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GROULX, ADELE FREEDMAN. Watercolor Paintings: Trees. (1978)  
Directed by: Mr. Gilbert Carpenter, Pp. 3.

The thesis consisting of watercolors was exhibited in the Weatherspoon Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro beginning April 30 and terminating on May 14, 1978.

One 35 millimeter color slide of each work constituting the thesis is on file at the Walter C. Jackson Library of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

WATERCOLOR PAINTINGS: TREES  
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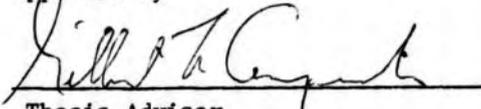
by

Adele Freedman Groulx  
"

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  
M.F.A.

Greensboro  
1978

Approved by



The handwritten signature of the thesis adviser is written in dark ink over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and appears to read "Richard A. Groulx".

Thesis Adviser

This thesis has been approved by the following committee  
of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North  
Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis  
Adviser

Gilbert A. Cooper

Committee Members

James H. Stan  
James H. Stan  
Gilbert A. Cooper

April 19, 1978  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

I want to gratefully acknowledge the support and assistance of my parents, Rose and Arthur Freedman, and also the patience of my son, Jamie. In addition I want to thank my thesis adviser, Mr. Gilbert Carpenter, for his useful criticism.

CATALOGUE

<u>Title</u>	<u>Dimensions</u>	<u>Medium</u>
1. Branches and Sky I (Sky after Constable)	10 1/4 x 7 1/8	watercolor, gouache
2. Branches and Sky II	10 1/4 x 7 1/8	watercolor
3. Branches and Sky III	10 1/4 x 7 1/8	watercolor
4. Branches and Sky IV	10 1/4 x 7 1/8	watercolor
5. Branch and Sky V	10 1/4 x 7 1/8	watercolor
6. Branch and Sky VI	10 1/4 x 7 1/8	watercolor, gouache
7. Oak in Winter	22 5/8 x 29 5/8	watercolor, gouache
8. Oak in Spring	22 5/8 x 29 5/8	watercolor, gouache
9. Dancing Branches	41 1/2 x 11 5/8	watercolor, gouache
10. Branches at Sunset	41 1/2 x 11 5/8	watercolor, gouache
11. Looped Oak Branch	22 5/8 x 29 5/8	watercolor, gouache

I am making drawings and paintings of parts of old oak trees. The subject is personal and autobiographical in some ways, cerebral and abstract in others. The four trees I am painting are close to my house. I have seen and studied their intersections with parts of fields, distant trees, sky, times of day, weather and seasons. I burn parts of them to stay warm. A limb of the oldest tree crashed through the kitchen roof during a recent ice storm. These trees have increasingly seemed to acquire anthropomorphic qualities of human anatomy and gesture which I intend the paintings and drawings to express. I have written a series of descriptive words; presence, power, giant arms - reaching, entreating, protecting, grasping, straining, cracking, penetrating, dancing, budding.

The visual problem is to work toward a clearer presentation of the three-dimensional form of the trunk, branches and limbs and their movement into the space around them. I began with whole trees against whole landscapes - foreground, middleground and a distant line of trees - and have for this exhibit gradually focused in on sections of one tree, on only two branches, and finally to a small area of one branch, all against changing skies. This change in focus has been an attempt to get closer, to isolate certain gestures of the limbs, and to work out continually more disciplined approaches with color, value and brush stroke to create convincing three dimensional forms in space. The construction of the skies has become equally important, and I have made daily studies as well as copies after Constable. The skies are

soft, constantly transformed forms - breaking up, changing color, brightness, shape and position. I want to create a mood by emphasizing the contrast between the soft, subtle changes of cloud and sky and the sharp, dark, defined lines of the limbs which turn and penetrate it. The mood is also shifted by different conditions of light, time of day, weather and season.

There are a variety of sizes and formats. The small ones were initiated as a way of rapidly realizing a number of variations of an idea. While I see them as finished paintings, they are also the transitions which led to changes in focus and in the growing scale of the tree branches to the paper. The long horizontal formats resulted from a combination of factors: some strips of paper I was given, the suitability of the format for isolating the horizontal forms of the limbs and Chinese scrolls in which landscape is used to move the viewer through a passage of space and time.

Process is central in a number of ways. One aspect is my observation of the progress of this series of works and the intensification of concentration as the paintings focus more closely on smaller sections of the tree. Another facet is the process of nature, seen more sharply as the paintings progress, and changing momentarily as I paint it - from ice to swelling buds. Still another is the analysis of techniques of making them. I began by making detailed drawings to learn the forms and their spatial relationships. From some drawings I traced the images and transferred them with conte to other pages in order to work out several versions of one image. In other paintings I am building the forms only in watercolor and gouache.

Watercolor itself is a demanding process, transparent and unalterable. It is a challenge to allow exciting interactions of color, water, paper and the movement of the brush and at the same time to control them to create forms in space. I am working to unify my touch and trying to generate a rhythm of marks and a relationship of color and value which are expressive of my feelings, but I am also seeing how far I can push the paintings beyond single touches of the brush to paper, to build up layers of paint gradually to more completely and definitely present forms and spaces. I am struggling with the decision to push the paintings further without simply filling in, and with the risk of losing the painting entirely. I am working on many of the paintings simultaneously - some over a period of a month or two and aiming toward an accumulation of thinking and painting which will resolve the final works as unified wholes as well as relate them to each other.

