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MY WORK

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

by

Robert McConnell Rice

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

[Faint handwritten signatures and notes]

Greensboro
1976

4-16-76
Date of acceptance by committee

Approved by

Walter Barker

Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

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the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North
Carolina at Greensboro.

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Date of Acceptance by Committee

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of tradition and the idea that such dignity should be retained of
one sought it was that this was the ideal to be achieved. This
has led the strongest influence on my work.

My introduction to photography came when I was thirteen with
the introduction of a 1905 Kodak folding camera. My first work
was still life. This required long exposures and a firm support.
Results were varied owing to a number of visual factors and a
disciplined vision.

At twenty-two, I acquired my first "serious" camera, a 1905
Kodak model. I then did all the things everyone does with
this type (112) of camera and got the same results that every-
one gets. My expectations, however, were not met.

When I was twenty-five, I purchased a 2 1/2 view camera for
twenty dollars. This camera required me to take the time and
energy for careful composition. My first work with this new camera
was studies of nature that I found on the mountain above my home.
When I had my fill of nature, I returned to still life, and, for
the first time, profit.

I became interested in the style of photography in the first
quarter of the twentieth century and how this style coincided with
the painting and printmaking of that day. This period I consider to
be the height of photography as an art form. My own work is drawn

I was raised in the North Carolina Blue Ridge on the border of Tennessee and Virginia. There, I grew up with a strong sense of tradition and the idea that calm dignity could be attained if one sought it and that this was the ideal to be achieved. This has had the strongest influence on my work.

My introduction to photography came when I was thirteen with the inheritance of a 1908 Kodak folding camera. My first work was still life. This required long exposures and a firm support. Results were varied owing to no means of visual focus and a rudimentary viewfinder.

At twenty-two, I acquired my first "serious" camera, a 35mm viewfinder model. I then did all the things everyone does with this type (35mm) of camera and got the same results that everyone gets. My expectations, however, were not met.

When I was twenty-five, I purchased a $2\frac{1}{2}$ $3\frac{1}{2}$ view camera for twenty dollars. This camera required me to take the time necessary for careful composition. My first works with this new camera were studies of nature that I found on the mountain above my home. When I had my fill of nature, I returned to still life, and, for the first time, people.

I became interested in the style of photography in the first quarter of the twentieth century and how this style compared with the painting and printmaking of that day. This period I consider to be the height of photography as an art form. My own work is drawn

from this period. I do not attempt to copy this period but rather to achieve its richness and contemplativeness.

Photography as an art form needs more alternatives to what is currently in vogue. My work, I feel, is one such alternative. My work is mostly contemplations of subjects rather than action. It is atmospheric, dealing with form before detail.

The early works of the Photo-secessionists, especially Steichen and Kasebier, have influenced me greatly. The contemplative work common before technical advancement changed it, is the period I draw most ideas from.