MULTIPLICITY OF REFERENCES:
A PRESCRIPTION OF ADDITIVE NOTIONS

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

by
William Harvey Perkins Binnings, B.F.A.
The Ohio State University
1971

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
Division of Art
Table of Contents:

| Acknowledgments                                      | iii |
| Introduction: A Literal Comparison                  | 1   |
| The Creative Responsibility                         | 3   |
| Contemporary/Traditional Conflict                   | 11  |
| Multiplicities of References and the Creative Dialogue | 17  |
| Answer: A Multiplicity of References                 | 19  |
| Conclusion: A Moral Stance                          | 23  |
| Photographs of Thesis Work                           | 24  |
Acknowledgments:

I extend my greatest appreciation to Professor William Krueger for so conscientiously performing the function of advisor and non-hostile abrasive, without whose assistance this paper might have rambled incoherently ad infinitum.

My wife, Lee, should also be acknowledged for her patience and encouragement in all phases of my educational/professional career - it would be easier to settle for mediocrity without her stimulus - it is impossible to estimate her influence.

If I were to acknowledge my associates who have contributed to the development of thought and work, the list would be endless. I would, however, like to specifically thank George Wright, Assistant Professor of Art, and William Ramage, for talking sometimes. They helped.

Thanks also to many others.
Introduction:

A Literal Comparison:

Conceive "apple". We initially describe it in terms of its abstract properties. "An apple is round (red, spherical)." The abstract description is a generalization which may describe all apples. The statement is a progression from the image (apple) to the abstraction (roundness), and contains a duality of references. The statement describes a generalization of apples and allows for no inference of additional information. It is a static description due to its limitation of specific references. The introduction of a specific image, as "that apple over there and these two over here", and the introduction of a variation of the abstraction - that no apple is perfectly round - extends the meaning to include a multiplicity of references. The complementary functions of the image recognition element (apple/apples) and the formal (descriptive) element (roundness/degrees of "roundness") allows a broader field of participation by the recipient of the information through a variety of inferential combinations. One may experience both an empathetic response (inherent in image recognition) in the concrete "reality" of the apple and intellectualize its non-objective, abstract qualities. Image abstraction and abstracted/imagery inter-relationships are free to exist.

It is this multiplicity of references which we should apply to art to remove it from a temporal limitation to a
relevance of greater significance. Further, to recognize the multiplicity of references in a work is to perceive it in its totality - in image, form, and their complementary expression of concept.

I was once asked to explain my work, or rather to defend it, against the charge of "irrelevant traditionalism". The question was asked by a man who considers himself (and is considered by others) to be an influential, progressive, contemporary artist, complete with New York and international certifications. It was phrased "How is your work relevant to contemporary ideas?" (What specifically am I doing that identifies my work as "contemporary"?) What's that? The only sensible answer I could give to such a question is that I work in contemporary time. It is such a blatant tautology that he would immediately have perceived it as evasion. But his question had deeper implications - he was challenging the relevancy of an entire classification of work, specifically figurative sculpture, with a damning association with traditionalism. He was indicating that to be associated with such traditionalism, even so superficially as in the choice of a motif, is somehow in conflict with contemporary ideas and labeled as irrelevant. This is a particularly repressive stance that I have noted to be common among many "contemporary" artists. The stance is repressive because it is based on a prescribed value system that is exclusive of additive notions. It implies a limitation of "acceptable" responses that should be totally alien to the creative, contemporary man.
The Creative Responsibility:

Social existence requires social function. A man cannot relate to society without acknowledging the responsibility to act within and (sometimes incidentally) for the benefit of that society.

A man is generally distinguished as an individual in terms of his social function. Vocational categories describe a man in terms of that function most unique to him and which he most often performs as a social action. Therefore the term "mechanic" may distinguish an individual in terms of his performance of mechanical-vocational activities, separate from other activities, while the term "father" may also describe a function he performs but distinguishes him less within a specific social organization.

The condition of this descriptive categorization is passive. A man is categorized in terms of the function he performs; in this case it is a function which is a set of activities standard to the classification "mechanical". The man is described in terms of adherence to that set. When he deviates from that set, i.e., when he creates new sets and/or rearranges the existing set he is no longer performing the function of a mechanic until he succeeds in establishing a general acceptance of the new sub-sets within the existing set of "mechanical" functions. He is, however, no longer a mechanic until he resumes the activities of a mechanic or changes the over-all function of mechanics to include his created set, and then adheres to this set. It is the necessary
adherence to a set, in terms of which the man is described, which makes the man a passive recipient of the descriptive social-function category.

In contrast, the creative man, in any vocational category, is the active determinant of his function to the extent that he seeks to create or discover new sets of activities which in turn redefine the old activities to which they apply. The creative man is described as "creative" only so long as he continues to actively seek his own determinant. As in the case of the mechanic, once he accepts a function as a set of activities and ceases explorations beyond that set, he is again a passive recipient of his function/description, even if the set he accepts is of his own making. When a man conforms to a set of functions by which he is described, as "mechanic", the set of ("mechanical") determinants is external to the will of the man. They are a prescribed system of actions, exclusive of additive notions. If he wills himself not to function in terms of the prescribed system, or to the set determinants, he ceases to function in terms of the set and ceases to be (socially) a mechanic.

By the nature of creativity, the descriptive determinant of the creative man is elusive and not confined to a singular set of functions, but rather subject to change at the will of the creative man in his active, self-determinant role. It is this tentative nature of descriptive sets that establishes the creative man in any vocationai category, whether chemist, astrologist or artist. In the creation of sets he
is free and responsible to create his own determinant, by which he is then described. A distinction exists, however, in that descriptive sets of activities are applicable to most social categories except that of "artist". Other vocational categories may include creative possibilities, but the primary activity is confined to a particular limit of activities, as astrology. For the man categorized as "artist", the singular descriptive function is "to be creative", i.e., to not conform to a passive set of activities or prescribed systems, but to continue to create new references - this is the social function of the artist. The artist is afforded greater freedom because of his assumed creativity - he is expected not to conform to predetermined sets of activities, and deviation from the standard is, within "tolerable" limits, encouraged of the artist by his society.

It is often difficult to perceive the nature of an artist's work, a condition which works in favor of the creative person because it underlines the uniqueness of his vision. Given a range of complete expressive potential, each work, or series of works, must be limited to a concentration of references within which the concept of the work may most clearly be expressed. If the artist used every possible reference with which he is familiar, the result would be a chaotic jumble of ideas. It is evident, within any particular work, what references were used to express that particular idea. It reflects a value judgment and a
process of elimination of those references superfluous to any particular idea. This reflects a process of choice based on a selective inclusion value stance, self-determined, rather than a prescribed, eliminative value system. The selective inclusion value stance is necessary to the coherence of any particular idea-expression.

It is a point to be established that art works are not, necessarily, evaluated in terms of the individual creator's creativity. To a viewer unaware of Stella's first color/ground/strip/circle painting, the eighteenth color/ground/strip/circle painting may provide a significant interest, illuminating a particular prescribed point-of-view, while the series as a whole tends to suggest a set-function on the part of the artist, implying a drastically limited creative response and the limitation of prescribed decisions. Even more so are the secondary artists who adopt the limitations imposed by Stella in order to exploit a favorable market. It is within the realm of the artist to determine whether his work is explorative or exploitive - whether it has, indeed, become repetitive, and whether the stimulus for continued use of a set-reference is creative or exploitive of a sympathetic market for some stimulus other than creative expression. It is the imperative of the artist not to exploit the considerable license granted him because of his assumed creativity.

For instance, if film-maker A finds a particular reference visually appealing he may use that reference as a constant image throughout his work, in context with a particular work,
without diluting the validity of the works (unless the image becomes over-used to the point of acquiring its own historical-associative meaning apart from the context of the work, as a constant in any context, in which case it becomes a cliché). Film-maker B enjoys the same or a similar image, because it is particularly expressive in his context, and may use it with or without an awareness of A's work as an expressive idiom and an extension of the image-reference into a context not explored by A. If film-maker C wishes to refer historically/antecedently/referentially to A and/or B, he may use the reference, which is by now becoming a set of constants, to achieve this end with all sincerity. But film-maker D has perceived a particular audience reaction from the constant image of A/B/C and exploits it as a box office attraction, using it as his own reference in a way which exploits its previous success. Even if he introduces it to a new audience, as a new image not associated with a set-constancy, the creativity involved in the expression of the image is not his and he is not functioning as a creative man, despite any degree of critical acclaim or economic encouragement.

When an artist's work becomes a set, with constant properties and consistent references which designate it as that set, by continuing to conform to the restrictions imposed by acting within that established set, the artist has become passively engaged in production and can no longer be described as "creative"; he has ceased to function as a creative man.
It is the moral imperative of the artist to protect his creative license by continuing to be creative - to continue to exploit only one factor in the production of his work - the creative needs or drives inherent in the artistic, creative nature, and the permission and encouragement (albeit rarely enough in financial terms) of the culture. The artist must continue to be creative, to establish a role of and for the artist in an interaction between the individual and his culture.

In regard to the "contemporary art scene" (New York-International) many non-creative people are continuing to function as "artists" due to the inbreeding of creative ideas from the lack of critical evaluation from an audience responding intuitively to a largely intuitive medium.

The New York market has created a new academy under the avant-garde banner, with its dictates of relevancy-for-the-moment and prescribed value systems based on "contemporary" preoccupations. Artists of this new academy describe their work in terms of a singularity of theme that reflects their most recent concern - "Wow, I'm doing gigantic things in earthworks", or, "Christ, you oughta see the new soft machines I'm making", or, "I don't make nothin' because all art is in the concept." The basic elements of design, embodied in "traditional" works as complementary visual references, have recently been isolated as individual themes of much contemporary expression. Thus the elements of linear structure, directional emphasis, texture, volume, mass, ambiguity - all
of which formerly existed as the tools of expression now exist separately as the expression itself - expressions not composed of multiplicities of complementary references but existing as a singular element. As singular, non-contextual themes they are automatically doomed to a temporal relevance because the notion of avant-gardeism, by definition, cannot tolerate acceptance and understanding, yet avant-garde movements based on a singularity of reference cannot avoid such a fate because of the simplistic nature of a mono-reference theme. The result has been consistent with many other elements of our culture - a superficial quality caused by the rapid displacement of one set of ideas by another.

The displacement of one movement by its successor is occurring at increasingly rapid rates. The rapidity with which the changes are occurring imposes necessary limitations on the participants of a particular movement and encourages a prostitution of the arts. Artists of a particular movement are pressured from behind by the acceptance of the most recent movement and therefore the necessity to move on in order to remain contemporary, and pressured from the future because of the limited amount of time available before their new movement is in turn understood and displaced to the growing ranks of "cliché", irrelevant statements. The dual result is that not only are artists' explorations of a particular idea temporally repressed, but also this compression of a range of expressiveness into a
short period is intolerant of fringe artists - those artists who explore the implications of a movement into its adjacent realms.

From the fringe explorations of the Impressionist's concern for light, physical structure, and anti-academy-ism came the Post-Impressionists' extension of those visual elements on which contemporary art movements are based. Yet the Post-Impressionists had only one thing in common to be called a "movement" as such - that they all were concerned with attitudes and contexts of the Impressionists as antecedent to their own ideas. Thus we find a concentration of color relationships among the fauves, the concern for form and line in Art Nouveau, the concern for pattern and structure seen in Matisse and Cezanne, and the science of color and light relationships developed by Seurat, all operating within a similar context of multiple references, with a self-determined thematic point of view. These men were responding to the creative stimulus of discovery and revelation - not one of them could be said to be responding to critical or economic encouragement. It is this exploration into adjacent realms that extends the relevance of a movement by the application of its premise(s) to a broader range of references and the availability of an historic reference in the form of its antecedent and progressive influences. It is the fringe artists who traditionally have extended the viewpoint of the artists of a movement into its universal applications, accounting for a progression in the history of modern art rather
than a thesis/antithesis growth pattern indicative of prescribed, eliminative systems that is evident today as it was at the time of the French Academy. Recently the change-over from one movement to another has become immediate and definite, leaving those wishing to pursue a particular thesis working in a manner that overnight has become passé. The prostitution of the arts occurs when artists adhere to economic, critical, and popular pressures in order to "keep up" with the new movement, and by so doing perpetuating a cycle that robs the artist of his unique creative abilities and ultimately transforms his social-function role to that of entertainer of the elite; or what has become the anathema of the creative spirit, the "avant-garde."

Contemporary/Traditional Conflict:

When the "contemporary man" looks at art he expects to be challenged with an ambiguity that has come to be associated with an absence of objective image contexts - a pure abstraction that provides intellectual rather than cognitive, associative, or intuitive responses. The result has been an introversion of creative activity reserved for an elite, sympathetic, select audience responding to some other impetus than creative discovery or insight. This approach has created an artist/society, and even artist/artist, polarity by placing the primary artistic processes and stimuli on far too intellectual a plane. It is as if the "contemporary man" fears the empathy inherent in a
recognition response, preferring as a prescribed alternative the disassociation available with clinical analysis of a problem. Equating the word image with reality, reality with traditionalism, and traditionalism with irrelevancy is a rather strung out system of elimination, based on the erroneous assumption that the limitation of image recognition is an associative concern with "reproduction of 'reality'".

Perceivable references of art can be classified as degrees of two basic elements: that of formal (design) recognition (the grammatical structure in literary art forms) and that of image recognition (narrative content). The conflict around which the contemporary/traditional polarity is built lies in the assumption that the two elements are mutually exclusive. The contemporary/traditional conflict exists because of an erroneous generalization of these references into their associative categories: contemporary/abstraction (formal design recognition) as a singular theme. These conditions are separate only in the extreme condition of both categories.

In discussing a work of art, we may isolate a particular theme which we perceive within the work and say "that is what this painting (sculpture, composition, etc.) is about." But the existence of one point of reference does not necessarily eliminate the existence of other references. We may perceive the melody of a musical composition and describe the composition in terms of that melody, using it as the single
descriptive reference, while still being aware of the orchestration that complements that melody and without which the composition would not be complete. Similarly, we may still perceive a landscape motif in a Cezanne painting of Mt. Ste. Victoire while being aware of the formal treatment of space and planar structure that comprise the reason for the painting's existence. The landscape is simply the vehicle through which he presents his specialized vision of space and color - the concept.

If the major theme of a work were the reproduction of "objective reality", i.e., if the primary concern of the artist were to reproduce a situation as it actually appears (a concern which could never be realized due to an automatic abstraction of imagery when transferred to a visual medium), this concept would be a singular, and singularly restrictive, reference. As a major theme it is exclusive of all other creative criteria and renders the existence of other references within the work incidental. When a person is primarily concerned with this reproductive intent "to make things look as they look" his creative control of the situation is eliminated. He is no longer free to manipulate realities to express a particular pattern or color relationship or spatial dynamism. He is bound by the existent generalization of these qualities (or their absence) within a rigidly structured objectivity, and the particular vision of the artist is not free to be expressed. In the conflict of traditional/imagery and contemporary/abstraction this "stigma of 'reality'" is
applied as a generalization to all recognizable contextual imagery, unless it is removed from its "natural" contextual existence to another "unnatural" context. The contradiction of this condition is the cause of the demise of the Pop movement as a valid continued reference - that no context is inherently unnatural. Objects in conjunctive space at the same time are, by definition, in the same context. When the situation is repeated often enough that context becomes "natural." Conversely, no context can be explicitly "natural" in such a way as to exclude the unnatural, i.e., the abstract or formal reference within a "real" context. The true limitation of this image-reproduction thematic approach is that it exists as a singular reference, exclusive of all other creative possibilities. It is shared equally by ultra-realists and ultra-abstractionists, and any artist who participates in a movement based on a singular thematic reference or who allows his creative vision to degenerate into the performance of a set of functions.

The weakness of both stances - the ultra-either-polarity is in the extreme of a prescribed value system that excludes factors of the opposing camp, and thereby creates the oppositions discussed in this paper. Super-image traditionalism and its antithesis, super non-image contemporariness are both guilty of the categorical error; they have in common a singularity of theme that in effect drastically limits the creative potential of those artists bound by the themes.

Artists traditionally are aware of many levels of
recognition and use them in complementary or discordant ways to create a statement, or express a concept. The elements of art in general are discussed in "traditional" terms - the terms which appear and reappear in the history of art. Compositional structure, interactions, series repetitions, harmonies and discords, figure/ground - these references of visual expression are the meat of traditional art.

As indicated above, in his search for intellectual and aesthetic challenge, the contemporary artist has distilled the multiple levels of recognition out of art in the name of purity, or abstraction. The Stripe-Painting-New-York-Movement personified in Stella, Nolan, et al. isolated the thematic reference of color/ground, removing it from a situational context to the purity of isolation. The assemblage movement exploited the romance of materials, contrasting them to their traditional role as still-life subject matter and raising the romantic-appeal reference by juxtaposing the objects to a contrasting, equally romantic situation and creating the format of a still-life in the process. David Smith incorporated mass/void relationships in his sculptural expressions, even limiting his forms to the basic geometry of the rectangle and the sphere. Tony Smith brought ambiguity and monumental scale to its logical extreme by balancing a massive cube on one fragile corner. The contemporary art diet is starved for meat because of its preoccupation with blatant, singular-reference themes. The
distinguishing factor between the two classifications, the "contemporary" and the "traditional", seems to be limited to the variable use of only one reference within the entire category - conceptual context, which really means only that the image recognition level has changed its function. The movement-conscious artists of the contemporary classification have limited their multiplicity of references to the concentrated dose of a single unit of recognition, often exclusive of the complementary possibilities of multiple references. The Pop movement, for example, has made a statement about the context of objects versus the non-functional existence of art objects - that the non-art object or image, when removed from its functional context and placed in the context of "relevance and reverence" - the gallery - magically becomes a work of art. Because of its context.

This situation as a creative stimulus is short-lived. As soon as we begin to accept the non-art object in this "unnatural" context, we accept the context as natural to the situation and the stimulus of ambiguity, on which the Pop movement is solely based, becomes a set. Once the particular reference is realized and understood by a great number of people, the use of that reference as a creative premise is no longer valid. What will be the status of those art works based on such a premise when the cynicism of our times is replaced by another temporally tempered attitude? The works illustrative of the idea will simply become historical curiosities of limited relevancy - a reminder that once
upon a time they spoke to a particular mood of a particular society, reminding it to take itself a little less seriously.

As the Pop movement, and every other structured movement in the history of art, the relevancy of those art forms based on a singular reference is doomed to a temporal existence because of the isolation of those concepts to their "purest" form without the solid base of an empirical reference to which man may continue to relate. The forms will die while the unit of reference itself, upon which they are based, will find another expressive abode and continue functioning as "real" situations or conditions of consciousness. The attendant limitations of a mono-reference premise results in a short span of interest. Once we understand the concept of color/ground as well as the artists who base their work on the reference (and it is an educational process) - there will be nothing compelling about the work because there is no level of empathetic or curious response. The expression of a concept without the benefit of empirical, complementary associations soon becomes a static condition.

**Multiplicities of References and the Creative Dialogue:**

It is necessary for two processes to occur in the transferal of information. The duality of communication requires that information be made available and that that information be processed.

It has too long been taken for granted that any breakdown in the creative dialogue has occurred in the second phase of the duality - the audiences' failure to process -17-
that information which has been made available by the artist. The standard response to a viewer's plaint that "he sees nothing there" is to advise him to acquaint himself with the artist's premise(s) and try again. It is a basic assumption that the problem lies in the viewer's naiveté. If he doesn't understand what the New-York-Art-Scene is about, he dismisses it as meaningless.

The statements "he doesn't understand the New-York-Art-Scene" and "it is meaningless" imply two possible positions. Either: (1) he is failing to process the information available, or (2) he is continuing to be told that information is available where so little is actually present as to be insignificant in its perception. It is highly possible that in many instances the cause is the latter case - that the artist is failing to supply significant information in the duality of the creative dialogue. If there is only one point presented, and that point is not processed as significant, then the presentation is meaningless to the viewer. If the point exists as a set, as shock-value, ambiguity, or any single reference tends to do the second time it is viewed, then once that set is perceived and understood, it is no longer valid as a curiosity or as created information. Metaphors are only valid as long as they represent a duality of information - a comparison between two contrasting factors that results in an understanding of a third factor. As soon as a metaphor becomes so familiar as to acquire its own, singular meaning it becomes a cliché and elicits a set of
responses corresponding to the information-set it has become; it is no longer valid as a comparison. It implies a meaning that is associated with its cliche-ness rather than its original comparitiveness. The result is boredom, as has occurred already with the Pop movement. Once the audience became aware of the greatly limited degrees of references, ambiguity and context/function-non-function, the idea no longer served as a stimulus. Not as ambiguity because the context of the objects became a predictable set, and not as avant-garde because everybody was doing it. The basic creative premises were so shallow as to be available for everyone's equal understanding, allowing for no wonder or mystery or multiplicities of interpretation that gives art its vitality. Rather than the assumption that the audience was naive and therefore missing the point, quite the opposite was true. The premise was so limited that in no time at all the audience was as sophisticated and literate in the understanding of the references as the artists, and there really was "nothing there".

**Answer: A Multiplicity of References:**

Any work of art, whether literary, visual, or musical, exists as the expression of a concept. We perceive this concept in terms of references, or themes, which may exist in either the major capacity (as the embodiment of the concept) or the minor capacity (complementary to the expression of the concept) within the totality of the work. These themes, in their expressive functions, are the "narrative" as well
as the "grammatic" structure of the work. The subject matter, or image reference of the piece, is merely the vehicle in which these themes are most clearly expressed. The component themes are then the references by which we become aware of the artist's intent.

Brancusi is reported to have stated that, when looking at an egg, it is the shape that is important, not what is inside the egg. He was referring to the two specific references of the contemporary/traditional conflict - the explicit image and the implicit formal references - and was making a proscriptional distinction in favor of the sculptural rather than the functional existence of the egg. In doing so he was not eliminating the image reference as a fundamental part of the object. His work indicates a similar preoccupation with form, within a determined image.

To be involved with sculpture, especially in terms of a limitation, as the figure-image reference imposes, is to automatically be involved in multiplicities of references - in form and, by association, in formal references. One automatically perceives sculpture in terms of masses and voids because of its imposition on and within its environment, much greater than a painting that hangs unpresumptuously against a wall or a book which is meaningless unless opened. The formal recognition of the sculptural object is primary - the image recognition, to varying degrees, is secondary. The intensity of the secondary recognition depends on the
degree of empirical imagery employed - the more "natural" the imagery the more intense is the image reference. Thus imagery may provide an understandable context within which to perceive formal references, as color in a painting or texture in a sculpture. These formal references have in recent history become the total context of the work, with the corresponding dismissal of imagery as irrelevant. But the formal references are derived from objective situations - from empirical experiences. The same arrangement of objects in a "traditional" still-life now contributes to the "non-objective" abstractions of composition - of the movement and counter-movement of linear axes (see Sleeper, illus. 5, 6), the relationships of volumetric masses, the "hills and hollows" spoken of by Rodin (see illus. 1, Figure, and illus. 10, Agora figure #2), the psychological and empathetic responses to a recognizable but non-specific situation (see illus. 3, 4, Wedding Portrait), or geometric forms and the ambiguity of figure/non-figure of the Maxi-Coat (see illus. 7).

A man cannot respond to something with which he cannot relate. The phrase "I don't understand it" implies that the person has no reference from which to begin to understand it. It has been abstracted right out of his realm of recognition, and specialized to the extent that only those who already understand the precepts understand the art which expresses those precepts without an empirical reference. In architecture, the scale of constants is man, or empirical reality as
it is perceived from man's viewpoint. Windows and doorways are scaled to his proportions, or to the proportions of his ideas. The windows of a residential dwelling have two functions - to admit light and to allow the confined spaces of the inside to relate to the open spaces of the outside. The ceiling of the Gothic church is lofty to reflect the proper attitude for the function of the room - its scale is "divine", in contrast to the earthly scale of the men who will use it. The architect, then, creates environments to which man may relate, and his scale of constancy for either exploitation or deviation is that with which he is most familiar - his own proportions.

Similarly, in my work I have used the image of greatest empirical value - that of the human form as the vehicle for non-empirical abstractions, allowing the viewer to both recognize and to discover - to say "I recognize that; I know what it is and can relate to it directly." It is this empathy inherent in image recognition that can inspire further curiosity and involvement on the part of the viewer, and it is this curiosity which may allow him to discover the reality, in the true sense, of the structured situation. With the re-introduction of imagery as a component of the multiplicity of references, I attempt to give the viewer new impetus to experience a work through the automatic empathetic reaction inherent in a recognition response. This is not to imply the death of abstraction or formalization of concepts, but rather their elevation to a more
complete context based on additive notions rather than on prescribed eliminations, allowing participation on all levels of recognition, emotional as well as intellectual.

Conclusion: A Moral Stance:

The implication of a moral stance is that multiplicities of references are desirable for a maximum relevance, as in the case of "apple/apples" (introduction). Clearly it is a matter of degree. But an artist functioning within his society as a creative man does have the obligation to present alternatives, and as a creative person has an obligation not to establish sets and/or value systems based exclusively on sets. If the alternatives are so limited as to become sets they are no longer alternatives. i.e., no longer expressions of creative vision. In short, (my prescription), there should be two major references (at least) which serve complementary functions - the reference of the image recognition and the formal reference. To eliminate the image reference as irrelevant is to eliminate the link by which the artist might communicate a concept. To eliminate the formal reference as "too intellectual", "too unreal" (or any of dozens of reasons) is to eliminate the factor which can transcend imagery from reproduction to creative insight. The image reference may contribute to the work as a vehicle for the formal references, or the formal reference may exist in order to extend the meaning of the image reference beyond mere recognition, to the realm of a creative, stimulating experience.