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Date AUGUST 9, 1976

TROUT FEVER

by

RODNEY GLEN BELAND

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

of

MASTER OF ART

in

Art

Approved:

Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Head, Major Department

Graduate Dean

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

August 1976

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

TROUT FEVER is a state of mind that a fisherman or woman experiences if they pass through the four major phases of trout fishing.

In the first phase of fishing the beginner wants desperately to catch a fish. He does not care how big it is, just as long as it has scales and fins. Usually at this stage of the fever, his equipment is sparse and consists of a rod, reel and a hook which impales a nightcrawler.

If his fever continues to grow, the fisherman moves into the second phase in which he wants to catch as many fish as he can. His technique and equipment are more sophisticated now and may consist of a spinning reel and rod with an assortment of lures and tackle that fills many tackle boxes!

After catching large quantities of fish over a period of time, the fisherman enters the third phase of the fever, the trophy phase. It is during this time that he wants to catch the biggest fish in the river, lake or pond. During this phase the fisherman comes to a fork in the road he has been traveling. In one direction the fisherman continues to use the same tackle. His technique will consist of drifting a bullhead along the bottom of a river, hoping a very

large, hungry brown or rainbow is waiting. In the other direction the angler will enter the world of flyfishing. It is down this path that the most fortunate fishermen will travel. They will find before them a whole new world of technique, tactic and tackle.

If the fisherman enters the flyfishing world, he is entering the fourth and final phase of the fever, the "catch and release" phase. In this final phase the fisherman finds that catching quantities of fish or catching the biggest fish is no longer of supreme importance. Now the subtle aspects of the sport become paramount. The flyfisherman finds greater enjoyment in watching a fish rise to his Royal Wulff, taking his Size 18 Jasid, listening to his reel scream in protest as a heavy fish runs and jumps as he tries to shake that streamer from the corner of his jaws, collecting nymph specimens from his favorite riffle, tying imitations of fur and feather, reading his favorite Traver or Haig-Brown book again and dreaming of faraway pools in exotic lands.

This final phase of TROUT FEVER is one from which the fisherman never graduates. The more he observes and experiences, the more aware he becomes of the fact that there is so much more of the fishing world to enjoy.

After reaching this fourth stage of TROUT FEVER, I have attempted to portray some of my personal observations, experiences and fantasies from each of the four fishing phases into bronze, aluminum and ceramic sculpture.

The Fishin' Hole, Slide #3, and Whitefish Hole, Slide #26, are from the first phase of TROUT FEVER. They portray a section of the trout's environment that is the most important to the beginning fisherman. A fishing hole is often the place where the beginner catches his first fish, either a trout or a whitefish.

Slide #23, Buffalo Ford, is from the second phase. Buffalo Ford depicts an actual section of the upper Yellowstone River in Yellowstone National Park where the angler can catch cutthroat trout until fatigue overcomes his desire to fish. By grouping the fish close together and facing the fish in two directions, I have tried to show how numerous the trout actually are in this section of the River. The iridescent quality of the water and of the trout is captured by the use of a turquoise luster on the base of the sculpture and by a mother of pearl luster on the trout. This same glazing technique is used for Whitefish Flat, Slide #25, which shows a school of whitefish on a feeding spree.

In Southwestern Montana when anglers talk of trophy trout, the conversation invariably leads to the Wall of Fame at Dan Bailey's Fly Shop in Livingston, Montana. Slide #35, Wall of Fame'r, is my interpretation of a section of that wall. The bronze fish that is facing the opposite direction from the other three is a mold of my Wall of Fame fish. The other three are raku which darkens them and makes the bronze fish more dramatic. Larger Trout for Western Flyfishermen, Slide #34, actually exists (without the fish, of course). In the book Charlie Brooks tells about holes 1, 2 and 3 on the upper Madison. It is from this section of the book that Slide #27, Holes 1, 2, 3, was conceived and created.

From the fourth stage of TROUT FEVER and beyond comes the major portion of my work. Slide #24, Refusal above Yankee Jim Canyon, records an actual experience. The trout made an inspection of my Whitlock Hopper and refused it at the last second. The bronze Stonefly and Rock, Slide #18, records a scene that an angler can see during the many hatches that occur on Montana waters. The nymphs crawl from the stream or river bottom onto a rock, split their nymphal cases and emerge as an adult Stonefly. They then fly away to propagate their species.

My Altar Pieces, Slides #7 through 11, and the various River Gods, Slides #19 through 22, are fantasy sculptures that are used by religious cults of fanatic flyfishermen during their prayers to the fishing gods. Feather Fish, Slide #28, and Trout Totem, Slide #29, are also fantasies used perhaps as offerings to the gods for successful fishing.

Whitefish Fetus, Slide #16; Trout Fetus, Slide #17; Future is in the Egg, Slide #31; Steelhead Redd, Slide #32; and Erosion Rock, Slide #30, all deal with the present and future of trout fishing. For without unpolluted water and clean gravel, the trout egg and trout fishing have no future.

Although I feel that the viewers of my work who flyfish will be able to identify with some of my sculptures because of their own experiences, I believe the nonangler will also enjoy the sculptures because of the colors, forms, and textures of the individual pieces.

The slides of the sculptures presented in this paper will be used as teaching aids in my high school art classes. One of the most difficult aspects of the creative process for a student to achieve is the formulation of more than one idea for a work of art. Usually each student's first idea is the one he or she pursues.

Students fail to try variations of the theme or form they are using. By showing my work of the fish theme and its variations, I hope the students in my art classes will achieve the process of exploring variations of one theme or form into many ideas and then choose one to finish for their projects. In this way I hope to develop a higher degree of creativity in my students' artwork.

SLIDE TITLES AND IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Yellowstone Trout Derby | 21. Madison Fish God |
| 2. Rainbow Trophy | 22. Gallatin Gish God |
| 3. The Fishin' Hole | 23. Buffalo Ford |
| 4. Tail Rise | 24. Refusal Above Yankee Jim |
| 5. Up, Up, Up, and Over | 25. Whitefish Flat |
| 6. Not telling Where | 26. Whitefish Hole |
| 7. Altar Piece #1 | 27. Holes 1, 2, 3 |
| 8. Altar Piece #2 | 28. Feather Fish |
| 9. Altar Piece #3 | 29. Trout Totem |
| 10. Altar Piece #4 | 30. Erosion Rock |
| 11. Altar Piece #5 | 31. The Future is in the Egg |
| 12. Yellowstone Lunker Lure | 32. Steelhead Redd |
| 13. Fishin' on the Mind | 33. The Fly and the Fish |
| 14. "He was this Big!" | 34. Larger Trout for the Fisherman |
| 15. Hooked on Trout | 35. Wall of Fame'r |
| 16. Whitefish Fetus | 36. Catch and Release |
| 17. Trout Fetus | 37. People or Fish? |
| 18. Stonefly and Rock | 38. SHHHH, they're asleep |
| 19. Rabo | 39. Undercut on Slough Creek |
| 20. Yellowstone Fish God | 40. Nymph Fantasy |





ACQUINTA



THE FISHING HOLE

NEW YORK







THE SECRET TO CATCH—

















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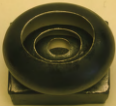














THE
FUTURE
OF
TROUT
FISHING.







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