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GRAFF, KATHLEEN BEDNARSKI. A Study of Life: The Nude and the Self-Portrait. (1976) Directed by: Walter Barker. Pp. 2.

This thesis of prints and drawings was exhibited in the Weatherspoon Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro from April 18 through May 9, 1976.

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

A STUDY OF LIFE: THE NUDE  
AND THE SELF-PORTRAIT

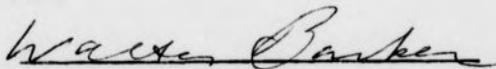
by

Kathleen B. Graff

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  
1976

Approved by

  
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

Walter Barker

Committee Members

Ruth Ayers

Walter Barker

Ruth Ayers

Joseph Craig

April 13, 1976

Date of Acceptance by Committee

CATALOGUE

TITLE	MEDIUM	DIMENSIONS (INCHES)
1. Self-Portrait, 1975	Pencil on Paper	10-1/2 x 14
2. Self-Portrait I, 1976	Pencil on Paper	9 x 8
3. Self-Portrait II, 1976	Pencil on Paper	7-1/4 x 8-3/4
4. Still Life with Pine Cones, 1975	Pencil on Paper	16-3/4 x 21-1/2
5. Mr. Smallwood, 1974	Etching	9-1/2 x 8-1/4
6. Torso Study, 1976	Etching	8-5/8 x 7-1/2
7. Nude Study, 1976	Etching	7-3/4 x 8-1/2
8. Figure Study I, 1976	Etching	7-7/8 x 8-5/8
9. Figure Study II, 1976	Etching	8-3/8 x 7-5/8
10. Figure Study III, 1976	Pencil on Paper	7 x 6-3/4
11. Figure Study IV, 1976	Pencil on Paper	10-1/4 x 12-1/2
12. Figure Study V, 1976	Pencil on Paper	7-1/2 x 8-1/2
13. Figure Study VI, 1976	Pencil on Paper	8-1/2 x 10-1/4

The purpose of this thesis is twofold, the major portion being an in-depth visual analysis of the nude, and the second area concentrating on the portrait, primarily the self-portrait.

My approach to the nude is one in which the concern is not the feminine but rather the female, a physical rather than an emotional level, where I do not assume form but rather attempt to rediscover it. This does not negate a feeling, however, of the spirit of the nude nor does it suppress the freedom of form or interpretation. The scale is kept small and intimate.

To further such an ideal while dealing with the real, a move away from the conventional realm of drawing the nude is attempted through the use of a series of dots. Such dots create a surface appearance of randomness on the paper and yet result in overall structure and tranquility. The dots relate by mapping out the form and at the same time defining it by reaching the outline of a shape and moving to relate to other assemblages of dots in defining adjoining areas. The system becomes a series of points in space which merge, where a concentration of dots becomes shade and the sparsity of them, light. The dots, however, must allow the form to be well

defined rather than becoming mere masses of light and dark. Thus a casual spontaneity is achieved without sacrificing the reality of the form. Emphasis on a particular area of the figure is created further by a cropped off approach to the nude thereby giving a concentrated and thus heightened effect to the chosen area. This does not result in an unappealing pose or a distortion since the drawing suggests the presence of the rest of the body. The language of the dots permits the form to emerge and take on a life of its own.

The self-portrait presents an entirely different problem from the nude by reason of the self-conscious intertwining of objective and subjective reality. The artist becomes both the observed and the observer which links formal problems with the thematic. The dot to dot approach is taken here as it was in the nude, but the result is a deliberately harder line. The portrayal is a physical as well as psychological appearance which gives evidence as to how the artist not only feels about herself but how she thinks others might perceive her. Such a combination emphasizes the qualities of the spirit in which the image is reconciled to balance the subjective with the objective reality.