ONE FOOT FROM PERFECTION:

AN INTRO-TALKIE

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Fine Arts
by
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The Ohio State University
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Approved by

Advisor

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Strange is our situation here on earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose."¹

-- Albert Einstein

My graduate work has been a visual confrontation of my Christian ideals with the recognition of my own femininity and individuality. By making ceramic pieces and paintings, I have tried to give visual, concrete form to my day-to-day feelings about my living experiences as I examined them in relationship to my values and sensuality. As my work has progressed, I have begun to realize that a dichotomy existed between my sensuality and spiritual values. I saw my sensuality as characterizing my social role as a woman, as well as my sexuality. My spirituality represented my attachment to Christian religious values and a search for an understanding of God. I came to see this dichotomy as symbolized in two pairings: the

¹ Albert Einstein, Living Philosophies, p. 3.
male-female and the masculine-feminine.\textsuperscript{2} The male-female polarity became a metaphor for the other opposing forces which characterized my personality, a phenomena best explained by the Jungian psychologist June Singer:

"Consciousness, then implies man's awareness of his own mortality, over and against a cosmos that appears to him timeless and of another order. Gradually in the process of acquiring consciousness he becomes aware of all of the other pairs of opposites, the male-female pair being among the most important, for this pair can be seen as a metaphor for nearly all the others."

This metaphor was also extended to represent birth and death. I saw my biological sex as containing my potential for giving birth to a new individual. Death was the inevitable result of my mortal existence. Thus, within

\textsuperscript{2}Robert Stoller uses the following definition \textit{(Sex and Gender: On the Development of Masculine and Feminine}, p.9) to distinguish sex and gender: Gender is a term that has psychological or cultural rather than biological connotations. If the proper terms for sex are 'male' and 'female', the corresponding terms for gender are 'masculine' and 'feminine', these latter may be quite independent of biological sex.

\textsuperscript{3}June Singer, \textit{Androgyny}, p. 100.
this extended metaphor, I began to address the issues of my afterlife and purpose for my ability to procreate. I wondered whether I would have an afterlife because I doubted the Christian ideals. I was beginning to see Christianity as culturally defined. I felt it pointed to a spiritual truth or ultimate reality but I also saw its short comings. I saw the Christian values for women, i.e. passivity, submissiveness, purity, as being culturally based and discriminative.

As I continued my work, I tried to visually represent the opposing forces within me. As my experiences changed, I found that the male-female, masculine-feminine, sensual-spiritual, birth-death polarities represented in my work were confronting each other, a confrontation which led to an eventual intertwining of my abstract understanding of these pairs. Again, through interpersonal relationships and reading, I acquired a new understanding of my Christian ideals. I came to see these ideals as a guide for living -- not as a way to strike a perfect balance between two opposite points, but as a way to flow between the masculine and feminine, the male and female, the sensual and spiritual, the living and dead. In this sense, I felt I also had a new understanding of my feminine/female identity and spirituality. I began to see my feminine/female identity and spirituality as being part
of a cosmic whole, beyond cultural classification, working and flowing together in a recurring process.

Through form, my artwork expresses the dichotomies which I have been exploring. Generally, the central focus of either my paintings or ceramic pieces is the interaction of two forms which are separate from each other, often spatially or physically, but through their narrative quality are to be read as a whole. The interaction of these forms usually speaks of my psychological confrontation of the forces which I have identified, that is male-female, etc. These forms are representational but fantastic and often manifestations from my subconscious. They are also humorous. A winged coffin floating next to a flower pot containing smiling fish plants or clay doll legs, used for the antennas of a ceramic bug-woman, speak of serious psychological issues but in a humorous manner. For me, this method of interjecting humor with seriousness exhibits a sense of contradiction. It is this contradiction or duality that is consistent with my way of perceiving reality which is then presented for and as interpretation.

My artwork is also characterized by surfaces which have been continually reworked. I place layers of color on top of each other and scratch through to the color below. I also juxtapose tiny dots of color next to each
other. These techniques produce a combined atmospheric and decorative effect. The actual mark of the paint application is important to me, for in itself the mark is separate but paradoxically belongs to the whole of the artwork. My ideas and their representation through form and composition also have a paradoxical quality which aids in creating this unity.

The marks of dots of color which I use in my work come together to create several related hues. I use a broad range of colors mixed with alizarin crimson, ultramarine blue, and cadmium yellow medium, and often white. Through a combination of these colors, through mark or dot, a hue ranging from a deep pink, medium blue-purple, to a blue, has predominated my work. I believe the color blue-purple represents a psychological union of the opposing forces which I have identified. To me, blue-purple is a male-female color. I found that I also used a redder range of this hue to express aggression and excitement, to bring out masculine qualities which I would discuss in a particular piece. By painting a predominately bluish hue, I produced sensations of calm and comfort, qualities which I believed to be more feminine. Recently, with the evolution of my personal philosophy, I find I am able to emphasize a bolder and wider range of color.
Throughout the development of my art and personal philosophy of life, I have been influenced by the work of several artists. The most important of these artists is Francisco Goya. During his life, Goya depicted the events which happened around him, interpreting these events through his feelings toward them, always acknowledging the imperfection in man. I believe Goya saw man's existence as multifaceted and irrational, and I share this view of human experience. I see the imperfections in myself and other human beings as being magnified when I compare these flows to my Christian idea of God. I see man's inhumanity to his fellow man; I see his lack of truthfulness to himself. As did Goya, I express through my artwork the contradictions which exist within my own personality and experiences with other people.

Goya's Black Paintings and his Caprichos have had perhaps the most influence on the formation of both my philosophy and the dialogue which my work has held for me. In these images, Goya represents the coming together of contradictory forces. His work becomes a battle ground for resolving these conflicts. Goya often created fantastic creatures portraying particular aspects of his unconscious. In his Satan Devouring His Children, one feels his attempt to resolve a personal dilemma. As with Goya, my use of fantasy is a way to build a bridge from my
subconscious ideas to their visualization as images. Again, as in the case of Goya, the visualization of these thoughts is a recognition of and attempt to work out the conflicts which exist within me.

Another influence has been the work of Bosch. I have borrowed Bosch's sense of narrative and theme. In his *Garden of Earthly Delights*, he has individual narratives and scenes which deal with birth and creation, sensuality and sexuality, death and the afterlife in the context of Christian religious beliefs. His sense of humor and his use of the bizarre will always remain with me. He created fantastic creatures interacting with humans, representing various aspects of the human personality. He also used fruit, eggs, and birds to symbolize aspects of earthly and spiritual existence. I feel I have borrowed all of this from him but have filtered it through my own vision. Through the eccentric incongruities of his narratives and the cartoonish quality of his images, Bosch represents his own special quality of humor. At times his work manifests "black" or "death" humor; at times he is bitingly sarcastic, his humor becoming an instrument to flush out man's weaknesses. My humor is similar in that it speaks of death and human weakness.

A third artist who has influenced me is Gustav Klimt. I have discovered that his decorative and atmospheric use
of color as well as his color choice, provide a model for
my creation of a sensuous surface and color application.
I also admired his portrayal of the concepts of
male-female, birth-death as confronting and intertwining
forces. His painting *Death and Life* presents the clearest
example of this. Male and female bodies are intertwined
in a decorative design. Some of the figures are old, some
young -- one is an infant. This cluster of figures
dominates the right half of the composition. Occupying
the left portion of the canvas is the representation of
Death. Here a skeleton emerges from a decorative pattern,
carrying a club and facing the group of figures at the
right. In Klimt's *Medicine*, he shows the recurring
process of birth, growth, and finally death. I feel the
theme of these works is similar to my own. However, I do
not feel that Klimt's work exhibits an intense sense of
introspection or personal contradiction that exists in
Goya's and my own work.

II. Analysis of Work

My artwork immediately preceding graduate school
involved a series of decorative, cartoonish prints
portraying three stages of my life: pre-birth, the
present, and death or the afterlife. In these prints, I
developed a personal iconography of male and female
elements, earthly and divine reference points, and birth and death transformations. While working on these prints, I was also completing a large still life painting. This photorealistic painting contained lush colors as well as the illusion of sumptuous textures. Reflective of the seventeenth century Flemish still life painting, it symbolically portrayed earthly life and its pleasures, yet alluded to the transience of human existence.

Upon entering graduate school at The Ohio State University, I abandoned the decorative, narrative prints and worked exclusively with the still life imagery. I chose to continue working with the still life imagery, because I felt it contained something which I did not yet understand or had left unresolved. My next large still life painting took on a much more feminine air, not only in the objects represented (tea cups, ribbons, fruit, and pearls), but also in my use of pastel colors. I then began selecting single objects and painting them. I felt by isolating and painting these objects I could gain control over their meaning. I also put a limited number of objects into collages for this same reason. Finally, one image became more important than the rest: a pink flowered tea cup with a deep rose floating directly above it.
In one collage, I painted the rose and the flowered tea cup photorealistically. In the background, a pastel flower pattern was sprayed with tiny dots of white, red, blue, yellow, and gold paint. These dots of color, overlaying the surface of the flower pattern, created a sense of depth. This layering effect gave the piece an overall color of light purple, a color which I believed, at this time, to represent my feminine sensual existence as well as my spirituality. I also realized that the cup represented feminine virtues and Christian values passed down from mother to daughter in my family. The rose floating directly above the cup signified my personality, separate from the cup but paradoxically connected to it (see Plate #1).

After completing several collage pieces, I noticed that I was making each one progressively more three dimensional. My method for framing these collage pieces was also becoming more elaborate. In my last collage, I found that I was adorning its wooden frame with as much decoration as appeared in the actual collage; velvet ribbon, netting, gold thread, and pearls highlighted the frame. The only painted image, in the middle of the piece, was a rose. The framing device was becoming as important as the object being framed. At this time, I began to see the frame as a metaphor for my feminine
heritage, ideals, and values "framing" my internal spiritual center as well as my personal and sensual existence, which, again, was signified by the rose.

My next pieces were built of clay. I decided to create ceramic frame-boxes which hung on the wall. I believed this change in medias would give me a better understanding of the ideas with which I was working. I decorated these pieces with clay objects such as flowers, ribbons, angel faces, and doves, which I believed represented the ideas that I was questioning. By actually manipulating these three-dimensional symbolic objects, I believed I was gaining control over what they represented in my life. These ceramic frame-boxes were approximately the size of a sheet of paper. Their exterior frames were decorated with clay ribbons and flowers made with a cake decorator. Beside these flowers and ribbons, I placed angel faces and doves cast in clay from miniature plastic objects. Some of these pieces were very elaborately decorated and were covered with ceramic bows, birds, flowers and other pieces. An angel face was placed at the center of the frame of each piece just above the entrance into the box. Ruffles extended from the edge of the frame to the wall. I painted these pieces white, with either a deep pink rose or bow in their interiors. They eventually came to resemble feminine religious reliquaries or small
beds. In the center of one piece, I buried a ceramic rose in sand and covered it with glass. Another piece had a rose-colored bow floating in its middle; small doll arms protruding from either side of its exterior, gave the piece an anthropomorphic quality (see Plate #2).

Generally, I saw all of these early ceramic pieces as references to the female body. Their centers communicated a sensuality of the female body as well as its spiritual center. The exterior frames signified my feminine/female heritage, values, and ideals. At the same time, however, I was questioning the manner in which these ideals influenced my spiritual and personal growth. In many ways, these pieces were sarcastically sweet and overly feminine, expressing my quizzical attitude toward my Christian ideas of femininity. As I now reflect on these pieces, I consider them to be my attempt to define my own identity and recognize how my sensuality and spirituality work together in the individualization of my self.

I next began to construct extremely ornate ceramic pieces. I painted the exterior of these with pastel colors while I used black for the interiors. This particular use of color was a new addition to my work, a change also mirrored by a shift in my technique. I was no longer preplanning my artwork, but starting with a basic idea and allowing each step to determine the subsequent
step until the completion of the work. I found that by working more spontaneously my art pieces were becoming more psychologically based, visualizing my internal dialogue in a way I believed more truthful. This approach eventually brought forth new images which I did not comprehend and, consequently, understanding myself through this new imagery became my reason for continuing to make new art.

As I look back now, I realize that these pastel pieces represented a turning point in my work -- not only in terms of working method, but idea. I was still questioning my feminine/female heritage and ideals but in a much broader context. I saw my values as an idealistic guide for living, but at the same time I could not understand their validity or truthfulness in the scope of my brief existence. I could not understand "...the awareness of [my] own mortality, over and against a cosmos that appeared to [me] timeless and of another order." As a result, my artwork began to visually represent opposing forces (male-female, femininity-masculinity, birth-death, sensuality-spirituality).

One piece in this series of pastel works resembled the shape of an ornate cuckoo clock, perhaps an unconscious

"June Singer, Androgyny, p. 100."
and humorous reference to time. I was beginning to expand on the basic format of my pieces. This change in form represented my beginning attempts to control my identity. On the face of the piece, above three parallel windows, is a line of miniature men. In the center window is a doll-woman's head; beneath the doll's head, extending outside of the structure, is the remainder of her torso. The doll's head faces outward while her arms and hands can be seen, protruding slightly to the outside, but reaching toward the inside of the other two windows. Suspended from each of these hands on strings attached to the exterior of the piece are "Wing Suits," which are woman-doll body suits with attached wings. One suit is missing a foot. This piece is entitled One Foot From Perfection (see Plate #3).

In One Foot, the structure's black interior is tomblike as well as womblike, since it holds figures of babies on top of columns. The figure of the woman is partially within and partially outside of the structure. The hands of the figure reach toward the interior of the figures of the babies but at the same time hold the strings to the "Wing Suits," her means of achieving a spiritual life. Here, feminine-female is represented by the hands reaching for the babies, while masculine-male is depicted by the same hands grasping the strings -- the
need to struggle to achieve or become something other. This woman-figure represents a dual nature in my personality; the sensual and the spiritual. The "Wing Suits" dangling precariously from the figure's hands represent her escape from death. Yet a foot from these "Wing Suits" has been broken off. The title of the piece, One Foot From Perfection, not only describes a visual pun, but my attitude toward my ideals, which I see as a guide for living but impossible to at all times attain. At the time this piece was constructed, I was questioning the validity of these ideals in my life, and in a similar way, this piece, which upon first glance, is decorated in sweetness and innocence, actually exhibits images of brutality and death. I was beginning to recognize another aspect of myself -- my dark side. I saw this dark side as containing the death, male, masculine elements of my personality. Consequently, as my work continued, I tried to bring out these characteristics for a further understanding of myself.

In my pastel pieces, I expanded my visual language to accompany my changing ideas. I was now incorporating cast found-objects such as miniature men, women, babies, and columns, along with the angels, flowers and birds of before. As I indicated above in my analysis of One Foot, the exterior ornamentation of the piece was an expansion
of the idea contained in the framed interior. In this sense, the boundaries of the interior and exterior were no longer clear. On the exterior of another pastel piece, I constructed a narrative which spoke of a transformation from sensuality to spirituality. In this transformation, a personal fantasy creature was born. "Herberta: The Immortal" was a superhuman creature, an androgynous life form or spirit. This character was created through the use of male, bird, and female elements. Through a series of several transformations, where one element dominates the rest, Herberta finally emerges as a unified balance of all three elements. I saw "Herberta" as an answer to the man-woman, masculine-feminine, birth-death, sensuality-spirituality dichotomies. With the head of a female baby, a top of a man's tuxedo, and sprouting wings, "Herberta: The Immortal" was able to rise, literally and figuratively, above earthly realities (see Plate #4).

After this series, I began a new series of boxes which extended further from the wall. The exterior of these pieces contained more and more distinct narrative elements. These exterior elements flowed from one to the other and at points merged. I believe these narratives spoke of birth and death as well as maleness and femaleness, since, at times, the objects used in the narratives indicated sensual parts of the body, and at
times, these sensual parts were transformed into spiritual objects and symbols or vice-versa. For example, two eggs were placed symmetrically on the front of a piece to represent breasts. At times these egg-breasts were split open to become egg-vaginas giving birth to angels or birds. In other pieces, columns sprouted wings or changed into fonts containing small figures of men. I believed that these narratives also spoke of my own personality; feminine elements at times exhibiting control and domination over the masculine, at other times the masculine elements commanding the feminine. I indicated submission by the reclining figure of a woman-doll. A small figure of a man appears to be growing out of foot and somehow holding her down. In another narrative, a winged woman-doll rises off the column which is below her (see Plate #5).

The interior of these pieces served to bring together the complexities of the exterior. The interior was usually composed of two elements and had a narrative quality. In one piece a rock is floating directly above a miniature figure of a man, who is facing upward toward the rock. The piece conveys a feeling of sexuality as well as of potential death. In another piece in this series, I constructed a small square opening at its center. In the interior of the space "Herberta" is painted gold.
Protruding from her stomach, as a type of umbilical cord, is a long round stick extending approximately five inches beyond the exterior of the piece. Hanging from the end of the stick is a miniature chair, which has been speared by the stick through its back. This piece is entitled Next Please, a title which I thought was humorous in that it pointed to the continuing process of birth and death, but it was also cruel and inhuman as it signified my feelings of helplessness in relation to the power of my Christian, cultural ideals of femininity possessed (see Plate #6).

Next Please and the other four pieces in this series of frame-boxes were painted with tiny dots of color. The dots of color optically blended together to form single colors which merged and flowed into new colors, giving color to the variety of narrative objects which merged and flowed on the surface of the piece. The overall hue of the pieces in this group was a blue-purple. In a narrative sense, it is as if the black interiors of the pastel pieces have extended their shadow to engulf the exterior of the piece.

At this point, my visual language had now expanded to include life-size rocks, pears, and eggs. The rocks and pears were cast from objects in nature. The remainder of the objects, such as the column, small men, women, birds, and babies, were cast from plastic mass-produced
miniatures, which I found in a cake decorating store. I initially chose them because they symbolized traditional feminine values. These objects exist as popular icons of the American culture, and are intended to represent Christian ideals of woman's roles in American society. For example, the plastic woman-doll which I cast in clay is often used on the top of birthday cakes for young girls. The icing on the cake is used to form the doll's clothing, which is usually a frilly long gown of pastel colors. As a result, this cultural-ritualistic object presents the ideal of femininity as passivity, submission and purity. Consequently, as a cultural icon, it perpetuates a dangerous stereotype of females in the American-Christian mindset.

By manipulating this doll-woman and other objects, I believed that I was gaining control over the values they represented in my life. As my work progressed and my visual language expanded in accordance with my ideas, I discovered that I had also chosen these objects because they visualized male-female, masculine-feminine, birth-death, sensual-spiritual dichotomies. Some of the objects which I was using, including eggs, birds, and fruit, were sacred religious symbols often used by native cultures and ancient societies to express the same dichotomies. From this standpoint, I saw these
mass-produced objects from the cake decorating store as being nothing more than commodities to be bought and sold. In some ways these objects were only products of modern technology, full of decadence and impersonality. By manipulating them and transforming them in my work, I believed I was controlling them and giving them a new emotionality, renewed meaning, and in some way returning to them their preciousness as images.

After the series of ceramic pieces which included *Next Please*, I gave my work a new form. The box shape now began to resemble a house structure. I consciously worked with this shape as a reference to the female body. The portals or openings in these pieces existed as passages through the body. These passages led to an interior space or womb, a place of spiritual unity and rebirth. As a result, my use of decoration was narrowed down to a representation of masculine-male elements: miniature columns, men, winged columns, interrelated with the feminine-female quality of the structure itself. One decorative female-feminine element which I did use in these pieces was a new fantasy creature which I named "The Egg Head." She took the place of "Herberta." Instead of a human head, I placed a disproportionately large egg on the doll-woman's body. This figure spoke of my own physical potential for procreation as a vital link in what
I believed to be a spiritual cycle of birth, death, and afterlife.

Following these decorative pieces, my work became much more minimal. I shed all decorative elements except for the miniature columns. The ceramic structures now had sharply pointed roofs, and their openings were long, narrow slits. In these pieces, I established relationships between the opening and a single column. The column often merged into the now heavily textured surfaces of the structures. In one piece, Passage, two columns appear to have emerged from the structure to define the opening of the structure. In another piece, Exegesis, a winged column rises from the surface of the piece as if to fly away. The opening appears as if it is moving off the top of the piece. These pieces are a direct interaction of male and female elements. They refer to the potential of birth by their "womblike" interior, and they speak of death through their black surfaces and chapel or coffin-like form. I believed that through this combination, the pieces represented a certain spiritual rebirth, or a new spiritual understanding. I saw these pieces as a further synthesis of my ideas; however, I did not feel satisfied with their impact or their surface treatment. I believed if I could change their size to human scale, they would be more representative of the human psychological experience.
As I attempted to make these pieces relate more to human scale, I found I only multiplied their length. As I look back now, I believe if I would have mimicked the dimensions of the human form more closely, these pieces could have been more effective. None-the-less, I do believe these pieces combined many of my ideas. These structures were made of wood -- five feet tall, seven inches wide, and five inches deep. They eventually became free standing sculptures. Their tops were pointed, and they had narrow slits in the center of their form to serve as "portals" to the spiritual world. Some of these portals took on the look of faces. The structures were also reminiscent of caskets, columns, guard houses, or grave markers. These pieces were androgynous in nature, combining both masculine and feminine, and male and female qualities. They were tall, sharp and angular yet at the same time, had stationary, circular openings in their surfaces -- masculine and feminine characteristics respectively.

I entitled one piece Spirit Catcher. The long narrow slit in the front of this piece led to an open archway at the bottom which also gave the appearance of legs. I saw the piece's long narrow form as being male. The long narrow slit in the piece existed as the spiritual pathway between the male and female. In the open archway, I
placed an empty terra cotta pot, the female counterpart. However, I believed this series of pieces was becoming too sterile in surface quality and color application -- I was using only black. I wanted my work to have a greater sense of spontaneity, playfulness, and joy in its making. I felt I had identified the opposing forces in my personality and my existence, and had gained a sense of control over them. I believed I had perhaps buried or resolved these conflicts and felt I was ready to explore these dichotomies with a new attitude.

During the construction of the large wooden pieces, I was also doing flat clay reliefs in the shape of houses and female figures. These pieces were very spontaneous and direct. I did not feel, however, that all of the results were successful since the pieces lacked a sense of completion. But the pieces did use my ideas in a more immediate way. The immediacy of this approach lead me to open and ink drawings. With this method I could quickly put down my ideas in a complete form. Consequently, I discontinued the use of the wooden structures and concentrated my efforts on the drawing. The imagery that I used in the drawings was based on the visual language which I had built up in my ceramic pieces, wooden structures, and decorative prints completed prior to graduate school; the imagery also included coffin shapes.
which stood vertically on two columns. In the middle of these coffins were long slits. I also used winged coffins, giant balloon heads, and figures with only arms and legs and a "spiritual center" indicated with a spiral. A new character was added: "The Planetary Intercessor," a winged creature with a bird's head, a beak, tail, and claws (see Plate #7). At times, this creature took on a gentle countenance; at other times it looked vulture-like and aggressive. This creature represents my acknowledgement of the masculine and feminine in my own personality and an emerging sense of myself. It also symbolizes a newly found spiritual direction and a sense of freedom.

Currently, I am involved with small paintings on paper, developing the imagery I have synthesized in my drawings (see Plates 8 & 9). I am working in a very spontaneous way, sometimes only planning the work with a quick sketch. The fantasy element is becoming increasingly more important, for as I have stated, it helps to bring my subconscious thoughts to their visualization as images. My concerns remain the same, but I believe that the male-female metaphoric forces interact in a more direct and identified way, reflecting my new understanding of my Christian ideals. I see my Christian ideals as a guide for living, in a caring relationship.
with my fellow man. I am beginning to recognize the God in man and myself.

I believe these recent paintings reflect my own personal evolution. I still strive for a refinement and continual reworking of my painting surfaces to create rich textural qualities. I feel that this approach manifests my sensibilities. I use layers of color to enliven the surfaces of my work. In the past, my use of color has presented an overall impression of blue-purple. This hue remains, but I find I am interjecting bolder colors into the scheme. These bolder colors reflect my newly found attitude but are also indicative of my new interest in Medieval Persian, Indian, and Christian illuminated manuscript paintings. I am attracted to the glowing or shimmering colors which I see in these art works. I like the range of color and its decorative use. I enjoy the use of distorted perspective in these paintings and have utilized this technique in my work. For color, Van Eyck is a major inspiration. I hope I can someday achieve the sense of joy and mystery he was able to do through his use of decorative color.

In my current work, I continue to refine my painting technique, expand and clarify my use of color, and develop my surface treatment and imagery. Projecting into the future, I would like to enlarge the scope of the pieces and to work on canvas, adapting my style and technique to
this difference in format. I see my work as delving deeper into the psychological territory which I have mapped out for myself and making new discoveries in the detailed search for this conscious as well as unconscious information.

As I look to my future work, I am filled with excitement. I feel I have developed a personal imagery and use of color, and I have a secure sense of what my work is about and knowledge of my approach and working methods. Overall, I believe that I have accomplished what I had hoped to do in graduate school: to understand or resolve the meaning behind my still life imagery. In this process, I have created a new language for myself and a spontaneous way of setting down my imagery. I have continued to develop a growing awareness of my concepts, the reasons I make art, and the power in the dialogue that my work has for me.

In conclusion, I see my work as manifesting a consistent conceptual base. My ideas progressed from an initial confrontation of my Christian ideals with the recognition of my own femininity to the development of a male-female metaphor as my understanding of reality, spirituality, and the structure of the cosmos. As I progressed from art piece to art piece, I discovered how my religious ideals hindered my growth toward a mature and
actualized existence. Through the dialogue of my artwork, as a visualization of my feelings about my day-to-day living experiences, I began to understand how my religion was fallible. I recognized that it provided a reference point for understanding the spiritual, but I was now more concerned about this reference point as a celebration of God in man rather than as a means of instilling fear and submission in man. Through my work I recognized my feminine-female identity as less important in terms of cultural categorization and more important as an equal and necessary facet in a recurring process of birth, death, and afterlife.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


PLATE #2
CENTER
PLATE #4

UNDECIDED ANGEL
PLATE 45

WHAT USED TO BE CHARIOTS OF PYRE
PLATE #6

NEXT PLEASE
PLATE 47
FINGER TEARS
PLATE 49

INTO