A JUNG (SIC) PERSON AT
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Master of Fine Arts

by
Mark Pascale, B.A.
The Ohio State University
1978

Approved by

Adviser
Department of Art
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BODY OF THESIS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOTNOTES</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLATES</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are many different opinions of what visual artists do. My impetus for making something labeled "Art" is to communicate by visual means, ideas I have about the humor, ambiguity, and tragedy of certain situations. I am interested in a visual presentation of these ideas, and in accounting for my immediate intellectual response to information that is visual, verbal and audial. The way I have tried to account for this response is by juxtaposing formal devices (such as color and placement), incongruously with images.

William M. Ivins, Jr. has stated that the original purpose of prints was to make exactly repeatable pictorial statements. I agree with Ivins' hypothesis and believe that I made prints for this reason before I realized that lithography was more significant to me than simply a means to make more than one copy of each statement. Lithography is capable of producing a richness of image that is unique to the medium.

Art is information for, about, and of life. As different as human beings are, it is difficult to grasp the amount of sameness that exists in all of us. Far be it from me to make declarations of absolute fact or universal truth. I want to make art because it is the best way I can think of to bring purpose to my life, my comprehension of life, and especially to contribute to the richness of human experience.
Going back to my original interests in art and comparing them to my present concerns, has revealed to me one constant. I have always been graphically inclined. That is, my earliest interest was in drawing and my current interest is still "drawing". It was not until my sophomore year of college that I became aware of the print media as a means of artistic expression in and of itself. Many students are a product of high school art programs that offer "graphics" as a means to punish those who do not work on their painting or sculpture. I was one such student who was, as a result, unaware of the current state or former state of printed art.

Printmaking was the strongest and most active area in the art department at my undergraduate school, Southern Connecticut State College. It was the only studio where students and faculty were always visible, working hard, and discussing contemporary art issues. In addition, there was a mystique about the room itself which was very seductive to me: people were making images on paper using facilities that looked not unlike a factory. My stereotyped notion of what an artist's studio looked like was completely destroyed. Too, my concept of how a "drawing on paper" looked was challenged. The students were producing work that went beyond the figurative and abstract expressionist art that I had been exclusively exposed to in books, museums, galleries, and art history courses. There was a drive and energy among the
students and faculty that made me want to be in the print room working.

I took my first print course (lithography-serigraphy) with Keith Hatcher in the Fall Semester, 1973. I immediately became interested in the lithographic process more than other processes because it was capable of producing an image which looked most like a pencil or graphite drawing on paper. This potential is still of great interest to me today. While I was learning and struggling with the complex procedures of lithography, Keith provided me (and everyone else) with the additional responsibility of making something that went beyond mere representations of things "out there". It was at this point in my career that I stopped making "Pictures", and began making images or statements that would later develop into my visual vocabulary and my aesthetic sensibility.

Fall Semester, 1973 provided me with the challenge for which I had been unconsciously waiting. At the close of this most disastrous semester (from which I received my first grade of 'B' in an art class), I had made some important discoveries and decisions which still show their affect today. Keith Hatcher was the only teacher or person who had ever challenged me on all intellectual fronts: what I knew, what I did, and why I did it. This close peer-artist friendship, which still exists, developed during those three months. I had found a place (studio) in which to work (I could use the shop 24 hours
a day), and I made the decision to concentrate my creative energies in printmaking for the remainder of my undergraduate years. Rather than exercise my ability to please two or three different instructors with two or three different kinds of work, I was left free to experiment, develop, and expand my personal visual syntax. For the first time I was exposed to art executed outside of New York, or as John Canaday once put it, "Art From The Hinterlands." 3

It was possible for me to put everything I could think of into a print at this time. Keith would tell us to look and do research constantly, and to build a library of information—both physically and mentally. We were encouraged to "steal" formal visual devices which we liked, were interested in, and which we saw other artists using. There was so much input that the output became arbitrary, visually confusing, and loaded with contradictions. Everything in my prints became a gimmick, a device, or just another way of doing something. This period was important however, because the total effect of exploiting the process enabled me to leave undergraduate school with a strong command of lithography.

Being in a liberal arts college that did not offer a fine arts degree forced me to take a variety of courses that had little to do with what I was pursuing in art. Taking the time to study everything properly and democratically took studio time away from me. I soon realized that the way to make the other information count or mean something was to
relate it to the art context. Language, psychology, philosophy, history, etc., all became a part of my art or the process of making it.

I began to see an absurdity and humor in the esoteric nature of so much of the academic research I was exposed to in my classes. Why was the student forced to accept so much fiction as fact (eg. crystal coordinate numbers in chemistry), and regurgitate it on tests? The question became an obsession to me. I soon found that questioning all information presented to me usually produced a series of funny and/or outrageous answers. Beginning with the study of Sigmund Freud who could trace all human activity or thought back to a fascination with some aspect of sexuality, I could make these psuedo-intellectual associations between an image and an idea. In addition, my sense of humor began to surface in my work, specifically in my manner of linking the verbal explanation with the visual organization. All the associations between my images and my basis for assembling things resembled scenes out of early Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, or Woody Allen films, in which slapstick visual antics are mixed with a complex and tragic sense of humor.

The basis for my visual work at that time was a series of photographs and newsclippings which I had accumulated over a one year period. My interest in straight silver process photography was just as great as my interest in printmaking, but I would never be satisfied enough with the photograph. It
seemed much too easy both intellectually and visually to present my silver prints as art. In addition, the manual manipulation of the brush or pencil working to make the image was missing, and the process seemed too distant from the product to call it mine. Both my photographs and the found newsclippings represented those things which were closest to me, such as my dog, my friends, a variety of closeups of textured surfaces, plus mannequins wearing suits of medieval armor. In an effort to transcend the singular photographic image I began to assemble fragments of the photographs into compositions that were approximately the same format as photographic enlargements from 35mm film. When I was satisfied with the resulting assemblage I would translate the image into a lithograph, using the materials such as different tusche washes that are unique to lithography (see 1).

The impact of the original images became veiled as a result of the manipulation of process. It became more and more difficult for me to talk about my work without retreating into some bizarre and irrational discussion about how I was affected by the pharaohs, Norman Mailer's macho heroes, and the early Roman Empire all at once. These were ideas which resulted from discussions in my literature, philosophy, and history courses over a one and a half year period. I thought it important then, for my visual statements to reflect the kind of inner frustration and confusion I was experiencing as a result of my absorbing large amounts of new information all
at once. Each print became an amalgamation of specific incidents, research or fact finding missions to the library, and the work took on a narrative look in which subtle games of meaning were being acted out between what had once been a factual representation and its new appearance (see 1). I felt like everything was in the process of becoming something else, and it was impossible to pin anything down as to a specific answer or even to a specific question. The work was as unsettling as my ideas about it were out of control.

As my undergraduate education came to an end I had just begun to sort out my important concerns from surface concerns. I realized that the formal aspects of my work (i.e. how it is made, of what it is made up visually) were separate from the intellectual aspects (what it meant and why it was). The most important thing that I have accomplished in graduate school has been to isolate and then connect both my formal and intellectual concerns.
"The temptation is to anthropomorphize their activity. They have a sense of urgency and fright, they seem funny. It looks like a sudden maneuver, a quick evacuation. They are brightly lit, and it appears to be night, which adds another element - intrusion on a covert activity taking place under cover of darkness. We don't know what they are doing, nor can we inhabit their space with the proximity that we have been given in the photograph." 4

This quote almost completely summarizes the visual qualities and impact of my last eleven prints. It is strange to me that these words could be so close to what I have discovered about my recent work (Plates 2-8), because it appeared in print after my eleven most recent pieces had been all but printed. I even used the word "covert" in the title of one of the latter prints: A COVERT DISPLAY. A discussion of the intended impact I have tried to create in my recent work is forthcoming. The quote I have mentioned will be refered to later in the body of this thesis. The description does serve well as an introduction to the final problem I intend to deal with here, because it asks the question: "How does the 'why', 'do' ?"

My interest in the connection between our comprehension of visual language and its verbal counterpart has already been stated. The work I have done for the past year (1977-8), represents the clearest integration I have ever achieved between these two ideas. When compared to the work which
precedes it, these prints illustrate a narrowing down of the essential information needed to make the intent of my work clear. They also have established my true aesthetic sensibility, and completely exposed the means by which my products are achieved.

Lithography is a medium capable of producing great subtlety and one which allows for a broad range of tonality to occur. It is the process which most accurately and naturally produces the kind of space and surface I feel is needed to reveal my statements. I mentioned earlier my interest in both lithography and silver prints. Silver prints are generally acknowledged as producing the most primordial space (tonality range) and surface texture of all the two-dimensional reproductive media. I have found lithography to be a close second in that category. The choice to use lithography as a means rather than photography has become a simple one for me. The camera depends on what already exists. I am no longer interested in that kind of information as the carrier of my statements. My knowledge of the clean, clear image produced by a photograph, and its nacreous brilliance has, however, provided me with the ability to produce my personal illusionistic two-dimensional space.

Personal is the key word here, because the images and space that I make have no precedent in terms of with what I am familiar. The illusionary quality of my images is questioned by juxtaposing a printed surface (lithography), to the memory
of an objective reality (black and white silver print). That is how I arrived at the combination of litho inks and paper. When the proper balance is achieved between image darkness/lightness, color intensity and the manner in which the inks are absorbed by the paper, the resulting image transcends the silver print, as well as a drawing made with graphite on a piece of paper. This product is the only thing that can ultimately support my ideas.

Humor, ambiguity and tragedy are not so much the issues of my work at the present time. They are closer to a verbal translation of my ultimate statement: creating a visual equivalent for the sum total of every persons' inability to recognize what they don't know about what they encounter. In short, the "funny" shapes or forms which act "urgently" in the space which "we" cannot inhabit, are my visual supplement to the "encounters" that we all have with information. These prints are attempts to make us believe that we understand what we are hearing, seeing and feeling, when we really do not.

WE LAUGH AT JOKES WHOSE PUNCHLINES WE DON'T UNDERSTAND.
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN WE CRY ABOUT NOTHING.

-OR-

WE CRY AT A JOKE, AND LAUGH AT A TRAGEDY.

My images are not asking why we act this way, nor are they suggesting how to change such behavior. The connection between my verbal explanation of these visual statements is
too subjective perhaps. Because the forms, spaces, and relationships that exist in my prints may seem so bizarre and hard to take, they are also difficult to characterize or label. One might feel uncertain about whether to call one of my pieces "finished", or complete enough. This stalling, tension, and uncertainty is a deliberate trap set up for the viewer, and is even more evident in my eleven most recent prints.

No verbal description of the prints can substitute for the experience of seeing them. What follows then, is my attempt to discuss their visual qualities and to relate these qualities to my ideas or intent. HIT/SKIP was the first print I did at Ohio State University which seemed to achieve the mixture of humor and ambiguity between image and surface I have been discussing. Its structure and presentation anticipated all of the work I have since done. A flat surface of silver acts as a supporting ground for an assortment of hard-edge and biomorphic shapes. Each shape appears to be a fragment of something; suggestive of raw meat in this case, because of the "red-meat" color in which they were printed. Other prints which relate to HIT/SKIP are A SHAKE AND A BLOW, A SHAKE AND A RATTLE, A SHAKE AND A TREMBLE, A SHAKE AND A SIZZLE, A SHAKE AND A SKIP, and A SHAKE AND BAKE. Each of these prints contain a similar silver flat surface presentation of color and image treatment. When seen as a group, they trace a linear development in terms of how the kind of information in each changes the image impact, and therefore
makes a clearer statement.

Each image or fragmented "bit" in HIT/SKIP appears to hover over the silver surface, or melt into and bounce off of the white area of the "box" form which splits the print in half (see 2). I tried to make their placement and movement in space seem resolveable but uncomfortable at the same time. The "bits" seem curiously independent from one another but are all the same color (red and black), and on the same plane in space. Contradicting the depiction of the "bits" in space and their relationship to each other visually was deliberate. It was an attempt to suggest that this group of tiny fragments was somehow on a stage or performing their unrelated functions in a stage-like space.

My reasons for referring to the small floating forms as "bits" are many. To me these "bits" represent ingredients. Ingredients are those things which "...enter into a compound or are a component part of any compound or mixture." Technically then, the "bits" are just some of the elements which visually make up the print. On another level, the "bits" are traces of tusche washes or traces of the lithographic process. Intellectually, I can trace the origin of the "bits" to my interest in cooking, which paralleled my art activities when HIT/SKIP was made. My favorite stir-fried Chinese dishes were made up of many different ingredients which were prepared by a long drawn out process of cleaning the ingredients, cutting the ingredients, etc. The fully prepared foods resemble the
the fragments which appear in the prints from my "A SHAKE AND A..." series (see 3&4). So, cooking, cleaning, printing, drawing, processing, etching, assembling, signing, and eating are all activities which I performed daily. Rattle, Tremble, Sizzle, Skip, Bake and, Blow are all words whose meanings are connected to these activities (some esoterically and some literally). These words are used in the titles because to me they accurately describe the spirit of each image.

Connecting my food fixation with the "bits" I created became a controlled intention after HIT/SKIP and A SHAKE AND A BLOW. These were personally funny associations on my part and reflected the "more dumb" side of my sense of humor. It was easy for me to be motivated by this connection because it gave me permission to work without questioning my decisions every step of the way.

A COVERT DISPLAY, UNTITLED, SZECHWAN FRIED-STIR CRAZY, and RAVEN-MAD are my most recent prints. Visually, they are more "formalistic" than the pieces which directly precede them. My intent was to create a structure which could be read clearly as a believable illusionistic space. By returning to printing the paper flush to the edge I hoped to produce a more enclosed space, which projects a closeup and more intense viewpoint. In each print the image consists of a long narrow field, broken up into one plane of silvery gray and one of a deep brown-black color. At the horizontal ends of each print,
a "curtain-like" shape borders and/or encloses the fields of silver and black. "Bits" or images in each print seem attached to the edges of the paper, or come into the open space from beneath the "curtained" borders.

By confining most of the information in each piece to the edges of the paper, I hoped that the ambiguity of the activity projected by the images would be intensified. That is to say, that by chopping the striped images off on the edge of the paper (see 6&8), their origin and their position in space would be unclear. What I hoped to create with this image is a situation similar to a motion picture in which the viewers' position is that of voyeur. This effect is also similar to the one discussed in footnote 4, page 8: "...intrusion on a covert activity taking place under cover of darkness...."

To me, this idea is consistent with the formal concerns expressed in my most recent work. Splitting the paper into two distinct fields of dark and light, plus bordering the ends with "curtain-like" protrusions should invoke a definitive sense of space. However, it seems to me that the closest one might come to a universally accepted description of the space would be to label it "theatrical," or "stage-like."

It is this index which provides the strongest clue to what the intent of my work is. I have been interested most in a philosophical position which never completely reveals itself. My reason for this is because I recognize that life itself is so abstract a concept that no one person or thing has the
power to define LIFE'S goals or meaning. Each of us has the right and responsibility to defend our own idea of LIFE'S purpose. When these rights are denied we become overly protective of and violent about our beliefs. My area of interest encompasses, as I have stated, those situations in which the pettiness of some of our defenses becomes absurd and therefore humorous. In these situations, there is also the potential for tragedy. Those decisions which are politically motivated, rather than humanitarily, usually lead to the ugliest consequences.

The reason for a "stage-like" space in my prints is to create an atmosphere in which activities are being performed by one or more things. The "bits" are the actors, and their activities are directed at the viewer of the print. Hence the need for a somewhat obvious proscenium. The degree to which my images act upon a viewer relies solely upon the viewers' attraction or repulsion of the piece. It is at once both visually seductive and intellectually puzzling. I think that I achieve this response by making the printed surface technically brilliant, and by producing a very clear and minimal composition. On the other hand, the "bits" do not make reference to specific things with which we are familiar, and because of this they are not as accessible as the printed surface.

This intended imbalance between the formal aspects and the "meaning" of each print is what (I hope) will engage the
viewer long enough for them to realize the kind of control the piece is exercising on them. I want viewers to feel like they have come upon a sudden operation or function (the "bits" are floating, moving, pointing at something unidentified), yet they cannot quite identify what is being done or why it is being done. These responses are the same to me as our belief structures. Some of us must always ask "why". Others would rather keep moving on and growing by doing. The paradox between my CALCULATED decision to create a clear space, and my whim to use confidential "bits" in the space is what directly creates the intent.
FOOTNOTES


2 By "out there" I am referring to the visible world.

3 "Art From The Hinterlands" was the subject of John Canaday's final review as an art critic for the New York Times.


7 See 4.
LIST OF PLATES

1. Testament of the Belly
   - lithograph on chine colle'
2. HIT/SKIP
   - color lithograph
3. A Shake And A Sizzle
   - color lithograph
4. A Shake And Bake
   - colored lithograph
5. A Covert Display
   - color lithograph
6. Untitled
   - color lithograph
7. Szechwan Fried-Stir Crazy
   - color lithograph
8. Raven-Mad (Phil's Piece)
   - color lithograph
