................... B.S., Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, Edinboro, PA

1977-1982 ........................ Administrative Assistant:
Arts Council of Erie, Erie, PA
Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA
North Toledo Area Corporation, Toledo, Ohio

1985 .......................... Assistant to the Committee for Women and Minorities Visiting Artists Program, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

COMMISSION

1982, 1983 ........................ Erie Summer Festival of the Arts, Sculpture, Erie, Pennsylvania
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The transience of the life of the individual is redeemed by the survival of a people, by the slow accumulation of culture. Rituals, images, music, literature bind people, from generation to generation.  

Ruth Weisberg

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past six years, I have traveled to various regions of the United States to live in places away from my eastern roots. I have lived for short periods of time (not exceeding two years) in the west, south and midwest. Overall, the experience has been strongly positive because I have a more exclusive understanding of the various people, culture and places. I have selected the theme "journey" in my work. To me, the term "journey" encompasses two distinct elements of life: the passage of time and movement in space. The idea of a journey has offered a context for my work. Personal experiences are recalled by the year and the place where they happened which automatically grants a sense of history to details of daily life.

The "journey" expressed in this work is about the so-called spiritual rather than physical world. It is about the passage of life and the experience of loss caused by death. This thesis recognizes the key role of form and content in art, explores the notion of the spiritual, relates and records the making of objects to express ideas, and translates individual loss into visual form.
II. UNDERSTANDING THE CRITICAL STRUCTURE

An understanding of the terms "form" and "content" is essential to appreciating artworks fully. However, such understanding cannot be achieved easily. This difficulty stems from the interdependence of the two terms. The way we look at art and the many factors that shape our understanding of art moves within a visual-physical manipulation of materials to an intellectual approach that focuses on the artist's need to interpret and translate ideas into a visual form. "Far from a simplistic philistinism, content is a complex and demanding event without which no artwork could transpire. It demands our attention since without awareness of these distinctions and levels we do not really know what has happened already in art, and what is happening now for the first time."¹ Likewise, as stated by Roberta Smith:

Content is perhaps the most elusive, elastic term in the critical vocabulary; the meanings of the word itself never stop. Perhaps it can be stretched to include such ideas as narrative meaning or reference, but surely it can't be limited to them. It encompasses art's presence, intentionality, effectiveness, and even its ambition, and it is inherent in any art that survives a generation or two of attention.²

Additionally, critics, historians and artists have expanded the concepts of form and content by failing to accord either term a uniform meaning or consistent usage.

Over the past several decades, artists have increased their awareness to include concerns of the intentionality and interpretation of their work. Artists are more active when it comes to the documentation of their work. "'What you see' is still what we all, artist and viewer
alike, must start with. As time passes, we are seeing and demanding to see, more and more between, behind and beyond."^3 We are aware of the historical context of other artists and their works (e.g., college programs, research, museum collections and exhibitions). "The central artistic concerns have shifted from issues of form — how an object is made and perceived, or what defines its style — to those of content — considerations of why art is made and experienced, and what a work of art means or signifies beyond the experience of its formal and stylistic ingredients."^4

Graduate school helped me shift the focus of my work from issues of form to concern for content. Previously, my artistic concerns related to the technique and visual elements of abstract forms. My work in bronze and wood was not idea-oriented because I placed more attention on the material, the technical process of fabrication or casting and elements of style. As I became aware that the broader spectrum of art included the intention of the work and the expression of ideas, I realized that the task at hand was to integrate my visual aesthetic with a concern for meaning.

The direction of my work changed towards a more figurative style. This change was a result of a reaction against the abstraction of the bronze and wood sculptures and the need to begin work with the human figure. For several months I explored and used the human figure as the subject for drawings and sculptures. The concept that I chose in connection with the figure was the idea of absence. I traced the outline of the human figure for full scale drawings (Plate I) and the figure became the initial carrier of my ideas. It's George (Plate VII) is a
relief sculpture which describes the absence of the figure by the space left under and between abstract forms. These works were the initial steps towards a unity of form and content in my work. Later, I became interested in a more narrative and referential style as the concept of absence was pushed towards an absence due to loss caused by death.

My search for an understanding of form and content continued. In December 1984, I saw the exhibition "Content: A Contemporary Focus, 1974-1984" at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C. The exhibition contained 157 works by 147 artists which gave me the opportunity to see a large number of the works previously viewed through the pages of art magazines. The show contained a variety of methods in which to express ideas. There were images, objects and numerous styles of installations. The following more than adequately describes the exhibition:

"The new emphasis on so-called content relates to a new kind of form, that there are specifically visual tactics by which today's artists are seeking new ways to fuse subject-matter to the indissoluble unit of form and content. Cutting across styles and media, these stem from various uses of multiplicity, fragmentation, juxta-position and the articulation of complex space both mental and visual."

Other pertinent research included discussing and viewing the work of visiting artists, faculty and other students as well as reading articles that describe the relationship between form and content. The knowledge gained through the process of making art, the articulation of the intentionality of the work and continued exposure to works of art has helped me understand the critical structure of art.
III. WORKS ON PAPER

Drawing is a means and an end for the expression of my ideas. As an end, a drawing may be the product of an idea which is inclusive as an image. As a means, drawing serves in support of my sculpture. It serves to aid the visual process from the idea stage to the completion of the object. The process of drawing was an impetus for my sculpture and often supported my ideas as they were transformed in the third dimension. "When you make sculpture" says Bryan Hunt, "you often don't have the privilege of privacy. Drawing is the most private activity of all. There can't be distractions. Sculpture involves both more communication and more physical work." Accordingly, these drawings served as working sketches as well as a source of information for my work.

I began drawing by tracing the human figure on paper, making a cardboard cut-out of the gesture held by the figure. The empty space left by the human figure became the focus of large scale drawings. The image which remained because of the process of working outside of the human figure revealed an absence (Plate I). These drawings were made on wide newsprint, tar paper and various rolled paper which was prepared with gesso and marks applied with graphite pencil and powder, spray paint, mineral oil and ink. I became interested in the use of hand marks and skin prints which are actual, applied marks (Plate II) and the rendering of skin prints. I was influenced by the drawings of Jasper Johns, Yves Klein and Giuseppe Penone as I searched for an application of skin prints on paper. A small drawing (Plate III) shows an example of the type of work which Penone meticulously renders to huge proportions. Penone makes room-size drawings which are abstractions of magnified skin prints.
thus obscuring their source. As shown in the detail of a drawing (Plate II), I used skin prints as a way of pushing the content of the work towards a narrative style, to make the space left by the human figure more expressive and to give more meaning to the work.

Through the next series of drawings, I discovered that the usefulness of pictorial space combined with narrative style could give way to imaginary places and a context such as Gray Spirituality (Plate IV). Here, the capacity of drawing to show vast panoramas surpasses the ability of sculpture to address the issue of space. As explained by L. R. Rogers:

Because the depth space of pictures is a notional, or, a represented dimension, the scope of subject-matter in the pictorial arts is much greater than it is in sculpture. A picture requires...at least an edge, but there are no physical limits to its represented extension in depth. In sculpture in the round, however, all three dimensions are actual and there are no physical constraints on its extension in all directions.7

The pictorial space illustrated in the narrative works I made began to reveal my feelings about the loss I experienced due to the death of my father. The expression of personal turmoil in these works explored imaginary landscapes and exposed several clues which led to shapes used in other works. "Narrative concerns itself with what is happening all the time" wrote Gertrude Stein and the need to express a personal loss directed my work towards a more obvious autobiographical style. With this series of drawings, I reduced my scale. The materials used in these drawings are the same as those of the larger drawings such as gesso, graphite pencils and powder, and mineral oil. It became important to tell more through drawings such as Self-Portrait (Plate V) and
Vortex (plate VI) and in doing so, I became aware of another aspect of narration - self-consciousness.

I experienced self-consciousness as well as the "authenticity" of work which reveals a personal, emotional or autobiographical content. This aspect of narration became compelling because it took my private experience of loss into the public. In addressing the issue of mortality, I am able to explore concerns that are both personal and universal. As I continue to work from an autobiographical position, and as changes in my life take place, drawing provides a fast medium for the expression of ideas.
IV. LOSS AS SUBJECT-MATTER

The body of work I completed is autobiographical and focused on the concept of loss. The term "loss" has two meanings for me. One meaning involves the effects of my decision to live apart from my husband as I pursue a graduate degree. The second involves the irrevocable loss of my father. The personal losses that I experienced caused painful feelings that I chose to consider in my work. I found myself following this course:

In order to address the issue of loss... artists have taken an autobiographical journey...to regain a sense of wholeness in the face of loss. In the process, a feeling of absence has been transformed into a sense of presence. When artists intensely identify with the loss of one particular life, one life unrewarded, they feel the sorrow of many lost or unfulfilled lives. The power of these feelings has motivated them to translate the ephemeral nature of life into a permanent form.9

As I began to encounter feelings of grief, I concentrated on a spiritual notion of passage because it turned the absence I felt into a more positive outlook on dying.

Death has been expressed in the visual arts as well as the other humanities such as poetry, literature, and music. It also is a concern of medicine, the law and business. Although these areas deal concurrently with the various aspects associated with dying, it is the humanities that deal with the conceptual:

The object of a great novel is not to provide orderly solutions but to probe the limits of language and idea, leaving us with a wealth of possibilities. Its purpose is to confuse, to challenge
obligatory patterns, forcing us to confront unverifiable and unprecedented elements of life. Poetry, painting and musical compositions speak through the elements of color, rhythm, texture [and] line.  

Sebastiano Timpanaro and others have suggested that "some types of subject-matter, such as sex and death, appeal to us because we are organisms subject to death and involved in sexual reproduction; these responses, then, are prior to socioeconomic acculturation." My interest in death as subject-matter is stated according to the impression that remained with me during the process of bereavement. As I recall the feeling of loss, I chose to remember the peaceful and positive.

The passage of time that we experience in our life or when we think about someone else's life materializes as a journey. "The description of death as a journey is one of the oldest and most universal of images. Ancient Romans were buried with coins between their teeth to pay the boatman on the mythical river Styx." I was consumed by the need to express feelings about death and in so doing, I reached beyond the personal to a universal ordeal. "By first giving voice to [my] own feelings" I was able to "cross from the inner realm of private sadness to the public arena of shared experience." The ordeal of understanding and communicating my feelings about death with its overwhelming tradition of cultural practices, rituals and images made it clear that burial, graves or the associated rituals was not to be the focus of my work. Instead, I explored the nebulous orb of spirituality and borrowed from a prior religious background the term "ascension".

My idea about a spiritual realm became visible in the show "Ruminations/Roomination: Explorations of Emotional Geography" (Plate IX)
which was an exhibition at the branch campus of Ohio State University at Newark Art Gallery during the month of February, 1985 and subsequently in the show "Journeys" (Plate XI) my thesis exhibition at Hopkins Gallery in the month of October, 1985. The form of the concept differed with each show. "Ruminations" was a site-determined sculpture installation which relied upon an environment created by sand, other objects and the human figure made from plaster casts. The human figure is placed on an imaginary, elevated plane giving the illusion that the figure has begun as ascension from the site (Plate X). The show "Journeys" consisted of three sculptures shaped to rise from a small mass at the base to a larger, wider diameter of mass above eye-level. The central focus of these shows was to portray upward movement and the concept of ascension.
V. SCULPTURE AND THE SPIRITUAL

My initial investigation for my sculpture began with a concern for the human figure and the value of negative space. This combination drew me towards an examination of the perimeter of the human figure and deliberation on the use of a container to hold the figure in absentia as shown in "Ruminations" (Plate IX). The solution I employed was a mold image or impression achieved by making plaster casts directly from a person. Although sculptors have made plaster casts for centuries, beginning with the Egyptians' use of plaster on their mummies to George Segal's sculptural records of specific individuals, few have used such to reveal the figure's negative space. The Canadian artist, Colette Whiten, and Italian, Giuseppe Penone, have created works that exhibit the mold itself which is then enriched with illusion through the use of lights. Penone begins with an object, makes a plaster cast of the object and then fills the void of the plaster cast with a slide projection of the original object he has cast. Whiten makes plaster casts from the human figure revealing a figure in absentia which is placed in the gallery. The gallery lights are then manipulated to give the illusion of presence. American artist, Judith Shea, makes sculptures by using shells of clothing that work with open and closed spaces to remind the viewer of a past presence --- such as the shedded skin left by a snake. The work of these artists is important to my work because it directly reflects a similarity in form and choice of materials which display the use of negative space. The idea to exhibit the mold itself in the show "Ruminations" came mostly from the influence of Giuseppe Penone's sculptures which are made from a variety of materials including marble, bronze, clay and plaster.
(Plate VIII). Prior to "Ruminations" I had not discovered the work of Whiten and Shea. I found their interest in the imprint of the human involved which at the same time seems empty, to resemble my attempt to create an absent figure.

The installation, The Journey: A Sense of Place (Plate IX), the titled work of the show "Ruminations", begins an association with the spiritual. Although not intentionally religious, the feeling of hope and passage addresses the concept of a transcendent figure. As I looked for a term to explain what I mean by "spiritual", without limiting it to a religious definition, I would like to borrow from Paul Tillich. He uses the term "Ultimate Reality" as that which underlies every reality and characterizes the world as non-ultimate, preliminary, transitory and finite. The point of his essay "Art and Ultimate Reality" is to show that the manifestation of the ultimate in the visual arts is not dependent upon the use of works which are traditionally called religious, thus, expanding the way we see the spiritual in art to include a contemporary vision. Such vision encompasses the view of a religious art to include non-objective and Abstract Expressionistic paintings.

Additionally, the history of art has taught us that when recognizable subject-matter disappears and leaves the viewer with abstraction, the absence of subject-matter from the oridinary world does not render a work incomprehensible and without content. For example, Ad Reinhardt's subtly modulated monochromatic paintings which "do not literally refer to death [but] offer a powerful analogue of death - lonely, stark, endless and impenetrable."15
To think about a spiritual realm or the existence of another life beyond, thoughts which provide comfort during a funeral as we contemplate our own mortality, gives courage and new meaning as we survive death. It is not important whether we believe in an eternal life or the spiritual for a moment or ever because the genuine quality of the spiritual is life affirming. It was more important that the aspect of death I preferred to express was one that showed the passage of time in an upward, affirmative movement. The idea of the universal, ultimate reality and inner emotion is considered a connecting factor between the spiritual of abstraction and the art of the Primitives. My attempt to express the absence of my father was not so much a desire to commemorate as to reveal the crosscurrents of human emotion as experienced by a survivor of death.

The idea that a spiritual quality of life is common to human experience helps us relate to those who came before us, bonding us to our past as we gather information from their culture e.g. the Primitives and the work of modern artists. The spiritual gave shape to the sculptures I made.

In the installation, I used plaster casts to show the bodily perimeter of a figure as it appears to travel to another realm. The installation utilizes two planes of differing scales: the actual scale of the human figure lifted by a steel armature defines a higher plane representing another realm and a reduced scale of a shoreline. The shoreline contains an architectural model of a house under construction and an unoccupied rowboat which represents the real, physical world. As stated previously, *The Journey: A Sense of Place* was a site-determined installation designed to span and utilize the
architecture of the gallery as the proscenium for the work when viewed frontally from the center of the gallery. Additional views are provided due to the interior and exterior glass walls of the gallery (Plate X). In this plate, the figure rises from a four-point kneeling position to a standing, arm-extended position signaling a place beyond.

The show "Ruminations" utilized the literal aspects of figure and landscape or the application of a horizontal plane provided by the shoreline, house and boat with the vertical direction of the plaster figure. The fragmentation of the installation remained constant due to the segregation of the visual components of the figure(object)-ground relationship of the work. After careful evaluation of the show, several changes were made to move away from an installation that separated the figure-ground into two entities to a singular object that obscured, blended and incorporated the elements of the work. I selected a more vertical direction over that of the horizontal stance which seemed to recall a landscape. I kept the feeling of nature first created with the sand in the gallery but, chose another approach to represent it by using trees and cast fragments of the earth. I wanted to bring elements of the earth into the sculpture without relying on the same type of ground plane that I had created with the sand. In order to avoid having a horizontal plane establish the notion of earth, I defined the direction of the succeeding sculptures as vertical. These works incorporated my ideas into a singular object which had a vertical direction.

The concept of the spiritual is seen in The Journey: A Sense of Place as the movement through space becomes visible by the plaster casts of the figure. A ghost-like presence begins an association with the notion of
spirits and the existence of another realm created by the elevation of the figure. This work is pointed towards a feeling of passage and has a peaceful ambiance that accentuates a sense of the spiritual as a positive aspect of dying.
VI. JOURNEYS: THE SHOW

The sculptures in "Journeys" (Plate XI) developed as self-sustaining works, because I proposed that the ideas of my work be contained in singular objects rather than fragmented units as in an installation. Other criteria included: to make the work more dimensional, address and use the architecture of the exhibition space, transfer the weight from the floor to a point at eye-level and maintain a scale which was larger than human scale. These choices were made as I developed the form and concept of my work. Beginning with The Journey: A Point of Departure (Plate XII), each sculpture grew as a reaction or a response to each other. The need to create a form that had movement or an upward spin generated the tornado-like shape of the last two works. The funnel shape functioned as a solution against grounding the sculptures with a mass of material at its base. The materials of plaster and steel were carried over from "Ruminations". I selected sticks because they reminded me of the powerfulness of nature and drew, in my mind, a connection to cosmic forces.

The shape of a tornado or funnel is seen in The Journey: A Gamble for Transformation (Plate XV) because it appears to generate more meaning than that of a spiral. "The spiral is seen as a dynamic but meaningless shape even though it has acquired abstraction, laid over its varied cultural significances. It is, nonetheless, a form that has survived the intervening millennia as the vehicle for vital expression...even if we cannot cite its source and symbolic intricacies." The tornado-like movement in two of the sculptures was a correction to the stacked, static appearance of the first work (Plate XII). The most dramatic and varied shape belongs to The Journey: A Move towards Ascension (Plates XIII and XIV).
The sculptures are united in the use of materials: cut or chopped sticks that vary in length from two inches to four feet and increase in diameter from half an inch to three inch logs. Steel plates serve as bases and an interior steel armature creates stability and support. The materials for A Point of Departure are sticks chopped with an ax on a tree stump to give irregularity to each end. The sticks are stacked and plaster casts of the earth are layered in the stacking. Three sensuously tapered, forged steel bars are inserted in the top portion of the sculpture. In A Move towards Ascension the sticks are patterned in a closed, circular form at the base which begins to open in order to expose the interior structure. Above, a wooden form suspended from the ceiling limits the upward movement of the top branches. Finally, a work to address the full scale of the gallery space, A Gamble for Transformation utilizes, more aggressively, logs and sticks that discourage close inspection.

At first glance the three sculptures in "Journeys" appear similar due to the shape. However, the most apparent contrast is evident in the difference in the stacking of A Point of Departure and A Move towards Ascension. In A Point of Departure the stacking presents itself as an inverted pile of logs, a static vision which eliminates the notion of movement. On the other hand, A Move towards Ascension is circular, giving rise to a feeling of motion which is achieved by building with multi-layers of sticks in several directions. The armature that is mostly hidden in A Point of Departure is exposed in and through the back portion of A Move towards Ascension. The repetitiveness of the stacked sticks is seen as graceful and nest-like in A Move towards Ascension, most
aggressive in *A Gamble for Transformation* and once the visual inversion of the pile of sticks is comprehended, *A Point of Departure* is the most predictable.

The sculptures have an aesthetic quality that strives for balance and order. Each sculpture draws attention to the technique of placing each stick on top of the other and displays to the viewer a repetitiveness of activity. The tornado-like shapes of these works refer to an ascending movement in space that addresses my association of the spiritual. These works are related to the personal and poetic as are the works of Eva Hesse and Michael Singer, and to the Primitive instinct which is spiritual, intuitive and blends the logic of scientific forms together with grace and mystery. The choice of materials in these sculptures creates a visual association among them and the art of the Primitives. Further, the thought that the objects made by the Primitives were based upon their concern with the expression of inner emotion advances this connection. Finally, the manner in which the sticks are layered repetitiously suggests the organizational patterns of the tribal or artwork which is highly process oriented. These associations are developed more fully and are summarized in two parts. First, by discerning what is meant by "primitive art" and how we interpret the term "Primitivism" as it applies to contemporary works. Secondly, a discussion about aspects of the work of Eva Hesse and Michael Singer as they relate to the sculptures in "Journeys".

The term "Primitivism" is an art historical term which has been interpreted by William Rubin and Kirk Varnedoe and separates into three periods loosely defined as: Modern, Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism.
The artists of each period refer to the art of the Primitives and appropriate an aspect of the work that fits their work thus, broadening the definition of Primitivism as they borrow from past images and forms to make visions of their own. "Lost religious systems, new concepts of the Primitive mind and enigmatic monuments have largely displaced discrete objects as the dominant source of inspiration of Primitive artists."18 For Picasso, Miro, Ernst and other leading artists of pre-war Europe, notions of the Primitive began with or found their primary focus in concrete examples of tribal art. During a visit to Picasso's studio, Mr. Rubin questioned the use of primitive images in modern painting. Picasso stated that the appropriation of the primitive was a reaction against 19th-century salon illusionism which has a type of "complexity" for an imagery with more "simplicity". Artists such as Picasso, Matisse and Brancusi were aware of the conceptual complexity and aesthetic subtlety of the best tribal art, which is simple only in the sense of its reductiveness - and not, as was popularly believed, in the sense of simple-mindedness."19 Interest in the Primitive continues with the generation of Abstract Expressionists who favored a broader synthetic idea. Their view centered upon the spirit, myth and magic more than on specific forms. Further, such a broader view found mature expression in types of abstraction that showed no evident links to tribal styles.20 In the new Primitivism that appeared around 1940, the recurrent invocation of the "universal" signified a more assertive engagement with the challenge of the modern art of Europe.21 Varndoe states that for painters such as Rothko, Newman and Gottlieb, who were opposed to Formalism as the interpretation of their work, identification with the Primitive was a way of claiming
a less arbitrary, timelessly valid, vocabulary of non-representational form. Seemingly, the sculptures in "Journeys" rely upon this same kind of interpretation that enables the content of the work to be "universal" and have meaning beyond the decorative or formal.

Since the late 1960s, Post-modern artists have changed the way we look and appropriate the work of the Primitive. Such began with objects without context to context without objects. The goal of the new work was to overcome the alienation between modern art and society and to achieve an art that was more integrally engaged with broader systems of nature, magic, ritual and social organization.²²

For me, the intuitive coupled with the rational takes into account the art of both contemporary and tribal artists. It could be said that these artists arrived at their solutions incrementally as with much Western art - over a period of generations. The paintings of Mark Rothko have content rooted in the universal and because artists have participated more fully in the documentation of their work through writing and discussion, the interpretation has been more controlled. The affinity of these artists with tribal artists is asserted to be the investigation of the subconscious roots of human representations, the fascination with the ideal of the universal sign, and the matter of linkage between the deep "irrational" past of man and his present science-dominated cultures.

The art of the past is a worthy concern for art as "a new generation of predominately middle-class, college-trained artists, sophisticated and self-conscious in art historical awareness, began producing systems and process art, conceptual art, performance art and earthworks.
Artists have produced art that refers directly to the display of natural history museums, which speak to both the methods and subject of anthropological and paleontological research. As modern art changed, it demystified and ennobled the picture of the Primitive. "It depicted the Primitive mind not as the domain of magic and hallucination but, as the seat of powerful forms of logic, separate from but comparable to scientific thought." However, Warnedoe warns against a "strict opposition between cold modern rationalism and shaggy Primitive instinct" and offers that a more complex blend of the scientific and sensual needs to be characterized.

It is within this complex blend that structures such as A Point of Departure interfaces with the characteristics of system art. This work is devoid of a definite, individual "touch" and consists of layers of assembled material that suggest strict patterns of organization, shows the process of their making and reveals a repetitious ritual. The compulsive repetitiveness of my work allows for a connection between these sculptures, the work of Eva Hesse and Michael Singer. The link that holds them together is in the energies of the personal and poetic.

In Michael Singer's work "the ghost of a guiding pattern, often a buried grid governs ephemeral weaves of sticks and branches." Singer's sculptures float above the floor suggesting "temporal rhythms and incidents of nature, subtle and complex as in the spirit of a Japanese tea ceremony." Accordingly, the poetry in the work of Eva Hesse " touches us in part through the anatomical and psychological allusiveness of its shapes and materials." Hesse was concerned with an identification between herself and her materials leaving the process behind the work as
simply a necessity to get to the final product. Her work was a reaction against the rationally ordered, geometric forms of Minimalism as she "extolled the personal, organic, unexpected, irrational and absurd" making more "home-made" or natural procedures that relate back to one's own body."28 Hesse's interest focused upon the work's overall character, trying to make the sculptural elements absurd in themselves - an attempt to place less emphasis on the visual beauty of materials.

The poetics of Hesse lie in the repetition of shapes in her work. I am intrigued by Lucy Lippard's explication of repetition:

Repetition can be a guard against vulnerability, a bullet-proof vest of closely knit activity can be woven against fate. Ritual and repetition are also ways of containing anger, and of fragmenting fearsome wholes.29

The repetition in Eva Hesse's work is realized in the multiples that she would make of a shape. I think that I was involved in a different type of repetition even though I chose to use basically the same funnel, twister-like form in my work. The repetition in my work is most extreme in the process of the making of the sculptures. The regular, tedious activity of placing each stick to the other in order to build these works into a single unit concentrates the ritual nature of the work on the activity itself.

One of the visual qualities of repetition that I find most interesting is that of rhythm. In the sculpture A Move towards Ascension this visual element is carried by each horizontal stick that is drilled and glued into position one above the other. The speed of the line made by the horizontal stick accelerates as the length of the stick increases
(Plate XIII). In the sculpture A Gamble for Transformation (Plate XV), the last work to be completed, the compulsion of the repetitious activity left me feeling fanatical and obsessive. However, the visual harmony created by the numerous sticks that look poetic in their rhythm and movement undermines the repetitiveness of the activity.

The sculptures in "Journeys" originated from my personal need to express my feelings. These works have a sense of balance and the tightness of the process grants order. The shape of the sculptures begins an association with an ascending, rising mass which I relate as having a spiritual context. The personal and poetic of artists such as Hesse and Singer as well as an affinity to the tribal connects these works beyond influences and sources to an inner emotion that dictates their existence.
VII. CONCLUSION

The information I acquired through the process of balancing the intuitive with the intellectual has increased my aptitude and has begun to provide the necessary vocabulary in which to understand and appreciate works of art. With an understanding of the terms "form" and "content", I clarified my goals and directed my attention towards the intent of the work. I gained additional resources to aid in the interpretation of criticism and the history of art. This ability not only helped me make art but to also appreciate and discern the activities of others involved in the field. I have attempted to record in this thesis what I have come to know about the motivation and inspiration behind this work. There are a few aspects which have remained mysterious. However, due to the incorporation of a more complete understanding about art, I have been able to communicate my ideas more efficiently. Accordingly, works and the process of making art has become less mysterious and more fulfilling.
I. Installation of large drawings (1983)
12' X 8'
II. Detail of 1st drawing in Plate I (1983)
36 X 54 " 
III. Untitled (no. 5), Giuseppe Penone, 1981, 9 X 9"
IV. Gray Spirituality (1984) 32 X 26 " 
V. Self-Portrait (1984) 32 X 26 "
VI. Vortex (1984) 32 x 26"
VII. *It's George* (1984) 3 x 4 x 9
VIII. Breath No. 2 (Soffio 2), Giuseppe Penone, (1978)
IX. "Ruminations/Roomination: Explorations of Emotional Geography", The Journey: A Sense of Place, (1985) Installation (view from inside gallery) 20 x 8 x 10'.
X. A Sense of Place (glass wall view)
8 X 10 X 20'
XI. "Journeys" Installation view (1985)
XII. The Journey: A Point of Departure (1985)
4' x 3' x 12'
XIII. The Journey: A Move towards Ascension (1985)
8 x 5 x 11'
XIV. A Move towards Ascension (front view)
4.5 X 4.5 X 11'}
FOOTNOTES


2Roberta Smith, "Endless Meaning at the Hirshhorn", Artforum, April 1985, p. 82

3Ibid, p. 85

4, Content: A Contemporary Focus 1974-1984, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, catalogue entry

5Roberta Smith, p. 85

6Phyllis Tuchman, "Bryan Hunt's Balancing Act", Artnews, Vol. 84, No. 8, October 1985, p. 73


8Conversation with Janet Cooling, Women and Minorities Visiting Artists Program, The Ohio State University, May 1985


11Thomas McEvilley, p. 65

12Susan Scholl, p. 23

13Ora Lerman, p. 103


15Susan Scholl, p. 25


17Hereinafter, each sculpture will be referred to by its specific title without the series name.

19 Primitivism, "Introduction", William Rubin, p. 7

20 Primitivism, "Contemporary Explorations", Kirk Varnedoe, p. 661

21 Primitivism, "Abstract Expressionism", Kirk Varnedoe, p. 165

22 Primitivism, "Contemporary Explorations", p. 661

23 Ibid, p. 653

24 Ibid, p. 662

25 Ibid, p. 672

26 Artnews, Vol. 81, March 1982, p. 208

27 William Rubin, "Introduction", p. 69


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