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LIGHT AND SHADOWS

An Exhibit of Twenty Experimental Paintings

by

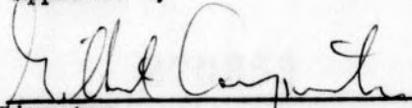
Ann Weeks Bonitz

6860

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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Approved by


Director

c

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis (dissertation) has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, North Carolina.

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BONITZ, ANN WEEKS, Light and Shadows: An Exhibit of
Twenty Experimental Paintings. (1964) Directed by:
Mr. Gilbert Carpenter.

This thesis about my thesis, which was the
twenty paintings exhibited in Weatherspoon Gallery
from May 17 through May 31, 1964, explains the process
involved in making the paintings.

The desire to express a visual experience I
call "bubbles of light around the shadows" was the
beginning. The steps involved in the development of
methods, techniques and approach to this subject are
included.

DEDICATION

To the members of the art department both past and present,
I extend thanks for their professional assistance and fellowship.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
Preface	ix
I. Text	1
II. Catalogue	9

FIGURES

SECTION	PAGE
I. Printed Catalogue of Exhibit	10

PREFACE

This document is a report and record of the thesis which was an exhibit of twenty experimental paintings held in Weatherspoon Gallery, University of North Carolina at Greensboro from May 17th through May 31st, 1964.

The subject matter for the paintings evolved in the spring of 1963. The general effect of the light in the small gymnasium in Rosenthal and the specific shadows of the shrubbery outside the building excited me. I made several painstakingly detailed drawings mostly of the shadows but also of a phenomena of light that apparently no one else saw--the globes of light around the shadows.

The tempera painting in this exhibition, "Golden Globes of Light," was the first complete expression of this theme. It was first drawn with a soft lead pencil and then tinted with the polymer tempera colors used sparingly with much polymer medium and water.

My oil painting was going badly. Everything seemed to turn to unhandsome mud. Boris Margo suggested that I try a series of monoprints aiming towards clarity in color and simplicity of composition. We found a piece of glass in the basement and cut off the irregular edges which left us a square piece of glass 12-1/2" x 12-1/2". With this piece of glass and a demonstration by Mr. Margo I began the series. I set a daily goal of fifteen prints and worked for two weeks from Monday through Friday.

Each day I mixed only enough raw linseed oil and turpentine for one day's work so that I might try a variety of proportions from day to day. Once I added some damar varnish but had to throw the batch away as the results were unsatisfactory. Finally

I decided that the best mix for my purposes was one part of turpentine to ten parts of oil. This would change as the day went along because freshly cleaned brushes (washed in turpentine) gradually added more turpentine to the mix.

My palette of colors I decided to limit to ultramarine blue, Mars violet, Viridian green, Payne's gray, ivory black, titanium white, cadmium yellow light and cadmium red light. I used newsprint to pick up the prints because it was absorbent and cheap. During the second week I began to use some rice paper.

On a typical day (after preparing the medium and palette) I began by applying a coat of medium to the glass. I would apply a single color chosen at random from my palette. Then by scraping with a spatula or stick, adding other colors over the base color with smaller brushes or by adding sand, cigarette ashes or thread, I would form the print. I had to remember that the printing would not only reverse the picture but would also reproduce the foreign objects on top of the paint as white shapes. When I was satisfied with the painting on the glass I would pick up the print by pressing the newspaper on the glass with the palms of my hands. The process had taken about fifteen minutes or more depending on the problems of composition involved.

During the second week of work I settled with a motif and an approach to the composition within the square which seemed to

satisfy both the demands of the subject and the limitations of size, shape, colors and technique which existed. The square was a challenge. It is a demanding, exacting shape which gives one less freedom of composition than does the rectangle, but these very qualities by contrast compliment the curved lines and ungirdled shapes of my painting. Unfortunately the glass was broken accidentally and my printing was suspended for a while.

"Shadow Shapes" and "Gray Light" in this exhibition were completed during this two week period. They are good examples of the two separate and divergent themes. "Gray Light" represents the phenomena of light through a dirty window which I called "globes or bubbles of light that appear and disappear" in my diary on February 27, 1963. "Shadow Shapes" represents the phenomena that any strong, direct light on an object creates on a surface--shadow. I was not interested in the shape of the shadows alone but also the things that shadows do. They move back and forth and grow larger and smaller and become things quite apart from the object being projected. This particular print resulted from watching the shadow in profile of a fellow student. "Shadow Shapes," the oil collage in the exhibit was done just after the series of monoprints and was the first painting in which I used metallic paints. The "shape" in this case is my own shadow.

I wanted to find a way to combine these two themes--the bubbles and the movement of shadow, however, they seemed to be incompatible. The bubbles were not mobile. They were solid things which could appear and disappear. The shadows were flitting things that were never still and did not disappear.

In the fall of 1963 I came back to school anxious to try several ideas which had occurred to me during the summer. I began work in a class with Gilbert Carpenter. The small 6-5/8" x 6-5/8" panels of masonite for several paintings in the exhibit were cut from a long strip left over from some larger paintings. I began by putting five layers of gesso on a few of these panels. I found that ground to be too smooth and susceptible to chipping on the edges. I decided to use a flat undercoat commonly used for woodwork and walls to be finished with enamel. It did not chip from the edges and did not sand off too smooth. Five coats on sanded masonite, sanding lightly between each coat gave me the ground. I found another long strip of masonite at this time and cut it into squares 8-7/8" x 8-7/8" and put a ground on them as I began painting on the smaller panels.

I kept the same palette but added metallic gold and silver. The compositions were similar to the monoprints and I chose the square because it had worked well with the monoprints. The texture of the oil paint and the illusive quality of the metallic gold and silver began to bring about subtle changes.

I moved a room divider-display board to my corner of the

basement of Rosenthal Gymnasium and placed it at right angles to the direction of the sunlight which angled down through the high, small windows. Anything pinned on the display board cast exaggerated shadows and the light did not glare from the metallic paint. This board provided me with a place to pin the small panels which were too small for the easel and too hard to see lying flat on a table.

During the time that I was working on the small panels I expected to go on to larger canvases. I prepared two. However, the delicate effects of the small circles, dots and splashes of metallic paint when enlarged looked gaudy. So I left these two canvases unfinished until I could find a solution to this problem.

The four paintings of this period, "Blue Light," "Red Light," "Sunlight" and "Silver Light," I felt were beginning to show promise of combining the two themes of shadows and bubbles, but I still needed more dramatic expression.

Metallic wrapping paper for collages seemed promising. Looking back through my drawings I found one of shrubby shadows whose shapes seemed adaptable to collage. Using a small flat brush I drew directly on one of the masonite panels with a silver ink followed by gold ink in order to have a pattern for cutting the paper. I had thought to work directly on this panel by pasting down the metallic paper on the drawing, but the effect was too good to change. I traced the outlines of the gold areas on

gold paper and silver on silver paper. By cutting on the traced lines, a positive of the drawing and a negative (using the paper removed from the paper "drawing") were made. "Catch a Shadow" in this exhibit is the result of gluing these four cut-outs, one positive, one negative and one combination on three panels and mounting them with the original drawing. "Tree Shadows I," "Tree Shadows II," and "Tree Shadows III" were all taken from areas of this same drawing. In each case two positives and two negatives were made and then I selected the combination which seemed most appropriate.

The display board was almost completely covered with panels in various stages of completion. Mr. Carpenter commented that it seemed to be one big painting composed of a lot of units including a "G O O D" written in red crayon by an enthusiastic and sympathetic friend. I began to study the board. It changed as the light changed. It was this or that depending on the weather or time of day.

Studying the board and working and reworking the arrangement of its parts finally led to the development of the wire collage. I began by trying to treat the wire screen as the gilt and silver paper--in positive and negative cut-outs, but the wire screen was too difficult to cut into the intricate designs of the shrubbery collages, so I used the scraps from this first attempt and pinned them over a white panel. I then drew lightly with metallic

crayon on the panels as a pattern for cutting the wire screen. By using the crayon on the panels as a pattern for cutting the wire screen. Using the crayon on edge I could draw the circles and curved lines and get an incidental texture from the brush marks on the ground. These drawings were almost too subtle. The silver, because it was closer to the white ground in value, was even more illusive than the gold.

To these drawings I began to add pieces of wire screen. The effect was even better than I had hoped. I abandoned the composition imposed by the drawing and placed the wire screen shapes freely and loosely over it, opposing and reinforcing the underlying composition simultaneously.

How to affix these wire screen shapes permanently onto the drawings and masonite panels without flattening them out was a problem. The masonite was too hard for the dressmaker pins; nailing into the masonite spoiled the ground. I finally devised a method of gluing and wiring them satisfactorily. This was accomplished by using an epoxy cement. I put a touch of this glue on any intersection of screen. "Silver Shadows" and "Golden Shadows" are examples of this procedure. "Gold Globe" was painted directly with metallic oils and then the wire screen was added.

"Blue and Black Shadow" is one of a group of monoprints printed on rice paper in the fall of 1963. This particular one

I decided to mat and frame in the traditional manner. This manner of presentation tends to focus the viewer's attention on the print as if it were a stage seen through a proscenium. This purpose is thwarted by the distracting glare of the glass. At best there can be a visual recording made by the viewer of the shapes, colors, and lines of the print but much of the tactile quality of the oil on the rice paper and the stained-glass effect of the color is missed. Therefore, I used a method I had seen used for mounting Noma Hardin's batik scarves in the faculty show in the fall to better display the others in this series, "Yellow Shadow," "Gray Shadow," and "Blue Shadow." They are mounted between two pieces of glass whose edges are bound with Scotch mending tape and then this assembly is placed in a slot in a block of wood.

"Tree Shadow IV" is the most recent of the paintings in this exhibit and combines painting on canvas with wire collage. This is a possible direction for future paintings, however, why I may or may not pursue this direction is another thesis in itself. I end this one by saying that this series is not complete but only a beginning dimly suggestive of a whole.

CATALOGUE

1. Golden Globe of Light	Tempera	10-1/2" x 10-1/2"
2. Gray Light	Monoprint	12-1/2" x 12-1/2"
3. Shadow Shapes	Monoprint	12-1/2" x 12-1/2"
4. Shadow Shapes	Oil-collage	16" x 16"
5. Sunlight	Oil on masonite	6-5/8" x 6-5/8"
6. Silver Light	Oil on masonite	6-5/8" x 6-5/8"
7. Blue Light	Oil on masonite	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
8. Red Light	Oil on masonite	6-5/8" x 6-5/8"
9. Catch a Shadow	Collages	Four 6-5/8" panels
10. Tree Shadows I	Collage	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
11. Tree Shadow II	Collage	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
12. Tree Shadow III	Collage	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
13. Golden Shadows	Wire Collage	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
14. Silver Shadows	Wire Collage	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
15. Gold Globe	Wire Collage	8-7/8" x 8-7/8"
16. Tree Shadows IV	Wire collage with oil	14" x 14"
17. Black and Blue Shadow	Monoprint	10-1/2" x 10-1/2"
18. Yellow Shadow	Monoprint	10-1/2" x 10-1/2"
19. Gray Shadow	Monoprint	10-1/2" x 10-1/2"
20. Blue Shadow	Monoprint	10-1/2" x 10-1/2"



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

thesis for Masters of Fine Arts by

ANN WEEKS BONITZ



1. GOLDEN
2. GRAY LIG
3. SHADOW
4. SHADOW
5. SUNLIGHT
6. SILVER LI
7. BLUE LIG
8. RED LIGH
9. CATCH A
10. TREE SHA
11. TREE SHA
12. TREE SHA
13. GOLDEN S
14. SILVER SH
15. GOLD GLO
16. TREE SHA
17. BLACK AN
18. YELLOW S
19. GRAY SHA
20. BLUE SHA

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CATALOGUE

1. GOLDEN GLOBE OF LIGHT	TEMPERA	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
2. GRAY LIGHT	MONOPRINT	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
3. SHADOW SHAPES	MONOPRINT	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
4. SHADOW SHAPES	OIL-COLLAGES	16" x 16"
5. SUNLIGHT	OIL ON MASONITE	6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
6. SILVER LIGHT	OIL ON MASONITE	6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
7. BLUE LIGHT	OIL ON MASONITE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
8. RED LIGHT	OIL ON MASONITE	6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
9. CATCH A SHADOW	COLLAGES	FOUR 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " PANELS
10. TREE SHADOWS I	COLLAGE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
11. TREE SHADOWS II	COLLAGE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
12. TREE SHADOWS III	COLLAGE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
13. GOLDEN SHADOWS	WIRE COLLAGE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
14. SILVER SHADOWS	WIRE COLLAGE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
15. GOLD GLOBE	WIRE COLLAGE	8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
16. TREE SHADOWS IV	WIRE COLLAGE WITH OIL	14" x 14"
17. BLACK AND BLUE SHADOW	MONOPRINT	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
18. YELLOW SHADOW	MONOPRINT	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
19. GRAY SHADOW	MONOPRINT	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
20. BLUE SHADOW	MONOPRINT	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

THE THREE PHOTOGRAPHS OF "TREE SHADOW IV" ILLUSTRATE THE ILLUSIVE QUALITY OF THE MEDIUM—WIRE COLLAGE WITH OIL. BOTH THE SOURCE AND AMOUNT OF LIGHT AFFECT THE COMPOSITION.