



Contemporary luminous landscapes [slide]  
by Bruce Rodman Park

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts  
Montana State University  
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Abstract:  
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CONTEMPORARY LUMINOUS  
LANDSCAPES

by

Bruce Rodman Park

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

of

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APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Bruce Rodman Park

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.

Aug-17, 1987  
Date

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Chairperson, Graduate  
Committee

Approved for the Major Department

AUGUST 12, 1987  
Date

[Signature]  
Head, Major Department

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

9-22-87  
Date

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Graduate Dean

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## ARTIST STATEMENT

Artists have a responsibility to society, to faithfully and honestly record their perceptions and experiences. I believe further, that those artists who see through an intuitive vision can reveal mystic truths about our existence and reflect, guide and influence this society's morals and beliefs. Intuitive thinking circumvents logical and analytical problem solving and avoids visual gimmicks and the illustration of pre-planned ideas. It was when I gravitated towards the landscape that this vision finally evolved for me.

My thesis work is about exploring the environment through my intuitive vision; a quest to seek new truths about a traditional subject, the landscape. What I could contribute to landscape's long and extensive history became the challenging issue. Curiously, the problem was resolved by my children. Through them, I understood that each person enters this life as an autonomous individual soul, seeing the world again through innocent eyes. To perceive the land as if completely new is the attitude I seek, and then to present the landscape's grandeur and beauty in my paintings. Light infuses life into the earth and sky, and I choose to render my experiences of this energy as it

affects the land at different times of the day, the season and atmospheric turbulence.

My art is of idealized, luminous landscapes that carry on in a new way the grand tradition of the American landscape. Taking my inspiration from the artists of the Hudson River School, I heighten the local color to intensify the authority of the imagery. Other formal values I have derived from the Abstract Expressionists and the contemporary artists: Wayne Thiebaud, Martha Alf, Fairfield Porter and Nance O'Banion. I employ their reductive theories and also utilize their pattern of deliberately conceived compositions; altering, adding and eliminating shapes and forms to create the play of light that represents my vision.

The land is a source of rejuvenation for me, a place to escape the trauma of civilization and observe nature's harmonious, intricate beauty. The landscape remains astonishing and mysterious to me. Natural forces possess the power to humble the strong, yet, this harmony of beauty and strength survives within a delicate balance.

My artwork also relies on a fragile balance to achieve harmony. My working methods echo my observation of nature, simple and elegant at a glance, complicated and intricate when studied closely. Imagery is chosen for its light and atmosphere, composing the terrain to correspond with my mood. The compositional dynamics are controlled by

obscuring, emphasizing or eliminating the horizon line, which tends to be the focal point of most landscapes. Detail is only suggested, thus emphasizing shape and form and revealing their essence in abstraction. Colors start out bright and then are toned down as the piece develops, eventually projecting the radiant glow of energy that gives all forms a sense of inner resonance or life. Forms are drawn or painted with many layers of color, each succeeding layer in reaction to the previous color which, in turn, has been intuitively dictated by the piece as a whole. Every element within the piece is kept alive through its interaction and dependency on all the other elements; total harmony is reached when the piece presents the landscape as my six senses experienced it at the time of inspiration.

In a world dominated by negativity and pessimism, I offer my art in the spirit of optimism. "Only through a change of consciousness will the world be transformed. As we bring mind, body, psyche and spirit into harmony and unity so also will the world be changed. This is our responsibility."<sup>1</sup> A change like this has to come from within the individual. My work is meant to have a calming influence, to soothe the soul through the image of the land. Fields of crops are the evidence of man in my work. This further instills the feeling of harmony and mutual dependency between earth and man. I feel no need to depict the atrocities nature has suffered from the activities of

man; this would be a visual gimmick with a short term-shock value that would compete on the level of a sensationalized nightly newscast. I prefer to present the timeless beauty and intensity of the landscape without the intrusive, narrative element of man, thus allowing people to freely project themselves into the work. Ideally, the viewer becomes totally absorbed into the colorful energy of my landscapes and escapes, for a moment at least, the pressures of daily existence.



REFERENCES CITED

- <sup>1</sup>New Dimensions Radio, New Dimensions Foundation, P.O. Box 410510, San Francisco, CA 94141

LIST OF TITLES

1. "Gallatin Afternoon"  
42" x 66"  
Oil on Canvas
2. "Study for Gallatin Afternoon"  
22" x 30"  
Pastel
3. "Season Transition"  
42" x 66"  
Oil on Canvas
4. "July Morning"  
42" x 66"  
Oil on Canvas
5. "Evening Moon"  
54" x 90"  
Oil on Canvas
6. "Spring Evening"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel
7. "Jefferson Storm"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel
8. "Dusk"  
60" x 62"  
Oil on Canvas
9. "Firelight #4"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel
10. "Summer Thaw"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel
11. "Overcast; Paridise Valley"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel
12. "Squaw Creek"  
24" x 32"  
Oil on Canvas
13. "July Snow"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel

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Slide • Saver  
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VUE-ALL

Bruce Park  
13. "July Snow"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel 7-1987



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Bruce Park  
6. "Spring Evening"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel 6-1987



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Bruce Park  
12. "Squaw Creek"  
24" x 32"  
Oil on Canvas 8-1987



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Bruce Park  
4. "July Morning"  
42" x 66"  
Oil on Canvas 7-1987



SEP 15, 1987 9

Bruce Park  
11. "Overcast; Paridise Valley"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel 8-1987



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Bruce Park  
"Study for Gallatin Afternoon"  
22" x 30"  
Pastel 7-1987



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Bruce Park  
1. "Gallatin Aft"  
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Oil on Canvas



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Bruce Park  
7. "Jefferson Storm"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel 7-1987



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Bruce Park  
10. "Summer Thaw"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel 6-1987



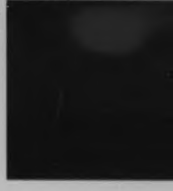
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Bruce Park  
9. "Firelight #4"  
29" x 41"  
Pastel 4-1987



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Bruce Park  
5. "Evening Moon"  
54" x 90"  
Oil on Canvas



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Bruce Park  
3. "Season Transition"  
42" x 66"  
Oil on Canvas 6-1987



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