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To End In Silence

A thesis
presented to
the faculty of the Department of Art and Design
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art

by
Justin R. Hammer
May 2010

Mira Gerard, Chair
Travis Graves
Catherine Murray

Keywords: Compulsion, Meditation, Simplicity, Numerology, Ritual, Light, Escape

ABSTRACT

To End In Silence

by

Justin R. Hammer

This thesis supports the Master of Fine Arts exhibition, *To End In Silence*, at the Slocumb Galleries, East Tennessee State University, March 15-19, 2010. The exhibit consists of fourteen pieces, which are either presented on pedestals or mounted on the wall.

To comment on the title of my thesis, it is a description of the state of calm that I strive to embrace during the creation of my work and the unobtrusive yet engaging tone that I hope for each finished composition to project. This paper explores the aesthetic and conceptual transitions in my work, inspired by a period of personal realization and acceptance. Influences discussed include a number of connections to historical practices including Buddhism, Numerology, and Traditional Japanese Aesthetics, as well as the works of contemporary artists, Agnes Martin, Lee Bontecou, and Manfred Muller.

Also included is a complete catalogue of works from *To End In Silence*.

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Thank you, to my late grandfather for first introducing me to the art of woodworking.

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Finally, to my mother: Thank you for teaching me to follow my heart, embrace the person I am, and strive to become the person I want to be. Thank you for your wisdom, love, and constant encouragement, which have benefited me beyond words. I don't know if I could have ever come this far without you. I am truly blessed to have you in my corner.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Rituals use repetition to create the experience of walking the same path again and again with the possibility of discovering new meaning that would otherwise be invisible” (Bateson 115). This statement made by Mary Catherine Bateson in *Peripheral Visions* describes how the simple act of continuing to do as one has always done can give birth to new discovery.

In recent years I have often questioned why I work in what could be described as a very controlled and seemingly obsessive fashion. I have come to realize that this method of creation acts as a mental filter, allowing me to dissipate the overcrowding of my mind and respond to the essence of the materials. My compulsion towards order makes for a clean and often minimal composition at first glance, but the slow realization of patterns, imperfections, and spatial relationships works to amplify the overall feeling of a piece.

I think of each piece as having an intrinsic resonance, brought into being by a set of actions taken in response to given materials. This “tone” is meant to be obvious yet unassuming, promoting a similarly contemplative sense of calm as that I strive for during the creation process. I often use terms normally associated with music to draw parallels between my work and the power that music has to induce serenity. Corresponding to his understanding of the principles of Japanese aesthetics, John McLaughlin voiced a similar desire to invoke personal reflection. He said that it was his goal “to enable the spectator to contemplate nature beyond the limitations of an image or symbolism” (qtd. in Duncan 84). He championed Asian paintings because “they made me wonder who I was. By contrast, Western painters tried to tell me who they were” (Duncan 84).

In the following chapters I explore my own artistic discoveries and discuss what drives me to be who I am and produce the art that I do. In Chapter 2, I recount memories from my past that aided me in coming to grips with my compulsive behaviors and allowed these behaviors to assist rather than hinder me on my artistic journey. In Chapter 3, I present the influence of several contemporary painters who have inspired changes in my work. In Chapter 4, I address a number of connections I have made between my own work and historical practices that were helpful during this period of personal realization: Buddhism, Traditional Japanese Aesthetics, and Numerology. In Chapter 5, I expand upon my own process of creation. In Chapter 6, I discuss the role that the introduction of new processes and materials have played in the development of a cohesive body of work, and in Chapter 7, I present my conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

RECALLING THE PAST

I sometimes get the impression that I interpret the physical world differently from most people. When I encounter an unfamiliar space I quickly notice details, small things that seem particularly interesting or out of place. Unique linear and geometric forms often catch my eye while other elements seem to fade. Subtle compositions present themselves as if they were seen through some sort of visual filter. For as long as I can recall I have drawn inspiration from my surroundings, finding myself most at ease in settings that I would describe as “manicured nature”.

Even as a child I searched for ways of escaping the constant visual and mental bombardment of life around me. When I was as young as five or six years old I desired to alter and order the “natural” in an attempt to create “quiet spaces” from which I could enjoy the disarray of the outside world. When I built forts in the woods, as most adolescent boys have done, it was not enough to simply create an enclosure for the purpose of hiding. Even the surrounding area had to be free of debris. I would often create a geometric perimeter by collecting the leaves and dead branches within, then scattering them loosely so as not to leave a mound at the edges of my space. All low-lying brush was then cleared, and new flora was transplanted, often in repeated patterns of size and species. This allowed me to appreciate the minutia of these natural elements without the noise of the cluttered forest floor. The interiors of my forts were rarely visited, as I found solace in sitting just inside the boundary of my new plot, watching nature from an area that I had claimed as my own. Over time the original plant life returned and new leaves fell, leaving me with the decision to edit or embrace the effects of time.

Joseph Cali may have interpreted this behavior as an early form of meditation, reflecting “abstract thought and reduction to essentials indicative of Zen” (Cali 7). The reordering of nature may seem a tedious and fruitless task to some people, but I have always translated repetitive action as a form of relaxation.

Although my concern with the aesthetic of simplicity and geometry is a trait I come by naturally, there are people in my life who helped to nurture these characteristics early on. Both my mother and my grandfather (I called him Papaw) were artists in their own right. My Papaw, an exceptional woodworker, taught me at the age of six to take my time and pay close attention to detail. He always maintained that it was much better to make a mistake slowly, so that when the mistake was realized it was not too late to salvage the rest. I was too young to use power tools, so my tasks were often limited to marking, sanding, and other types of finish work. I can still hear him saying “measure twice... cut once.”

I didn’t discover my mother’s artistic abilities until much later in life, as she often kept them to herself, but she has a great talent for designing and restoring homes. She has drawn floor plans in her free time for many years but didn’t start sharing them with me until I was around fifteen. They are interesting to me not only in terms of what they represent but also as works of art themselves. At first glance a high level of precision and attention to detail makes them appear as if they were generated on a computer, but upon further investigation you notice that they are all drawn freehand. They retain expressive qualities indicative of an artist’s hand at work. Her eye for seeing “what could be” is nothing short of astounding. We have often discussed the details of imaginary spaces for no reason other than to think “what if.”

These memories undoubtedly contribute to the recognition of a style I have come to embrace as my own. “When you know and respect your own inner nature, you know where you

belong” (Hoff 41). It is my belief that this recognition of a long-standing desire to order and edit has been an essential step in creating this body of work.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEMPORARY INFLUENCES

When looking at the progression of my most recent work, three artists were particularly influential. Agnes Martin, Manfred Muller, and Lee Bontecou have each contributed to the development of my current way of seeing. I will begin with the artistic creations of Lee Bontecou, primarily her dramatic sculptural assemblages of the late fifties and sixties, which I had the privilege of seeing for the first time in the latter part of 2005. Bontecou used pieces of canvas, iron, rope, and other scrap materials to create intricate “wall sculptures”. The depth of the hollow voids present in these works are dramatized by the use of soot and dark fabric, which create a vortex from which even light cannot escape. In 1965, commenting on her very three dimensional and “surprisingly asymmetrical” compositions, Donald Judd wrote; “The work asserts its own existence, form and power. It becomes an object in its own right” (qtd. in Smith 83).

I was intrigued by the presence that her works of this time period achieve, and though I did not adopt her very confrontational use of spatial elements, I did begin experimenting with relief elements. I started using pieces of canvas, string, and paper to build up the surfaces of my paintings, creating linear elements from the presence of shadows and variations in surface texture. I do not consider these early pieces to be sculptures, but they were some of the first steps in my recent attempts to distance myself from what I assume to be the traditional parameters of painting.

As my work developed my paintings became more and more minimal. Like Agnes Martin, I could describe the “genesis and resolution of a particular piece in terms of inspiration

followed by a process of intuitive decision making... worked within narrow, self-imposed confines” (Cooke 27). Her Zen-like compositions reflect her love of nature and an aptitude for appreciating fine detail. Subtle variations in color, repeated patterns, and vast expanses of negative space speak of her commitment to precision and the projection of an overall “sensation”

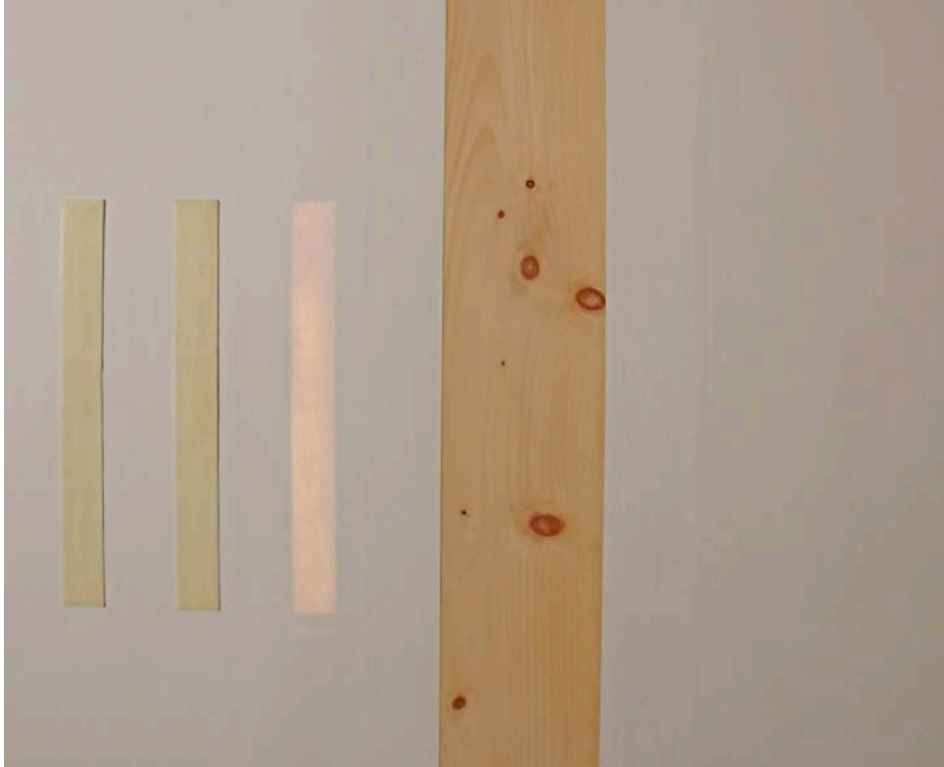


Figure 1: “*Mediating the Gap*” Acrylic, Encaustic Wax, Plexiglass, and Compact Fluorescent on Pine, 38” x 32”. 2008

from a single unified surface. The slight shifts in value and saturation make otherwise grave colors seem to shine brightly, as if the entire composition were made of light. Inspirations such as these could be easily linked to my

use of repeated forms and delicate variations in color and texture (Figure 1). Coupled with a careful balancing of positive and negative space, I hope to project a calm in my own work similar to that which I feel when viewing Martin’s.

As my work has become increasingly three-dimensional, I have developed an affinity for the work of German-born sculptor Manfred Muller. As with my own projections, Muller often

draws his aesthetic inspirations from mechanical, industrial, and geometric relationships that he encounters in new spaces. I enjoy not only the physical and metaphysical impact of his oil paintings on paper but also their elegance. Their spatial depth casts crisp shadows on the surrounding wall while their translucence gives the impression of a subtle glow from within. “They sit somewhere between manufactured and millennial artifacts, striking the same rich tensions between technology and soulfulness” (Doktorczyk-Donohue 51). His works are engaging on an extremely intimate level, encouraging the active participation of the spectator. Upon seeing his painting “*White Prelude #373*”, I found myself questioning which elements were real and which were illusions.

There are two underlying themes that appear in my work that reflect these three influences. The first of these is the incorporation of light, which James Turrell describes as a “powerful substance” to which we all have a “primal connection” (575). They do not use artificial light as a physical material, as I often do, but the presence of light or the lack of it is often palpable in their work. The second connection between my own work and the work of these three artists is the implied need to investigate beyond the surface. Their works are often created in layers that allow for the formation of compositional relationships that can be perplexing from a distance. They promote interaction of both a physical and mental nature, making them very intimate pieces no matter their scale or subject.

CHAPTER 4

REALIZATIONS AND CONNECTIONS

After staring at a completed piece for an extended period of time, I often continue to discover themes and relationships I had not consciously created. I have realized that my work bears connections to traditional Japanese aesthetics and religion as well as mathematical concepts such as Numerology and Geometry. In the beginning these connections were mere afterthoughts, but they quickly became an integrated part of my thought process.

I believe that natural materials contain innate qualities that allow these materials the power to inspire and communicate. The following statement from *The Way of Zen*, written by Alan Watts, illustrates how Chinese and Japanese culture share a similar belief:

The art forms of the western world arise from spiritual and philosophical traditions in which spirit is divided from nature, and comes down from heaven to work upon it as an intelligent energy upon an inert and recalcitrant stuff. Thus Malraux speaks always of the artist “conquering” his medium as our explorers also speak of conquering mountains or conquering space. To Chinese and Japanese ears these are grotesque expressions. For when you climb it is the mountain as much as your own legs which lifts you upwards, and when you paint it is the brush, ink, and paper which determine the results as much as your own hand (175).

Traditionally, Japanese ideas of aesthetics have reflected a nuance of refinement and formal austerity, embracing the expressive power of what 15th century artist Sesshu called “the

marvelous void” (Duncan 84). Demonstrating a tendency to condense and reduce, Japanese works of art including ceramics, paintings, architecture, and even gardens are often believed to be representations of “beauty” in its purest form. Attempting to encapsulate the ideas of beauty that I believe to be embodied by Early Japanese art, as well as my own, I am reminded of a celebrated anecdote concerning the sixteenth-century tea master Sen no Rikyu. Apparently, Rikyu was a master gardener, renowned for his cultivation of a rare variety of morning glories. When Rikyu’s master, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, heard of these magnificent flowers he insisted upon seeing them, and it was arranged. On the morning that Hideyoshi was scheduled to visit, Rikyu went into his garden and plucked every single blossom, with the exception of one perfect specimen. When he entered the garden Hideyoshi was livid, until that one exceptional bloom caught his gaze. Hideyoshi left enthralled and completely satisfied:

Rikyu had chosen to concentrate the beauty of the morning glories in a single perfect flower, trimming away all the rest. This impulse to remove everything extraneous and limit oneself to the most abbreviated means of expression possible was a key element of Rikyu’s aesthetic of *wabi* (Shuji 64).

Japanese culture draws much of its aesthetic inspiration from Buddhist teachings, but “beauty” in the Buddhist sense of the word cannot be defined by physical characteristics alone. Instead, beauty is often measured in terms of the process by which a physical manifestation comes into being. Beauty, then, could be defined as that which, through process, has been freed from duality, and is no longer defined by physical appearance. My personal aesthetic, which celebrates that which is both pure and beautiful, physically reflects Japanese compositional

values. At the same time, a repetitive process and abstract thought, indicative of Buddhist philosophy, directly informs the fruition of these characteristics. Through process I am liberated, no longer do I “need to consider the distinction between beauty and ugliness” (Yanagi 135). Until recently I understood beauty as far as art is concerned to be a strictly material matter. This discussion of implied presence through process and enlightenment was my primary reason for naming Buddhism, in addition to Japanese aesthetics, as echoing many of the themes I find to be important in my own work.



**Figure 2: “Two and Three: Male and Female”
Acrylic, Plexiglass, and Hemp on
Pine, 11 ¼” x 11 ¼”. 2008**

In my investigation of repetition as a process of creation, I realized that the pieces themselves contain repeated forms, lines, and patterns. These recurring elements often appear in twos and threes, almost always containing one factor slightly divergent from the rest (Figure 2). I began to research mathematical concepts in hopes of finding what, if any, connections could be drawn between my subconscious decisions and the study

of numbers. I have discovered that two and three have ties to balance and growth, and that numbers have been assigned representational meanings by cultural groups throughout history.

Numerology and Sacred Geometry have since been consistently present in my work, especially during the past year. *The Secret Quality of Quantities* by Miranda Lundy has been the catalyst for naming many of my pieces. However, in some of my later compositions such as *Resonance in Shadow* the study of numbers influenced changes in the work itself. The original arrangement contained six vertical lines instead of seven (Figure 3). The seventh was added when I made a connection between the piece and music. In the world of numbers seven is often associated with music, and I wanted the work to reflect this. It is common to see seven tones in a



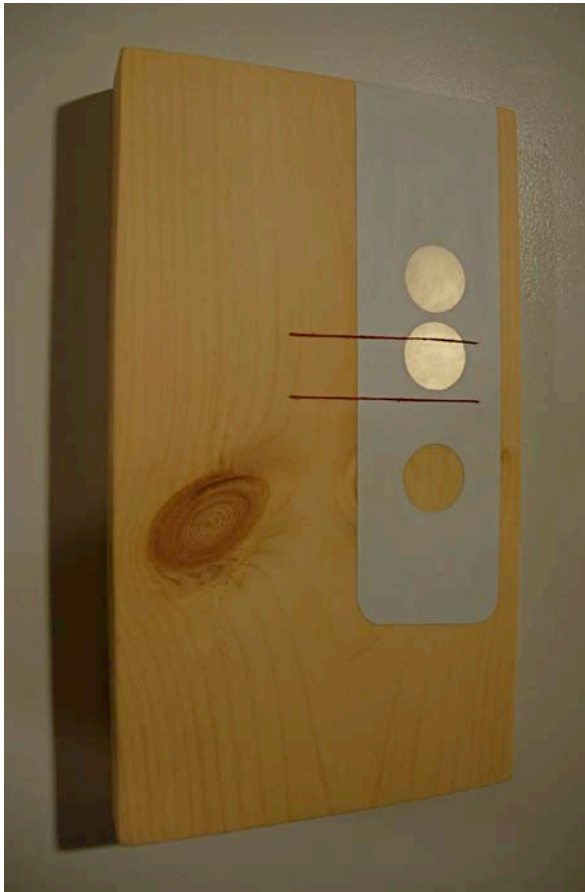
Figure 3: “*Music in Shadow*” Acrylic and Hemp on Pine, 31” x 10 ½” x 2 ½”. 2009

musical scale: “These are the white keys on the piano, producing the seven modes of antiquity, a universal pattern” (Lundy 14). The rest of the title is inspired by the dark shadows left by the linear elements on the deep blue recess that mirror the seven pieces of rope like the reverb of sound in a cathedral.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROCESS OF ESCAPING

When beginning a new piece I try to refrain from having any preconceived plan as to what the end result may be. I often contemplate for long periods of time where the next gesture should be placed before acting upon the surface with extreme care and precision, losing



**Figure 4: “Invoking the Triangle”
Acrylic, Plexiglass, Hemp,
and Compact Fluorescent
on Pine, 10” x 17 ¾”. 2009**

myself in an act that may or may not be of any consequence in the end. Each new element, informed by previous actions, is added with the intention of unifying the piece as a whole. The “ritual” of making that shapes these paintings and sculptures remains for the most part a constant, varying only slightly from one piece to the next. I will start by describing the wall-mounted pieces that provided inspiration for my later three-dimensional work.

Balance and craftsmanship are always foremost in my mind when I begin. In the first step I chose a material that spoke to me in its unaltered state (Figure 4). After much consideration, I selected a surface of white

pine stock containing an oval shaped knot and very pronounced grain patterns. The decision to include the literal presence of light, which has recently become a recurring theme in my work,

dictated a depth of two inches in order to house a small compact fluorescent bulb. I chose to expand this to three inches to create a more pleasing balance with the width of the piece. I then finished the surface with a hand plane and eighty grit sandpaper. I used a heavy paper to soften the edges and give the wood a velvet-like appearance.

Inspired by the natural imperfections of the material, I decided to use circular forms in the piece. Originally I had created four circles, but one was omitted because I felt that the empty white space better served the balance of the overall composition. The negative shape, instead of being masked, was created by obsessively removing the paint using a small chisel until the wood was restored to its original form. The two parallel lines are painted hemp that has been sewn into the panel. It would have been easier to paint these lines directly onto the surface, but I believe that the method used to attach them adds a level of finish that promotes more in-depth examination.

The title *Invoking the Triangle* is inspired by the fact that there are two active (lighted) circles in the composition. In geometric progression, “the vesica piscis formed by two overlapping circles immediately invokes triangles” (Lundy 6). However, this interpretation of numbers did not play a role in the manifestation of these forms. I did not make this connection until after the piece’s completion. The two lighted elements appear to advance but are tethered by the overlapping lines that were painted red in order to emphasize their weight. The third circle, a negative manifestation of an identical component, seems to recede and highlights the existence of solid wood beneath the smooth gesso. Though the surface of the piece is flat, the space is difficult to define and calls to question the actuality of what lies beneath the facade. The completed composition was created through a calculated series of actions and reactions.

Sometimes the addition of a new component resulted in the removal of previous ones, but the act of rectifying these mistakes only added time to think and minutiae to reflect upon.

The editing process, in my opinion, is paramount in bringing “life” to a piece of art. In “The Way of Zen” Alan Watts describes what he refers to as “painting by not painting,” stating that “the secret lies in knowing how to balance form with emptiness and, above all, in knowing when one has “said” enough” (179). Visual tension between positive and negative space speaks clearly but not so loudly as to diminish the impact of the intricate details.

Much like the process I have described above, my sculptures are formed through a series of realizations and responses during a slow and methodical process. However, when starting a sculpture like “*Monad*” I begin with a number of precise drawings and measurements (Figure 5).

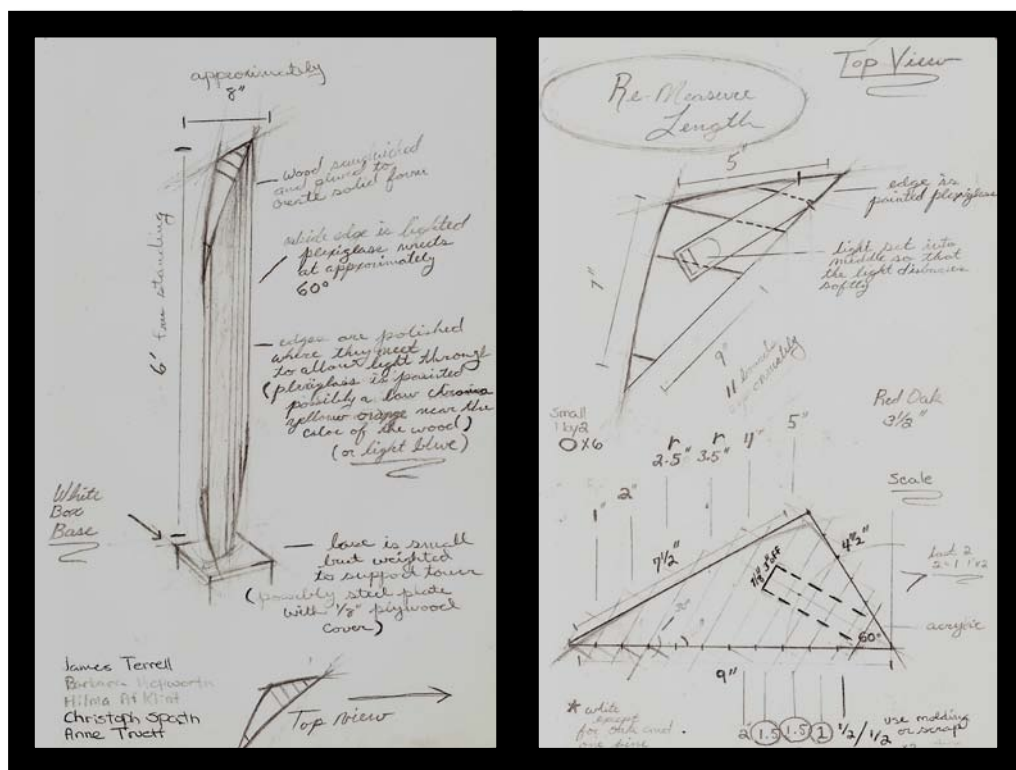


Figure 5: Preliminary Drawings for “Monad” Graphite on Paper, 5” x 7” each. 2009

These drawings help me avoid a number of problems that could arise later on. For example, lack of access to interior spaces may hinder my ability to make alterations late in the formation of a

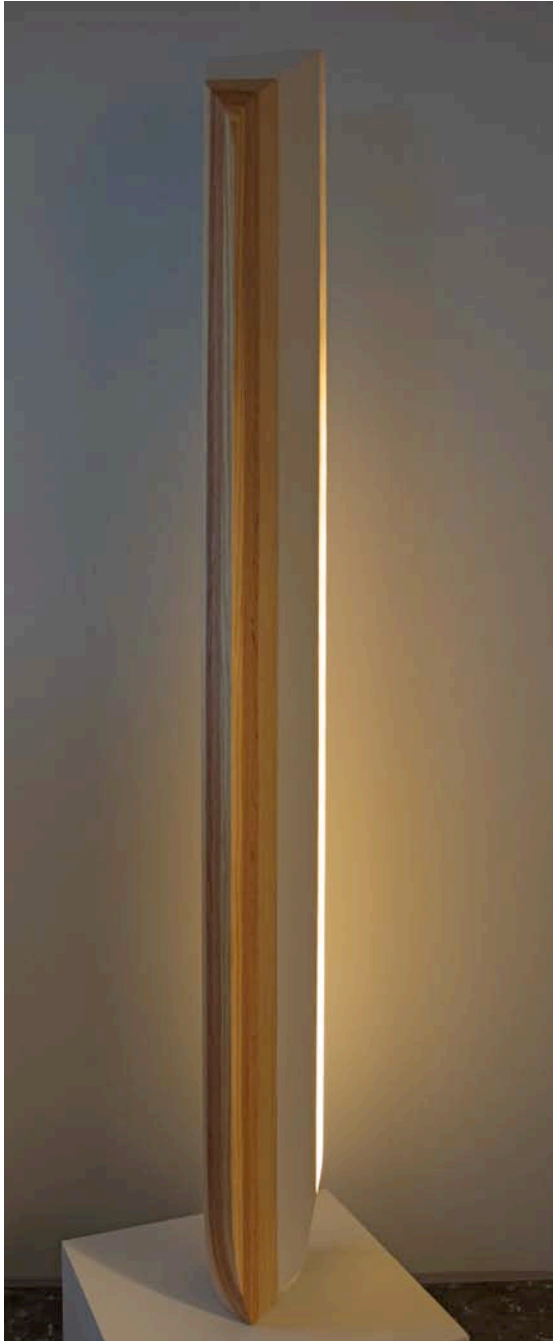


Figure 6: “Monad” Acrylic, Plexiglass, Pine, Oak, 10½” x 7” x 72”. 2009

piece. Also weight, size, and expense of materials cannot be overlooked. In this case, the drawings were extremely valuable in the preparation of raw materials.

After the basic form was glued and the lighting element installed, the sketches became a tool of reflection and suggestion for future decisions. The slow manipulation and refinement of the surface eventually removed nearly three inches from the predetermined width, and altered a number of the exterior angles as well. I rethought these angles when I noticed the tendency for the piece to morph as I walked around it. Each side is intended to change drastically, both in composition and ambiance. The illuminated plexiglass edge is integrated seamlessly using wood filler and layers of acrylic gesso (Figure 6). The fade from top to bottom (a representation of growth) is accomplished by varying the thickness of the primer coat. The sterile white surface is countered by the warm presence of white pine

and red oak. The piece could pass for a machined object, but a closer look reveals a symphony of pits and brushstrokes that make obvious the artist's hand. I try to refrain from overworking my art to the point of its losing character through the "rigor of its technique" (Watts 176).

CHAPTER 6

MATERIAL PROGRESSION AND LIGHT

To practice-anything, playing the violin, extracting DNA in a laboratory, rock climbing, doing Zen meditation, bathing the baby-is to repeat what appears to be the same action over and over, attentively, mindfully, in a way that makes possible a gradual-almost imperceptible at times-process of change.

-Mary Catherine Bateson, *Peripheral Visions*

Though I often revisit forms and concepts, I try to keep the creative process fresh by slightly altering the techniques or materials used for each new piece. Early in the development of this body of work I painted on stretched canvas using more traditional methods. I had already begun to incorporate light into my practice but only as it pertains to dimensionality. I have recently become increasingly interested in the psychological effects of light. In describing his own work, James Turrell portrays the metaphysical impact of light in saying:

In working with light, what is really important to me is to create an experience of wordless thought, to make the quality and sensation of light itself something really quite tactile. It has a quality seemingly intangible, yet it is physically felt. Often people reach out to try to touch it. My works are about light in the sense that light is present and there; the work is made of light. It's not about light or a record of it, but it is light. Light is not so much something that reveals, as it is itself the revelation (574).

With the introduction of new materials and concepts, I continue to discover more effective ways of using light as a medium. Encaustic wax seems to emit a warm glow, but when used on top of a plexiglass surface this glow can be increased dramatically. The translucency of the surface allows me to create depth and dimension not only by the overlapping of layers but also by controlling the intensity of the shadows (Figure 7). By hanging such works one to two inches from the wall cast shadows become compositional elements creating an implied interior space.

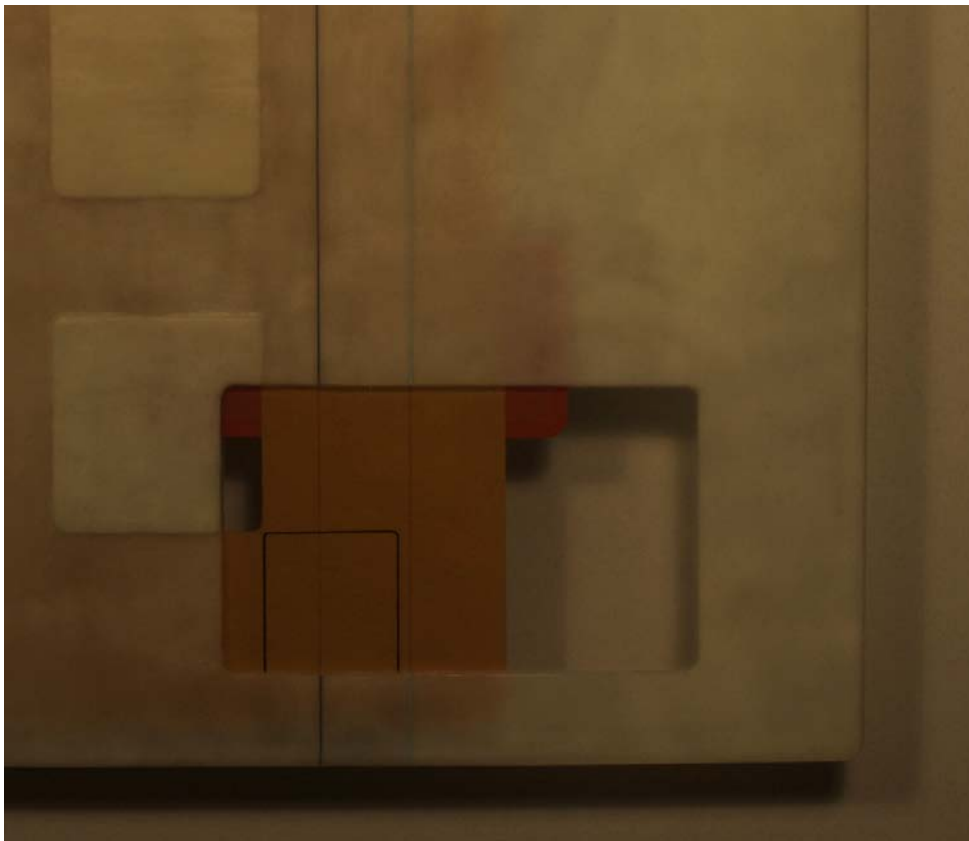


Figure 7: *Compulsions* (Detail). Acrylic, Oil, and Wax on Plexiglass, 18" x 24". 2008

In order to make the impact of light more readily experienced, I needed to make its presence more concrete. In subsequent paintings I added a deep wood frame in which I could enclose a small light source. I worked in this fashion for a while; drawing with light, until I

decided that the cold plexiglass surface just didn't speak to me. The lack of inspiration from the material made the process seem too forced.

Wood speaks to me. Before anything is added or altered, wood has character and personality. Wood is a uniquely inspiring material that offered me a perfect beginning. How to



Figure 8: *Opposites: Two* (Detail). Acrylic and Hemp on Pine, 6 ¼" x 11 ¾". 2009

incorporate light with wood, on the other hand, was a new dilemma.

Initially I used a clear inlay to achieve this, but in doing so I had to cover or remove the wood itself.

After a long period of trial and error, I determined that carefully shaving the wood in desired areas to around one sixteenth of an inch would allow light to shine through, while resisting the tendency to crack or warp. By working from the reverse side of the panel, my

process becomes an integral part of

an already existing composition. The light that emanates from beneath the surface works in tandem with the natural qualities of the material I wish to highlight (Figure 8). In a way, I am changing the metaphysical impact of the wood without physically altering the surface.

"From the state of the "Uncarved Block" comes the ability to enjoy the simple and the quiet, the natural and the plain. Along with that comes the ability to do things spontaneously and

have them work, odd as that may appear to others at times” (Hoff 21). However, one must take into account the element of eventual change that is inevitable when attempting to assert complete control over materials, which by their very nature resist regulation. Paint fades, wood swells and cracks, steel rusts, and wax gathers debris leaving me choices not unlike those I faced as a child building forts in the forest; do I embrace the natural aesthetic of time or rethink and revise?

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Informed by research and experience, I rely on my own intuition to guide the future progression of my work. To aid me in this, I always keep in mind the words of Soetsu Yanagi: “Seeing and knowing form an exterior and an interior, not a right and a left. Either way, they are not equal. In understanding beauty, intuition is more of the essence than intellectual perception” (110). My intention for producing this body of work and writing this thesis has been to define my own methods of creation, and in doing so to generate works that reflect a similar stillness to that which I feel during the creative process. Constantly developing my aesthetic senses, new materials and concepts such as numerology continue to improve my techniques for projecting my inner consciousness as clearly and simply as is possible. It can be difficult at times to stay focused on the perfection of ones craft while trying to keep work from becoming formulaic. However, I try not to concern myself with the flight from formula, as I have realized that the obsessive behaviors that dictate my process have been imbedded in me from a very young age. Compulsions toward order and repetition are engrained in my psyche and would inevitably be present in whatever artistic endeavors I chose to undertake. Over time my work has become less about manipulating materials to make a specific statement and more about recognizing what they must become.

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APPENDIX:
CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION

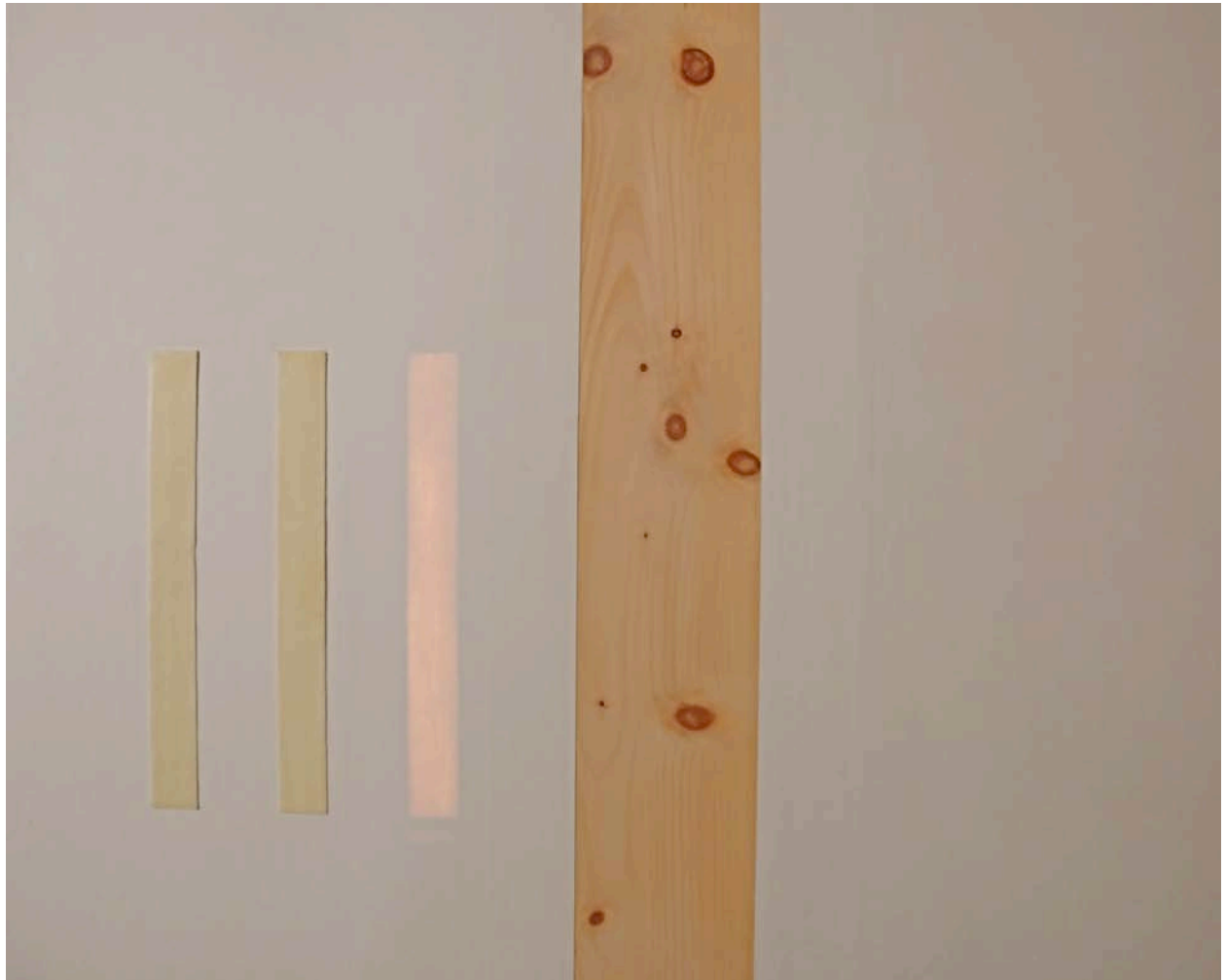


Mediating the Gap

Acrylic, Plexiglass, and Encaustic on Pine

38" x 32"

2008

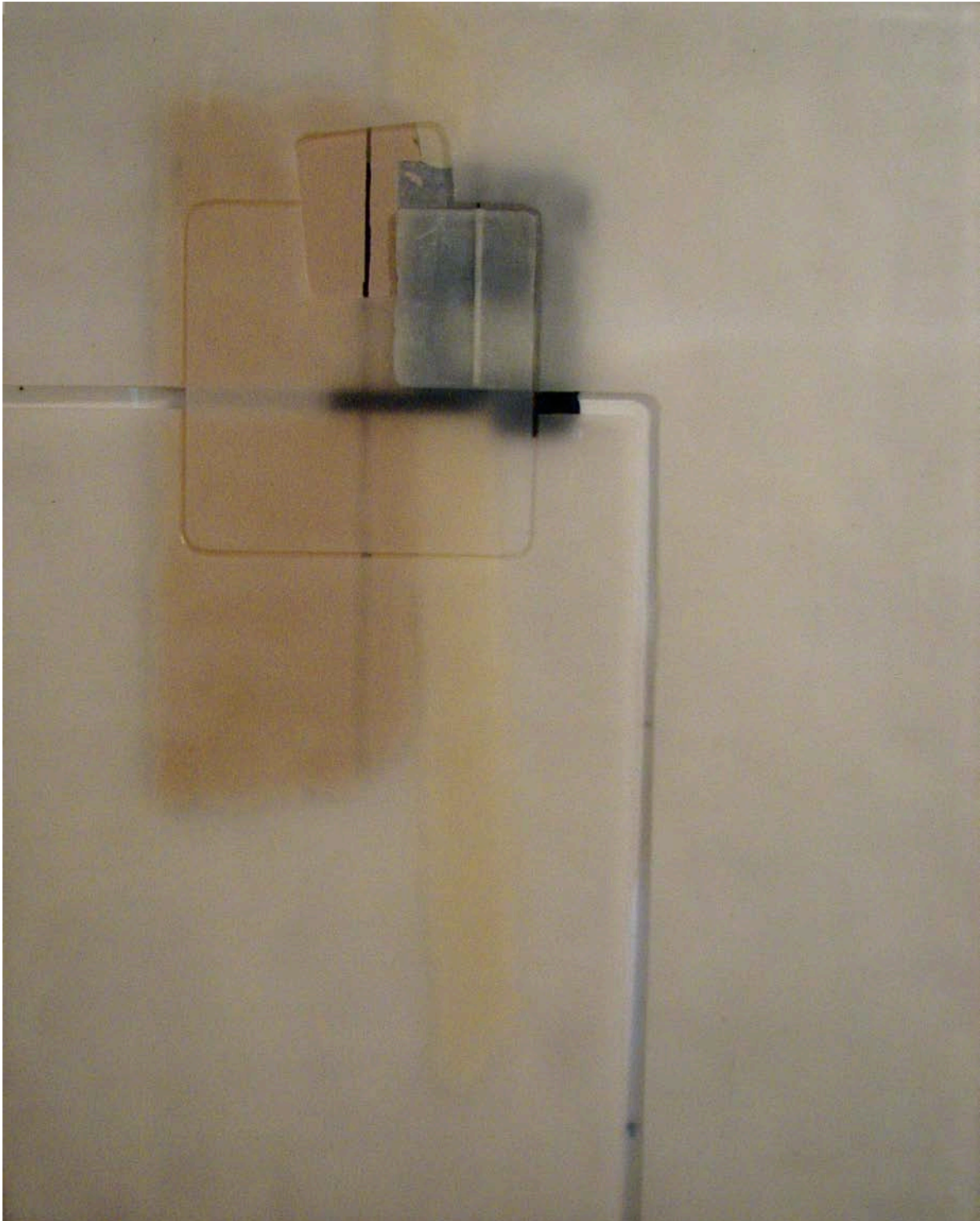


The Disposition of Elements

Acrylic and Encaustic on Plexiglass

17 ½" x 22"

2008



Compulsions

Acrylic, Oil, and Encaustic on Plexiglass

18" x 24"

2008

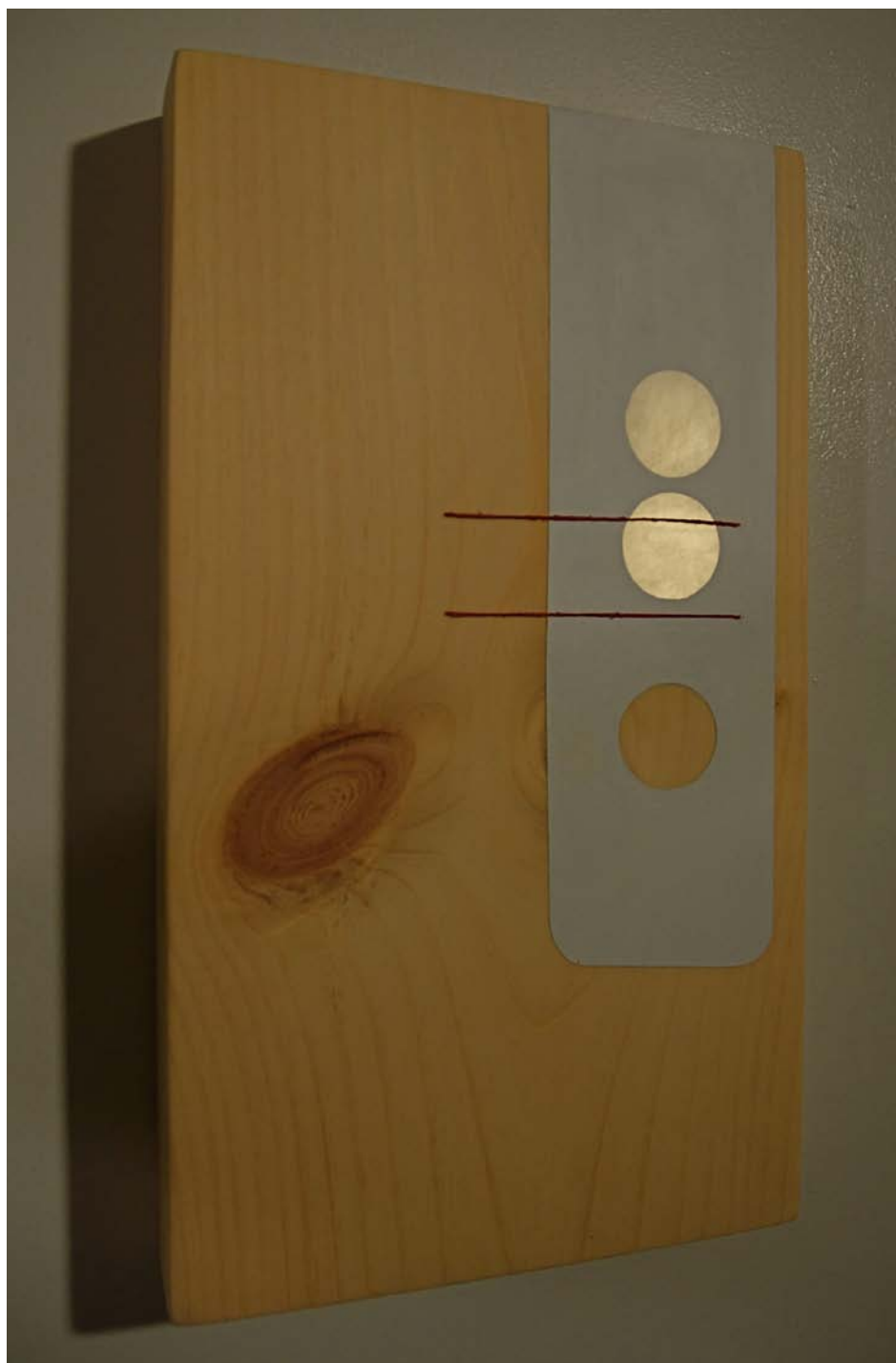


Invoking the Triangle

Acrylic, Plexiglass, and Hemp on Pine

10" x 17 ¾"

2009



Opposites: Two

Acrylic and Hemp on Pine

6 ¼" x 11 ¾"

2009

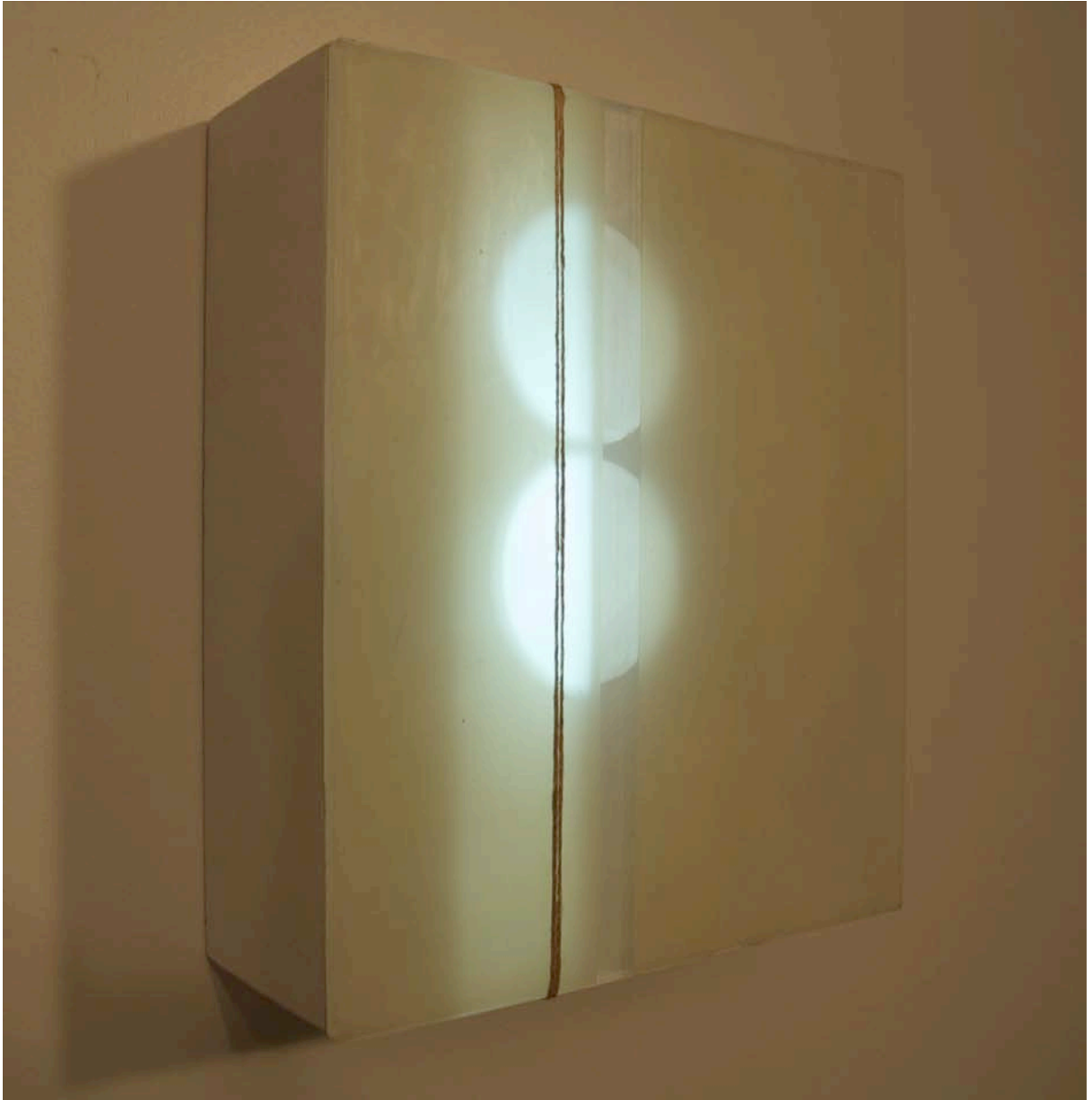


The Sides of Both

Acrylic, Hemp, and Encaustic on Plexiglass

7 ¾" x 8 ½"

2008



The Fourth

Acrylic, Pine, Masking Tape, and Plexiglass

11" x 48"

2009

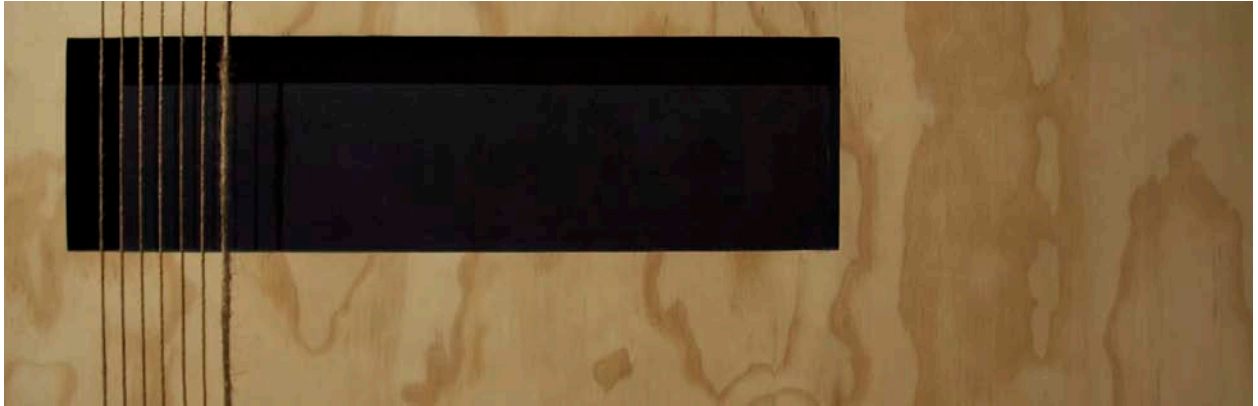


Resonance in Shadow

Acrylic and Twine on Wood Panel

31" x 10 ½"

2009

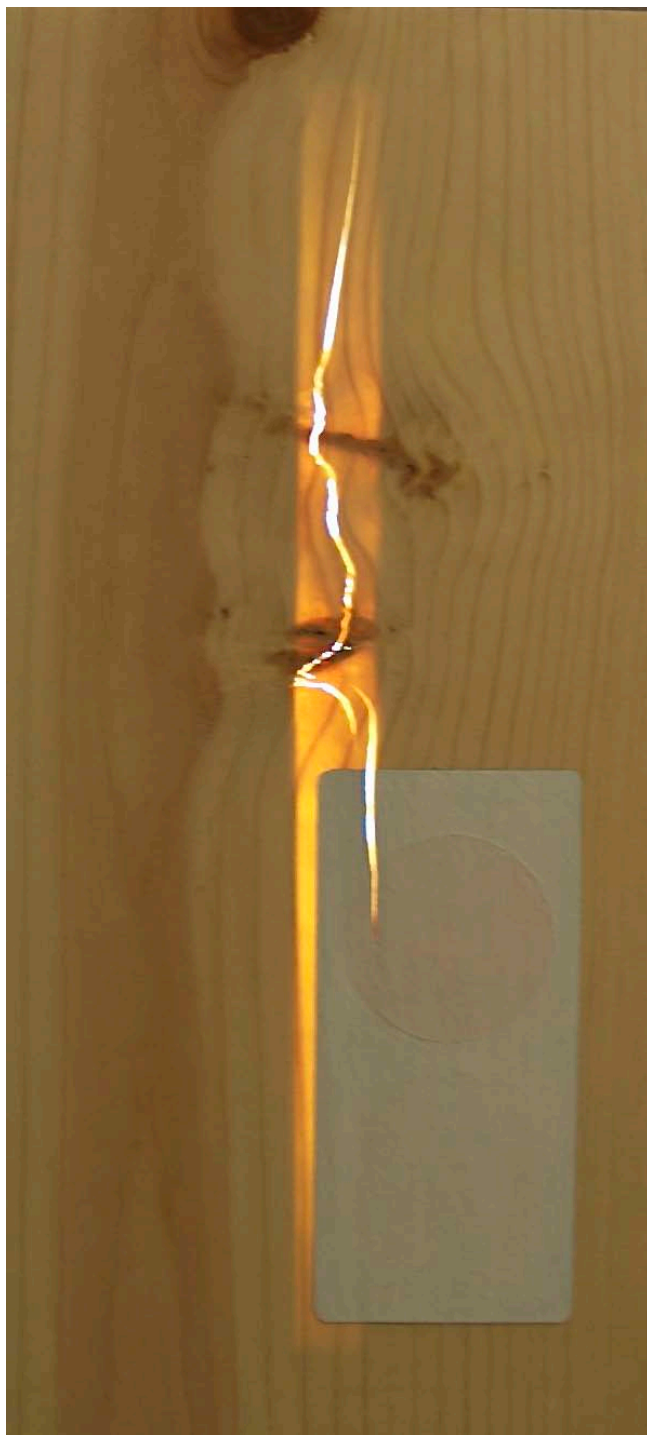


And so it Became

Acrylic on Pine

7 ½" x 15 ¾"

2010



Half

Acrylic, Encaustic, Plexiglass, and Hemp on Pine

22 1/2" x 22 1/2"

2010



Transplanted

Acrylic and Manila Rope on Cedar

7 1/2" x 38 1/4"

2009



Monad

Acrylic, Plexiglass, Pine, and Red Oak

10 ½" x 7" x 72"

2009



Spirit and Matter

Acrylic, Plexiglass, Encaustic, and Hemp on Pine

11 ½" x 25 ½"

2009



Fret and Reverb

Acrylic, Pine, and Steel Cable

36" x 7" x 7 3/4"

2010



VITA

JUSTIN R. HAMMER

jhammerpratt@yahoo.com

Education: Master of Fine Arts, Painting
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN, 2010

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Painting
Pratt Institute,
Brooklyn, NY, 2005

Teaching Experience: Teaching Assistantship (Instructor of Record),
East Tennessee State University,
Color Theory, Fall 2009 – Spring 2010

Teaching Assistantship (Instructor of Record),
East Tennessee State University,
Color Theory, Fall 2008 – Spring 2009

Graduate Assistantship,
East Tennessee State University,
Figure Painting, Spring 2008

Graduate Assistantship,
East Tennessee State University,
Beginning Painting, Fall 2007

Exhibitions: “To End In Silence” Slocumb Galleries
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN, 2010

“Stimulus: Annual Graduate Exhibition”
B. Carroll Reece Museum,
Johnson City, TN, 2010

Postcard Show and Silent Auction, Slocumb Galleries
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN, 2009

Adsmarts Creativity Auction,
The Charles
Johnson City, TN, 2009

ETSU Jewelry and Metals Exhibition,
Nelson Fine Arts Gallery
Johnson City, TN, 2009

“Look at the Mess You Made”: MFA Exhibition
B. Carroll Reece Museum,
Johnson City, TN, 2009

Postcard Show and Silent Auction, Slocumb Galleries
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN, 2008

“Look Out Below” Tipton Street Gallery,
Johnson City, TN, 2008

“Marks”: Graduate Student Exhibition,
B. Carroll Reece Museum,
Johnson City, TN, 2008

Postcard Show and Silent Auction, Slocumb Galleries
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN, 2007

Recent Works: Solo Exhibition,
Mason House Gallery,
Greeneville, TN, 2007

“Contemplation”: Solo Exhibition,
Mason House Gallery,
Greeneville, TN, 2006

“Absence”: BFA Thesis Exhibition, East Hall Gallery
Pratt Institute,
Brooklyn, NY, 2005

BFA Juried Exhibition,
The Rubelle and Norman Schafner Gallery
Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY, 2005

Mary Jane Coleman Award Exhibition,
Mills Spring Gallery,
Greeneville, TN, 2004

Awards:

East Tennessee State University,
Department of Art and Design,
Teaching Assistantship, Fall 2008- Spring 2010

East Tennessee State University,
Department of Art and Design,
Graduate Assistantship, 2007-2008

Mary Jane Coleman Scholarship,
Greeneville Arts Council,
Greeneville, TN, 2004

Mary Jane Coleman Scholarship,
Greeneville Arts Council,
Greeneville, TN, 2003

Pratt Institute,
Presidential Merit Scholarship,
Brooklyn, NY, 2002-2005

Pratt Institute,
Pratt Grant,
Brooklyn, NY, 2002-2005

Pratt Institute,
Freshman Excellence Award,
Brooklyn, NY, 2002