



Paintings and drawings  
by Marguerite Anne OLeary

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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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
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of

Master of Fine Arts

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Bozeman, Montana

August 1985

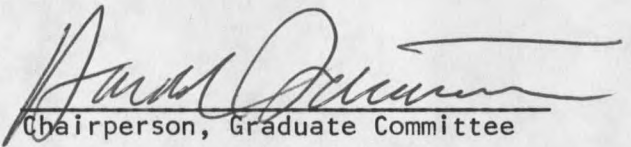
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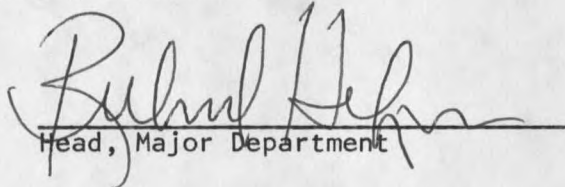
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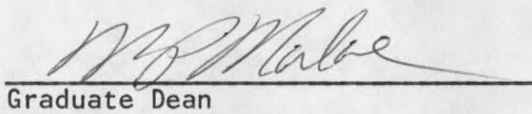
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Aug. 19, 1985  
Date  Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Approved for the Major Department

19/AUG/85  
Date  Head, Major Department

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

8-21-85  
Date  Graduate Dean

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## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Responding intuitively to a canvas both formally and emotionally is an important element in my painting. Ideas about color, composition and subject matter are brought about spontaneously while painting, achieving a sense of activity and a spark of the present.

There is equal importance between the function of formal issues and more subjective, or content, issues. Formally the paintings are concerned with the placement of images in relation to each other (composition) and how the images relate specifically to their environment or field, in that they are often embedded in (and overlapped by) a color field, confronting the traditional "foreground/background" problem. This denies a sense of realism or believable space, and instead emphasizes the two-dimensional or plastic nature of a painting. The background competes with the foreground images, creating an activated and contradictory surface. By embedding objects in a color field, formal concerns and abstract elements on the surface are presenting themselves with importance as equal as the images themselves.

These paintings reflect a chain of events and experiences which are relevant to my life. The images that I choose to paint serve to describe a specific event or feeling in a way that precisely captures that feeling. Choices in color and composition are adjusted to describe these things while maintaining a sense of spontaneity with the canvas and the act of painting. The images, however, never lose their

significance entirely. Images such as beds and chairs are everyday objects, yet are loaded with symbolic and objective meaning to which most people can relate in some personal way. They are familiar, and therefore understandable. The relationship between and within these objects, however, is my particular vantage point.

Although there are no figures in the paintings, per se, they evoke a distinct sense of the figure or, more often, of its absence. In some, the figure's obvious absence creates a sense of anxiety, loneliness, or loss. The juxtaposition of images to each other evokes other specific psychological relationships, varying from serene and calm to more tense and less predictable ones. Two empty chairs, for example, can speak of the distance between people and can emphasize the space between them in an active way. Empty chairs can also represent the sensation of waiting or anticipation. Other objects in relation to each other evoke vague sexual connotations. The relationship between objects, blurred literally by paint, allows for discrepancy and mystery for the viewer. Their experience of my experience is open, and is their own.

## LIST OF SLIDES

1. Untitled  
1985  
29" x 41"
2. Untitled  
1985  
29" x 41"
3. Untitled  
1985  
29" x 41"
4. Untitled  
1985  
29" x 41"
5. Untitled  
1985  
60" x 72"
6. Untitled  
1985  
60" x 72"
7. Untitled  
1985  
60" x 72"
8. Untitled  
1985  
60" x 96"
9. Untitled  
1985  
60" x 72"
10. Untitled  
1985  
48" x 60"
11. Untitled  
1985  
48" x 60"

12. Untitled  
1985  
48" x 60"

13. Untitled  
1985  
60" x 96"



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.



10.



11.



12.



13.



MADE IN U.S.A.

VUE ARCHIVAL  
-811 SLIDE-FILE

