



Surface::structure [slide]
by Sarah Maki

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts
Montana State University
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Abstract:
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Sarah Maki

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

of

Master of Fine Arts

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

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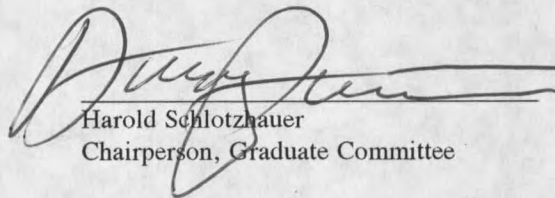
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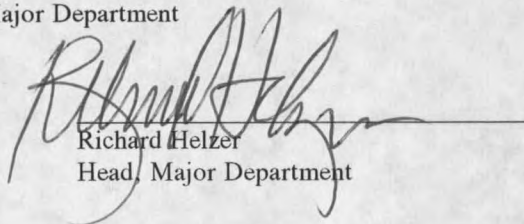
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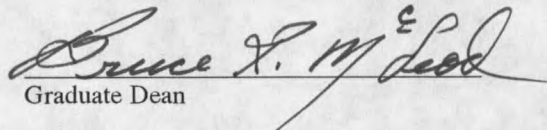
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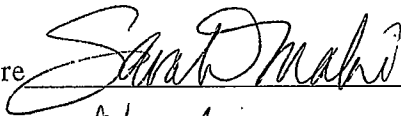

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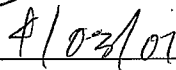
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"Truth comes from the observation of nature. Greatness exists in the inconspicuous and overlooked details."

-Leonard Koren, on *Wabi-Sabi*

My work is about revealing beauty in the hidden, subtle, and inauspicious details found around us. I want to call attention to beauty found in the quiet, temporal familiarities of the physical world where there exists a transition between material and nonexistence.

The main vehicle for this disclosure is casting process in which translucent materials are used to lift impressions from surfaces such as the studio floor or sheets of plastic. This process reveals countless natural occurrences, varying from cracks and wrinkles to dirt and chipped paint. The combination of these subtle incidents is the focal point of my work. My attention to surface draws the viewer into the interior of each piece, dissolving the outer membrane and revealing layers of hidden irregularities. Each work is a record of used and misuse – a temporal expression of beauty created by the collective effects of time, human treatment, and my own hand.

In order to view these subtleties, a visual order is necessary. The physical grid in all my pieces serves the function of providing a three-dimensional (metal or fabric) as well as a two-dimensional structure that allows the view to experience the subtleties of each surface. As a result, each piece is a constructed object that can be entered visually. Within either format, the purpose of my work is to show the view layers and natural occurrences in each surface.

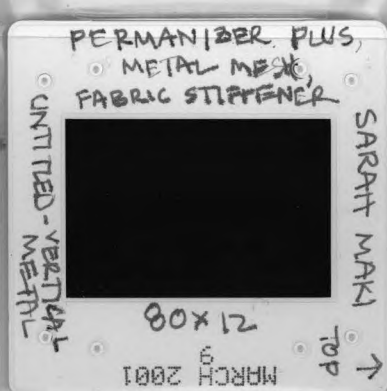
Ultimately, a dynamic is created through the incorporation of opposites, including: accident and control, serious and whimsical, order and chaos, form and formless. For instance, when a cast of a floor is made existing natural materials such as dirt and cracks become beautiful colors and surfaces. The materials used for casting such as rubber and plastics, have their own irregularities that when combined with the natural impression become elegant soothing subjects.

I use translucent materials for each surface because they successfully bridge the gap between the polarities mentioned. All of these materials are castable and can record subtle surface qualities, as well as reveal a balance between material and nonexistence. When light passes through the translucent materials it seemingly dissolves parts of the surface and reveals other areas built up by casting. Subtle layers emerge that exist as dichotomies themselves: microcosm/macrocosm, wet/dry, materiality/immateriality.

These polarities are found throughout the physical world and are what I intend to refer to the viewer. My work is about beauty found in familiarities like the surface of water, ice on a window, a muddy snow bank and cracks on a driveway. Echoing the lessons a Wabi-Sabi – a Japanese aesthetic philosopher – that all things are impermanent, imperfect, and incomplete, I want to call attention to beauty found in the overlooked and temporal. My work is successful when it causes the viewer to slow down, look closely, and discover the balance between the pleasure of thing and the pleasure of the freedom of things.

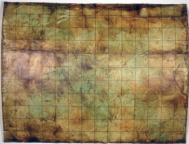
LIST OF SLIDES

1. Untitled - Hopi's studio floor - latex, fencing, shellac, 48 x 192
2. Untitled - graphite - latex, silicone, graphite, fencing, 84 x 24
3. Untitled - mattress - latex, acrylic, fencing, 48 x 108
4. Untitled - green - latex, acrylic, fencing, 72 x 78
5. Yaburitsugi - mulberry, plexie, shellac, pine, 60 x 96
6. Untitled - vertical metal - permanizer plus, metal mesh, fabric stiffener, 80 x 12
7. Untitled - studio floor - latex, graphite, acrylic, fencing, 48 x 84
8. Untitled - silk - silk, fabric stiffener, acrylic, fencing, 42 x 72
9. Untitled - layered - latex, acrylic, fencing, 48 x 84
10. Untitled - arch - permanizer plus, steel, 48 x 96
11. Untitled - paper tryptych - mulberry, acrylic, metal mesh, 72 x 100
12. Untitled - columns/diptych - latex, permanizer plus, fencing, 24 x 180



























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