Act of uncivil obedience : a master of Fine Arts thesis against mastery and fine arts - a holistic view
by Carl Thurston Stewart

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:
My artistic production in graduate school is primarily temporary public art with an increasing commitment to art that presents political and social issues. Most of my artwork takes the form of large banners with images and words. My year of thesis work included writing criticism and producing video works. The thesis exhibition is a culmination and logical extension of my thinking of art as a means of communicating about issues that have vital importance to the world, integrating living with art, and stretching the limits of art.

I am protesting "mastery" and "fine arts". "Mastery", furthers patriarchal values as a male term of dominance and control. It is an unsuitable term or value for these changing times. "Fine Arts", denoting a discipline separated from the other arts and disciplines, is also restrictive.

I am interested in art as a form of communication. The urgent world situation prompts me to direct my powers to political and social issues. We receive most of our information about political and social issues from the major electronic and print media which address a mass audience. They are bound to the prevailing culture, its traditions, and to the constraints of commercial success. I have chosen to communicate to a smaller audience in a poetic, non-traditional manner relatively free of constraints.

My thesis Exhibition included an occupation of the art gallery, a 21 day liquid fast, and various changing installations. It was entitled, "An Act of Uncivil Obedience".

ACT OF UNCIVIL OBEDIENCE: A MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS AGAINST MASTERY AND FINE ARTS — A HOLISTIC VIEW.

by

Carl Thurston Stewart

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

of

Master of Fine Arts

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

May 1988

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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.

June 8, 1988
Date

Chairperson, Graduate Committee

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JUNE 8, 1988
Date

Head, Major Department

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

June 10, 1988
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Graduate Dean

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Date June 5, 1988

VITA

Born August 28, 1955 of Lenore Thurston, and Omer Call Stewart, Carl Thurston Stewart, the youngest of four, was named by his brother for three Brooklyn Dodgers of that same winning year. His mother (MA in English with a thesis on Stephen Crane) was a librarian and his father an anthropologist (ethnohistorian), specializing in the Peyote religion of the American Indians. Brought up in beautiful Boulder, Colorado of the Sixties, he always wanted to be a baseball player. His plans were permanently interrupted when his parents took him to Bordeaux, France placing him in a French lycee for the seventh and eighth grades. Returning to Boulder High School, Carl became involved in theater, with leads in such plays as J.B., Beckette's Fin de Partie (Endgame produced in French), and Everyman. He was the Colorado State Champion in the Analysis and Interpretation of Oratory in 1973 when he graduated. Aimless, and scared of the sexual aura of the theater, Carl chose to perform more quietly. He took a job at the City of Boulder Ceramics Lab as janitor and aide for two years, doing his own pottery on the side. With the money he made, but feeling there were enough good potters in the world already, he returned to Europe, first Italy (Perugia) for nine months where he learned Italian quite well, then to Paris to study Art History (BA cum laude 1978, American College in Paris). After working in the ACP library for two years, he did a session at the Goethe Institute in Passau, West Germany passing their intermediate language exam. Without having found anything else that came quite so close to a passion, Carl returned to ceramics at the Kansas City Art Institute in 1980. There his ceramic work changed from almost purely utilitarian pots to pottery birds. Although pleased with the attention his birds attracted, he would return to more utilitarian forms of art in Graduate School. At Kansas City he was the Chairman of the Student Gallery Committee. After graduation (BFA, 1983) he worked at the Morgan Gallery, as Assistant to the Director where he oversaw all of the major and minor operations of the nationally recognized gallery. After two years there, he began graduate work at Montana State University January, 1985. He left ceramics after the first quarter, and spent a quarter in his second year in Guatemala studying Spanish, writing and doing watercolors. While at MSU he was a member of various committees and political organizations, wrote art related articles in the student newspaper, and was a radio news broadcaster.

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Many people helped in my thesis, not least of whom were my committee, Jay Schmidt, Hal Schlotzhauer, Stephanie Newman, and especially Paul Monaco and ex officio committee member, Director of the School of Art, Willem Volkersz. Outside the university I received essential support from Timothy Tate.

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ABSTRACT

My artistic production in graduate school is primarily temporary public art with an increasing commitment to art that presents political and social issues. Most of my artwork takes the form of large banners with images and words. My year of thesis work included writing criticism and producing video works. The thesis exhibition is a culmination and logical extension of my thinking of art as a means of communicating about issues that have vital importance to the world, integrating living with art, and stretching the limits of art.

I am protesting "mastery" and "fine arts". "Mastery", furthers patriarchal values as a male term of dominance and control. It is an unsuitable term or value for these changing times. "Fine Arts", denoting a discipline separated from the other arts and disciplines, is also restrictive.

I am interested in art as a form of communication. The urgent world situation prompts me to direct my powers to political and social issues. We receive most of our information about political and social issues from the major electronic and print media which address a mass audience. They are bound to the prevailing culture, its traditions, and to the constraints of commercial success. I have chosen to communicate to a smaller audience in a poetic, non-traditional manner relatively free of constraints.

My thesis Exhibition included an occupation of the art gallery, a 21 day liquid fast, and various changing installations. It was entitled, "An Act of Uncivil Obedience".

INTRODUCTION

My artistic production through three years of graduate school is primarily temporary public art with an increasing commitment to art that presents political and social issues. Most of my artwork takes the form of large banners with images and words hung outside from a tower next to the art building. During my year of thesis work I expanded my repertory to include writing criticism and producing video works.

My final work, the thesis exhibition, is a culmination and logical extension of my thinking of art as a means of communicating about issues that have vital importance to the world, and of integrating living with art.

I am an advocate of art which is as free an expression of the artist's will as possible. Although our society has established freedom in art, there are still many imposed limits. Some of the limits are imposed by institutions; others are imposed by the individual artist sometimes unconsciously. I am trying to stretch the institutional and personal limits to free my ability of expression as much as possible.

Personal limitations are formed by our experience. The broader our experiences the less they will be limiting.

My graduate studies and thesis have been a building up of these but, unlike many artists, I have not specialized in a particular medium, and the experiences that I have culled do not fit into traditional art skills.

Language can also be a limiting factor. The term "mastery", for instance, furthers patriarchal values as a male term of dominance and control. It is an unsuitable term or value for these changing times. "Fine Arts", a term denoting a discipline separated from the other arts and disciplines, is also restrictive. For these reasons I am against a Master of Fine Arts and my thesis is a protest.

I am interested in art as a form of communication. With that basic premise, the question is <u>what</u> to communicate and how. I am attracted to art that communicates the wonders of nature and that delves into the mysteries of the human condition. While these are part of most art, the urgent world situation prompts me to direct my powers to political and social issues.

We receive most of our information about political and social issues from the major electronic and print media which address a mass audience. They are bound to the prevailing culture, its traditions, and to the constraints of commercial success. I have chosen to communicate to a

smaller audience in a poetic, non-traditional manner relatively free of constraints.



Figure 1.
'Titled'[1], Fall 1985. General view, First banner hung between Cheever and Haynes Hall, west side. Paper, paint and charcoal. 139"h x 285"w. All figures of banners are at the same location and are approximately the same size.

This means that, although there are specific meanings to my works, they are stated in an open manner, to be discovered after some consideration. I expect to get consideration by creating pieces that are intriguing through their oddity, curious juxtapositions and by their unexpected placement.

The following Artist's Statement describes the logic that I have pursued. I begin by illustrating holistic vision through a widely accepted concept of basic design. Then I show how I have worked toward this through my work. Finally, I describe the intention of my thesis exhibition.



Figure 2.
'Titled'. Close view.

A HOLISTIC VIEW OF ART

To define a thing summons everything else other than that thing, particularly its opposite. For example, to define snow it must be compared to other conditions of weather such as rain, sleet, fog and so on. The condition of no-snow is essential to describing snow. Together these conditions and their organic relationships describe weather as an organic whole. This "whole view", or holistic view, is what I am trying to achieve.

This principle of wholeness is illustrated by one of the basic principles of design: the concept of positive and negative space (see Figure 3). When one makes a shape on a surface, one not only makes that shape but the shape that surrounds it as well. Positive space is the shape itself while negative space surrounds the shape. One cannot exist without the other. They are organically dependent on each other. The important lesson in this is that one is not more important than the other and both contribute to make up the whole design.

This idea is often difficult for art students to understand. Teachers inevitably develop tricks which deceive students into learning this truth. For instance, they will have students draw all of the space around a

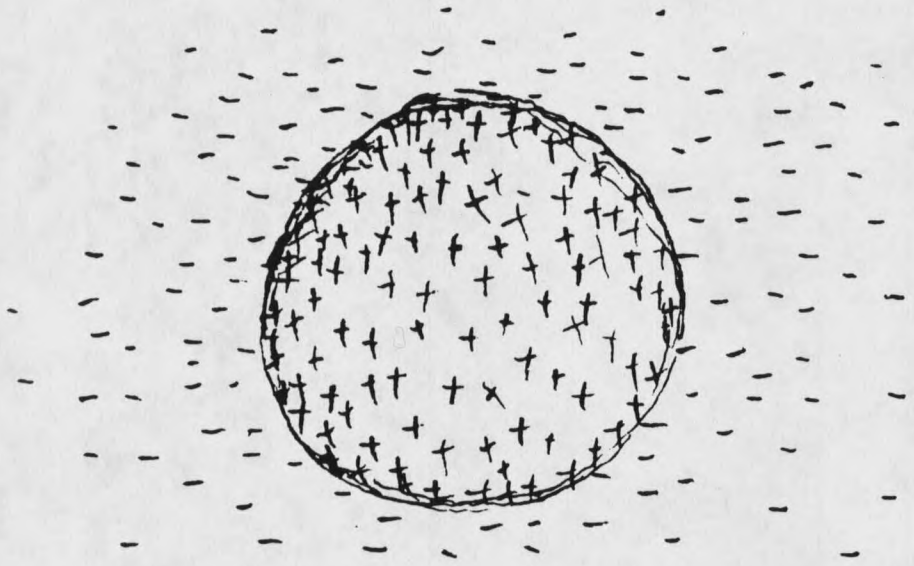


Figure 3.
A shape drawn on a page showing positive and negative space.

chair, without drawing the chair itself--and voila!--they find they have drawn the chair in spite of themselves.

Taken beyond drawing to the realm of three dimensional works, the same principle applies. A plaster sculpture of a woman will comprise not only the plaster, but all of the space around the plaster. That space comes to include the gallery, or environment the sculpture is placed in, or the context. The context in which a sculpture is placed will define to a great extent what the sculpture is. Taken to the logical extreme, the context for every work of art is the society in which it is made.

Thus, just as no-snow (and rain, sleet etc.) defines snow; as the negative space defines a shape; society, what is not-art, defines art.

This was described most succinctly by Marcel Duchamp with his "Ready-mades". When Duchamp placed his famous "Fountain" (a porcelain, industrially-made urinal) in an art gallery, it made a statement of enormous proportions. Among its meanings was that the context of the gallery gave a product that otherwise would have had only mundane significance a new significance as "art".

Although Marcel Duchamp's work is now widely accepted, it remains radical in that it gets to the root of some problems of art production. It questions the importance of uniqueness in art objects, whether it is important for an artist to have a hand in the actual construction of an object, and he shows that the gallery context can define a thing as art.

This can be seen as a monumental gesture in bringing art into a holistic realm. It shows that indeed what is non-art (the gallery, art's agent to the society) that defines art.

To attempt a holistic view of Fine Arts we should consider everything that is <u>not</u> Fine Art. Fine Arts are defined by Montana State University and School of Art as a

product of "painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, metalsmithing, and professional design".[2] A tremendous amount of material lies outside these fields and makes it all the more difficult to achieve any holistic view.

MY APPROACH

I will consider five things that lie outside the realm of this definition of Fine Arts: distribution of art, art criticism, politics, language and video and the news. I have tried to integrate these non-Fine-Art aspects into my work.

The Distribution of Art

Currently, most professional artists distribute their work by letting others do it for them by using the established networks of galleries and museums. This system was established in the mid-1800's, the same time the current world economic systems were codified to address industrialization. The gallery system in art freed artists from dependency on salons, government, or religious patronage. Galleries continue to free artists from dealing directly in the distribution of their work.

The gallery system has become very sophisticated and powerful. I experienced the shortcomings of gallery distribution personally while working at the relatively prestigous Morgan Gallery in Kansas City for two years. I saw that while galleries free artists to devote themselves primarily to the production of their art, artists also

sacrifice a great deal. First, by not controlling the presentation of their work, artists risk either being misrepresented or inadequately represented. Galleries control the market of an artist's work and not necessarily in the artist's best interest. The dealer and market will unconsciously if not consciously direct an artist's production. Artists are often obliged to restrict their materials to materials of archival quality and the scale and scope of their work will be restricted to the gallery's scale and scope. Inevitably, artists working within the framework of the gallery system become producers of objects for investment and speculation.

This often leads to an alienation of artists from their products. Objects usually made with a great deal of personal involvement are often sent to a distant market and sold without the artist knowing the circumstances or final home for their works.

Also while working in the gallery, I was struck with the great power that living with art works over an extended time can have. I found that while some art lost its initial attraction over a period of time, other works grew to have an unexpected, profound effect. Most viewers of art in galleries give the art only a cursory glance rendering a lot of art completely ineffectual.

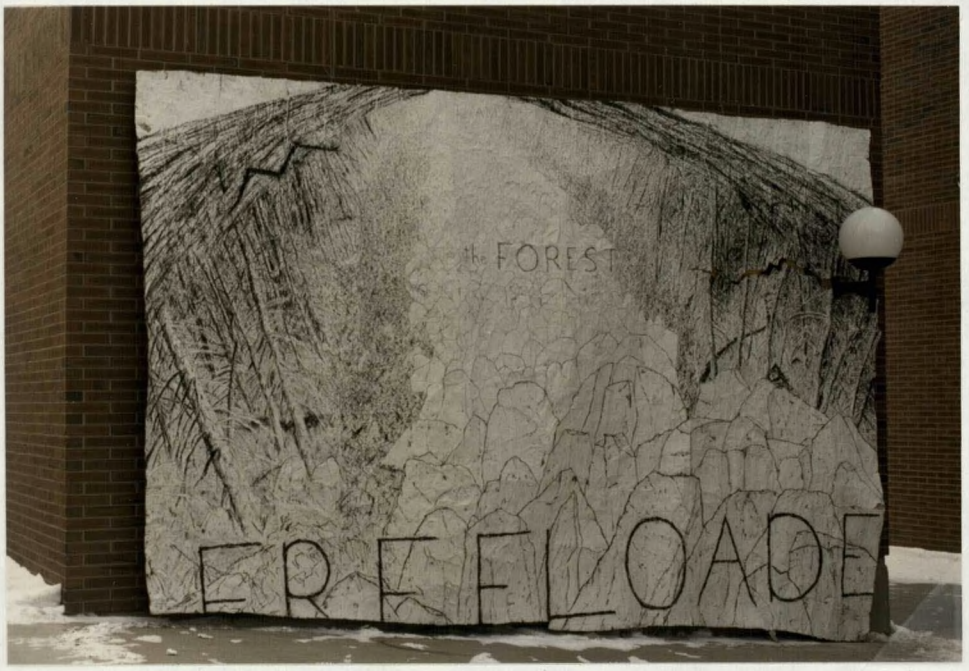


Figure 4.
'The Forest'. Fall 1986. The full text: "I AM/YOU ARE/ the FOREST/FREELOADE. . .". On the inside of Haynes Cheever Tower.

While at MSU I was able to experiment in the distribution of my own work. Working with inexpensive, recyclable materials, I devised ways to easily hang billboard-sized banners in a public space. I was able to personally oversee the process of production and distribution of my work from beginning to end. The banners presented themselves directly to viewers without any middleman.

My works were seen over an extended period of time by a large general public. Placed on a building on campus along a commonly traversed route, my work was seen by

thousands in the natural course of their day instead of only hundreds in a gallery. Repeated exposure to my pieces makes up for the fact that people have only a short time to give to art. I think I was successful in putting art into the lives of people who would customarily not be exposed to it. By being more involved in the distribution of my work, I saw how it functions in public and have a better view of how art in general functions in society.

My interest in distribution goes beyond my own art work. I particularly enjoy helping those who would generally not have their art works exhibited show their art. The exhibition that I organized of Montana State Prison inmates' drawings at MSU is an example of this. Also, I made a point of including other artists' work in my thesis exhibition.

Criticism

Art criticism is probably the most common method of getting the word out about art to both other artists and to those not necessarily following the art scene. Published criticism, whether it be positive or negative advertises the arts and as such is part of the distribution network. Only badly written, slanderous, or libelous criticism is detrimental to the arts.

My primary goal in writing about the arts is to pose intriguing questions and ideas that will stimulate the general public to view art. I do not claim to be objective in my reviews because I do not believe that it is possible. I openly acknowledge my bias for active social or political art which is the same agenda I have for my own art.

For example, in the spring of 1987, I wrote a series of articles that maintained that all art should communicate directly about political and social issues.[3] This may be an absurd proposition because direct communication is never truly possible due to the inability of language or our perception of images to ever match another experience. I was also denying the power of poetry (visual or written) to communicate truths even if poetry uses indirect means. But, although it was perhaps an absurd proposition, my articles did make many art students question the subject matter of their art, and probably caused more people to view the exhibition.

The so-called objectivity of critics is one of the reasons criticism is separated from the arts. Some artists and critics now recognize that this is an artificial separation and agree that critics and artists use the same techniques and strategies, and often for the same ends.[4]

I think it is important that artists become more involved in the distribution and criticism of each other's and their own works. Many galleries and critics currently involved in these activities are not working with the artist's interests in mind and have little knowledge of the artistic processes. Since distribution of artists' work is essential to their survival it is unwise to leave this to others.

Politics

Although political art is not new or unique, it is often unpopular. At this time, I don't feel as though I have any choice but to do political art. My most important motivating premise is that the world is in the most precarious position ever before in human history. We are responsible for this problem, and I feel I must do what I can to keep the problem in front of the public.

I have done this quite literally in a couple of works by painting a globe/baseball with the words "World Serious" and symbols representing the United States and the Soviet Union. I wanted to suggest how, in a typically ethnocentric way, we make something global which is really local. The humor of this work also made it more effective.



Figure 5.
'World Serious 86', Fall 1986, Cattle Marker, enamel on plastic tarp.

I do not communicate in a prosaic manner so my works will not necessarily be understood in their original intent by everyone, but I do think there are entry points in all of my works either visually or with the use of words. My meanings are woven in the interaction of these images and words. Although viewers make up their own meanings my intent of stimulating thought and discussion about world issues is achieved. I use many of the same tactics as advertisers use when they put up billboards, but my art does not sell products. It only suggests topics for discussion through repeated exposure. Also, people who

share my activism, recognize in my art someone who shares their convictions, and they are encouraged to keep active.

Some people do not want to think about politics. Others think politics is not the realm of art or think that art cannot have any impact on world problems. For me, it is simply an obligation; and thus, more than anything else, the world situation restricts my freedom of expression.

Language

I use written language in my work because it gives many viewers a definite entry to my work the same way titles function next to art works in a gallery. My use of words is more integrated with the work of art itself. I also have a personal fascination with the richness of language and its treachery: language can both direct a viewer and mislead them through its multiple meanings. When asked which is more important, the words or the visual image, I respond that they are inseparable. Together they convey ideas that are important and complex.

An example of my play with words is a piece in which I wrote "PAIN" with loaves of French bread associated with the words "companion", "pan" and "compañero. The initial image of "PAIN" by itself gives viewers a powerful image.



Figure 6.
'PAIN', Spring 1986. Weatherproofed French bread wired onto paper (chicken wire backing).

If they choose to pursue the meanings of the other words, a richer meaning will be revealed. I am interested in the fact that this same work would have a completely different meaning in a French speaking country where pain means bread. By tying "pain", "companion" (which etymologically means "to share bread"), and a hidden heart shape, I intended to give a complex poetic image of the sharing of bread and pain in companionships. This could be called etymological iconography.

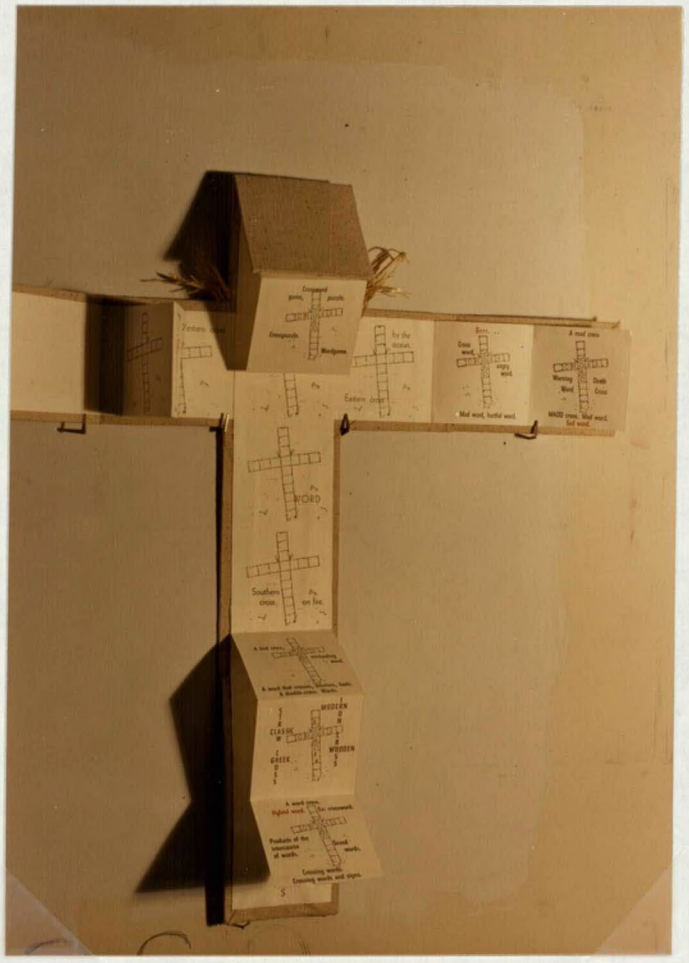


Figure 7.
Cross Word book, Summer 1986. Closed size: 16 1/4" x 12 1/4". Canvas, straw, and Arches paper.

My most thorough exploration of language's treachery and richness is a Cross Word book (Fig. 7) and installation of crosses with words on campus (Fig. 8). I tried to give all possible meanings of "cross word". I had crosses that had cross word as in a crossword puzzle; words from Christ's cross; angry word as a cross word; cemetery

crosses as last words, etc. I included "parallel lines" which might be seen as the opposite of a cross but which, according to the theory of curved space, actually do cross eventually.

Viewers give their own meanings to each of these works. Perhaps I even mislead viewers to surface meanings, but through complexity and the oddness of the presentation, I suggest that there is more to understand. "PAIN" seems at first to be simply "PAIN"; crosses just crosses, but with either a shared culture, more thought, or an initiation a richer meaning can be found.



Figure 8.
Installation of word crosses, Fall 1986. Wood, straw and paint. MSU campus, 11th and Garfield.

While some of my works are more literal than others, I prefer the more poetic. I think that the ambiguity of a poetic image and words gives an idea more staying power since people must consider the pieces longer to understand them. A poetic image is also a more open statement which gives viewers more room for interpretation. It is less authoritative and reflects the complexities of the issues of our times.

I see my art works as puzzles concerned with important concepts and experiences. Even on a surface level, these games direct viewers to consider contemporary issues. The display of words and images is a successful mass advertising format. Although I share that format my banners are more complex, poetic, and have a different agenda.

Video and the news

The power of television and the effect it will have on our society after a few generations is incalculable. Kenneth Clarke suggested that as other machines have been used by a minority to "keep free men in subjection"[5], so television has been used.

Video seems like television but, because it is relatively inexpensive, it can be used by those outside the

major media to provide alternative T.V. images. It is a natural direction for me as it combines image with language. It is also a means of mass communication and, like my billboards, can be distributed independently of galleries or other distributors of art.

I have made three videos. The first illustrates a personal view about our condition and sexual identities (see Fig. 9). The second combines my interest in criticism with video and features the art building's maintenance man reviewing an art show.



Figure 9.
Video still from: "You may be wondering about me..." 1985-87. Ten minute repeating monologue with variations.

The third video is a synthesis of my ideas. It is a newscast containing political and social issues. Although I have used it in a variety of ways, I feel it was most effective at eight o'clock in the morning, outside, in front of one of my banners of the world. This was a collaborative project between undergraduate student Chris Hawkins and myself. The banner contained the words "World Serious" and "MBCL NEWS". Images and words repeated themselves between the installation and the video.

This installation evoked the urgency of the world situation. Its effect was partially dependent on the time of day, dawn, and on its placement--an unlikely place to find a television blaring the world headlines. As the newscaster, I read a variety of stories, from the trivial to the very important, with my character and costumes changing from scene to scene. The work had an odd, strange quality that I feel made it compelling to people who passed by.



Figure 10.
"MCBL NEWS' installation, Fall 1987. Paint, video monitor and ceramic figure, etc. Done in collaboration with Chris Hawkins.

The newscast was delivered in the requisite stern news voice--but full of bloopers and stumbling. I tried to project a human and humourous image, not domineering or authoritative. While delivering some of the most urgent messages of the day, I provided an alternative image to the one associated with typical news broadcasts.

THESIS EXHIBITION

With my previously stated attitudes about galleries, it would seem that I would not agree to show my work in one. Galleries, as separated spaces from the general public, serve to keep art precious, and apart from everyday concerns.

I felt, however, that I could use the traditional gallery against itself or at least expand its meaning with my ideas. Rather than a place to show art objects, the gallery could be a staging ground for political action, a place to distribute ideas rather than art objects. Also, I could take full advantage of the time and space I had in the gallery to continue my search for a holistic view of art.

As an "Act of Uncivil Obedience", my thesis exhibition was a protest against the values of our prevailing culture. My tactics included a liquid fast or hunger strike while I physically occupied the gallery, living there during the duration of the 21 day exhibition. My activities during that time included rearranging the space of the gallery using recyclable waste, news wires and newspapers, natural materials like leaves and rocks, and videos. A primary image motivating me was the metaphor of the art gallery as

prison--with me a prisoner of the ideals represented by a Master of Fine Arts. I am against "mastery" and "fine arts".

Against Mastery

Some artists and critics, many of them feminists, attack "mastery" as a negative ideal in our culture.[7] They say the nature of the word is male and thus reinforces the patriarchal values in our society. They point to "master narratives" as the primary subject matter of modern art. Master narratives are images that show mastery over the land (landscapes); or over women (the nude), for example; or they are pictures about the "sublime", which is commonly a narrative about a master (a god or higher truth) in our culture. Even the notion of a sublime (or Master) is a means for an elite to have power over others.[7]

"Mastery" is also invoked in terms of mastery of materials and techniques. This often causes artists to focus on techniques or on problems of certain materials so that they lose sight of any message or of the effectiveness of their communication. Mastery over materials and techniques is also a means of domination. To awe a viewer with one's technique or mastery of material is to separate them from you. Simple means and materials mean that the

message stands on its own and that skill or seductive materials do not distract from the meaning.

My art shows little mastery of the kinds mentioned above. The subject matter of my work is not women, the landscape or the sublime. The subject matter of my work is our culture and my search within it. Our culture is characterized by the mastery of women in advertising. Although nature is important in my work, I do not master it with my technique. I use cheap or free materials in a



Figure 11.
'Mastery/Mistress/. . .', Fall 1987. (With anonymous graffiti added 'Mystical/Magestic (sic) Magical/MOTHER)!

responsive way rather than with an idea of mastering them. Even in my videos there is no masterful technique either in the acting or production.

Little of my art may be possessed. Possession is the greatest form of mastery. Fine art, until recently, has meant objects for ownership. To own something is to assume control of it, but that possession and control are really illusory. The temporality of life, the sophisticated methods of copying images and the threat of nuclear annihilation deny any true possession of objects.

The ideal of "mastery" is not confined to the art world by any means. Modern history is a history of wars of possession and control. Technology, too, is used to master the earth as if we can control or possess it. Modern sensibilities of justice oppose the right of possession of territory through violence though it still goes on anyway. The earth's limited resources and environmental problems show us that the earth will never be controlled or possessed, but the old paridigm, unlimited growth through the exploitation of resources and people, is far from changing.[8]

My work resists possession. It is all dependent on its temporary placement (in a gallery or on a building). In the thesis exhibition it is fragmentary and illusive

because it is constantly changing. Fundamentally, the exhibition was a personal experience, and experience can never be possessed or traded. My works are not material contributions to the prevailing culture but a critique of our culture obsessed with possession.

Against Fine Arts

I wrote of my non-Fine-Arts (as defined by Montana State University) activities. If I were to be against Fine Arts simply because MSU's graduate program did not include video, for example, it would be a simple technicality. The art faculty at MSU is open to the many forms that art can take these days. In fact, there is now a category for the MFA at MSU called Intermedia to handle students who don't fit the existing categories.

What I am really against is the separating of the arts from each other (Fine Arts from writing, film, music, etc.). I am also against the separation of the arts from the other disciplines. The arts should be at the service of all disciplines, particularly in connecting them. Unfortunately, with the current educational system, the arts are separated from other disciplines and often only speak to themselves.

The separation of disciplines is indicative of the fragmentation in our society which has led our culture to the point of self destruction. Specialization and technological progress, spurred by the desire for commercial success, have driven us to an insane point in history. Radical change is needed to right the course of human life. My art speaks to this radical change both in its means and its message.

An Act of Uncivil Obedience

My thesis exhibition takes my thought to the farthest logical conclusion. While celebrating the great freedom of expression we have in our society, I am protesting the limits that still exist. Those limits are institutional, linguistic, personal, and ultimately political. My intent is to communicate about these problems using evidence from our culture and by the example of my search.

The exhibition lasted 21 days, ending on Christmas day 1987. The title "An Act of Uncivil Obedience" says two things in one. As a contradiction, it encompasses the whole of what I wanted to communicate. It is obedience to my requirements for an MFA so that I may have the opportunity to teach. But I do this under protest. It is civil disobedience in protest of the current systems and

values which I find meaningless. I created my own meaningful trial or rite of passage to replace the traditional thesis exhibition.

Like my banners and other works, civil disobedience has the potential for communication about the problems of our world. It is non-violent. I was not seeking to dominate. The fast and constant presence in the gallery was humbling. I experienced both the institution and myself fully during this time. While literally institutionalizing myself, I tried to follow a path which would lead me to deeper understanding of myself.[9]

My exhibition was not made of artifacts or objects for possession. It is made up of facts. Using advertising from the local media I exposed the sexism and gross commercialism that are there. In a similar way my video newscast made up of actual Associated Press releases presents facts of our culture. I am exposing the culture with itself to itself.

Institutions are necessarily conservative in order to survive. The radical change that I am advocating would be the end of the institution of art education as it now exists. It is a remarkable credit to our society that my protest can be done within the institution itself. I use the institution against itself to inspire thought and

discussion which may provoke some necessary changes, not only in art but other disciplines as well.

By placing myself in the gallery, the fact of my being is presented as evidence. I am not telling stories with my art, as many do, but become a story. My sacrifice and commitment serve as an example to others to pursue the same kind of search of themselves and of our culture.

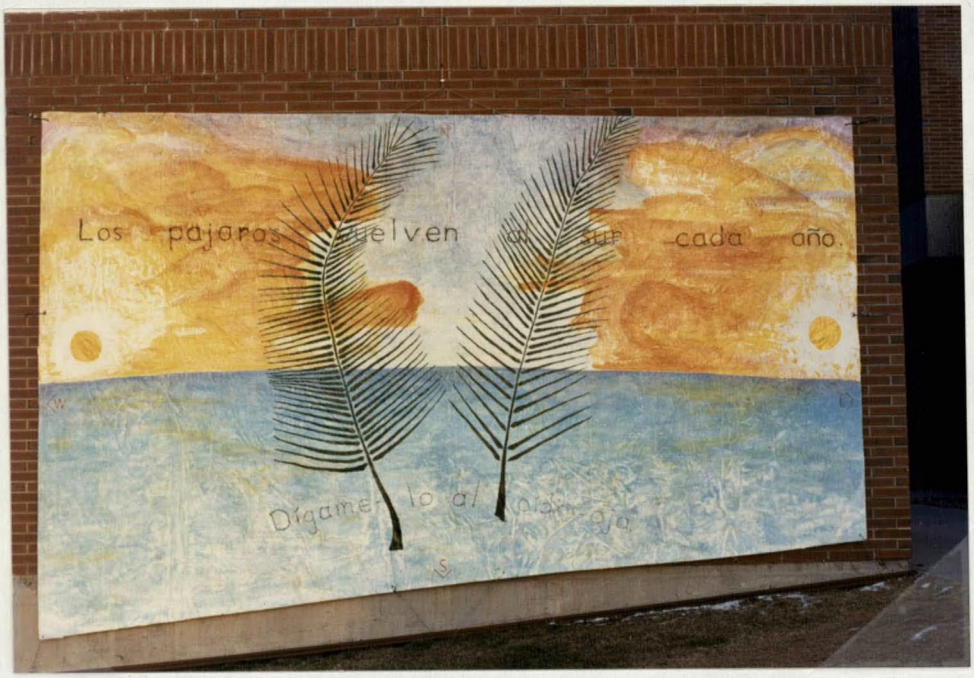


Figure 12.
'Los Pajaros. . .', Winter 1987. (Trans. "Birds return south every year. Whisper it to me--leaf").

FOOTNOTES

[1]None of my works are titled per se (just as they are not signed). They all have words on them so these could serve as titles, and will serve as names for the art works for the purposes of this paper. This quirk of my work is not just a gimmick, but an attempt on my part to present all of the information to the viewer on the artwork, with no extra information on its meaning, beyond the piece.

[2]Bulletin of Montana State University, Bozeman; Volume XXXVIII, No. 3, June 1984, Graduate Catalog 1984-86, p. 27. Also see the MSU School of Art Graduate Handbook (revised 11/86), p. 1.

[3]See Appendix. "Exponent" February 13, 1987, p. 12.

[4]Hal Foster, ed. The Anti-Aesthetic, (Port Townsend WA: Bay Press, 1983), "The Object of Post-Criticism" by Gregory L. Ulmer, pp. 83-110. An example of this: La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, Rooms and Stories: Recent Work by Terry Allen (catalog) (La Jolla, CA: La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 1983) "A Few People Dead" by Dave Hickey, pp. 67-79.

[5]Bruce Kurtz, "Video is Being Invented", Arts Magazine December-January 1973, p. 43.

[6]Opcit. Foster, ed. The Anti-Aesthetic "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism" by Craig Owens, pp. 57-82. Hal Foster and Craig Owens (both editors with Art in America) are two major proponents of this idea.

[7]Ibid. pp. 65-6.

[8]Capra, Fritjof and Spretnak, Charlene, Green Politics, Santa Fe, N.M. 1986 in collaboration with Rudiger Lutz.

[9]Gandhi, Mahatma and Kumarappa, Bharatan, Non-violent resistance (Satyagraha), New York, Schocken Books 1961, c1951.

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Foster, Hal, ed. The Anti-Aesthetic. Port Townsend WA: Bay Press, 1983.

Foster, Hal Recodings Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics. Port Townsend WA: Bay Press, 1985.

Gandhi, Mahatma and Kumarappa, Bharatan, Non-Violent resistance (Satyagraha), New York, Schocken Books, 1961, c1951.

Kurtz, Bruce "Video is Being Invented", Arts Magazine December-January 1973.

Rooms and Stories: Recent Work by Terry Allen (catalog) La Jolla, CA: La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, 1983.

LIST OF SLIDES

1. 'World Serious '87' 148" x 239" with signs. Fall 1987.
2. 'Mastery, Mistress...' 8 1/2" x 11". Thesis Invitation 4 color print, Summer 1987.
3. 'Master, Mistress' 148" x 239". Fall 1987.
4. 'MBCL NEWS' collaboration with Chris Hawkins. Fall 1987. 148" x 239" with video and sculptures.
5. 'Thesis Installation' (Beginning Day 2). December 1987.
6. 'Thesis Installation' (Companionship Day 2). December 1987.
7. 'Thesis Installation' (News Waterfall) Day 4, December 1987.
8. 'Thesis Installation' (World Masters) Day 9. December 1987.
9. 'Thesis Installation' (Campfire) Day 11, after defence. December, 1987.
10. 'Thesis Installation' (house) Day 11, December 1987.
11. 'Thesis Installation' (bibliography and tent) Day 17, December 1987.
12. 'Thesis Installation' (globe) Day 20, December 1987.
13. 'Thesis Installation' (behind bars) Day 20. December, 1987.

"Wrld Serious" Fa '87 (gen view)

1



Carl Stewart

Carl Stewart Su'87

2



"Mastery/Mist"8½ x 11" 4color print

"Mastery/Mist"148x 239" paint/paper

3



Carl Stewart Fa '87

"MBCL News" Wi '87 video/tarp/instal.

4



(colab.)Carl Stewart 148x239" var.

Thesis Inst. Wi'87

5



Carl Stewart (beginning)

Thesis Inst. Wi'87

6



Carl Stewart (companion ship)

7

Thesis Inst.Wi'87



Carl Stewart (news/waterfall)

Thesis inst Wi '87

8



Carl Stewart (world masters)

9

Carl Stewart (campfire)



Thesis Inst. Wi '87

Thesis Instal. Wi '87

10



Carl Stewart (house)

Thesis inst Wi'87

11



Carl Stewart (biblio/tent)

Thesis instal. Wi '87

12



Carl Stewart (globe)

Thesis Inst Wi'87

13



Carl Stewart (bars)

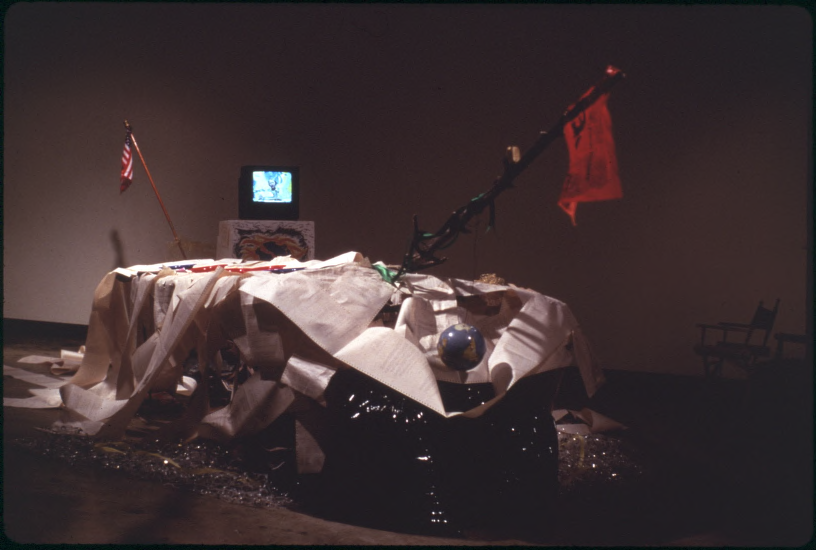

World Series '87
Baseball Cards
FAN WARS
STAR WARS


Mastery
Mistress
S
E
W
Miserly
Misery
N


Mastery
Mistress
Miserly
Misery


MBCL
NEWS
PUSH
POLITICS


PUSH PROTEST






World Masters
Masterd World


I paused.


NO SMOKING
in Gallery




World Masters
Mastered World
Mistress of Art



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - EXPONENT ARTICLES

Feb. 20, 1987 p.15

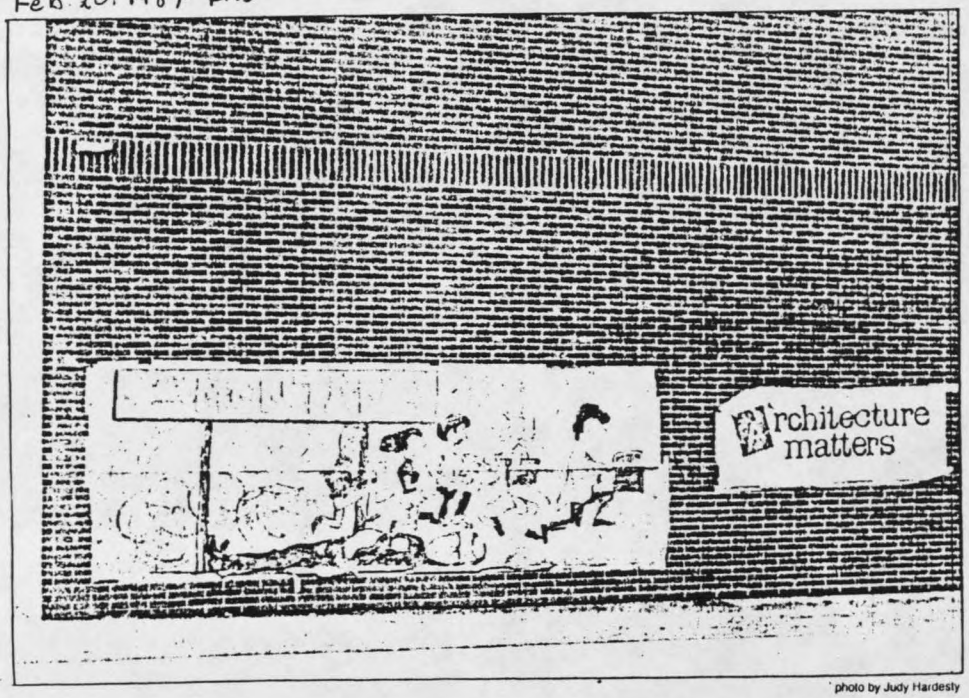


photo by Judy Hardesty

Politics in art

by Crawl Stewart

One of my art professors came to me the other day and said, "I don't like politics in art." I think he was indirectly trying to tell me that he did not like my art, which is fine with me, but his statement put an itch in my stomach that won't be relieved until I write this freewheeling article about art and politics.

Picasso, whose work mostly dealt with the sensuality of forms and color, especially sexual forms, said, "All art is political." I think this is true. Certainly we are all very aware of the political nature of the sexes and sex. Perhaps the most political art is art that in fact pretends to have no politics in it at all. What can have more political implications than the art we currently have on the walls of the Student Union: Cold, machine-made decorations? These were so innocuous that they stirred up a controversy last quarter about why the school would spend money on such things. It was art that seemed completely devoid of politics, that incited a political controversy. Apathy, indifference in politics is a most important political force.

European universities, or universities south of the border are usually covered with political bills and posters. Plastered on the walls, spray painted, re-pasted, scraped off, sand-blasted, their walls are maybe not particularly attractive. Perhaps those walls do not make for an "efficient" education (efficiency is one of the qualities touted on MSU's offical seal), but those posters do provide a challenging environment for the open questioning that should be a hallmark of education.

Maybe you see where I am leading. Yes, all of a sudden political posters are turning up on our campus. The sometimes tattered

SEE PAGE SIXTEEN

Art

from page 15

posters on the architecture building reflect that there are indeed some (frayed?) emotions and strong convictions at MSU after all. Crosses appear on the lawn. There are marches, radio transmissions calling for solidarity and action. I am sure that everyone has felt some tinge of excitement.

But, as is the case for most of the strongly followed activism in Montana, the issues that are being protested are of only very local concern. Education—a local concern? Well, with a larger view of education in America and the nation's other priorities, I think one might welcome the death of this mediocre education system. Just farm out the education of our young to states that specialize in Higher Education and adopt the proposal currently in the legislature to turn the whole state into a National Park.

But I lost my train of thought . . . I was talking about art and politics. I do believe that a progressive definition of art would include these protests and posters as art. They are certainly "expressions of the human spirit," though perhaps they could use more poetry and universal appeal to become great works of art. The professor who didn't like my previous political art is happy that I am now painting sunsets and sunrises. And I'm happier, too. Painting pretty things is fun. And nothing could be more political!

In the Arts

by Growl Stewart

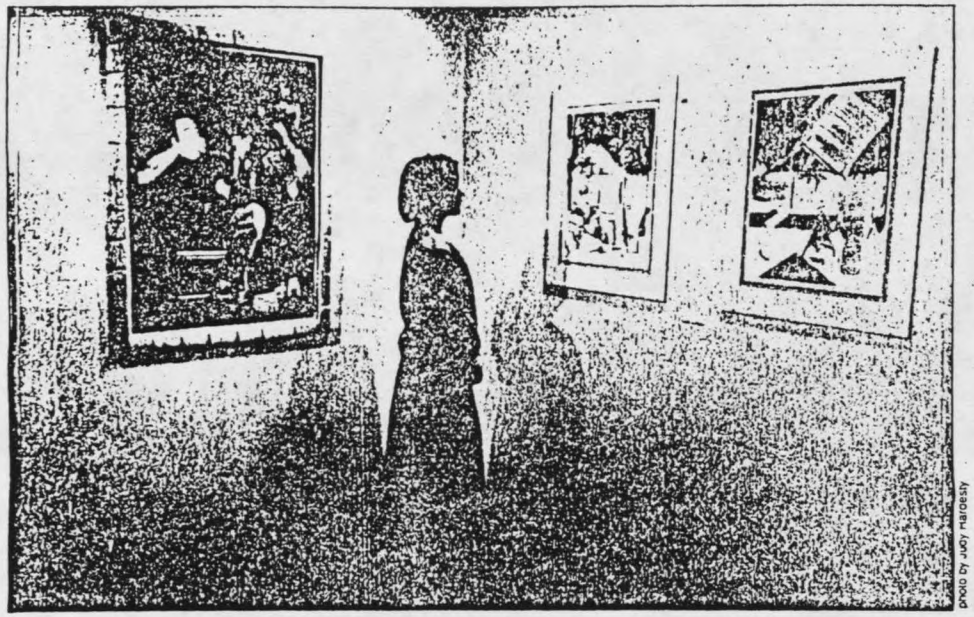


photo by Judy Hansley

"Works on Paper," now at the ARtifacts gallery downtown, features several works by MSU faculty members

"Works on Paper" falls flat

An exhibition at the Artifacts Gallery on Main Street provides us with a good opportunity to see many current and former MSU faculty members' work. The exhibition is entitled "Works on Paper", and most of the works would fall pretty flat if it weren't for the nails on the gallery walls. The works generally don't show a great deal of inspiration nor are there any urgent messages or strong convictions. All there seems to be is a need by these artists to make marks and perhaps tell small stories about their own lives. Now, don't get me wrong, these are competent, professional art works (good composition, fine line quality, etc) but they are boring; either meaningless or using worn out imagery.

Take for instance Mary Ann Kelly's large pastel. It is a strong drawing with forceful lines and some bright color, but, why do these things? I have been initiated to her imagery a bit so I recognize a high-dive and a pond and drawing these may be therapy for an artist, but I don't feel this can be called more than wall decoration—there is no greater meaning to reach out to the viewer.

Fran Noel's bright drawings contain the mandatory Montana fish images, the scruffy dogs which appear in every exhibition across America right now. I miss the cynical eroticism that he has used before which gave his work a fresher bite. Ken Bova is thinking about the same things his cat is thinking about and it is again worn out images; fish, a tornado, a hand outline, a crystal. Ken's best work is the job he does as director of the Beall Park Art Center.

Michael Peed's imagery is original. His large self-portrait represents the artist seated with a Howdy-Doody-Potato-Man. Images of the quirky paraphernalia that the artist collects whirl around the room as if they were pink elephants...sounds interesting maybe, but in truth the flat, chalky, gouache paint is totally inappropriate and kills the lively imagery.

Husbands of the two co-owners of the gallery figure prominently in the exhibition. Architecture professor, Peter Kommers has two drawings in the show called armature studies. He does everything right: a wide variety of line and tone, some enigmatic lettering, he even shows some of the sacred 'process' when he leaves some of his masking tape on the drawing. But is there any meaning to all of this? Not that I can see. As armatures, these are not much to hang your hat on in 1987. Richard Heltzers' drawing of English megalithic monuments does give us a clue as to what his sculptural work is about; aimless musings about why anyone would raise and line up huge stones 5,000 years ago. My question is why anyone would do it today? Two drawings are exceptions to a generally blah exhibition. Sheila Miles seems to have had a breakthrough. Her endlessly drawn "house on the prairie" has suddenly become a factory with a cannon smokestack spewing garbage into the air. It is a beautiful, albeit very simple allegory for our phallocentric, sick society. The other exceptional drawing is a small graphite work by Jayne Schmidt. An informal poll has revealed that this drawing got under just about everyone's skin. Picture a man with his head bent back and fiery smoke belching out of his eyes and mouth. It is entitled "Magic Lantern". It's wierd, eerie, maybe even juvenile—it's a pretty neat drawing.

...Whew, I did it. I wrote a negative review. I didn't think I could do it, because I actually .... well, I think that this show is definitely worth viewing. Paint me in a glass house, throwing rocks.

Art is a way of communicating artist's thoughts and ideas

by Willem Volkersz

Growl Stewart's review of the "Works on Paper" in the February 13 issue of the Exponent lacks both good judgment and insight. The remarks concerning the relationship between two of the artists and the gallery owners are totally out of place in an exhibition review; the comment that Ken Bova's "best work is the job ... as director of the Beall Park Art Center" is also irrelevant (and terribly judgmental). Let's look at these works as ART. Even there, in his attempt to write a negative review, Mr. Stewart asks of some of the works, "why do these things?" Well, artists have always tried to communicate their innermost thoughts and feelings, their observations, memories and dreams. THAT'S WHY, Mr. Stewart.

The reviewer thinks that some of these works are mere bits of decorative stuff. I disagree. If I have ANY faith in art, I must believe in the artist's honesty and commitment to articulate what are, in effect, private thoughts; this appears especially true in contemporary drawings, in which artists seem more at ease with personal revelation. In other words, I accept as an imperaive that the artists whose work I view are honestly communicating with me. They give me clues which I can use to unravel their stories: titles, symbols, narrative relationships, etc. If these clues transcend the totally personal and private and take on some meaning (whether they are glimpses of someone's personal history or insights into our collective culture), they become successful to me. But we have to WORK at this process of unraveling, Mr. Stewart.

"Works on Paper" (which includes prints, drawings and watercolors) gives us some wonderful views of the kinds of spaces and symbols which inhabit artists' minds. Rather than dismissing them as "decorative," or "worn out," or "aimless musings," why not take the time to "read" and understand these works? Mary Ann Kelly shows us her evocative imagery of towers and ponds and the land we live in. Peter Kommers thinks in TERMS OF ARCHITECTURAL MOTIFS, BUT USES his considerable skill as a draughtsman to attain spaces which are simultaneously tangible and imagined; he even makes us work at spatially constructing the flat template in Study #1. Rich Helzer's Wiley-esque drawing depicts a mentally constructed stage, full of visual tricks and contradictions.

Michael Peed offers us a cultural space — his drawing shows a collection of American popular culture's icons; it is a view of our culture through this artist's eyes. Fran Noel also holds up a cultural mirror: his tiny camper becomes the great fish, regurgitating Johah. Ken Bova's mind ruminates on his years in Oklahoma, and his drawings are filled with tornadoes which, as those storms are wont to do, create a whirlwind of images floating by. Sheila Miles shows us an image of a dark, foreboding tower in a stark landscape, and thus sums up our collective fear of ... what? Emptiness? Global devastation? Similarly, Jay Schmidt is fuming (with desparation?) in his drawing. (It is interesting to note that the only really unsuccessful drawing is one which looks OUTward rather than inward: an uninspired picture of a Billings warehouse at dusk. What I find lacking here is commitment, to both an idea as well as to the material.)

So, rather than "falling flat," I find that almost each work in this exhibition evokes a world for me, which I feel privileged to enter. Mr. Stewart, I have tried to open the door just a crack. Won't you come in?

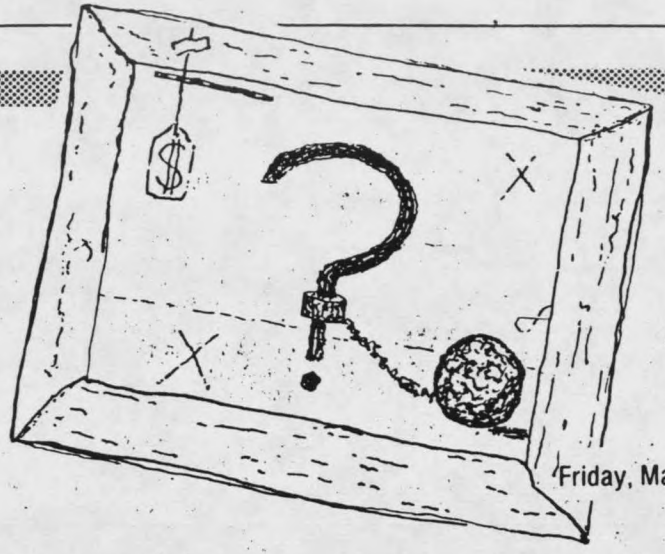
(Mr. Volkersz is the head of the MSU Art Department.)

Exponent
March 3, 1987
(corrections are the author's)

Issues in art

Commerce and art don't mix

by Crawl Stew'd'art



This is the first of a two-part series of articles based on Willem Volkersz' letter to the editor (exponent 3/3/87). I welcome criticism of my criticism. In fact, open discussion is the point of much of my work, and I am glad that Mr. Volkersz has taken up the bait. Today, I will address some of the particulars of Mr. Volkersz' criticism of my review, and next time I will show how he has misconstrued the function of art, and is participating in an old conspiracy by commerce to control art.

To bring you up to date: I wrote some strong criticisms of a show at the Artifacts Gallery (Exponent 2/13/87), which featured many faculty member's work. I called the show essentially boring because the works contained only "small stories about the artists' lives" and mark-making with little meaning for the uninitiated viewer. With a couple of exceptions, the images in the exhibition communicated "no urgent messages" or ideas important for today's world.

Mr. Volkersz came to his colleague's defense and complained that I lacked "good judgement" by mentioning the marital relationship between two of the artists and the gallery owners. Also, he complained that I should stick to writing about art, not the artist, and work harder at "unraveling" the stories of the works. "

To Mr. Volkersz' first criticism, I say that I think a marriage tie might affect curatorial decisions and that the public should know about facts regarding the selection process. This does raise the question of possible conflict of interest, but I did not make that accusation. In fact, I feel that the works by the husbands of the gallery owners fit very well into the general mediocre scope of the show.

There is a contradiction when Mr. Volkersz on one hand asks me to stick to talking about art, when he himself goes to looking on the walls of the gallery for titles (not integral parts of the works of art) and even to looking at the artists' biographies to explain their works. I believe that art works should stand on their own, without the need to know the artist's story. Artists who participate in an exhibition like the one at Artifacts must know that they are going to have to communicate in the time of a cursory gallery glance.

Although I do not feel the exhibition warranted a lot of work on my part, I did do some research. My research was selective, as was Mr. Volkersz. I, too, was haunted by the Wiley-esque quality of Richard Helzer's drawing. I questioned him about any elationship during an informal interview in the Haynes Hall ohn, he denied any influence. When he told me about the ntiquated subject matter for his drawing, I realized that any ssociation between his work and Wiley would be false. William T. Wiley almost always has references to important current events in his drawings.

Before I leave this scatological defense, I want to address my writing style. I agree with many of Mr. Volkersz' complimentary comments on the works in the show, but it was written with a pseudo-liberal, wishy-washy style that is more worthy of a paper like the Chronicle rather than the Exponent. I admittedly adopted a particular rhetorical posture in my review (to write a negative review), but I think this was valid and certainly more lively. I only apologize for the misspelling of Mr. Helzer's name--a typo.

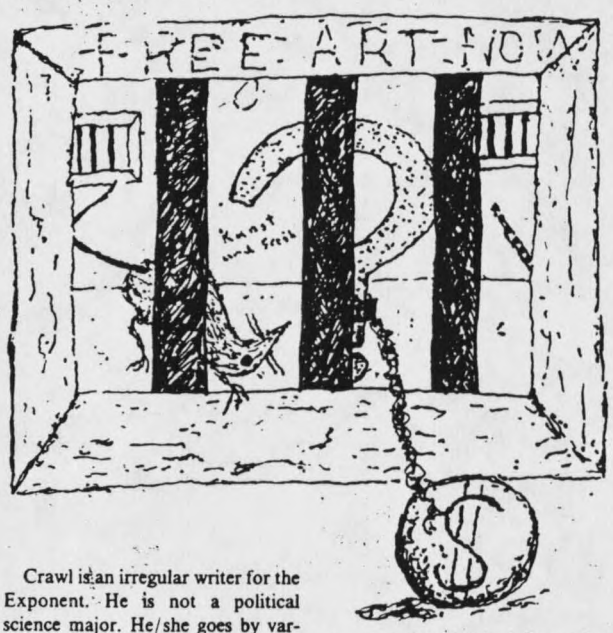
I think the main problem with the exhibition at Artifacts is that it was held in a commercial gallery at all. Commerce and art, and the direct communication of important ideas for today's world do not mix. I try to hold an artistic freedom as an absolute in my thinking, and the constraints placed on art by a commercial setting are evident. Major obstacles exist in a gallery in terms of scale, materials used for art, tradition, and especially that it be commercially viable. These things limit the freedom of expression in the art and control the artists' strategies. We often have a situation today where artists have to hide what they are saying in their work, use indirect means of communication if they still want to survive in society.

This is an unhealthy situation for art, and it is Mr. Volkersz' endorsement of this situation (in his letter) that I will address next quarter.

Exponent
Friday, April 3, 1987 13

I don't understand modern art

This is the second article in a two part series.



Crawl is an irregular writer for the Exponent. He is not a political science major. He/she goes by various aliterate aliases from Carl to Stewart.

by Crawl Start

If you have been following this column, you know that I am having a public tiff with the Director of the Art Department, Mr. Willem Volkersz. To summarize our arguments (see *Exponents* 2/13, 3/3 and 3/13, if you want to catch up in full): I wrote a rather negative review of a drawing show, Mr. Volkersz defended the work and accused me of "using poor judgment" and having a "lack of insight." I then defended myself, quite effectively, I think, and couldn't resist accusing Mr. Volkersz in turn of misconstruing the function of art... and participating in an old conspiracy by commerce to control art."

I didn't back up this last claim, putting it off until now, and I am sure that you can imagine the seething atmosphere in the art department. Everyone goes around with barbed glances, raw feelings and the battle lines have formed. Willem and I have even had some great conversations and I apologized for insinuating that he was pseudo-liberal in my last article. He is not pseudo anything, but a real and sincere individual who stands up for what he believes. I am simply advocating more radical ideas.

To the argument: although not the main subject of his letter, but central to his argument, Mr. V relates how he believes an art work functions in society; "artists ... (try) ... to communicate their innermost thoughts and feelings, their observations, memories and dreams." I agree. Then Mr. V states that an art work will be successful if the clues that the work provides "transcend the totally personal and private and take on meaning (whether they are glimpses of someone's personal history or insights into our collective culture)." This is where I have trouble. I don't know about this 'transcendence' bit. It sounds kind of religious, or that some kind of initiation is needed to understand art works. It implies that art should be involved in *indirect communication.*

When I was in therapy, I learned that one of the most unhealthy forms of behavior is indirect communication. You know what it is like: You aren't getting along with your mate and, rather than having a good knock-down-drag-out fight, you just don't talk to him/her. Indirect communication: he/she gets the idea that

SEE PAGE TWENTY

Modern art

from page 13

you are pissed off, but you don't get anywhere. This is often the state of being for art viewers, I think. You look at an art work, you know the artist is trying to communicate something (are they pissed off?), but you don't get anywhere. It is like they are speaking a foreign language.

I would propose an improved function for art in society: Direct communication of ideas that are important to people and the world.

Let's think about it: "Direct communication of ideas important to the world." What would be the most important ideas that art could communicate? I think they would be political, because politics fundamentally effects our world in economic, spiritual and cultural terms. You will find little art that is directly political in commercial galleries. Why? Obviously because it is not commercially attractive. Serious direct communication of the world's political reality would be pretty grim, full of hypocrisy, impending crisis, and contradition. Not very attractive, or right for "just the sofa."

So, what is an artist to do if they want to survive, i.e. support themselves by selling their work? Well, most just *don't*. It is hard to sell art work. When was the last time that you bought an original art work? In hopes that they might sell something, most artists (perhaps unconciously) choose indirect means of communicating. They will use transcendental images, or choose entertainment and 'escape' as their subject-matter (fishing, wildlife, landscapes for example), or they may paint about quirks of their personal lives for self-therapy.

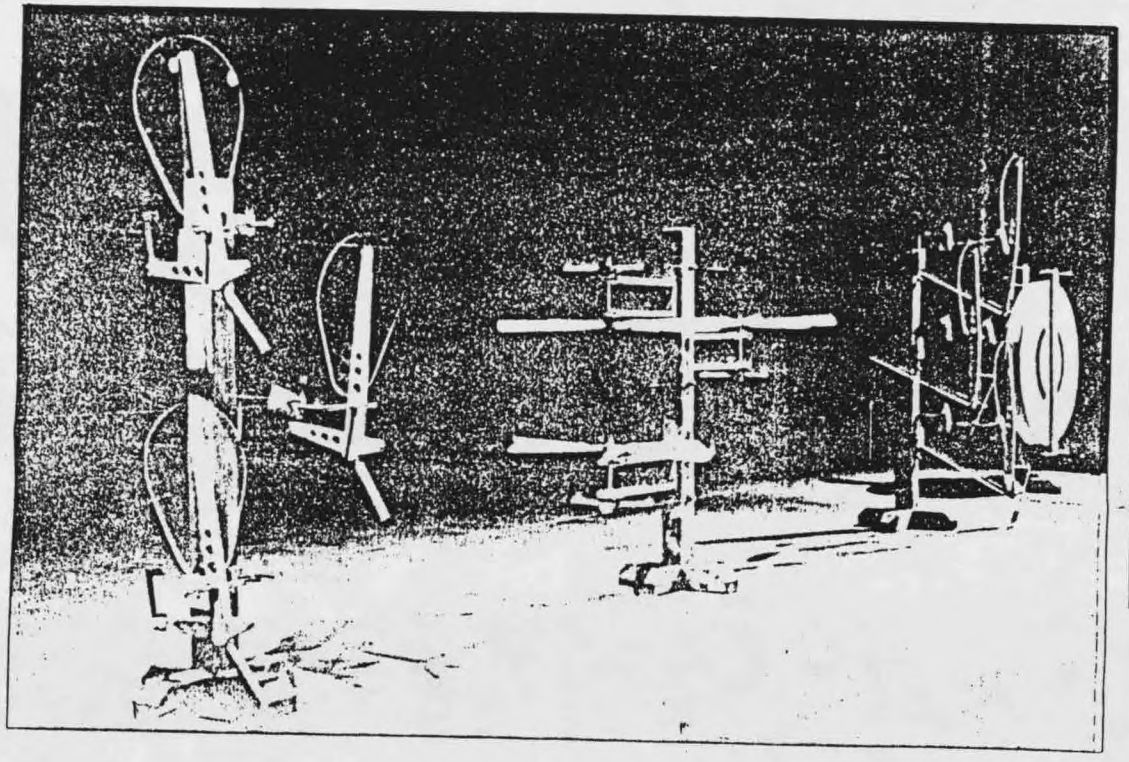
How did this sad state for art arise? It is a long history, but the roots for the current problem can be found in the beginning of a "modernism". Late in the 1800's when the current economic systems entrenched, specialization and progress were the catch words in all fields, including art. This was the time that commercial galleries became the primary means for the distribution for art.

I wrote, in an earlier article, that I hold artistic freedom as an absolute in my thinking, so I certainly would not advocate that all art be political. I do believe that our time provides a great deal of freedom, but it is free only within the market, and there have been some unhealthy sacrifices. The systems in place since the beginning of modernism have gotten our world into a precarious position.

Indeed I believe the real artists in the world are politicians (albeit some are very poor artists) because they are the ones who form the world. They take an active role rather than the passive role of so many artists, who make objects that merely reflect the world instead of being actively engaged in it.

Aesthesis

Zentz



Fence

by Crawl Stewart

The Fine Arts Gallery in Haynes Hall is currently exhibiting *Fence*, by the Montana born artist, Patrick Zentz. Zentz is a farmer/rancher/artist living outsice Laurel, Montana; and *Fence* is a future-artifact, a percussion/string instrument, and an artwork-in-progress. While I think that Zentz is one of the most exciting artists working in the State, I believe that the current exhibition is frustrating because it does not show the full quality of his work.

What you see when you walk into the gallery is a simple fence with the wires drawn taught. Attached to the fence posts are some odd looking contraptions which, upon inspection, are clearly made to produce sounds along the wires. There are plucking picks, chattering devices, and bows for stringed instruments. Attached to both ends of the fence are sound boxes which would amplify the sounds. It is like an orchestra waiting for a conductor! But where IS the conductor?

Well, the conductor will be the wind. This Spring, the instruments will be installed along a 1/4 mile stretch of fence on Zentz' land. The sounds that they will make will be recorded and combined with those made by two other sound making devices titled *Crank* and *Flow*. *Crank* already performed in Washington D.C. and its conductor was urban pedestrian traffic rather than the wind. Photo cells, similar to those that used to open supermarket doors, were located around a city block, and, as they were interrupted, they activated a crankshaft which beat on drums. The rhythm and tempo changed according to the amount of sidewalk traffic. Zentz was inspired for this by an image of pedestrians being like "the flow of blood through the machinery of the city" and that the action of his crankshaft was like the movement of "a well tanned leg."

The third part of this project, *Flow*, is in its planning stage, and will be located on the California coast. Its conductor will be the action of waves and freeway traffic along the coast.

Although the artist is very concerned with fine craftsmanship in the building of his instruments, and they are indeed beautiful objects, he does not consider these to be the finished works of art (in themselves.) They are only the means to an end. The end, the finished work, will only be the sound recording which is meant to be listened to during transcontinental plane flights. Disturbed by the abstractness of such a flight, Zentz wanted to "translate the experience into sounds." It is in this sense that he is a conceptual artist rather than a craftsman or object-maker.

Zentz' use of the word 'translate' for describing his work's relation to its object (ie. the landscape, the natural elements, or human activity) is important. More often artists or art historians use the word 'represent' when they talk about art. For instance they might say: "This painting represents a sunset I saw...(or represents) a feeling I had." In truth, it is probably impossible to represent something as an original and a thing will always change as it is re-created. Hold a picture of a sunset up to the real thing sometime. In literature, it is common to say that "something is lost in translation." This is true, but just as anytime something is lost, something new is gained — a new understanding or a broader understanding. Zentz' use of this precise word is an example of his integrity and care both in craftsmanship and thought.

On opening night, the artist gave a public lecture and played a sound recording of *Day*, an earlier project made from sound instruments which translated different natural phenomena of his land (the changing temperature of the ground, the wind, and the flow of a creek) into sounds over a 24 hour period. This recording, which may have some similarities with the next, sounded like something you would hear on a John Cage album or an eerie New Age record: random plinkings, pluckings and low drum beats. While we listened to the sounds, he projected slides of scenes from around his land. The effect was an awesome feeling of connecting the seemingly random beauty of nature to a mystic order. This is a feeling that we have all felt in nature sometime, I think, and his sounds remind us of that experience and enriches us.

The current project, that *Fence* is a part of is a more ambitious undertaking than *Day*. Rather than just translating the natural phenomena of his own land, Zentz is taking on the experience of the whole continent, with the human component as well. *Fence* is literally a cross-section of the continent. As an exhibition though, *Fence* does not do justice to the artist's ideas or the completness of his thinking. There need to be sounds and action, or at least more visual images, photographs or even words to make it understandable.

Or maybe Zentz is aware of what he is doing, like a fine entrepreneur or impresario, he is just teasing us, giving us just a suggestion of what is to come, whetting our appetites for more.

This exhibition will be on display through March 13th. Sound recordings and catalogs of *Day* are available from the Deweese Gallery or the Yellowstone Art Center in Billings.

Body/Subject: Bawdy subject?



Title: The Third Force
photo by Bob Salteman

by Crawl Start

Uncensored? Then why the characteristic black bar? Well,; you can either dig through the trash for last Friday's paper, where it was published in full (The Chronicle wouldn't print it) or better: Go see the exhibition in the Haynes Hall gallery entitled *Body/Subject*. I think it will be of interest to everyone. The show is up through May 8th and the hours of the gallery are Monday through Friday 8 AM to noon and 1 PM to 5 PM. The exhibition includes photographic work by 14 artists, and was curated by Steve Jackson, a curator with the Museum of the Rockies.

Mr. Jackson made his selection by running ads for entries in national art publications, and he extended a couple of special invitations to individuals. His intention was to show a wide variety of artistic attitudes using the human form, and he classifies these different attitudes in his statement. The body can be seen as a vessel, literally carrying another body (there are several images of pregnant women) or carrying ideas. The body is a means of motion or narrative action. The body is sometimes a surface for ornamentation, either in fashion or as is shown by some documentary photographs of tatooed men. The human form is also a rich source of purely aesthetic study, observing the way light and shadow play across its forms in an abstract or strictly formal way....

Oh, and yes, the human body is a source of erotic pleasure, sexual reproduction and delight.

This last catagory is not heavily represented (though the erotic is in the eye of the beholder), and none of the photographs are pornographic. Certainly many lingerie advertisements that we see in the newspaper everyday are more obscene. I questioned Mr. Jackson on the absence of pornographic work because I am sure that probably the greatest quantity of photos that are taken using the human body have that character. He replied that Bob Guccione, Hefner, *et al* did not submit entries to him. And even if they did, Mr. Jackson pointed to an important aspect of this exhibition through its title: Body/Subject not Body/Object—and this is an important distinction. In pornography, the primary purpose is commercial (to sell magazines) rather than aesthetic. The subjects, women or men, are presented as objects for auto-stimulation. There is almost always a psychic distance between the photographer and the photographed so that the intended viewer can enter into a fantasy relationship with the photographed. It is significant that most of the photographers in this exhibition are women, and that in most of the photographs we have to be very aware of the photographer, not just the photographed.

I enjoy the photographs of Frank Thomson the most because he seems to deal most directly with these issues of the artist and the model. He turns the tables on their traditional relationship and the model is actively engaged in making image. She sometimes holds a mirror, hiding herself and reflecting the photographer back on himself. I heard someone say that they "learned more about this photographer" than they necessarily wanted to, but his exhibitionism is frank (what a pun!) and is unidealized.

Some of the photographs that I think should also be pointed out specifically are the humorous I-Ching-like approach to "Naming Baby" by Michael Northrup; the most erotic image, for me, entitled "Jessica's Wedding Ring" by Marilyn Szabo; a beautifully poetic "Human Bridge" by Walter Chappell; and the "gaslight mysteries" by Leslie Bell.

This is a rare opportunity to see these kinds of images because of the relatively conservative nature of Montana. Perhaps some of you (perhaps the T. Burns/M. Kesckes variety) might object to MSU supporting this kind of artistic investigation. I feel that our various sexualities, our bodies as vessels for those drives, are most important subjects for research and support. I feel if anything that this exhibition does not go far enough. It is tame, and does not look at some of the seamier aspects of our bodies in society: the violence that is done, the exploitation, and the denial.

However, in all, I think the Art Department should be congratulated in presenting a challenging, well hung, and interesting exhibition.

Art for political and social action

by Crawl Start

Guest Columnist

Normally I write for the art section, but I feel the editorial page is a more appropriate forum for this article. I ran the below ad in the Exponent last Friday. You probably didn't read it–I know I would not have. I usually read the newspaper with ad-avoid blinders. The statement within the ad read: Unless forcibly removed, I began an occupation of the Fine Arts Gallery in Haynes Hall at 5 PM Thursday May 14 for 24 hours. I am protesting a system dedicated to specialization, progress and dominance (mastery) which has led to a threat of ecological and military destruction of the world. Commercial interests dominate the media, sexual attitudes, politics, religion and ultimately academia and art so that hope is unlikely without radical change.

This is an obscure, Post-modern, Green, New Agey statement of my strongest feelings. I did occupy the gallery for 24,...well, 23 hours. I followed a pretty strict fast of water, a couple of cups of coffee and cigarettes. After a very uneasy sleep on Bozeman Daily Chronicles, with dreams of falling rocks, I wasn't very inspired for much the next day. I quite naturally produced one odd artifact that is now part of the art work I have in the graduate show in the gallery. Most of the viewers who came into the space while I was sitting there seemed to feel a little uncomfortable with me. Artworks are generally supposed to be inert, completed, maybe dead, which is one of the problems with art. My art work, especially Friday, was alive, still interactive and asking questions.

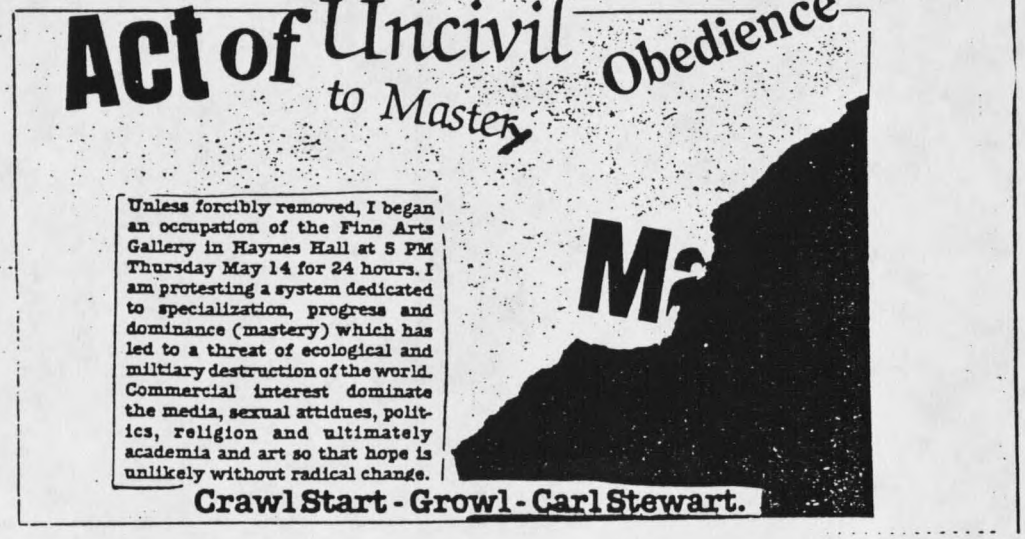
So what am I trying to do? Clearly, I am protesting, but it is a little vague in its broad scope. Now I want to focus on a few particular issues which I think illustrate the ideas in the ad above. Videos provided by the Students for Peace will be shown with my work in the gallery Wednesday through Friday this week. They pose a lot of good questions and stretch from propaganda to poetry.

Later during the grad exhibition I will try to communicate on issues of sexual attitudes and religious symbols.

You will find that my art work shows no mastery. Any one of you could pile some newspapers and rocks and make some crude signs. Any one of you could collect these videos and ask questions. And I am doing what any one of you could do.

Many Post-modern artists refuse to show their works in galleries because galleries seem to posess and hide artworks from the public rather than show them. When was the last time that you went to a gallery? If they do show their works in a gallery, they will transform the gallery, or make works utterly unposessable. I have seen galleries transformed into living rooms, novels or biographies, I hope to transform the gallery into a platform for political and social action and interaction.

The gallery is closed from 5 PM to 8 AM Monday through Friday, during the lunch hour and on weekends.



May 19, 1987

The Exit Gallery is now displaying the work of Chris Hawkins.

photo by Judy Hardesty

An Interview with an Artist

Exit show demonstrates "conservativism"

An Interview with an Artist

Exit show demonstrates "conservativism"

by Crawl Stew d'art

Contributing Writer

A couple of trucks pull up in the SUB parking lot and the interview begins:

Chris: How you doing?

Crawl: O.K...What have you been up to?

Chris: Watching T.V.

Crawl: You watch alot of television?

Chris: (shrugs 'no') Wish I could. I'd like to. Things like *The Three Stooges, Star-trek, Dr. Who*0... and I'd like to follow the soap opera *All My Children* ...it's kind of like a Zen instruction.

Chris Hawkins is currently showing his art work in the Exit Gallery (in the Student Union Building, south of 'Ask Us'). Perhaps you have already seen that black flash of Day-Glo green/orange as you walked down the hall.

I'll admit to you from the beginning that I am a fan of Chris's work. Well, of course I am, it is interesting to look at! So I was glad to get the chance to talk to him seriously about his art and find out what he was thinking about.

We sit down in the gallery. There is the trickle of a fountain in this background. Chris talks softly, haltingly sometimes. He has a black belt in Tae-kwon-do.

Crawl: So, why do you make this stuff?

Chris: I want to be communicative. I think that the eyes have the greatest potential for taking in information. That is why I work in art rather than, say, literature. But I do have some words in my art. I think you can have anything in art: dance and lights, and things like that, too.

Crawl: Then, what are you trying to communicate?

Chris: I'm trying to communicate a very conservative message. People mistake my intentions sometimes. Just because my art is radical they think my message must be too. I think we should go back to a time when, as a society, we were much more conservative; conservative of our environment especially. I would like to see us adopt a more humble attitude towards nature.

We should work more on developing our minds rather than developing materially, like we do so much. Science usually works at developing our material capabilities rather than our minds. Materially, in the world, we are limited, but the development of our minds is unlimited. You see, I want to kind of slander...(Now a woman comes in the gallery, looks at the black ceramic figure in the entrance and:)

Woman: You hate women, don't you?

Chris: No, not at all!

Woman: (raises her brows in...disbelief: or was it interest? And walks back out of the gallery)

Crawl: If you are trying to communicate, didn't you miss it there?

Chris: Many people just don't understand. This figure is a contemporary fertility figure and refers to prehistoric figurines of women. This one is contemporary in that I exaggerated the sexual organs to reflect what our society seems to value in women. It is a twisted, warped vision.

You see, I think I am very good at looking. I see the society pretty clearly and I think I have the duty to reflect it back to the society. Art gives me substance for my thought. I balance aesthetic concerns about 'how something looks' with my desire to communicate some moral or political message.

Crawl: But how well are you communicating when someone just glances in the gallery and says: "This was done by some sicko!" and walks on without looking?

Chris: I think they are getting the message. And they're right: I am sick...

(We walk out of the gallery, and down the hall. Chris Hawkins' exhibit will be up in the Exit Gallery through July 22, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.)

Chris: Do you know the early work of R.D. Lainge?

Crawl: Uh, no.

Chris: He said that just about everyone is sick, and *should* be with all of the unnatural pressures of today's society. He said that the ones that you need to be careful about are the ones who think they are not sick. Later, I don't think Lainge stressed that idea so much, but I still believe it's an important idea.

I got back into my little truck and Chris got back into his big red one, and we rode off into the nuclear glow--or the new-clear-glow.

"Art Complex" but not here

by Crawl Skewdart

Contributing Writer

If you ever wondered about the MSU Art Department–either you thought about taking a pottery or drawing class, or maybe you are considering commercial art–well, now is a great time to check out the Art faculty. Each of the faculty members is currently showing their work in the Haynes Hall Gallery through October 16. *Most* of the work is current. Haynes Hall is the building on the right if you are at 11th and Garfield facing the ominous sign which states "Art Complex".

And indeed the arts are complex in 1987, but you wouldn't necessarily think so by the works in this exhibition. This exhibition is made up of essentially conservative art which upholds the waning myths of property and possession. This art supports the reigning institutions of art (including criticism, or I would be out of a job, and might have become an artist). These works show mastery over materials and formal considerations, rather than any deep concern with communicating important issues to an uninitiated audience...In other words, this is Modern Art.

Hold on, Crawl, that's a mouthful. Either you have some axe to grind, or you are grinding your teeth and this isn't the right forum. This is really an interesting exhibition, with a lot of variety and curious things to look and wonder at. There is a strong dose of poetry here–but like a lot of poetry this stuff is sometimes pretty hard to read.

So, to an analysis of the work. One work that stands out is Willem Volkersz' *Shirttown*, because it has neon. A neon shirt form on the floor encloses a group of little house forms. A black crow form hovers above this bourgeois scene. Clearly Mr. Volkersz is working in the realm of visual poetry rather than direct communication of some idea. And his poetry seems to be a poetry



photo by Judy Hardesty

These works by Micheal Peed are now on exhibit at Haynes Fine Arts Gallery.

of property and control. Small coincidence that he is the Director of the School of Art.

Harold Schlotzhauer's two paintings epitomize modern painting in its most pure form. He is true to his materials, and never tries to make illusions. There is no trickery in his paintings to make you think that these might be pictures of any thing other than themselves.

Schlotzhauer affirms the inherent flatness of the paint and paper, but uses everything in his arsenal of color, line and shape to create a dynamic push/pull. There are 'figure' and 'ground' and they are neatly interwoven, to create an interesting visual space to wander around in. This is often called abstract art, and I really don't understand why anyone does it, but I guess there is still room in the world for it.

Mr. Schlotzhauer has said that when he goes into his studio, he leaves all cares outside except the desire to play with paint and paper. I get the impressions that he feels this is a sacred act, and that he feels he has earned the right of this freedom. And indeed he is a dedicated teacher.

Richard Helzer also works in the poetry of forms, but in his work there are clearly recognizable forms and themes. Mr. Helzer, metals professor, juxtaposes natural objects with man-made objects with man-made natural objects. There are also some ideal geometric forms. All of this arranged sensitively on a pedestal. I admit that I am a fan of that universal theme of 'man and nature', but to just present the theme without taking a stand seems a little sheepish. It is modern though, giving the viewer plenty of room to make up their own stories.

It seems as though Mr. Helzer's work would function best in the entry way of a rich home. You might notice it in the corner of some photograph in *Interior Design* magazine. Incidently, Mr. Helzer is a master with his materials and a good source of information for his students.

Space does not allow that I write fully about all of the works, but hopefully you are getting the idea. I have room to make a few more cracks. Michael Peed's monumental busts immortalize characters from childhood T.V. memories and lost advertising figures. They are a relief with their humor.

Harvey Hamburgh reviewed his own piece aptly, saying it was "pretty good for an art historian". I wonder why he limited his poetry to the label on the wall instead of putting it boldly on the watercolor.

Fran Noel's painting is a good example of what Hal Foster would call "Post-modern pastiche". It has a fine erotic thrill, but it uses history and a mixture of styles for their own sake, for art's sake, rather than against the culture.

John Buck's sculpture is one of the most imposing works, with admirable engineering. I heard on the radio that he is interested in projecting the presence of a figure, and generating original forms. It is a unique figure.

Sidney Kerlin's drawings are honest, direct drawings of what he knows.

Rick Pope's pots are what we have grown to expect from him. He attains elegance by de-basing the forms. No rough-housing around them.

John Anacker defines his 'place' (Montana) in his watercolor mixed with other forms that he finds intriguing.

The MSU Faculty exhibition is essentially an exhibition of possessable products that are made for rich homes, or museums and galleries, and art criticism like this. They are interesting, colorful, but I bemoan the fact that there is little to suggest that these products are made in 1987, a world filled with a great many dangers. I do believe in art's ability to stimulate thought and discussion about the important issues in the world.

The designers, the only women faculty, don't quite fit my indictment. Stephanie Neuman and Anne Garner are closer to any direct form of communication, and may be doing popular art. Ms. Neuman is showing the original of her design of the Sweet Pea Festival poster this year. Mrs. Garner shows us some impressive clients.

Oh, I almost missed it. They snuck in a drawing by a new faculty member named Robert Smith. We should welcome him to the department. And glory be! Look at that. His little drawing is titled *Industrial Couple* with a couple of angry faces in the smokestacks. I think there might be some socially active art in MSU art faculty after all.

Graduate students do some of the teaching, too. Not quite so conservative.



photo by author

Sculpture by John Buck is on display among works by other MSU Art Faculty.

EXPONENT Tuesday, October 20, 1987

Sexism on Campus

By Carlo Stewerdess

Sexism is a quality of our society that is so profound and so insidious that there is probably no one who can claim to be completely non-sexist. That is to say, there is no one who isn't aware of the sex of the person they are dealing with and who doesn't respond to that person according to their sex.

On the other hand it is encouraging that as a society we are trying to become aware of our sexist actions or attitudes and understand when they are prejudicial or detrimental. Often there is no reason for women to be treated differently than men. But often they *are* treated differently, for instance by the media.

I have been conducting a survey of sexism in advertising. For years I have surveyed underwear ads in the local newspapers. It is interesting how racey the women's ads are (lots of skin and inviting smiles) compared to the men's ads, where live models are rarely used. Men's briefs usually lie helplessly on a background or stretch around a cold chunk of plaster. And yes, I am aware of my own sexist voyeurism in even conducting such a survey.

The incessant bombardment of sexist images on our senses (and sexism in advertising extends beyond underwear ads — probably even to the ads in this newspaper!) has an effect on our general attitudes, unconsciously if not consciously. These attitudes are perpetuated to future generations through us.

Sexism in education is also a measure of our progress at decreasing sexism. It is encouraging that President Tietz, in his annual address about the State of MSU, cited the hiring of more female faculty among the top of the university's recent gains. But, there is a long way to go.

For a variety of complex reasons there is a smaller percentage of tenured women faculty members now at MSU than there was five years ago (latest figures). That percentage is 20.1, compared to a national average of about 26 percent, according to Corky Bush, Head of MSU's Office of Affirmative Action. The drop in women faculty at MSU (about 1.5% in the last five years) is as much a result of changes in programs and cuts as in falling behind in hiring women.

But I find that statistics kept by offices like Affirmative Action do not always show an accurate picture of a particular department, each with its particular idiosyncrisies. For instance, over the last three years, I have seen a real need for more women faculty in the Art Department at MSU. But according to the Office of Affirmative Action, the Art Department is doing well, having met its quota for hiring women last year, and the year before.

Three women faculty members have left the Art Department since I have been there. They were replaced in number, but not in kind, so to speak. The two women* faculty now in the department of twelve are both in the design area, not dispersed among the major areas (sculpture, ceramics, painting, etc.) Design, although it has a high undergraduate enrollment, is not an area of the graduate program.

Two women have left the graduate art program at MSU in the last year without completing their degrees. Both of them confirm that they left, in part, because of the sexist atmosphere in the department and the small proportion of women faculty.

Thus, it is disappointing that this summer, when the art department conducted a national search for a new painting faculty member they were not able to find a women to take the position. They tried though. While the search committee looked to the quality of the applicant's work first, tacitly the hiring of a woman was a priority. Apparently the Search Committee even went back into the whole pool of applicants to try to find additional women for the top choices.

The Office of Affirmative Action followed the hiring process closely and informed me that the first person contacted for an interview was a woman. She turned it down because she had another offer. The second contacted was a very qualified male applicant, and he accepted the position.

I questioned the Director of the Art Department, Willem Volkersz, about why there didn't seem to be more highly qualified women applicants for the job. He said that the quality of the women applicants was either not what the committee wanted, preferring a true 'painter' to someone in mixed- or multi-media arts; or, in some cases, the women applicants did not have the professional experience that the male applicants had.

In addition, others have said that the salary MSU was offering just wasn't competitive enough to attract the best women applicants in the first place.

I asked an art graduate student what she thought about the selection process, and she stated that she was definitely in favor of hiring for quality before gender. But, she said, while ideally there shouldn't be any difference between a man's teaching and that of a woman; unfortunately, since art is made from one's experience, and since a woman's experience is so different from a man's in this society, there is a need for teachers of both sexes.

Stewerdess

from page 4

Another woman graduate student used an example: She has been doing some paintings of lipsticks, and where a male faculty member was cool to the subject matter, a female graduate student could immediately identify with the subject and understand the particular importance of it for her.

The difficulty of getting more quality women applicants for a job like this one that was offered is complex. On the one hand it points to the 'Catch-22' situation of women without experience, and because they have no experience, they are unable to get it. Women are asked to play the male art-world-game of competition, but are sometimes shut out from the beginning. Perhaps, as one graduate student pointed out, the department could have use a faculty member with less experience, who could have used a faculty member with less experience, who could have been closer to the students.

Also, maybe it is not a coincidence that many women are working in multiple media, because the old forms of art, of separated disciplines (such as 'painting' as separated from 'sculpture'), are not important to them.

Of course the bottom line is the bottom line, and until the State of Montana decides it is going to pay for education as it should it will cheat its residents of an unbiased, quality university system.

I have singled out the art department at MSU only because it is the department I know. The same problem exists in many of the departments around campus.

The Search Committee did its best to find the most qualified addition to the faculty possible, and it would appear that they were lucky to find the superior, very experienced man who they hired. But these 'facts' do not right inequities.

But articles about sexism are getting old. You are all probably more interested in my recommendations to underwear advertisers (based, of course, on my exhaustive survey). Well, I certainly don't think they should remove the only suggestions of open sensuality from the newspaper. I would like to see more of that, but some that would address my odd sensuality, as well.

*This quarter there is a woman teaching temporarily. Also, an adjunct faculty member, who is a woman teaches one quarter per year.

What Did I Do This Summer ?

Crawl Start

Contributing Writer

There is still time for "What I did over the Summer" stories, right? Mine was the plight of the unemployed-graduate student: guilt about being so unproductive. I did lists of little errands. Stewed over my thesis, my criticism, art criticism, my freedom. I thought: if I could just free art, then I could...and I drank a few beers

And I got a DUI. Boy, did that hurt! But I was lucky. I had to do some time in Deer Lodge, but only as 'community service', teaching the inmates a few art skills. Thus I joined the ranks of such great art critics as Frank Stella, able to appease the Law with our art.

Montana State Prison was fascinating, and I thought I could extend the community service even further if I told you all about it. As you can imagine, it is the kind of place that is interesting to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there.

I only spent two afternoons and evenings there, first teaching the 'High Side', then the Low. The guys in the class were just like you and me. Well, since I had broken some laws—of course they were like me. I mean to say, if these men had been in an evening-adult drawing class here in Bozeman, I don't think the class would have been very different.

In the cafeteria at dinner I saw some rougher characters. The food was O.K. institutional. The saddest part was the old men there. Apparently they have a pretty high return rate, and many men decide they want to call the prison home because there is nowhere else for them to go

Working in the prison triggered an idea for me. Part of my thesis concerns freedom within institutions, for instance in universities. I figured if I could free art in a prison institution, that would be quite a test for my hypothesis.

So, I am organizing an exhibition of the inmates art works here in Bozeman: MSP at MSU. And the gallery here is so appropriately named the EXIT Gallery.

You might be interested that your very own Exponent (instead of the Law) is sending me to Deer Lodge this time to present the exhibition idea to the inmates. I'll see living quarters this time, do some interviews, and have some pictures in the next article.

The other highlight to my summer was attending a Montana Cultural Congress in Billings. After my bout with the courts, I decided to be an upstanding art citizen/advocate. As at most congresses I know, there was a lot of hot air and boredom, but some good stories,too.

One of the best stories came from MSU's Mike Malone, Dean of the Graduate School, who M.C'd the whole congress. He equated the congress to his dog's bark after senselessly arranging stones...You had to be there, it was a well told story.

Chris Pinet, also of MSU and Chairman of the Montana Committee for the Humanities, told stories of woe for Montana's culture if we don't get tough on trying to raise money for the universities. He even brought up the forbidden subject of the sales tax.

The key-note speakers Ivan Doig and William Kittredge, both of Montana University were supreme story tellers. Mr. Kittredge suggested that we start telling a New Story in the West—not the one of conquering territory for the exploitation of resources, but instead on of staying home and preserving the land.

"...But I was lucky. I had to do some time in Deer Lodge, but only as 'community service' teaching the inmates a few art tricks. Thus I joined the ranks of such great art critics as Frank Stella..."

After these speeches, the Congress became generally duller as we broke into groups to form resolutions for group discussion and approval. Once we got to the voting though it was voted 'not to vote'. The Congress could take no stand on anything, from considering the sales tax, or encouraging the telling of a New Story or even a softly worded nuclear-freeze resolution.

All a little disappointing. For more information about the congress contact the organizers: Montana Arts Council, Montana Committee for the Humanities, and the State Library Commission.

I stayed outside Billings the last night to sober up before driving back to Bozeman.

By the way, I didn't really get a DUI, but it made a better story, and I am curious to find how many people don't read to the end of this article.

Prison or Paradox

by Crawl Start

Contributing Writer

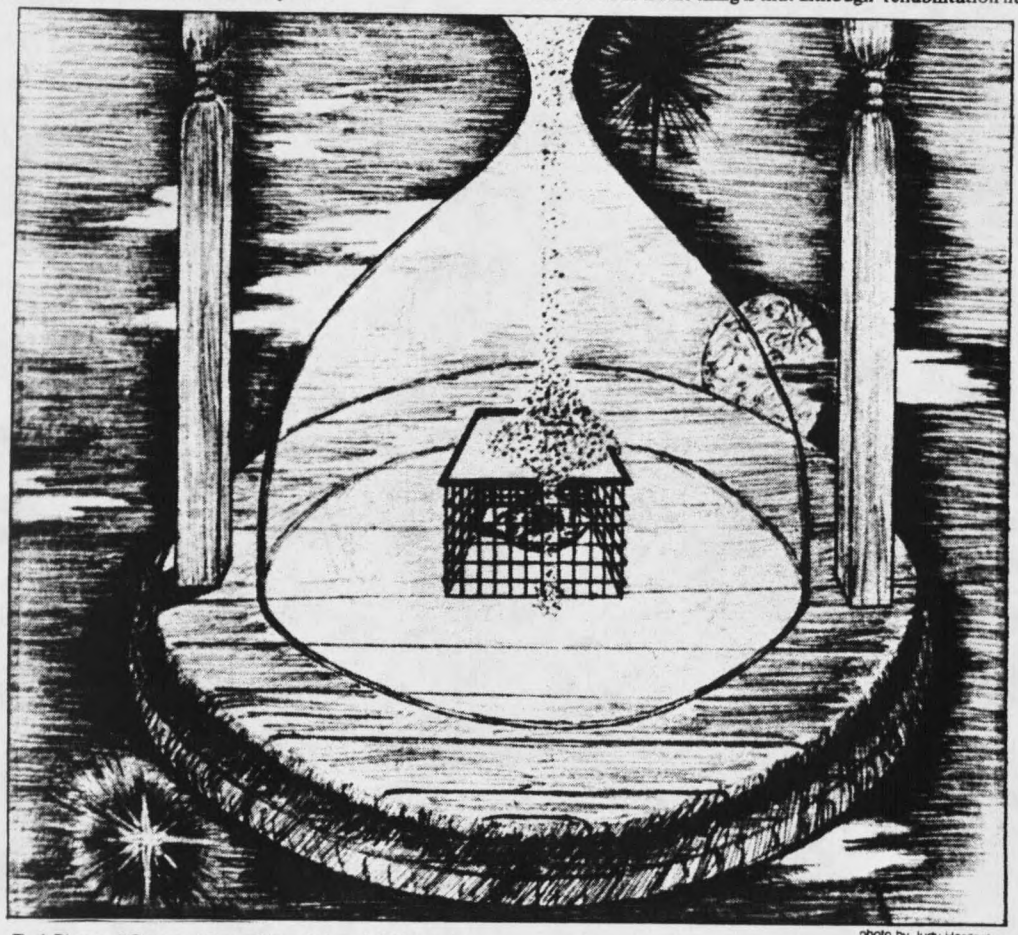
Have you seen the exhibition of inmates' art work in the Exit Gallery? Perhaps the following will make it even more interesting.

I promised another article about my experience in Montana State Prison. You all know now that my going to Deer Lodge was NOT part of a DUI sentence. It was a sentence of sorts though, but probably only a sentence or two of my thesis. The justice system did alright by me...I have done my time.

peace and quiet. Paradox number one: prison seemed to be a great place to draw, think, and write. I was teaching art to avoid incarceration, but I think maybe incarceration is just what I need. But enough about me.

The paradoxes that prisons present are conceded openly, as even a brief survey of the literature on prisons indicates. In fact it is a misconception that prisons primarily act as deterrents for crime. 'Deterrence' is part of their function; as is 'retribution' (punishment for crimes). Prisons are also for 'incapacitation' (this is prison literature vocabulary), which is to keep dangerous people away from the general population.

But the primary stated goal of the prison is 'rehabilitation', which is to reform the prisoner, so that he can return to society. That's why you see prisons increasingly called 'correctional institutions'. The ironic thing is that although rehabilitation has been



First Place "Caged Time" by John J. Cittenden

photo by Judy Hardesty

The problem with writing about prison is that it is such a complex issue, full of paradoxes. I went there expecting to find a miserable place. The kind of place that people would find so horrible that it would be some kind of deterrent for crime. Chains and shackles. Maybe a rat or two.

Instead, I found what seemed to be a pretty pleasant environment, with a lot of potential for someone who just needed some

a goal of prisons since the late 1800's, extensive studies by the National Research Council found no proof that rehabilitation works! Paradox 2.

And yet, they do not recommend its abandonment, because there is a lack of data, and it is difficult to obtain good data.

To add to the paradox of rehabilitation, I heard from different sources, including an inmate, that about 30 percent of the

inmates in the prison are there because they *want* to be there. Now how are you going to rehabilitate someone who wants to be there? Paradox 3.

Enough correctional theory, let me describe Deer Lodge.

Nestled in the hills outside Deer Lodge, surrounded by the prison farms, the setting of the prison is ideal for those who appreciate Montana's wide open spaces with mountain vistas. It is said that from time to time you can even see deer from the prison yard. Oh, there are some ominous watch towers that interfere with the view sometimes, and there are those chain link fences with glittering rolls of barbed wire...but the mountains rise above them.

I am truly amazed at how pleasant the setting and grounds of the prison are. When you first enter the grounds of the low side and you look across to their living quarters, the view could be mistaken for a tidy Western college campus. There is a neatly trimmed wide lawn, beautiful flowers; and the living-quarters, with their modulated facades and balconies, could be the envy of many of Bozeman's townhouses. There are even a few guys out on their front steps listening to someone play guitar. All that is missing from the collegiate scene are beers and girls.

The high-side is less appealing. Expressed in the architecture



Second Place Untitled by Denis Bearing photo by Judy Hardesty

the compounds are more block-like, there are fewer flowers; and there is actually a group of men walking around in a circle like in the movies.

That is what it was like looking in, from the outside, so to speak. I wondered what it was like looking in, from the inside? I hoped that I would find out by doing drawing workshops. I did three workshops inside the prison in the high side and the low.

They were frustrating. There was a wide variety of talents. Quite a few quick draw specialists who could whip out a cowboy scene in a flash. Some wild-life artists. Even a former art teacher. A few brought in drawings they had done before. Dots infinitum



Third Place "Sharing the Night" by Dan Nichols

producing semi-erotic drawings with motorcycle imagery, sometimes satanic suggestions.

But I wasn't finding out much about what was really inside these guys' heads. There wasn't much continuity between my visits and I always seemed to have different people attending the drawing sessions. They seemed reluctant to draw in the class. The still-lifes that I set up and the slides I showed were not doing the trick. Clearly the art school approach was not right for many of the inmates.

Some were listless, over-awed by the quick-draw specialists; or they were just inhibited. Some were afraid to jump in and try something new, like charcoal. This is, by the way, not very different from my experience teaching MSU students, but with students you have four days a week for three months plus the grade incentive. Eventually students will do something. Then it isn't long before you get them to make something good.

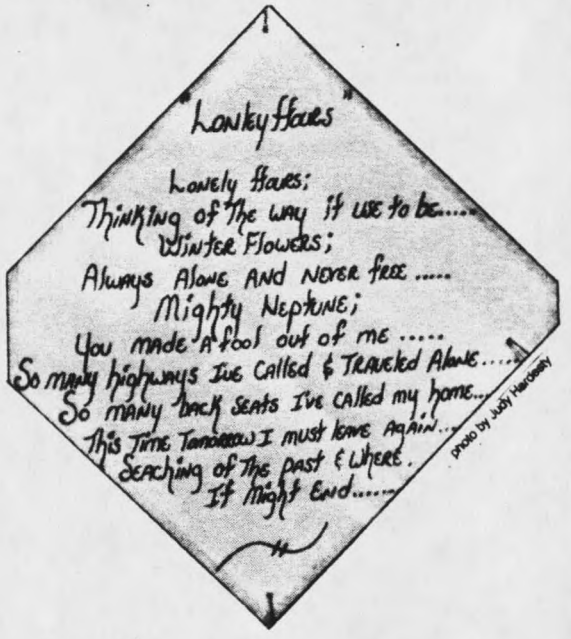
The art I *did* see confirmed that there are a lot of people in the prison that are dexterous and visual, rather than verbal or even literate. I imagine that this might even be the reason that some of these men are in prison. Our culture is easier for those who operate predominently with the left brain, or the verbal and reasoning faculties.

I spoke with Ron Maulding, the Hobby Director, about my frustration at not being able to see more art from the inmates. I wondered what could motivate them to make more. I should have known it would be no different from outside: incentive was needed, and money is the best incentive.

As a matter of fact I found out that there is a whole market for art and crafts in the prison. Though forbidden, it is difficult to control, and a lot of bartering goes on sometimes maybe even for protection or services. That is part of bull-dogging. Bull-dogging is also forbidden, but to a certain extent inmates run every prison. That's paradox number four. For example, the adminstration at

Deer Lodge recently took over the playing fields at MSP, which were formerly controlled by the inmates.

Money has a special value in the prison. It is estimated that the dollar is worth at least three times as much inside as on the streets. In other words there is a Black Market economy similar to that which you would find in a Third World country.



Honorable
Mention Untitled by Don Haskin

So, we came up with the idea of a drawing competition. I presented the idea to the inmates who attended my last workshop, and we ran an ad for the competition through the Siberian Express Flyer, the prison paper. It was important to the prison that everyone be able to participate. In fact there is an extreme democracy at the prison. This may be part of the re-habilitation process. The condition of what-one-gets-they-all-get is used so the inmates can experience a democratic environment, instead of the law of the streets.

I included copies of the quarterly Siberian Express with the exhibition of drawings so that students could see the great degree of freedom of expression that the inmates have.

Reading the papers (and some of the earlier ones are particularly forceful expressions of the inmates ideas) made me wonder exactly how much freedom of expression prison inmates have. I found out that prisoners have complete first amendment rights of free speech except when it jeopardizes prison discipline or security or if there is some other compelling state interest.

The later papers toned down the rhetoric, but I think this freedom of expression, and the other issues that I have touched, bring up important issues for us to all consider.

I'll close this article next week with a few more paradoxes and observations about the prison system. I hope that you will look at the exhibition and documentation and consider the importance of these men's expression.

Prison or Paradox

by Crawl Start

Contributing write

If you picked up this paper early you may have a chance to still see the exhibition of inmate drawings in the Exit Gallery, up until 3 p.m. Friday.

This article is a follow up of previous articles about my experience in Montana State Prison. Last Friday I wrote a glowing report about the beautiful natural setting of the prison in Deer Lodge. I think it was headlined 'Prison or Paradise', and I described the beautiful natural setting of the prison.

I wrote about the paradox of having such a pleasant place as a supposed deterrent for crime. In fact, one-third of the inmates in prison want to stay there — but not for the natural setting.

It is interesting to think about the subject matter of the drawings in the Exit Gallery. Most of the work is nostalgic. It is about what the inmates once did have available and don't now: images of wildness, wilderness and women.

Nature, though near the prison, is always distant. Apparently some interesting birds do fly in from the nearby nature preserve — not many since there are no bodies of water or even any trees ...

There are several drawings in the exhibition which show the despair of prison life and endless trapped time.

In prison you are counted eight times a day. In 'lock-down' (about 10% of the inmates) you are confined 23 hours a day, with an hour in the cement enclosed yard.

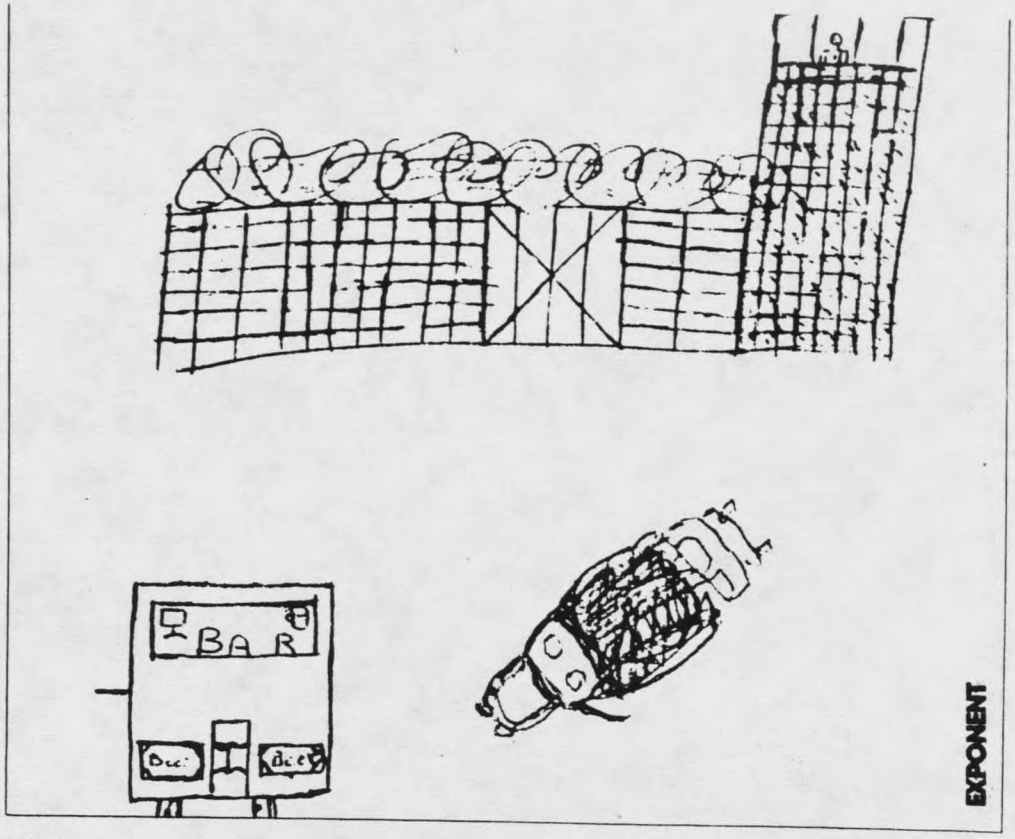
Cells are generally ten feet x eight cement feet. There is double bunking and overcrowding. The facility is housing 1,164 inmates in a place built for 960.

Can you imagine that many men together? I saw cramped filth. The refuse and droppings of men who don't care, or worse — are very angry. A food tray thrown as far as one can, through a small opening at the bottom of the door. I smelled stifled air, with urine close by.

I saw awful images of sloth, lack of care and laziness.

You don't *have* to do *anything* in prison. You can lie on your back in your cell all day and watch television. Laziness itself is not punished, and is not given great importance in advancement within the prison, or in parole hearings.

An inmate told me that most of the men in prison are lazy. What causes laziness? Drugs and alcohol play a big role in why many of the inmates committed crimes. Are drugs and alcohol a refuge for the lazy ?



Is laziness a cause or an effect?

A former employee of the prison said that almost all of the inmates had suffered some form of abuse as children. Speaking bluntly she said, "Every one of them had been told, in one form or another, that they were shit as children." There was a lack of uncompromised love in the family. Violated, the inmate/child defended himself with "If I am a shit, so is everyone else." And this then justified the violation of others.

I wrote about another paradox in my last article: although 'rehabilitation' is the stated primary goal of 'correctional' institutions, there is apparently no solid evidence that it works. I went to the prison hoping that art might be some sort of rehabilitation. Perhaps proof that it isn't is that I found some of the best art done by men in the high-security side of the prison.

I received interesting feed-back about the inmate's art exhibition from people who felt the show was a bad idea. Several people said that if the drawings had not been done by inmates, they would not have been shown. I disagree. There are some extremely sensitive and 'well drawn' works. The jurors awarded works which contained individual and sincere expressions. Many of my collegues in the Art Department have agreed with the relative merit of the art works shown, in artistic terms alone.

More cogent criticism of the exhibition came from someone familiar with corrections. They said they objected to the exhibition on grounds that it would interfere with the inmate's rehabilitation. Anytime an inmate gets recognition from outside the



prison it acts to justify their crime, in their eyes, and will make them resist rehabilitation.

I was told that publicity outside the prison gives an inmate power inside the prison. This power works against rehabilitation by giving the inmate a special identity and makes prison a more home-like place, reinforcing any desire to remain there.

Another paradox then: an attempt at giving the inmates a sense of self-worth and recognition can actually back-fire and reinforce their desire to remain incarcerated.

I remain with the image of our prisons as warehouses for the humans who don't fit in our society. The point has been made that the very genes that established our country, frontier spirit, and the violence that conquered the West (a time not so long ago) can now lead someone to prison. Mountains and towns have been named after such people.

Our society is trying to make amends for those awful days, though it doesn't seem like the land will ever be returned. There is a preponderance of Native Americans in the prison.

The corrections system is most successful at simply protecting society from what it perceives as an undesirable part of itself. (This image can easily be reversed, seeing prisons as protecting the inmates from an undesirable society). Effectively, prisons keep inmates from engaging in reproduction. A second image comes to mind: The prison as an institution for genetic engineering.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your point of view on such genetic engineering, many of the inmates have already started families and those families are what they are deprived of and miss most of all.

You might notice that I have a certain amount of suspicion in regards to our prison system. I would never advocate that all of the people now incarcerated be set free, the rapists, murderers, child molesters, etc. but I am suspicious of the society in general that has lead the earth to its most precarious position in human history. I don't think enough thought is given to the fundamental causes of what leads humans to violate others.

The facination that I have developed for prisons does not come from my belief that it is such a foreign world from my own, but that indeed it expresses in radical terms my own sense of imprisonment. Imprisonment by my history, by my own limits and limits imposed upon me by society.

Inevitably a couple of articles about the prison system (which really can not be isolated from the arrest process and the justice system) is bound to generalize. Perhaps I have raised issues that will make us all consider our generation's decisions about corrections.

I want to thank all of those who spoke with me about prisons, including inmates, employees, and guards at the prison. And especially the inmates who participated in the exhibition of drawings at the EXIT.

APPENDIX B - PRESS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE:
December 5, 1987

Carl T. Stewart
School of Art
Montana State Univ

PRESS RELEASE

As a portion of my thesis for a Master of Fine Arts, I will occupy and fast in the Haynes Fine Arts Gallery at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. The exhibition is titled "An Act of Uncivil Obedience (against mastery and fine art)". It will feature my temporary dwelling, various changing installations accompanied by video, sound, and written statements. The exhibition will begin December 5th and run through December 25, 1987.

Some of the topics the show will address are the danger of nuclear disaster, the global environmental crisis, sexism in our society, and other limits to our freedom.

While attempting to show the great potential art has to communicate about issues that are important to the world today, an essential aspect of my thesis is that I am against 'mastery' and against 'fine arts' as concepts which limit and confuse our view of life and the world. I believe a more holistic view of the world is needed if we are to survive the dangerous times in which we live.

Modern 'mastery' is a decidedly male term and suggests domination and control. This is undesirable in art and, as in other disciplines, unlikely, given the complexity of our

society. 'Mastery' is a negative term that denotes the subjugated and oppressed. The term remains, however, an honored concept in academia as well as a primary objective of the United States' foreign and economic policies. Short-term interests and business growth take precedence over environmental concerns as we seem to believe we can master nature and the globe. The earth is in the most precarious position it has ever been in since human time.

'Art'as a Western cultural construct has been refined over the centuries to become a discipline separated from life and the other disciplines. 'Fine art' is an even more refined and separated discipline. Art should be a quality to all human activity. Instead, art is commonly a specialized profession associated with making products for economic exchange and to be possessed. Most often art works are judged for their ability to survive into the future as objects for investment.

My fasting, political action and exhibition will have many facets. It is a protest, a celebration of the freedom of expression we have in our society, and a personal search for meaning.

Public gallery hours: Monday-Friday 8 AM to 5 PM.

* * * * *

Carl Stewart, a native of Boulder Colorado, received a B.A. in Art History for the American College in Paris, a BFA from

the Kansas City Art Institute. He has traveled extensivly in Europe learning languages, and recently in Guatemala. He has worked in several art galleries. Currently, in addition to making political art, he is a writer about the arts and culture, and a radio news broadcaster.

For more information:

Carl T. Stewart
School of Art, Haynes Hall
Montana State University
Bozeman MT 59717
(406)994-4501

The ideas and opinions in this press release and in the exhibition are not necessarily those of the MSU Art Department, Montana State University or its Regents; and are solely the responsibility of the artist.

BOZEMAN DAILY CHRONICLE, Friday, December 11, 1987 A-7

On exhibit



ALBERT DICKSON/CHRONICLE

Carl Stewart and his work at the Haynes Fine Arts Gallery at Montana State University.

Artist occupies gallery in thesis project

An exhibition titled "An Act of Uncivil Obedience (against mastery and fine art)" will run through Dec. 25 at the Haynes Fine Arts Gallery Montana State University.

Carl T. Stewart's master's degree thesis exhibition does not contain any paintings or sculptures. Instead, the Boulder, Colo., native has constructed a temporary dwelling and various changing installations accompanied by video, sound, and written statements.

Stewart will live in the temporary dwelling and fast round the clock during the entire exhibition schedule.

"Some of the topics my show addresses are the danger of nuclear disaster, the global environmental crisis, sexism in our society, and other limits to our freedom," says the artist.

"While attempting to show the great potential art has to communicate about issues that are important to the world today, an essential aspect of my thesis is that I am against "mastery" and against "fine arts" as concepts which limit and confuse our view of life and the world.

"I believe a more holistic view of the world is needed if we are to survive the dangerous times in which we live."

The MSU graduate student received his B.A. in art history from the American College in Paris and a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute.

He has traveled extensively in Europe and recently in Guatemala while learning languages. In addition to creating his "political art," Stewart is a writer about contemporary arts and culture.

"My fasting, political action, and exhibition have many facets," explains Stewart. "It is a protest, a celebration of the freedom of expression we have in our society, and a personal search for meaning."

University officials said in a news release that the ideas and opinions in the exhibition are the sole responsibility of Stewart, the artist, and are not necessarily those of the MSU Art Department, MSU, or the state Board of Regents.

Public hours at the Haynes Fine Arts Gallery are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

APPENDIX C - THESIS INVITATION


Mistress
Mercy

Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition as:

Act of Uncivil Obedience

(to Mastery and Fine Arts)

I Protest

Haynes Fine Arts Gallery
Montana State University
Bozeman MT 59717
December 5-25, 1987
Carl T. Stewart

"Fine Arts.
a distinct line
Separated from the
other arts (as art is
separated from the
distinct-lines- and even them
life. That separations are
part of what has
led us to this
modern mess.

"Mastery"
a modern male
ideal of dominance
and control - inappropriate
in our
foreign, economic, social and
environmental policies.
The Earth is in its most
precarious position ever!

M.S. Cockrell

Prisoners of Art

A Fast Fast

MBCL News

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