



Ruminations

by Miguel Angel Romero

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts In Sculpture

Montana State University

© Copyright by Miguel Angel Romero (2004)

Abstract:

What is most important to me in the making of my artwork is the pleasure it gives me to work with materials and forms. When manipulating materials into shapes my intentions center around the corporeal relationship of the viewer to the artwork as well as the space they both will inhabit. For example, my piece “Yoke” jumps from one wall to the other in a sweeping and gravity-defying gesture, thus coming forward to meet the viewer. This is a gesture which the viewer completes by either coming closer to touch the piece, or by the more aloof route of mere contemplation.

The actual sources for the type of imagery I use in my work vary in origin as much as my personal experience does. For example, the idea for the shape of “Ruminant” came from a stretched out nautilus shell, and its rocking motion suggested to me the repetitiveness of ruminating. On the other hand, the shape of “Yoke” is a variation I derived from ancient Mayan ceremonial belts, speculated to have been used during Mayan ball-game rituals. I use these images simply because I find their forms intriguing—in other words, I like the way they twist, turn and activate positive and negative space. My familiarity with these objects is just a testimony to either my interest in nature or my background as a Meso-American—that is, these objects are within my range of experience.

The way I use materials is also a reflection of intersections of my experiences. For example, the way I use steel as lines to create volumetric forms reflects my interest in drawing. Furthermore, in my younger years I used to work as a farm hand in western Honduras. The look and feel of hay and grass is a subtle but powerful memory, as well as a very direct symbol of the food chain we are a link within.

History, and in particular contemporary art history is something I have been fascinated with for a long time. Thus, thoughts of where in that tide of events and ideas I might fit best is something I have given some thought. Though I do like the formal beauty in the work of such minimalists as Donald Judd and Sol Lewitt, I identify more closely with less “Greenbergian”—and far more tactile—minimalists such as Rachel Whiteread and Eva Hesse. Content is, to me, undeniable and unavoidable. However, instead of seeking to convey a very specific message, what I intend to do is to create a suggestive visual mystery. That is, instead of resembling a book or an essay, my work is rather more like a concerto or a symphony. I intend to instill in those that experience my work a sense of speculative and proactive viewership, rather than our all-too-common practice of passive, almost thoughtless sign recognition.

There are certain words I like to use to describe my work: it is quietly playful and teasing, as in “Siftings”; it has a tendency to be iterative and pattern-oriented as in “Horns”; though at times it might seem static and overwhelming, as in “Inverted Barrel”, it can be kinetic and whimsical, as in “Ruminant”. I have derived all of these descriptive terms out of my experience as the maker of these objects. However, what I desire is for the viewer to touch and see these sculptures, and thus develop his or her own ideas about their nature, meaning and timbre.

RUMINATIONS

by

Miguel Angel Romero

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Fine Arts

In

Sculpture

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

April 2004

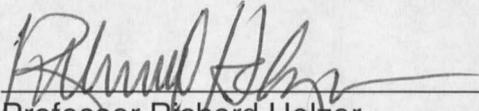
N378
R6645

APPROVAL

Of a thesis submitted by
Miguel Angel Romero

This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

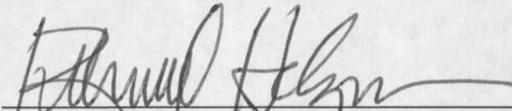
4/14/04
Date



Professor Richard Helzer
Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Approved for the School of Art

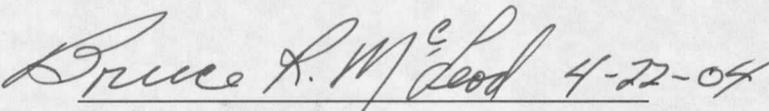
4/14/04
Date



Professor Richard Helzer
Director, School of Art

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

Date

 4-22-04

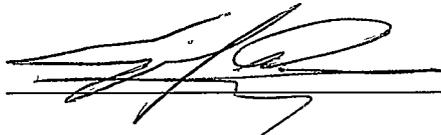
Dr. Bruce McLeod
Dean, College of Graduate Studies

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

If I have indicated my intention to copyright this thesis by including a copyright notice page, copying is allowable only for scholarly purposes, consistent with "fair use" as prescribed in the U.S. Copyright Law. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this thesis in whole or in parts may be granted only by the copyright holder.

Signature



Date

4/13/04

ARTIST STATEMENT

What is most important to me in the making of my artwork is the pleasure it gives me to work with materials and forms. When manipulating materials into shapes my intentions center around the corporeal relationship of the viewer to the artwork as well as the space they both will inhabit. For example, my piece "Yoke" jumps from one wall to the other in a sweeping and gravity-defying gesture, thus coming forward to meet the viewer. This is a gesture which the viewer completes by either coming closer to touch the piece, or by the more aloof route of mere contemplation.

The actual sources for the type of imagery I use in my work vary in origin as much as my personal experience does. For example, the idea for the shape of "Ruminant" came from a stretched out nautilus shell, and its rocking motion suggested to me the repetitiveness of ruminating. On the other hand, the shape of "Yoke" is a variation I derived from ancient Mayan ceremonial belts, speculated to have been used during Mayan ball-game rituals. I use these images simply because I find their forms intriguing—in other words, I like the way they twist, turn and activate positive and negative space. My familiarity with these objects is just a testimony to either my interest in nature or my background as a Meso-American—that is, these objects are within my range of experience.

The way I use materials is also a reflection of intersections of my experiences. For example, the way I use steel as lines to create volumetric forms reflects my interest in drawing. Furthermore, in my younger years I used to work

as a farm hand in western Honduras. The look and feel of hay and grass is a subtle but powerful memory, as well as a very direct symbol of the food chain we are a link within.

History, and in particular contemporary art history is something I have been fascinated with for a long time. Thus, thoughts of where in that tide of events and ideas I might fit best is something I have given some thought. Though I do like the formal beauty in the work of such minimalists as Donald Judd and Sol Lewitt, I identify more closely with less “Greenbergian”—and far more tactile—minimalists such as Rachel Whiteread and Eva Hesse. Content is, to me, undeniable and unavoidable. However, instead of seeking to convey a very specific message, what I intend to do is to create a suggestive visual mystery. That is, instead of resembling a book or an essay, my work is rather more like a concerto or a symphony. I intend to instill in those that experience my work a sense of speculative and proactive viewership, rather than our all-too-common practice of passive, almost thoughtless sign recognition.

There are certain words I like to use to describe my work: it is quietly playful and teasing, as in “Siftings”; it has a tendency to be iterative and pattern-oriented as in “Horns”; though at times it might seem static and overwhelming, as in “Inverted Barrel”, it can be kinetic and whimsical, as in “Ruminant”. I have derived all of these descriptive terms out of my experience as the maker of these objects. However, what I desire is for the viewer to touch and see these sculptures, and thus develop his or her own ideas about their nature, meaning and timbre.

LIST OF SLIDES

<u>Slide #</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Materials</u>	<u>Size</u>
Slide 1	"Yoke"	Hay and painted steel	5' tall
Slide 2	"Wind Field"	Pinwheels and painted steel	6' wide
Slide 3	Ruminant"	Hay and steel	8' wide
Slide 4	"Horns"	Painted steel	5' tall
Slide 5	"Untitled"	Painted steel	8' tall
Slide 6	"Inverted Barrel"	Redwood	9' tall
Slide 7	"Siftings"	Pinwheels and painted steel	9' wide
Slide 8	"Siftings" (detail)	Pinwheels and painted steel	9' wide
Slide 9	General View of the Show, Graduate Art Studios, April 2004		

MIGUEL ROMERO
"YOKE"

↑ TOP



Hay + Steel 5' Tall

● SLIDE 1 2004

MIGUEL ROMERO
"WIND FIELD"

↑ TOP



Pinwheels + Steel 6' wide

● SLIDE 2 2003

MIGUEL ROMERO
"RUMINANT"

↑ TOP



Hay + Steel 8' Wide

● SLIDE 3 2004

MIGUEL ROMERO
"HORNS"

↑ TOP



Painted Steel 5' tall

● SLIDE 4 2004

Painted Steel
8' tall
2004



↑ TOP
MIGUEL ROMERO
"UNTITLED"

● SLIDE 5

Redwood 9' tall
2003



↑ TOP
MIGUEL ROMERO
"INVERTED BARREL"

● SLIDE 6

MIGUEL ROMERO
"SIFTINGS"

↑ TOP



Pinwheels + Steel 9' wide

● SLIDE 7 2004

MIGUEL ROMERO
"SIFTINGS" (Detail)

↑ TOP



Pinwheels + Steel 9' wide

● SLIDE 8 2004

MIGUEL ROMERO
General View of Show

↑ TOP



Graduate Art Studios
● SLIDE 9 April 2004

APRIL 2004

21



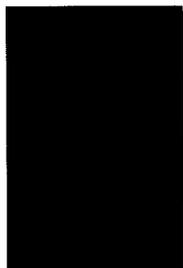
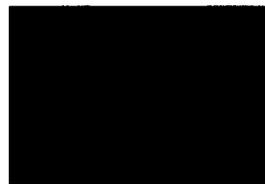
APRIL 2004

7

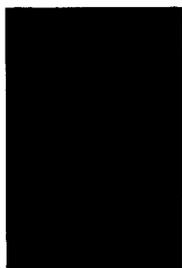


APRIL 2004

12



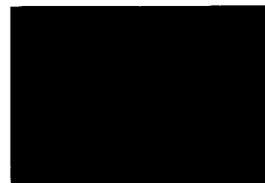
APRIL 2004
30



APRIL 2004
37

APRIL 2004

18



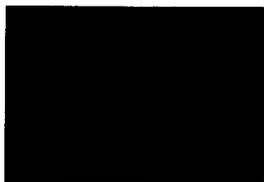
APRIL 2004

28



APRIL 2004

36

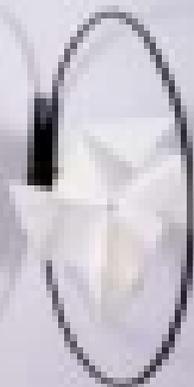


APRIL 2004

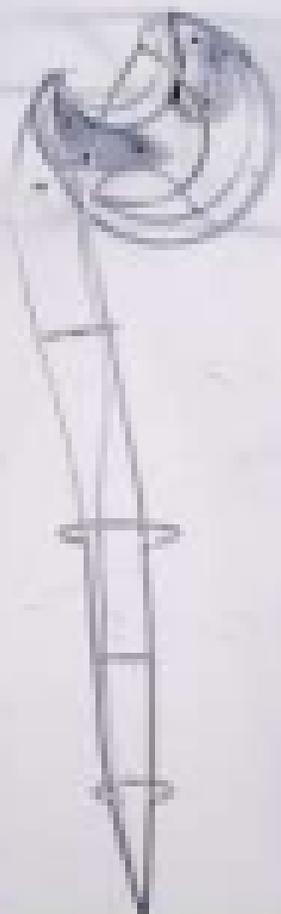
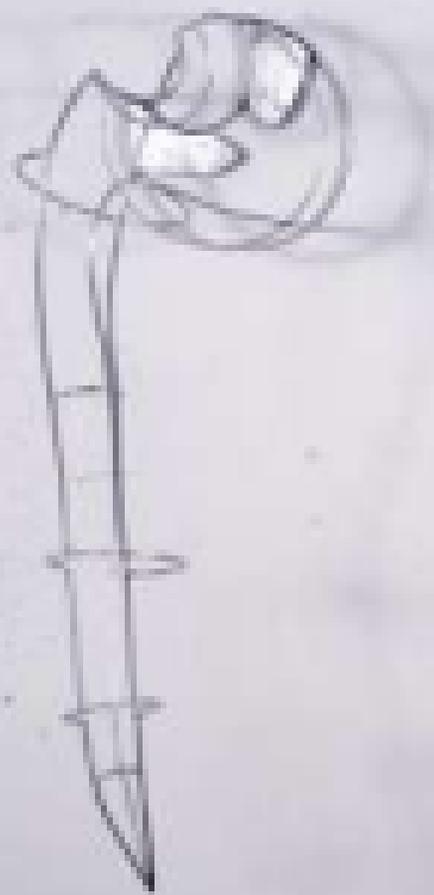
8

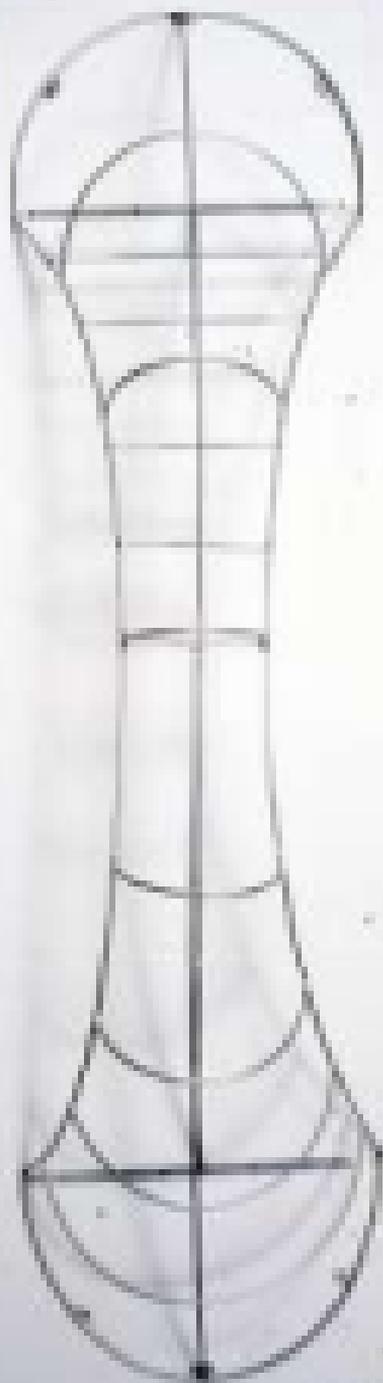




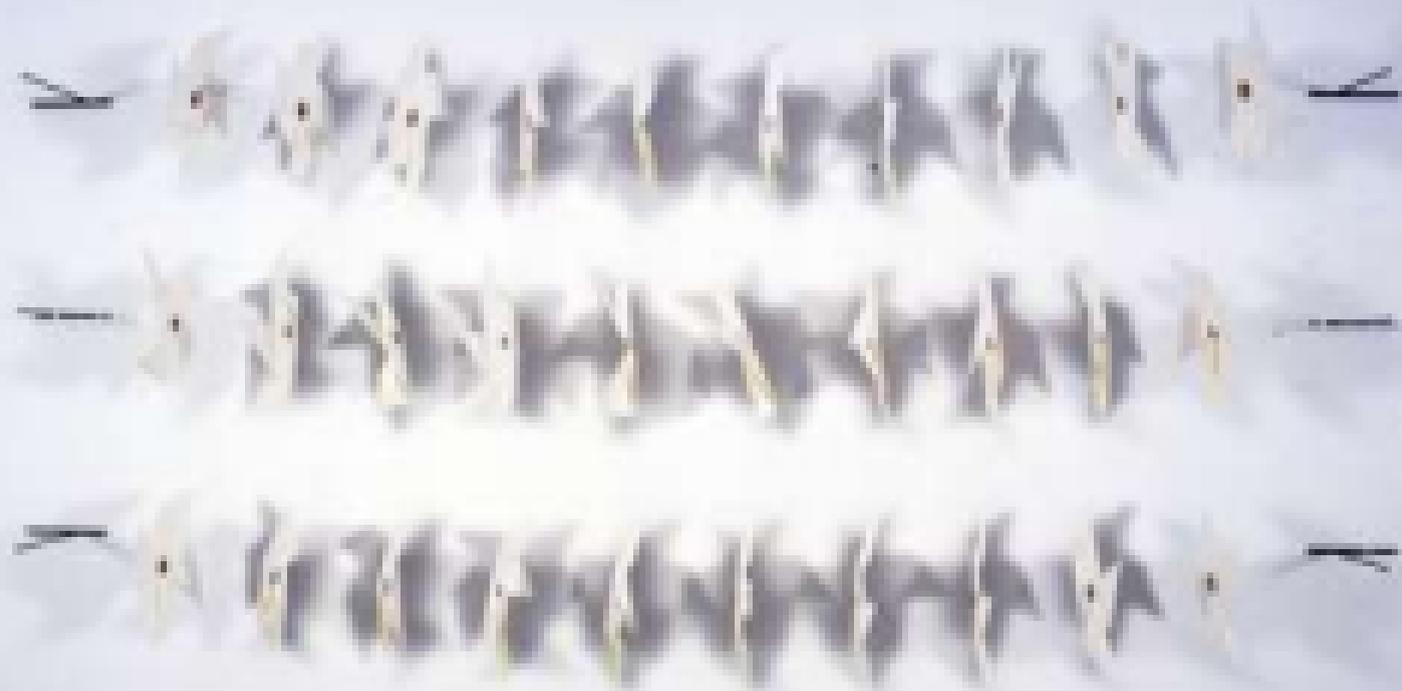
















MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY - BOZEMAN



3 1762 10396450 6

