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IMAGE-MAKING AS A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS
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by

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A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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Approved by

Walter Barker
Thesis Adviser

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This thesis, consisting of a collection of twenty-two photographs, was exhibited at the Weatherspoon Gallery of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro from April 30 through May 5, 1972. The photographs were a result of an exploration in stages of the medium of photography as a means of uniting the world of sensory experience with the world of physicality.

A 35mm. slide of each work is on file at the University of North Carolina library in Greensboro.

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

Walker Barker

Oral Examination
Committee Members

Walker Barker

Joseph Criv

Joan Gregory

Fred Chappell

May 5, 1972
Date of Examination

CATALOGUE

TITLE	DIMENSIONS IN INCHES
1. BEACH PHANTASM	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 13 $\frac{1}{4}$
2. LANDSCAPE WITH HORSE AND CLOUD	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 11
3. BRICKS AND CARNATIONS	9 X 13
4. CAT ON A CORNFIELD	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 13
5. LOOKING UP FROM THE DYE BRANCH	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 13
6. MOTORCYCLE	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 13
7. COLUMNS	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 12
8. ARRIVING	6 X 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
9. MILWAUKEE VERSUS DETROIT	8 X 9 $\frac{1}{4}$
10. PORTRAIT OF SALLY	7 X 13
11. AFLOAT	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 13
12. ISLAND OF THE SHARKS	6 X 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
13. COMPOSITION	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 12 $\frac{1}{2}$
14. NATURAL IMBALANCE	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
15. WOMAN	6 X 9 $\frac{1}{4}$
16. SNOWSNAKE	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
17. HONEYSUCKLE	6 $\frac{1}{4}$ X 10
18. SNOW PICTURE	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$
19. CHICKENS' BATHTUB	6 $\frac{1}{4}$ X 10
20. APPLE TREE BRANCHES	6 $\frac{1}{4}$ X 10 $\frac{1}{4}$
21. HEIFER	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ X 9
22. FUTURE PASSING	7 X 9 $\frac{1}{2}$

In any process of image-making subjective analysis will oftentimes necessitate some consideration, either intentional or subconscious, to dualism, or the philosophical theory which examines the manner in which sensory activity interacts with physical environment. I have made no attempt to discover or explain how this interaction takes place; I merely wish to state that its existence has been given considerable attention in regard to both the formal and the conceptual characteristics of the photographs. The images themselves, having evolved through certain physical and intellectual stages, emerge as the new reality which has resulted from a linking of the two worlds. The stages which comprise this transformational process are the pre-visual, the synthesis, and the post-visual, the latter of which is by far the most important.

The pre-image stage is the temporal and conditional situation wherein the artist, who has placed himself within sensory reach of a segment of his environment, chooses those objects which he wishes to appear within the dimensional limits of his film and possibly his print. His subject matter is real - it is not a product of memory or fantasy, and its presence is imperative in order for a recording of light to be made. The discipline of seeing is practiced here, particularly if an unaltered representation of the image is the desired goal, yet also when the function of the image lies somewhere within the framework of a new, two dimensional image created in the darkroom by the artist himself.

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The second stage in the transformational process, the synthesis, may be regarded as a scientific phenomenon which occurs somewhat independently of the artist's will. The activity of light particles upon light-sensitive surfaces (exposure of film and paper) and the activity of chemical solutions

upon "already begun" chemical reactions (development of film and print) are both explicable and controllable occurrences, but they are certainly the necessities which are least personal in the morphology of a picture. The synthesis takes place in the darkroom, and it is here that it first becomes visible. The reality of the artist's initial perceptions becomes perceivable in a new, but recognizable form of physical reality.

In the final step toward the development of a printed image there can be no doubt that the intuitive will of the maker is the principal actor. The post-image, now separate from associations of an artist-object encounter and the scientific origins of its birth, is, or is capable of becoming the art object itself. Evaluated esthetically and critically, it must exist as an image in its own right. There is no valid reason for it to remain simply an accurate depiction of one event. The choice as to number, kinds, position, sizes, or value of images should not be limited in any way. The completed print offers form as symbol, not as the likeness of an object. It offers conceptual grounds for conjuration of non-perceivable imagery, not a representation of a singular event in time and space.

The transformational process in photography affords a uniting of the world of visual sensation with the world of physicality to produce within a picture imagery which transcends the ordinary depiction of any subject. The prints have all been designed according to this process, and their evolution has been a testing and exploration of it.