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JOZEF ALFONS VANDERMEER

VANDERMEER, JOZEF ALFONS. Kinetic Force Within the  
"Dead" Center of the Square. ( 1969 ) Directed by:  
Mr. Walter Barker.

The thesis is an attempt to present works which  
establish a correlation and interaction between the  
square and the circle by means of form and color. The  
circle is placed at the "dead" center of the square.  
The kinetic force within the circle opposes the austere  
form of the square.

The thesis, consisting of twelve paintings and  
six silkscreen prints, was exhibited in the Weatherspoon  
Gallery of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
during May, 1969.

35 mm color slides of the works are on file at  
The University of North Carolina Library in Greensboro.

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APPROVAL SHEET

This Thesis has been approved by the following  
Committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

KINETIC FORCE

WITHIN THE "DEAD" CENTER OF THE SQUARE

by

Jozef Vandermeer

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  
April, 1969

Approved by

Walter Barker  
Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL SHEET

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  
Director

Walter Barker

Oral Examination  
Committee Members

Walter Barker

Andrew Martin

Walter Ashby

Robert K. Campbell

April 25, 1969  
Date of Examination

## CATALOGUE

|     | Title    | Date | Size in inches |
|-----|----------|------|----------------|
| 1.  | Untitled | 1968 | 6 x 6          |
| 2.  | Untitled | 1969 | 12 x 12        |
| 3.  | Untitled | 1969 | 12 x 12        |
| 4.  | Untitled | 1968 | 12 x 12        |
| 5.  | Untitled | 1969 | 12 x 12        |
| 6.  | Untitled | 1968 | 24 x 24        |
| 7.  | Untitled | 1969 | 24 x 24        |
| 8.  | Untitled | 1969 | 24 x 24        |
| 9.  | Untitled | 1969 | 36 x 36        |
| 10. | Untitled | 1969 | 36 x 36        |
| 11. | Untitled | 1969 | 48 x 48        |
| 12. | Untitled | 1969 | 48 x 48        |
| 13. | Untitled | 1969 | 6 x 6          |
| 14. | Untitled | 1969 | 6 x 6          |
| 15. | Untitled | 1969 | 18 x 18        |
| 16. | Untitled | 1969 | 18 x 18        |
| 17. | Untitled | 1969 | 18 x 18        |
| 18. | Untitled | 1969 | 18 x 18        |

The medium used in the works numbers one through twelve is acrylic polymer on canvas.

The numbers thirteen through eighteen are silk-screen prints.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to the following instructors and thesis committee members for their assistance: Mr. Walter Barker, Thesis Director; Mr. Gilbert Carpenter, Art History and Advisor; Mr. Andrew Martin, Painting Instructor; Dr. Warren Ashby, Committee Member.

Acknowledgement is also due The University of North Carolina at Greensboro for awarding me financial assistance in the form of an assistantship in the Weatherspoon Gallery for the academic year of 1967-1968.

All the works in my thesis exhibition are based on the square form for a definite reason. The form of the square is austere and universally well-known. As form it does not need any introduction. It is one of the simplest geometric figures in existence. Left and right are relative only to the position in which the square is placed. Within the boundaries of the four lines the square evokes only one image and has only one value as form.

Within the square of the canvas I have placed another square of different color. This fact immediately sets up an interaction in size as well as in color. The intenser chroma is placed on the outer square while the inner square, in nearly all cases, is a tone of the hue used on the outer square.

A circle is placed at the "dead" center of the square format. The circumference of the circle encloses a kinetic force of color and form. The configurations within the circle are freely flowing forms which have little, if any, relation with the contour of the circle. The forms do not follow the circular movement but, on the contrary, break in many instances this circular movement through the use of horizontals and verticals. The form of the circle, placed at the center of the square, sets up a correlation between the circle and the

square. This correlation is twofold. There is, first of all, a relation in color. Sometimes similar colors are used in the square as well as in the circle. Other times complementary colors are applied. Secondly, there is a relation in form. Whereas within the circle soft, amorphic forms are used, the square form is rigid and severe. The softness of form, contained within the circle, is reflected in the edge of raw canvas which forms the rim around the larger square. Thus there exists a multiple interplay between the square and the circle.

The continuity of the circumference is broken by a line, thus establishing a space relationship. The reciprocity becomes at once apparent. Sometimes the line seems to segment the circle bringing forward the parts. This gives almost a feeling of three dimensionality. Although the circle is physically behind the square, the segments seem to float on top. Other times, however, the line, which forms one part with the square, overlays the circle, thus creating a see-through effect. In what manner one sees the relationship between the circle and the inner square is relatively unimportant. The fact is they are illusionistically placed in a different space.

Within the totality of the exhibition the line evokes a rhythmical quality. This is especially true - and planned as such - when series of works of the same size is hung together. One senses throughout the exhibition a pulsation. This is due to the difference

in the size of the works themselves as well as to the variant of the inner core. The totality of the works create a visual excitement through the use of color.

I have been fascinated first of all by the amorphic configurations conceived by controlled staining of the canvas. Secondly I have been intrigued by the simplicity of the square form. The logical solution was to use the amorphic forms within the format of the square. The result was a disillusionment because the amorphic forms and the square existed as separate entities and a true integration did not take place. Elimination of the free-flowing forms was the result. For some time I used only the square form, placing them in series and setting up a relationship in color among them. The austerity of the square form, however, made me feel encaged and without freedom of expression. The final result was the containment of the freer forms within the boundaries of a circle, placed at the center of the square as not to evoke an added tension. The combination of the circle and the square in this manner, I felt, was the simplest and most balanced arrangement.

The technique used in the paintings is a combination of staining and applying paint in regular layers. The inner, freer forms are arrived at by staining the canvas either with a brush or by pouring the liquid pigment on the canvas or both. After the desired effect is achieved the circle is masked out, after which the inner square

is painted by applying several layers of paint. Finally the outer square is painted after masking the outer rim in order to retain the raw canvas around the edge. In the silkscreen prints I have used within the circle transparent base in combination with the pigment in order to achieve a softness of form. After masking the circle, the inner and outer square respectively are printed.