THE (RE)PRESENT SEQUENCE

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Master of Fine Arts in the

Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Riad Miah, B.F.A.

*****

The Ohio State University

2000

Alan Crockett, Adviser

Stephen Pentak

Rebekah Modrak

Terry Barrett

Approved by

[Signature]

Adviser

Department of Art
ABSTRACT

During the past year I’ve made a body of work titled The (Re) present Sequence. The work focuses on a long distance relationship with my significant other, Carrie. In making the work I used photographic images as documentation of my immediate surroundings with Carrie and other individuals. In an attempt to convey a psychological state, I painted over several of the images to convey a sense of loss, distance and substitution.

As away of describing this particular psychological state I use a series of formal cues. The painted passages are in relationship to how photographic space is read e.g. light coming through a window is often read as the color white. At the same time white paint I use obscures the photograph and resembles the photographic passage to say white paint is light and vise versa.

This paper examines three topics in the making of a body of work titled The (Re) present Sequence, they are: myself an observer, my painted photographs, and how I made the final product. These three topics allow me to explain the materialization of this body of work. Starting with simple observation and documenting discoveries, the photographs reflect my psychological state. By obscuring the image, I reveal a language to describe specific moments: a personal story of a man and a woman. Using the photographic image allowed me to communicate my world through visual means and suggest narrative.
Dedicated to Carrie Hornbeck
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Allan Crockett for his support, encouragement, humor, and faith in me as an artist, without which this thesis would not be possible.

I would like to express special thanks to Stephen Pentak for his insight in recognizing the full potential of this body of work.

I thank Rebekah Modrak for her technical and moral support in photography, without which this work would not have been possible.

I would like to extend special thanks to Terry Barrett, who, arriving on my committee during my 5th quarter review, has helped in the written portion of this thesis.

I would like to express gratitude to those who has offered guidance and support: Laura Lisbon, Michael Mercil, Todd DeVriese, Brian Phillips, Ben Hartley, Paul Ershen, Erica Manville, Shawn Daniels, Dee Anne Bullard, Dario Solman, Philip Hanson, Gina Reynoso, Amy Halko, Heidi Hesse, Christa Santa Maria, Christof Sayer, Tim Graves, Allison Hakala, Wen-Hang Lin, Marc Tasman, Shawn Scully, Deirdre Scaggs, Joanna Spitzner, Tai Tsang, Randall Szott, Simon Maberly, Eileen Woods, Steve Stelling, Ron Favor, Patrick Webber, Marc Dombrosky and Darren Grundy.

Also I would like to offer a special thanks to Georg Heimdal, Marthe Berlepsch, Donna Boggs, and Cathy Ellis for making my time at Ohio State a lot easier.

I also thank the Edith Fergus-Gilmore Foundation for their financial assistance.
VITA

April 21, 1971............................................. Born - San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago

                                      New York, New York

1998 - present................................. Graduate Teaching and Research
                                      Associate, The Ohio State University

FIELD OF STUDY

Major Field: Art
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 1: Myself, An Observer</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 2: The Objects I Make: Painted Photographs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 3: Making a Piece: The (Re)present Sequence</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works Cited</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Bibliography</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <em>The (Re)present Sequence No. III</em></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Snap Shot</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Detail of <em>The (Re)present Sequence No. IV</em></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Detail of <em>The (Re)present Sequence No. II</em></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>The (Re)present Sequence No. VI</em></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>The (Re)present Sequence No. IX</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Detail of <em>The (Re)present Sequence No. III</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Three years ago, I began to inquire: What is art? How do I represent myself in a work of art? How do I make work that relates to a contemporary time? Unknown to me, I had already started a body of work that paralleled and answered some of these questions: a collection of photos. I began photographing things around me that I appreciated, to remind me of where I’ve been. I began photographing curtains, windows, blinds, interior spaces and people. By recording my own world and finding something meaningful within my present condition, I began to answer for myself the two latter questions. Through documenting private space and environments in my daily life, through photographs, I attempted to present myself and a moment in my own time. This was important to me, because for me, a work of art has to stem from personal experience. Autobiography is all I have; it’s the only content I know, that is worth addressing.

In response to my need for a means to help me communicate my observation of my private space, I began to paint over the photographs. This medium allowed me to use paint as vocabulary that expresses the inner structure of what I wanted to communicate.

In taking a photograph, I make decisions according to my taste, e.g., patterns, color, the kind of light I choose to photograph under, etc. I respond to the subject matter
according to what I would like to describe. The next step of covering an image with paint obscures the photograph, arriving at a point where my subject becomes as an abstraction.¹

The artwork that resulted from this combination of photographs and paint reflects the narrative evolution of a year and a half of my life. The finished product consists of three important elements: myself as an observer, the painted photographs, and my recollections of my long distance relationship with my girlfriend, Carrie. I see myself as an observer rather than a participant in the world. For this reason, I choose to create art that is self-conscious of the personal space around me. Rather than being a participant, my role as artist is not to try and solve a problem or give answers to issues, but to acknowledge that I live in an imperfect world. This is how I find solutions to personal crisis.

As I have sought to keep my personal life with my significant other, Carrie, and my professional life somewhat together, I have lived in different places for short periods of time. Over the past few years, I’ve lived in Columbus, Bloomington, New York, and spent summers in New Hampshire and Maine. During this transient time, I’ve often felt displaced. My relationship with Carrie is one that is often inconsistent because of the fact that we live apart. The place I call “home” is also uncertain. I have tried to resolve the instability of trying to maintain the dynamic of my relationship with Carrie and contact with my other friends through remembrance of the times past.

The making of a work of sequence begins with a private space and facilitates the world around it in the making. The language of painting and photography is neither a

question nor an issue. My skills as a photographer, painter, and craftsman are combined and reassessed to present my viewer a space of my mind. A space that is in the making very private, but upon revealing, an event that is universal: the story of a man and a woman.

Thus, the entire body of work is a fraction of place, time, and space to reveal an individual's life in a particular moment. By looking, I have found poetic meaning in the most everyday subjects. My investigation as an artist has led me to press the boundaries of how I can present my world through the practice of picture and object making. I embrace the vocabulary of painting and photography in an unpretentious manner to reveal a human experience.
Part 1: Myself, an Observer

Recently I had the rare opportunity to have a lavish dinner with friends at a posh French restaurant. It was a superb experience, wait service attentive to every detail and a menu comprised of dishes ranging from duck confit, foie gras, venison and salmon. Courses were served in traditional French bistro fashion, transporting the typical mundane experience of dining into a crescendo of culinary bliss. The very next day I got together for breakfast with a colleague at a greasy spoon diner. A place of familiarity and charm, it was a spot I had not paid much attention to since beginning my investigation into fine dining. Much to my surprise the sensations of taste and overall experience were balanced on the same level as the night before. How was this possible? How could an experience of such stature be commensurate with one so trivial and common place? Excerpt from my diary, 11/99

When I wrote the above journal entry, I began to understand the relationship between high and low culture and art. With the French bistro as a representation of high culture and the greasy spoon diner as a representation of low culture, I began to understand that like my dining experience, works of art could also be experienced within the context and sensitivity of the participant.

For example, a passive viewer and a refined viewer may look at the Grove Group painting by Brice Marden in two separate ways. A passive viewer may experience the color field painting as a single color on canvas, and still have an appreciation for the color. A more informed viewer may look at the same painting and understand that the color has a particular context and is derived from a particular place, thus capturing the
essence of the place and light through a refined vocabulary of materiality. An informed viewer may also understand the importance of that color field painting within the context of painting. Either of the mentioned experiences are valid in terms of experiencing art. What you gain from a work of art depends, in part, on what you bring to it as a viewer. That is, art experiencers are in the eyes of the beholder / perceiver. An ordinary experience can be an artistic experience, depending on how acute you are as an observer.

At the point of defining what art can be, I began to ask another question: from where should my work be derived? Upon realizing that experiencing art is based on the subjectiveness of the viewer, I began paying closer attention to perceived information and to my own everyday world. My sensitivity is sharpened in terms of how art and life are related. I understood that I can experience my life as art, depending on how I choose to perceive it. Upon realizing this simple but complex idea, I still felt the necessity as an artist to make objects.

I realize that my need to make objects comes out of my fear of mortality. Upon reaching the age of 29, I am less reckless than I was ten years ago. I embrace my mortality and am terrified that I have not accomplished some of my goals in life. I want to make objects that may have the capability to sustain my time, so I can continue to keep on living through a representation of the object. The process of doing, I have found, always results in a manifestation of the self. So, however I choose to make an object, I know that in some ways I am able to represent a sense of self from the doing. Although my world is important to me and easy to present as part of my work, I don’t know how important it is to exploit personal information in detail or personal worldviews.
In choosing to make objects that relate to my private life, I choose to begin at the point at which sensitivity is induced. For me, that begins with sight. I began to find an appreciation for the visual world around me. At that point, I began feeling like "a kid in a candy store." I began looking at the simplest objects and began observing how my eyes were experiencing certain complex visual impressions. For example, I was fascinated by the eye's inability to focus both upon a mirror and a reflection in the mirror at the same time. It is an impossible task to achieve. I will explain my interest in retinal sensitivity and how it relates to my work in further detail in Part II.

Upon paying closer attention to visual information, I began looking at all sorts of objects around me. I found no inherent difference between the aesthetics of a well-crafted object, such as an All Clad cooking pot and a so-called work of art. The major difference is the so-called work of art, such as a painting, was conceived by human hands which are supposed to consequently reveal a quality of human presence. I wanted my object in its materiality to look like a well-crafted object, which at the same time is able to reveal qualities of a human condition.

At the point at which I decided to describe my personal self through this newfound appreciation in observation, I began to selectively photograph my personal space. I will describe how I arrived at using the camera in further detail in Part II. I found an appreciation for the simple moments that constituted my day-to-day life and my visual horizons.

In choosing to have my personal world be a part of my work, I began paying attention to the space of my home. For me, the home is a sacred space, a place where
reflection of the world takes place. By using the home as part of the content of my art, the work becomes an invitation to pause and partake in the intimacy and quietude of the scene. At the same time, the work does not entirely allow "you" the viewer, to enter the scenes that are recognizable and yet not precisely defined.

Specifically, my work has revolved around my long-distance relationship with my lover, Carrie. During the past two years I have committed myself to a graduate program, separating myself from my love. This work is born out of a need to express this distance and dependency that I have for this "other." While I attempt to focus on my work, I also try and conceal the longing I’ve had for her. I try desperately to work around this desire to be with another. Finally, the longing and desire became the subject of my work.

In presenting my subject matter in an inconspicuous manner, the work addresses moments that are universal. My viewer can possibly relate to the subject matter, as in the case of a woman with her back to a window. It is not necessarily important for the viewer to know who the person is or to understand why she is in the picture. But the presence of the figure is important as a pointer in a situation of banality, a human encounter that is casually overlooked. There is personal relevance of the person in the image.

My contribution as an artist has more to do with drawing attention to commonplace experiences, rather than participating in banal experiences. In looking at the world as an observer, I find pleasure in intimate settings to be more rewarding than being a participant in a group structure. My work does not try and answer questions in art that are related to the social world, but inconspicuously participates with the problems of a contemporary society and finds private answers to personal crisis.
Part 2: The Objects I Make: Painted Photographs

Rewind to a few years back. Before coming to graduate school at Ohio State I was living with a significant other, Carrie. After my workday was over, I would come home and participate in moments of intimacy with a loved one. All the responsibilities in the world did not matter; the times with Carrie could not replace any kind of success.

Fast forward to recent years. Upon motivation for success as an artist, I came to graduate school, which marked a separation from Carrie. Through my time at graduate school, I attempted to continue my life as I did before, work hard during the day and then come home, except one single ingredient was missing, Carrie was not there. There was a void in my life, a space that needed to be filled.

Without Carrie around, I needed to release some angst. Meditation by staring out my window during the morning hours amended my personal situation a bit. As mentioned previously in Part I, my jubilation of a heightened visual perception was occurring during this time. As a way of recording my discoveries of the visual encounters for which I found fascination, I began photographing my immediate surroundings. During the summer months spent with Carrie, I photographed her, as a way of keeping a record of our time together. What I chose and how I photographed her was affected by my psychological state.
I have a mix of influences. My selected experience of viewing the world is influenced by one way by, painting. I began paying attention to my world in the context of works of art I found a deep appreciation for, specifically the work of Vermeer. My experience of how I view the world might be quite different from Vermeer’s view. My affinity for Vermeer is that I take appreciation in the similar moments of quietude and intimate settings that are affected by light in the settings that he has portrayed. The kind of situation Vermeer painted related to how I currently felt about my loss and emptiness without Carrie.

Moments of intimacy are a human encounter. Looking out a window immersed in one’s thoughts is an experience I often wish could last forever. Upon reflecting on a moment, I appreciate my field of vision; a window with light passing through sheer curtains obscures my view of the world and a new scene enters. The sheer curtain diffuses the outside world. The curtain conceals the abrasiveness of what I see. I see poetic meaning in this kind of image. Light subtlety awakens me in the morning with the gracefulness of light and dark shadows that do not call attention to themselves, but just are; I get out of bed and go about my daily routine inconspicuously.

My challenge is to create work that refers to an aesthetic I appreciated, but also suggest and narrate a personal and private situation. The most appropriate means by which I could express what I saw and document my world was by using a camera. The photographed image serves as a surrogate for my eyes looking at the world.

In taking a photograph, I attempt to capture the longevity of a moment through a fraction of a second. The ephemeralness of the photographic image was a problem. I did
not want the image to seem as though it had existed in a split second, but to also seem as though it would last for an eternity. Likewise, Vermeer’s subjects in his paintings seem as though they were caught in a moment. The longer one looks at a painting by Vermeer, the more one begins to pay attention to the time it took him to conceive the picture: the careful application of paint, the building of the surface layer by layer, contrasted with its subject matter. I want my work to be able to sustain the viewer’s time in looking at my images. By juxtaposing images and painting over an image, I invite the viewer to contemplate the art object.

Influenced by compositions and a process of painting, the approach I have to taking a photograph is calculated. The choices I make in taking a photo are in a way similar to several composed activities related to painting, but they are made by the eye rather than the eye and hand. The cropping of a field of vision through the view finder, the subject matter, the kind of light and the type of perspective space are in a way related to the decisions made, influenced by representational painting. The eye makes all the formal considerations of composition, color, and spatial relationship through the viewfinder. The difference between painting and the camera for me is that I am able to make a closer visual record of my world, with a medium that comes closer to accurately representing my environment.

As an attempt to say that the photographic image is a surrogate for my eye, I choose to photograph my subject matter according to retinal sensitivity. In my photos, I try to achieve a similarity to the way the human eye functions in its ability to only focus on one thing at a time; retinal sensitivity. For example, we cannot focus on a pane of
glass and the space beyond it, at the same time, but we look through the pane of glass to focus upon a view. Upon doing this exercise, the pane of glass becomes “out of focus.”

To explain the nature of how the eye focuses, I would like to refer to Rudolf Arnheim in his explanation of retinal sensitivity:

The eye movements that help select the targets of vision are somewhere between automatism and willful response. They must direct the eyes in such a way that the area of the visual field to be scrutinized comes within the narrow range of sharpest vision. Sharpness falls off so rapidly that at a deviation of ten degrees from the axis of fixation, where it is at a maximum, it is already reduced to one fifth. Because retinal sensitivity is so restricted, the eye can and must single out some particular spot, which becomes isolated, dominant, central.  

The artist that shoots images at a 22 F-stop defines his/her image in high focus.

This technique invites the viewer to question the objective nature of the image, allowing a subjective reading to take place in relationship to its subject matter. Inevitably, this photographic process only seems to have led to problems in my desire to address the work as and from a human experience, rather than a mechanical experience. The technical device of shooting my images at a 5.6 F-stop (shallow depth of field) is a way of relating the camera as a surrogate eye.

The photographed image is based on my attempt to represent my world according to the way my eyes experience it, while I paint over photographs and juxtapose images to convey an elusive narrative. It is at the moment responding to the image with paint, visual thought, that narration is accounted for. I thought if the photographed image is the surrogate eye, painting would function as thought that is related to a human experience.

\footnote{Ibid., pp., 23-24}
The work presents the potential viewer with a course of suggestions that stand in reciprocal opposition to one another: the assertion of space and the denial of space, a clue of an image, and the dissolving of that image, the presentation of a logical scene, the complication of the scene, and so on. In untangling this puzzle of contradictions, one must reflect on the nature of the images presented.

How I interpret a photograph is based on my experience as a painter. I see the photograph as an objective surface, which subsequently suggests my content. For example, The (Re)present Sequence No. III is based on my experience of places where I’ve lived, New York and Indiana (figure 1).

This image is made up of three panels. The painted passages that cover the area of Indiana and New York are similar. I made the decision as a way to describe my relationship to Bloomington, Indiana and New York. New York. I’ve once lived in both places but currently they exist only as a memory. The painted passage to the left of the piece, that covers an image of New York, also links up to the central portion of the work, which reveals an interior view of a window with a curtain. The curtain, in terms of hue, is similar to that of the painted passages, as curtains are similar to paint: curtains conceal an outside view, while paint conceals an image of outside views. The central panel, an interior view of a window with a tied curtain, is significant in terms of reading the work as it relates to a human moment of a memory. The image of an interior space is used as a metaphor, the space of the mind where a memory exists. The color of paint I used, a

---

3 *Ibid.*, pg., 154. On the chapter entitled “What Abstraction Is Not” Arnheim says: “Abstraction ... is an organization of the mind that passes beyond the concrete and has freed itself from it.”
tinted white, relates to the central panel in terms of value and hue. This seemed to be an effective use of color to address interior space as a representation of the mind. For me, a visual memory is often pictured with a majority of color missing with bits of intense color present.

The curtain is pulled aside to reveal another significant form - an image of blinds, a pattern. Patterning is a device rampant with several implications in this work. A pattern is used as a visual cue that describes my habit and repetition of going back and forth between two places. As well, the long and horizontal format is used to suggest time.

On another conceptual level, to heighten the issue of the interior space being representation for a space of the mind, the central image reveals an outside view through parted blinds. The spaces of the outside view are revealed through horizontal slats, which in effect echo the format of the artwork, a long horizontal object. If the spaces revealed through the blinds are not clearly visible, similar to the way the images under the paint are not clear either, the work becomes a question: what kind of overall space is being revealed with the inclusion of three images and paint? The view is of an interior space looking out, an opposition to the presentation of the artwork. Hence, the mounting of the images onto wood presents them as objects to be looked at, with an image of a view taken from inside which inverts the object as a space within the mind.

The overall artwork has a glossy surface. At times, when standing in front of the work of art, my own physical reflection is revealed and often contorted. For me, this effect reinforces the work as a reflection of the self, a mirroring, with a literal reference to
describe my relationship to the object, and the different forms an individual can take in
the process of making art.

The juxtaposition of one or more images is a natural way of setting up a dialog for
comparison. The work is built upon a series of pictorial and formal relationships to be
compared and read. The cognitive operation called thinking, which aims at and in turn
helps induce the senses, is presented through materiality and an abstraction is reached.
Hence, the artwork is not specific to pragmatic interpretation and form alone, but is that
of a felt experience. The context in which the work should be seen is the spaces between
the image, objective reality, and the space of the mind. It is not so important that the
potential viewer “gets” the exact personal narration. Upon comparison of visual cues,
viewers are free to form their own narration of the pictorial space.

On the nature of how the work functions as an imitation for an idea of memory, I
would like to turn to Jacques Lacan’s definition of imitation:

Does art imitate what it represents? In reality, posing the question in this way
means setting out toward a dead-end - the dead-end of the choice between
figuration and abstract art. One shouldn’t even enter the net. Of course artworks
imitate the objects they represent, but their finality is precisely not to represent
them. By giving the imitation of the object, they make the object into something
else. Thus they only feign to imitate. The object is brought into a certain relation
with the Thing, in order to encircle it, to present it, and to absent it. But the more
the object is made present as an imitation, the more it opens the dimension where
the illusion shatters and aims at something else.4

---

4 Pelzer, Birgit and Tosatto, Guy, Gerhard Richter, 100 Pictures. (Ostfildern-Ruit: Cantz. 1996), pp., 138
Similar to Gerhard Richter's desire to "blur an image so it does not look artistic or crafts manlike but technological, smooth and perfect," I see my application as images rather than gestures. The marks have similar properties to that of the photograph. The image of the mark should be scrutinized and read within the context of other images.

Within a sequence of images, I may include a photograph of curtains; in another image similar properties of the predecessor image are then simulated by paint over an image. It is within the context of a sequence that personal narration occurs; e.g., painting is a curtain and an image of a curtain is painting. The paint that looks like a curtain over an image is suggestive of a metaphor for a space in the mind.

---

"Ludeking, Karlheinz, Pictures and Gestures, British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol. 30, No. 3, July 1990, pp., 219. "Gestures do indeed belong to the 'purposive movements' of the body, but they are distinguished from other such movements by the fact that they have to communicate something. A gesture would not be a gesture if it had no meaning."
Figure 1. *The (Re) present Sequence No. III. 2000, oil on C-print, 15" x 66"*
PART 3: Making a Piece: The (Re)present Sequence

The Photograph. My photographs function in two separate ways. They act as documentation of an actual place, thing, and person; they also act as a means of narration of a personal and private event. The major difference for me between a painting and a photo is that the photographed image is more representational of something actual. For example, when looking at an image of Carrie tying her sneaker on a striped carpet, people always seem to ask me the same question: “Where did you find such a carpet?” and “I can’t believe someone would actually put that in their home.” (Figure 2.) The response of the viewer is always the same. They know they are looking at a representation of something that actually exists, even if the image is photographed with a subjective eye. If I had painted the image, I think people would be more prone to think the stripes are made up or the color is heightened by artistic virtuosity, which I did not want. I wanted the image to present itself as a certain situation from the three-dimensional world as best as possible.

The people, places, and things represented are used to form a potential narration. By using the photograph, I could present my world as inspiration for my art. Narration of my personal life is the only story I know of that is worth telling. Thus, my story is not
easily accessible but is suggested. I only reveal bits and part of the story. In the event of examination of the information presented, other scenarios can take place; but ultimately, the work stays pretty focused on the story of a man and a woman.

*The Subject Matter.* My choice of subject matter is related; a person at a window, a window, patterns, blinds, curtain, an interior view, a gesture. A window is an image used to describe the photograph; a photograph is a window, and vise versa. The photographs reveal windows from an interior space as to say the state and space of the artwork represented come from the psychology of the spaces within the mind. There is constant inverted play between the subject matter and the painted activity. At times, the painted passage resembles the curtain in an image (figure 3). The constant reversals of images are also repeated with the individuals used as subject matter. In *The (Re)present Sequence No. II* there is a blond woman wearing a red T-shirt, while in *The (Re)present Sequence No. VI*, there is another image of a woman with blond hair wearing a red shirt (figures 4 and 5). These people are not the same. In the same way paint is used as a substitute for a curtain a person is used as a substitute for someone else. There is a constant interplay between the substitution of one thing for another. The light that is often depicted in the images through a window is often obscuring the detail from the window. The tinted white paint gesture that is used also has a similar quality of the light depicted in the images, as to say that white paint is a replacement for light (figure 6). At the same time, the paint also serves as a device in an attempt to communicate. Covering an image is to hide; in concealing an image, a new kind of image is revealed. All subject matter and types of processes used serves as metaphors to describe a personal relationship.
Tinted White Paint. I started using white paint as an effective means to describe an idea very literally. I first began with just wanting to cover an image to conceal the subject matter in the image. I did not want to use a color such as red, yellow, blue, etc., because I felt color would have too many implications. A particular color, say for example, red, has too many implications, it can be suggestive of passion, blood, the representation of speed, etc. I am more interested in the medium as a physical thing to describe a psychological state.

The tinted color is in relationship to the particular image I'm painting over. I mix a hue according to the overall temperature of the image and to the over all hue of the photograph (figure 7). The tinted color is used as a formal relationship in combining the photograph with paint.

The Application of Paint. I wanted a smooth, removed, inconspicuous, unexpressionistic quality of a mark. I can't bear looking at another painting with "brushy" marks. Gestural painting marks look like they are searching for something while ultimately searching for nothing. The person making a work of art is doing the mental search, but the end result always seems less interesting than the motivation. I want my marks to be removed and cold like the photographic print, plastic. Also, the marks should only be one gesture, as to say the photographic image is a kind of gesture.

The Photographic Print and the Gesture. I used to think the gesture made by the hand could be a one of a kind type of mark. Upon making editions of photographic prints, I realized the mark made by the hand could also be reproduced. Upon making The (Re)present Sequence from a moocket of color Xeroxes and then remaking the same
images on a printed photographs, I realized the unique gesture was not so important. Instead, the mark in its dialogue with the image seems like the more relevant issue. The edges of the mark in relationship to the images are more important than having the mark seem like it was made by a tool. Marks made by a tool are a given. The relevant issue is where the mark is placed in order to draw a relationship to other properties of the photograph.

In an attempt to find the appropriate mark in relationship to an image, I would make several studies, painting over the same image several times. Similar to the photographic process of editing, I too edit my images from a group of related painted photographic images, finding the appropriate image/mark to describe my narration.

*The Tools Used.* The tools I use to paint with are trowels of various sizes ranging from six inches to three feet. I worked in construction before coming to graduate school and used to skim coat drywall using these tools. It is quite easy to paint with these tools on a sheet of paper when, originally, I was working on walls of enormous scale, using similar dexterity. My techniques are refined as a craftsman. I used to do a lot of wallpapering as well, a craft based in accuracy. My ability to mount a photograph onto a piece of wood so the edge of the image and piece of wood exactly matches is based on an expertise of working with the most difficult kinds of wallpaper, such as silk, hand-painted silk murals, etc.

Veneer added to the side of the plywood support comes from my experience of building cabinets. The cabinets might have been considered "stand in" since they were made to look like solid pieces of wood. These skills came to me first from being a manual
laborer rather than a trained artist. Similar to William de Kooning’s experience of painting murals and then making large scale works of art as an effect, my sensitivity for well-crafted object making comes from a similar source.

Similar to the way I want my painted passages to resemble photographic passages in an inconspicuous manner; I would work on construction sites with a similar state of mind. I could go into a home at 9:00 a.m. to work, while the resident was away doing business. I would work making a mess and would have to clean up at the end of the day to make it seem as though no one had been there. I liked this; I want my artwork to be presented in a similar manner to that of removing the self in the creation. Of course, human hands make the work; but the presence of the human hand (or ego) is suppressed. I want the work to seem as though it came into being with as little effort as possible.
Figure 2. Snap shot. 1999, c-print, 3” x 5”

Figure 3. Detail of *The (Re)present Sequence No. IV*. 2000, oil on C-print, 15” x 22”
Figure 4. Detail of *The (Re)*present Sequence No. II. 2000 oil on C-print, 15” x 22”

Figure 5. *The (Re)*present Sequence No. VI. 2000, oil on C-print, 15” x 22”
Figure 6. The (Re)present Sequence No. IX. 2000, oil on C-print, 15” x 22”

Figure 7. Detail of The (Re)present Sequence No. III. 2000, oil on C-print, 15” x 66”
WORKS CITED


SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


