OTHERWISE

by

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

of

Masters of Fine Arts

in

Art

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

November 2006

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Signature __Julia Lauren Carpenter_____

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The nine, large-scale paintings of my MFA Thesis show, "Otherwise," are artifacts from a year long exorcism of grief and anger over my young sister's terrible, yet merciful death. I painted my sister's image through the filter of my own emotion exploring scale, color, and the gestural mark. In addition I painted her son, whose image links the past to the future.

Each portrait is confrontational, emotionally naked and in some cases, disturbing. With my largest brushes, rags, a broom, and my bare hands, I explored a palette of certain colors to shout out my horror or in some cases sing an ode of idealistic beauty. Dynamic, gestural marks created with charcoal stick or loaded brush communicate rage and instability, a counterpoint to the more restrained brushstrokes or glazing. The mystery and the elegiac quality I have admired in Rembrandt and the Venetian painters influenced my more somber color choices. Yet, my morbid fascination with flesh, bone, and viscera after Amy's death led to a painterly obsession with the color red. I looked to Francisco Goya as well as contemporary painters Tony Scherman, Marilyn Minter and Francis Bacon each inspiring me with the simultaneous beauty and horror of the human mouth.

The paintings are based on photographs, many taken two months before my sister died. Each portrait maintains a certain likeness to her features yet also reflects the process of memory by blurring edges between subject and background or between one feature and another. The details dissolve into rivers of dripping paint, one area running into another, a reference to the decay of the human body as well as the ephemeral nature of certain details of the physical or personal memory. Clarity and certainty are lost while

the painter's psyche is revealed. Throughout this body of work, I attempt to weave the complex psychology of grief into the painted surface.

The creation of this body of work allowed me to explore my own loss. Using the template of the human face I discovered within the genre of portraiture the ability to go beyond the traditional to express the unspeakable.



Image 1 - *Autopsy*



Image 2 – *Troubled Memory (Jared)*



Image 3 – *Lost in a Haze*



Image 4 - *Questions in a World of Blue*

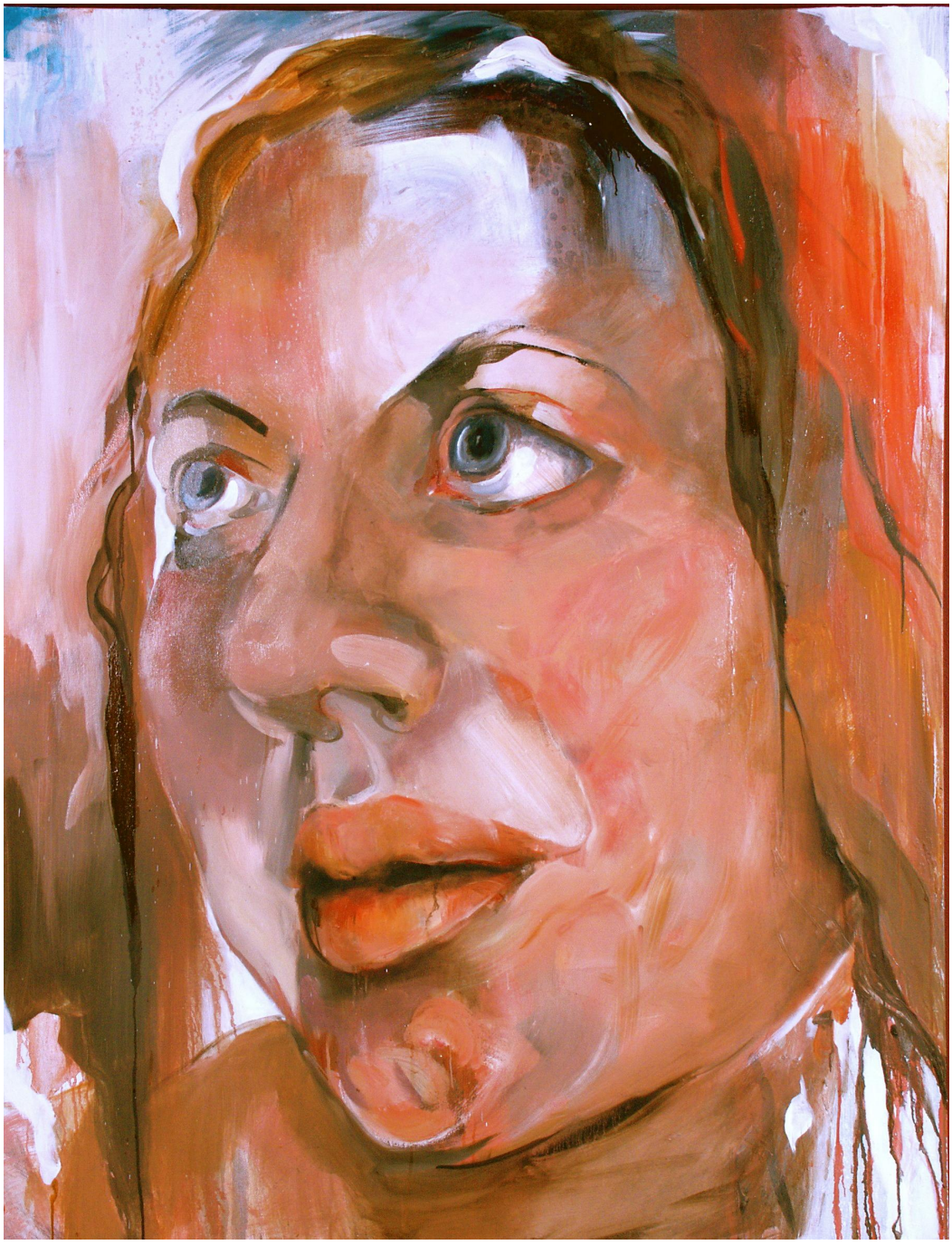


Image 5 - *Illogical Associations*



Image 6 –*Odi et Amo (I love and I hate)*



Image 7 – *The Taste of Stone*



Image 8 - *Doppelgänger*



Image 9 - *Goodbye*



Image 10 - Installation View 1



Image 11 - Installation View 2