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LANE, BARBARA CHESTNUTT. The Figure in Space. (1977)  
Directed by: Andrew Martin. Pp.2.

This thesis consisted of seven oil paintings, which were exhibited in the Weatherspoon Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro from April 24 through May 14, 1977.

A 35mm color transparency of each work is on file at the Walter C. Jackson Library of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

THE FIGURE IN SPACE

by

Barbara Chestnutt Lane

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  
Master of Fine Arts

Greensboro  
1977

Approved by

Andrew Martin  
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

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

Andrew Martin

Committee Members

Robert C. Gentry

Andrew Martin

Susan Barkdale

Joan Sizemore

April 11, 1977  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

# CATALOGUE

1. Untitled	oil	16x20	(1975)
2. Crouched Figure	oil	16x20	(1976)
3. Untitled	oil	16x12	(1976)
4. Untitled	oil	18x13½	(1976)
5. Reclining Figure	oil	16x13	(1977)
6. Helon	oil	13x17	(1977)
7. Sylvia	oil	15x19	(1977)
8. Helon II	oil	15x20	(1977)

This thesis evolved after two years of studying the figure and color-space relationships on the canvas. It is composed of paintings from the later half of 1976 to April of 1977. All of the paintings were done directly from the model. The amount of time I was able to work from the model in a particular position varied from six to ten hours; therefore, I do not consider these finished paintings. These paintings are studies of color relationships as revealed through the light on the surface of the form, and their respective spacial relationships. Only those colors observed in relationship to the figure were added to the canvas. Representing the true juxtaposition of the colors seen within the figure and the surrounding area is vital in establishing the relationship of these forms in space.

The work for my thesis began in the summer of 1976, while working on clay figures to help me understand the movement within the figure. This is when I started using 'thumb strokes' in my paintings: tracing the movement within the form with each brush stroke as though my brush were moving over the surface of the figure, capturing the flow of movement from one shape into another. The term 'thumb stroke' is used due to the similarity of the brush with a sculptor's thumb following the movement of the form, rather than just placing the clay on the form.

In the early pieces I left a lot of the canvas uncovered making each stroke more visible, but the consistency of the raw canvas caused a flatness throughout the painting. By eliminating the white canvas the figure acquired more solidity and the area surrounding the figure provided a more clearly defined space for it to occupy. In the paintings included in this thesis the colors are placed against each other excluding any raw canvas which might cause a separation between the forms, forcing the edges to deal with one another in a spacial situation. By setting up enough of the color surrounding the figure, the spacial situation is resolved.

Although I feel that I have not been influenced by any one artist's style, working with Joseph Alber's Interaction of Color has helped develop my ability to see what happens between colors and the importance of their relativity to each other. I have also referred to Matisse's painting of Carmelina several times. The study of Matisse's subtle use of color and the almost sculptural solidity of the figures in his early paintings has helped me in solving some of my own problems in working with the figure in space.