

PAINTING THE IMPULSE

by

Jessica Moffett

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Chairperson, Graduate Committee Robert R. Smith

April 4, 2005

Approved for the School of Art

Head, Major Department Richard Helzer

April 4, 2005

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

Graduate Dean

Dr. Bruce McLeod

April 4, 2005

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Jessica Moffett

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My primary focus in my paintings is the male figure. These paintings have evolved in a non linear progression. I went from representational to partly abstract and back to representational infused with sequential art. During this development, I decided to paint my figures to resemble comic book characters of my own creation and paint them to represent emotional qualities of spontaneity and dualities of my psyche.

I am devoted to painting the male figure. The male nude has greater intensity in muscle definition and skeletal structure that creates dynamic anatomical imagery. This is why I draw and paint the male nude more willingly than the female figure.

I decided to integrate my admiration and study of Japanese comic books (called 'manga') in my paintings because this medium of Japanese popular culture is something that continuously fascinates me. Since I harbor a desire to become a comic book artist, it became inevitable to instill physical features of sequential art upon my figures. The facial structure is especially recognizable to those familiar with the average male protagonist seen in Japanese pop culture. Large eyes and sharp simple lines of the face and body are what construct a prototypical manga male figure. It is this format of the ideal I apply to my own comic book characters.

In Japan, comic books are a large part of the literary culture and extremely popular among all age groups. If the manga series is popular enough, it is usually animated into a TV series or a produced into a live-action movie. And what also develops from the manga and anime is merchandise. Accompanying my paintings are merchandise one would find flooding the Japanese and American comic book market. My banks, postcards, t-shirts, and posters are meant to convey the idea of mass

production based upon popular culture in the media. These items are represented by an icon I have created based on a character of my own invention named Toby. Toby is to be seen as cute, colorful, and cheerful, all of which are the opposite of my paintings. Despite the difference in mediums between my paintings and ‘mass produced’ products, these two worlds hold the element that they are inspired by sequential art.

In my paintings, emotions of frustration, melancholy, pessimism, and love ramble amongst each other in my mind, each wanting to express themselves in some form that would be ‘socially correct’. So, rather than hold these emotions behind a dam of self-restraint, I decided to brave a form of painting that would help accommodate these intensive and dynamic outlooks and focus upon a style caught between abstraction and representation.

To convey these impulsive visions emerging from that disruptive channel amid my heart and mind (a.k.a. id and ego, or right and left brain), figures in my work become erratic and complicated. All forms, objects, and figures constantly alter themselves, resisting easy decipherment; all the while I use my paint to glue these forms in relation to one another to render an impact of its visual elements.

In my drive to express with the paint, I cannot shake my sense of modesty over my deepest desires to present a clear image of my ideas on canvas. A part of me wants to fully expose the images within my head, but the other part wishes to conceal as much of it as possible to retain my own moral and political standing in society. And what escapes onto the canvas are male figures that are the embodiment of two intensities wrestling, the moral and amoral. These two forces react to one another with aggression and affection,

expressing both protection and insecurity. As a result, producing more anxiety than peace of mind.

On the other hand, the bank figures and other products are meant to represent the cutesy appeal of Japanese pop culture and reflect a calm, less erratic, form of communication. Nothing is radical or aggressive. There is no sketchiness or intimidation. These figures and sequential art imagery, to me, develop from my ego, the part of me that wishes to remain humble and modest.

I have decided to include these opposite mediums of paintings verses popular art because Japanese sequential art is an obsession of mine. I study it, draw it, and now I paint it because I've finally realized that this is something I will never escape creatively. The visual representations of my mind are seen in my paintings, they harbor my emotional rampage—and what I capture with pen and ink are the narrative images to vent these sensations. I cannot separate these two mediums, such as they are different application wise from each other; they both share something that I can manipulate to express my own divided psychology.



Image 1 – The 'Mpulse



Image 2 – Instinct I



Image 3 – Instinct II



Image 4 – Tenshi I



Image 5 – Ai



Image 6 – To Decide



Image 7 – The Heart



Image 8 – The Coffee bean Prostate



Image 9 – Unrequited. Luv



Image 10 – Joy



Image 11 – Nai



Image 12 – Akurei no Kohibito I



Image 13 – Akurei no Kohibito II



Image 14 – Tenshi Tobias I



Image 15 – Tenshi Tobias II



Image 16 – Tobias Piggybank



Image 17 – Tobias Postcards



Image 18 – T-Shirts