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ART - THE EXPRESSION OF EQUIVALENCE

by

GEORGE H. THOMPSON

B.S., Ohio State University, 1967  
M.A., Kansas State University, 1971  
M.A., Kansas State University, 1979

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A MASTER OF FINE ART'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Department of Art

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1980

Approved by:



Major Professor

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## ART - THE EXPRESSION OF EQUIVALANCE

### PART I

Real life is the mutual interaction  
of two oppositions of the same value  
but of a different aspect and nature.  
Its plastic expression is universal  
beauty.

Mondrian

The power of art exists as the expression of equivalence. It reveals it in its forms as a demonstration of the degree of formative powers that exists between the opposing elements of its use, that cause them to unite, or produce a specific effect upon each other. The manifestation of art's process as equivalency is summarized in its process and product as an indivisible whole. At each discrete moment in its construction, and perception, its level of meaning or activity touches its opposite, and produces it. Art, as life, oscillates between the creative states of opposition: disequilibrium and equilibrium. Each state arises through activity and, as tradition, transcends the boundaries of time and place. Art's expression of this phenomenon is its purpose and its transcendent value. Its transcendent power is its visualization process of expansion and limitation. These are the two coexisting, and coproducing, forces of art's expression of equivalence. It is to the expression of this phenomenon that this thesis is directed.

Each painter's endeavor confronts this mutual interaction of opposites in his mastery of content and technique. The execution of painting is of the greatest importance. It is through each discrete phase that the artist experiences the manifestation of equivalence. Each physical action with painting's materiality invites the experience of disequilibrium

that leads them to equilibrium through material control. Guided by the painter's total being each mechanical step from the simplest to the complex is controlled by the patient acceptance of the interaction of opposites. Through experience the painter accepts the subjectivity of his condition when in the state of disequilibrium. Guided by intuition he seeks the objective equilibrium from this condition; and realizes that this oscillation is the wellspring of his creative growth, as it is of life. The interaction of these creatively equal forces not only describes technique. They describe, through the execution and product, the content of the painter's endeavor.

This painting thesis demonstrates that equivalence is both its technique and its content, and that its manifestation in visual form is the essence of universal truth. This sensation of opposition evolves from the painter's ultimate search in the question of total meaning. The answer is in part structured from the conscious sensations experienced through technical material activity. This activity arises from the human want of meaning, and the seeking of meaning through perception of nature. The ultimate source of the painter's content is his response to nature's indispensable materials and visual forms. However, its study reveals that it but veils its ultimate meaning to the viewer, if one accepts only its abundant particular forms. Nature plunges the painter into subjectivity through its arousing impressions; from fear to comfort, the dynamic oscillation of nature's surface activity structures meaning before the painter's consciousness. It poses the choice of the particular of its activity or the universal. This thesis acknowledges that this subjective force of impressions invokes its own balance in objective abstract relations. In each visible figurative particular of changing nature there

is an opposite state. It is the painter's choice, and experience of will, to choose which state of consciousness he prefers. The particular is balanced by the less visible non-figurative universal of nature. Each state nourishes the painter, but requires a commitment of purpose due one's limited material existence. This thesis shows, through its technique as influenced by content and its content influenced by technique, that the essence of nature's universal meaning is its expression of equivalence. The painter's content-technique visualizes the perceptual sensation of the universal force of equal opposition. Throughout its process and its resolution as final produce this thesis draws its creative force from its seeking a relationship as a microcosm in the macrocosm. It posits that painting is the description in visual form of consciousness, and that as a choice it chooses as its content and meaning expansion and limitation. The perception in nature of the dynamic interaction of equivalents reveal and guide consciousness, and posit that the sensation of this active force is the statement of the purpose of painting.

## PART II

Whenever anything is created or destroyed it necessarily passes out of or into either its opposites or some intermediary state. And since each group of intermediates is derived from some pair of opposites (color, for instance from black and white), it follows that whatever comes into existence by a natural process is either itself one of a pair of opposites or a product of such a pair.

Aristotle

One negative difference is restricted by another that marks a distinction from more things.

St. Thomas Aquinas

. . . all determination is negation.

Spinoza

Painting has always been paradoxical. Like language it builds its statement upon its quixotic but inescapable denial of its state. It creates within its fragile two dimensional plane a transcendent space through its act of negation of the characteristics of real space. Perception of events in real space are, as the act of speech a succession of events, or sounds, which follow one another across a passage of time. Each draws consciousness ahead while leaving the previous fragment of reality behind. Painting, like language, denies this passage of time through the use of equivalence's understanding of expansion and limitation. In both forms of expression, the objective is the manifestation of a transcendent space where a phenomenon is made accessible to the perceiver, but that will not change in the course of its perception. It assumes that its function as expansion is the conscious sensation of timelessness. Therefore painting through opposition, or negation, uses its repertory of marks and its two dimensional plane to negate time. The negation of time creates an ideal continuity where through time's absence a pure ideal of intelligent space may exist. This expansion

of timelessness only exists through its opposition from the dynamic of limitation created by the limits of the plane, and the painter's repertory of marks.



## PART III

What captivated us at first does not hold us afterwards. If one has loved the surface of things for a long time, one will finally look for something more. This "more," however, is already present in the surface one wants to go beyond. Through the surface one sees the inner side of things; it is as we regard the surface that the inward image takes shape in our souls. This is the image we are to represent.

Mondrian

Just as the negation of time in the format of painting begets timelessness, so too does the act or negation of the painting surface beget timeless meaning. This thesis negates the direct representation of its sensorial impression of nature with the result that from this act its opposite state is conceived of in the painter's perception. This negation process then continues. For just as the first act of negation creates disequilibrium that results in the struggle for a return to equilibrium, through form, the next act is to negate the new equilibrium. The painting surface therefore becomes a dialectic for discovery. After its initial captivation, from the resulting unity of the experience of equivalence, it questions the painter's curiosity. At its state of visual resolution its form invites its own negation, and out of its limits in physicality and perception the expansion of new inquiry begins.

In its presentation, through the thesis art objects, this thesis demonstrates that its content-technique arose from, and is descriptively summarized as a dynamic cyclic process of opposition and negation, in which, through its active process, new positive determination of universal meaning is created. Once painting is activated by this eternal mechanism its resolution, and power, arises in its descriptive use of the mutually

opposing forces of equivalence. Expansion and limitation, two opposites, become the guiding concepts to painting's traditional resolution of forms.

This thesis, in its paintings, demonstrates that its form exists as demonstration of the operation of these universal relations. Its form exists only for the creation of these relationships; and can only arise as a result of these relationships.

Painting's unique physicality asks the painter to respond to these relationships in a proven tradition. In so doing this thesis demonstrates that these relations to form are made from two opposites: the surface material plane and color. The use of each element in combination creates, destroys, "passes out of or into" opposites or to an intermediary state as the product of these combinations. This transitive state we call the act of painting. The resolution to this activity is attuned to when the dynamic "give and take" or expansion and limitation reaches a point of equilibrium.

The paintings of this thesis not only demonstrate the formative process of nature as opposition, or negation; it shows that this manifestation is seen in paintings' use of material and color. Equivalency's combining and reactive values of expansion and limitation are expressed in the relationship of color to material; they are equally at work within each opposing element of form construction. Therefore it has been found that not only does this process describe the larger pattern of nature; it describes the smaller patterns as well. The art of painting, within its tradition of material plane and color, is the microcosm of the macrocosm.

The paintings of this thesis are the demonstration of the equilibrium of these processes through equivalence. But let there be a summary of this operative effect as a demonstration of the principles described. Expansion,

created through perceptual and intellectual negation, implies an enlarging, unfolding, spreading, opening out, or a developing in detail. This expansive activity occurred, or described itself, in the expansion of the painter's immaterial consciousness and conscious material manipulation. Limitation, its reactive value, restrained through reduction, boundary, and limits, checks the act of expansion. Its establishment as a force in form creation arose in the same manner as expansion, through opposition or negation.

The working process of establishing and experiencing relationships in this thesis begins as the negation of direct representation of the figurative description of nature. The result shows that its opposite is the representation of the indirect non-figurative description of nature. The examination of the result of this choice shows that the paintings of this thesis posit this negation before the viewer, and invite, through its form construction, the viewer's participation in a dialectical response. The painter's choice of non-figurative form necessitates its meaning to be materialized for verification, through the process of its seeking its own relationships. The paintings of this thesis show the construction of these relationships requires the use of, and demonstrates, the process of equivalency.

The material surface plane is an expansive state in both its actual materiality, and its time-conquering conception. The paintings of this thesis use its expansive white, light reflecting field, as meaning, material, and process that only gain existence, or purpose, from placing its expansiveness against its own limitation. The painting plane's own construction exemplifies this description in that its woof thread, a multi-thread crinkled nylon, is woven against a warp, that is a single straight nylon thread. The resulting construction of weave from its material, and process, is a dry, transparent, open-weave surface plane. The use of this

plane through the act of painting creates its own limits, as well as inscribing both the expansion and limits of its content. The dry surface is opposed by saturating it with water. The physical transparency of the plane, which is chosen to allow maximum light entry into, and reflection from, the surface, is opposed by the necessity of an opaque subsurface plane, that conceals the supportive substructure of the painting that the transparent surface opens to view. The transparent plane's revealing inwardness sets its own limit through the need of, in dialogue with, the concealing opaque, but outwardly reflective subsurface plane. The actual materiality, or construction, of the paintings of this thesis shows the relationship that these form producing planes have upon one another. The expansive light reflective surface is limited by the dark light-absorbing surface. The interaction of these pair of opposites results in its intermediary state as painting, and is "a product of such a pair" regardless of whether it is the upper or lower surface that is light reflective or absorptive.

The expansive surface field is negated, limited, and described by the marking of color upon it. Color negates its existence as continuing in unaltered whiteness. The act of marking converts the negation of surface, through its determination, from the expansive state to one of self-describing limits. Color becomes the new expansive condition in the painter's positive mark. But the mark's descriptive power only exists because the plane is now limiting it through its negative function.

The use of color as vibrant autonomous content is critical to the paintings of this thesis. Its materiality is structured by the materiality of the surface and the plane. Again the complex, but revealing, relationship of equivalence's process is demonstrated in the dualism of color's own expression; and in its larger relationship to the material plane. The paintings demonstrate this summary in their own materiality, in their own

description of relationships of visual form in space, and in their painting process.

The dry surface plane is transposed to a wet fluid plane upon which is placed in intervals lines, or zones, of pure fluid color. Color in this dynamic application is expanding from its initial zone to larger ones, as well as leaving the fluid plane through absorption into the thread of the surface, or draining off the surface as a result of blending with the pre-existent water. This wet upon wet fusion of color upon, and with, the surface plane is content created by an expansion subject to its own limits. The statement of color's intensity is opposed by its own, and the surface's viscous state. Likewise, the viscous state of both is held in balance by the state of color intensity. The expansive fusion of each unique color with other color, or with merely the white plane, is limited by the measured influence of temperature and time upon the evaporation of moisture from the surface. The fluid expanse of intervals of color as neutral forms in relational activity is limited in its fusion by the porosity of the weave, its absorption into the weave, and by the critical counter tension of the stretched surface. The surface material's resistance to this fluid condition ultimately shows that its painting content is structured from gravity's opposition to weight that is freely suspended without support. The tension of the surface, combined with the temporary condition of fluid color seeking a point of rest, inscribes this seeking across a plane. The result is, that what starts as the expansive disequilibrium of mark upon the surface, becomes through natural organization, by gravity, a natural equilibrium of color organization.

The selection of this working process acknowledges that this form of painting strives to negate overt texture caused by the plasticity of the color material, or the painter's bodily activity. The negation of

texture shows, in the thesis paintings, that its choice of surface material, color viscosity/intensity, and painting stain process results in maximizing light entry into, or reflection from, the surface. This negation in this investigation shows that its result is a rhythm of line, color, and form that in its process of opposition has produced a painting of non-texture that shows color as a light descriptive phenomenon rather than a tactile one.

Equivalency's expanding and limiting states are at work in the painter's use of color in structuring the rhythmic surface. Its vibrant optical sensation touches the painter's perception and conditions its use. The art of determined relations in the paintings of this thesis rely upon the outward and advancing quality of warm colors, such as red and yellow, be limited by the inward and receding color blue. This consideration is made regardless of whether the color application is a position of fusing color to color in a fluid plane so as to produce its blend, or if its position is determined as showing its autonomy in discrete relationship to other colors. The expansive color vibrancy is countered by a restraining color opposition.

This color structuring process produces a natural pictorial dynamic as a result of the use of this optical sensation. This expansive and limiting concept is continued in the formal considerations of the use of color as a tonal effect upon the opaque subsurface plane. As has already been shown, this opposing plane may either reflect or absorb the available light upon its surface. It states that color is described by its reflecting or absorbing plane, and that its tonal effect is either to posit an expansive infinite spatial field through its reflectiveness, or show a field of compact color mass that has density through its light absorption.

The concluding paintings, of this thesis summarize this issue by embracing both effects, and are the fullest visualization of this thesis's

concept of equivalence. Their non-textured colors are warm and advancing yellow and quinacridone red that are stained into a transparent surface plane. The constructive process as described, results in a rhythm of two colors that articulate each other through their linear continuity of repeated, but subtly varied, pattern. This transparent plane is then opposed by an opaque plane that in its opposition combines to produce a new intermediary state that is the visual sum derived from each mutual planar existence. Blue becomes a transitive color agent. This color as structured on the opaque plane in planar divisions of blue and white oppose and interact with the yellow and red. The natural expansive state of yellow and red are maintained on the white, but through the opposition of the blue the expansive lightness is transposed to restrained lightness; and is transposed from yellow and red to its opposites violet and green.

The description of this combining and reactive process summarizes through its example that these paintings demonstrate physically, perceptually, and conceptually that through the negation of either plane's characteristics that the denial creates a state, which is the "product of such a pair." The transparent yellow and red expansive surface is limited by the opaque blue and white. The result is a painting that uses its transparent layer to allow light entry and reflection but prevents complete transparency; and that through color opposition denies the three pure colors with the result of violet and green. This combining of opposites of material surface and color demonstrate that equivalence is content and is technique, and states that as painting it is the definition of boundaries. These boundaries are not definite. They are subject to perpetual change. The perception of the point at where this change occurs is the boundary, and is the sensation in consciousness of expansion and limitation upon each other. The meaning of this thesis is to visualize this dynamic. Painting in its



method, and tradition, asks for real and tangible form. Therefore equivalence's expansion and limitation becomes for painting, the ability to show this through visual ambiguity. This does not mean that the painting is without equilibrium. On the contrary it strives for it in the dynamic relationships of its construction. It strengthens its ambiguity in the ability to create with equilibrium a form that demonstrates its use of both structure and indecision.

The paintings of this thesis show the growth of this purpose. There is throughout its development the acceptance to make something which one wishes to perceive stand still against time. The repeated solving of the phenomena, a result of invoking new determination through negation, allows the painter to arrest the dynamic of nature by visualizing its multi-changing view in a series of visual forms.

The forms that these paintings take resolve that ambiguity occurs naturally in the negating process of placing the figure upon the surface, or ground. The attention to interval and dimension on either surface plane produces a dynamic alternation between these states of non-figuration when subject to equivalence.

The expansive state of motion, which arises through the painting process as a result of gravity, is used in each painting as a counter force. The diagonal free lines or color zones are placed against an opposing direction. The diagonal is placed against diagonal, against the grid, or against angled three dimensional shapes. The shaped paintings oppose the wall or flat surface, by pushing outwardly from it. Its ambiguity is not only the linear against the shape's edge as much as the shaped forms own self describing limit. The form's resistance to flatness is as much a negation of it as it is a need of it for its own unity of concept and support. The grid's ambiguity exists in oscillation between what its



compartments divide, separate, and identify and what the entire whole surface is as a dynamic counter movement to these lines, or internal edges of division and separation. The physical combining of two planar levels provokes continuous dynamic exchange between the continuous construction of the color plane and the measured interval of the divided grid plane.

The horizontal linear color field paintings of this thesis demonstrate the conceptual points that have organized and guided the development and meaning of this visual investigation. They pictorially show that their technique is content and that content is technique. And that technique and content arises from its own negation to become the visualization of that negation. These paintings define that equivalence's expansion and limitation are the resolutions in painterly activity to the creative and destructive choice of opposition to what is. The thesis concludes that the definition of boundary exists as a result of nature's expansiveness, and that universal meaning is the description of this exchange in pictorial form. The highest resolution of this concept is expressed when the form arrives at a state of ambiguity through showing equivalence as both indecision and structure in one. The painting's construction and perception Neither allows the affirming or denying its opposing relations without resulting in unresolvable contradiction in the perceiver.

These paintings demonstrate this through their physical combining of surface planes. The horizontal color plane is a vibrant linear continuity. Its alternation of color change, through stain process, is less contour, or edge, of color as much as a color to color contiguity. This plane is built from motion by weight and as such visualizes this weight, speed, and movement in its pattern. This expansive conceptual plane is then opposed and limited by its subsurface plane. This combining has previously been described to demonstrate the physical and conceptual process

of equivalence at work. It has been shown to occur in the transitions that are created from opposition to the plane's transparency, light reflection or absorption, and color content.

The opposing subsurface plane is a product of the same principles of expansion and limitation. Its rigid structure, by necessity, creates literal edge or physical boundary. This planar edge proposes its own negation through the division of its surface plane. The divisions used in this thesis create ambiguity. They use the overall plane's configuration to show divisions that create interior planes that allude to planes that visually extend beyond the actual planar edge. The divisions such as the four square pattern within the overall square creates an ultimate ambiguous figure-ground relationship. In this configuration of neutral forms neither the light nor dark square is the ground upon which the other is placed. Both are alternately perceived as such and result in equal opposite meanings defined by their equivalent context. One perceives both indecision and structure simultaneously.

The placement of the transparent color field upon this planar field, or support, compounds the visual statement and is the product of its "pair of opposites." The horizontal pattern upon the light absorbing three dimensional cylinder increases its statement of motion by kinetically involving the perceiver in examining its surface. Its pattern of infinite continuous motion is enhanced by the circular surface of the cylinder. However, ambiguity exists in this painting. The horizontal pattern against the vertical cylinder resists its interpretation as being perceived as circular. The painting surface flattens as a result of the horizontal linear color configuration, and denies its own circularity except at its ends. At each end where the cylinder is silhouetted against a flat surface the true

form of the support is reestablished to the perceiver.

The combining of the transparent color field with the previously described divided planes makes the same extensions of meaning, however not as three dimensional ambiguity but as two dimensional spatial ambiguity. The horizontal vibrant linear continuity of motion is opposed by vertical planar divisions, four square divisions, or neutral forms within the field. The oppositions of vertical to horizontal, outward flow of motion to inward turning edges, and color oppositions within a continuous field are the achievement and demonstration of painting as the expression of the power of equivalence. These paintings state that their meaning is defined as the experience of change from one state to another either in their physical actuality or in their perceiver's consciousness. The awareness of this change as consciousness results from the interaction of expansion and limitation with painting's traditional means of opposing elements of material surface and color in the time negating surface plane. The process of equivalence shows through its content-technique that neither state may be affirmed or denied without a resulting contradiction, and that its universal meaning is the expression of continual movement through equivalents.

This dynamic process of continual movement is life's universal meaning. Existence is the breakdown and reforming within ones perception of nature's expansive and limiting states. The human condition's response is ultimately dependent upon its acknowledgement and perception of these two mutually interactive forces. It becomes for the artist the task to perceive this upon every level of his work, and use it in a perception that shows where this change occurs.

Art's process and meaning are not the creation of form as if entering through a one way door, but rather as through a two way door in which both sides of the threshold are equal and lead equally to each other.

## PRESENTATION OF THE THESIS ART OBJECTS

Art is not made for anybody and is, at the same time for everybody.

Piet Mondrian

## INDEX OF THESIS ART OBJECTS

	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>MEDIA</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
1.	Untitled, Nr. 1, DB Series	Acrylic on paper	18"x24"	1978
2.	Untitled, Nr. 2, DB Series	Acrylic on paper	18"x24"	1978
3.	Untitled, Nr. 3, DB Series	Acrylic on paper	18"x24"	1978
4.	Untitled, Nr. 4, DB Series	Acrylic on paper	18"x24"	1978
5.	Trail Ridge Interlude	Acrylic on nylon	38"x54"	1979
6.	Matrix of Love, Nr. 2	Acrylic on nylon	36"x36"	1978
7.	Crosscurrents, Nr. 1	Acrylic on nylon	36"x36"	1979
8.	Crosscurrents, Nr. 2	Acrylic on nylon	36"x36"	1979
9.	Tao and the Government, Nr. 1	Acrylic on nylon with silk thread	32"x36"	1979
10.	Tao and the Government, Nr. 5	Acrylic on nylon with silk thread	34"x42"	1979
11.	Untitled, Nr. 1, CL Series	Acrylic on nylon	3½"x56"	1979
12.	Untitled, Nr. 2, CL Series	Acrylic on nylon	7½"x37"	1979
13.	Untitled, Nr. 4, CL Series	Acrylic on nylon	14"x24"	1979
14.	Untitled, Nr. 2, S Series	Acrylic on nylon	12"x6¼"x56"	1979
15.	Untitled, Nr. 5, S Series	Acrylic on nylon	12"x3¼"x56"	1979
16.	Untitled, Nr. 3, S Series	Acrylic on nylon	11 1/8"x5"x56"	1979
17.	Untitled, Nr. 8, S Series	Acrylic on nylon	10"Dia.x57 3/4"	1980
18.	Untitled, Nr. 3, W Series	Acrylic on nylon	3¼"Dia.X42 3/4"	1980
19.	Untitled, Nr. 9, S Series	Acrylic on nylon	10"Dia.x64"	1980
20.	Untitled, Nr. 7, S Series	Acrylic on nylon	10"Dia.x57 3/4"	1980
21.	Untitled, Nr. 2, T Series	Acrylic on nylon and cotton	38"x54"	1980
22.	Untitled, Nr. 1, Equivalents	Acrylic on nylon and cotton	36"x36"	1980
23.	Untitled, Nr. 3, Equivalents	Acrylic on Nylon and cotton	32"x34"	1980

	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>MEDIA</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
24.	Untitled, Nr. 4, Equivalents	Acrylic on nylon and cotton	36"x36"	1980
25.	Untitled, Nr. 2, Equivalents	Acrylic on nylon and cotton	36"x36"	1980
26.	Untitled, Nr. 6, Equivalents	Acrylic on nylon and cotton	36"x36"	1980
27.	Installation, MFA Thesis Exhibition	Union Gallery, KSU		1980
28.	Installation, MFA Thesis Exhibition	Union Gallery, KSU		1980
29.	Installation, MFA Thesis Exhibition	Union Gallery, KSU		1980
30.	Installation, MFA Thesis Exhibition	Union Gallery, KSU		1980
31.	Installation, MFA Thesis Exhibition	Union Gallery, KSU		1980

All slides are placed in their folder slot with the slide number indicating the orientation of the thesis art object. The number in the lower right corner indicates the bottom right orientation as actually viewed from the front of the painting.

## LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED

- Albers, Josef. Interaction of Color. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.
- Anderson, Troels. Malevich: Catalogue Raisonnee of the Berlin Exhibition, 1927, including the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam with a general introduction to his work. Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1970.
- Elsen, Albert. Paul Jenkins. New York: Abrams.
- Feldman, Anita. "Space and Subjectivity: Four Painters." Artforum. September 1979, pp. 49-53.
- Fried, Michael. Morris Louis. New York: Abrams.
- Klee, Paul. Pedagogical Sketchbook. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1965.
- Malevich, Kasimir. The Non-Objective World. Chicago: Paul Theobald and Company, 1959.
- Mascheck, Joseph. "Iconicity." Artforum. January, 1979, pp. 30-41.
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- Mondrian, Piet. "Natural Reality and Abstract Reality: An Essay in Dialogue Form." In Piet Mondrian: Life and Work. Michel Sephuour. New York: Abrams.
- Mondrian, Piet. "Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art." In Modern Artists on Art: Ten Unabridged Essays. Ed. Robert L. Herbert. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964, pp. 114-130.
- Nakov, Andrei, B. "The Language of Forms and Colors." Artforum. April, 1979, pp. 30-35.
- Nodelman, Sheldon. Marden, Novros, Rothko: Painting in the Age of Actuality. Houston: Institute for the Arts, Rice University, 1978.
- Rose, Barbara. Frankenthaler. New York: Abrams.
- Saxon, Eric. "On Mondrian's Diamonds." Artforum. December, 1979, pp. 40-45.
- Sephuor, Michel. Piet Mondrian: Life and Work. New York: Abrams.
- Waldman, Diane. Kenneth Noland: A Retrospective. New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1977.

## CANDIDATE'S PROGRAM OF STUDY

## MASTER OF FINE ARTS

<u>Department</u>	<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Credit</u>
Art	209-845	Graduate Painting Studies	35
Art	209-835	Graduate Drawing Studies	10
Art	209-545	20th Century Art History	3
Art	209-695	Topics Art History	6
Art	209-855	Graduate Print Studies	6
Art	209-830	Graduate Sculpture Studies	2
Speech and Theatre	284-711	Topics Technical Theatre	<u>3</u>
Total Credits			65



## GEORGE H. THOMPSON

ADDRESS: Home: 513 N. 16th, No. 4, Manhattan, Kansas 66502  
Phone: (913) 539-8751

University: Pre- Design Professions Department  
College of Architecture and Design  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan, Kansas 66506  
Phone: (913) 532-6846

BORN: February 24, 1943, Columbus, Ohio

## EDUCATION:

1980	Master of Fine Arts in Painting, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas. July
1979	Master of Arts in Painting, Kansas State University, May
1971	Master of Arts in Modern European Thought, Kansas State University, May
1964	Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, December

## EXHIBITIONS, GROUP, JURIED:

1979	The Amarillo Competition, Amarillo Art Center, Amarillo, Texas. Juror, John E. Canaday, October 27 - December 9.
1976	18th Annual 8 State Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, Oklahoma Art Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Juror, Norman A. Geske. September 19 - October 17.
1976	18th Annual National Print and Drawing Exhibition, Oklahoma Art Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Juror, Harold Altman. April 4 - May 2.
1974	44th Annual (eleven state) Exhibition, Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, Missouri. Juror, Harry Krug. October 27 - November 24.
1974	16th Annual Eight State Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, Oklahoma Art Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Juror, Stephen Prokopff. September 15 - October 20.
1974	8 West Biennial, Western Colorado Center for the Arts, Grand Junction, Colorado. Juror, Lewis W. Story. July 14 - 26.
1974	Smokey Hill Art Exhibition, Hays, Kansas. April.
1973	43rd Annual (ten state) Exhibition, Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, Missouri. Juror, Dee J. Lafon. October 28 - November 25.

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#### EXHIBITIONS, GROUP, NONJURIED:

- 1980                      Exhibition in Honor of Vice-President Chalmers, McCain Auditorium, Kansas State University, April.
- 1980                      Ten Artists, Farrell Library Gallery, Kansas State University, January.
- 1979                      MA Thesis Exhibition: Reed, Fooshee, Thompson, Union Gallery, Kansas State University, April.
- 1979                      Flint Hill Area Artists, Union Gallery, Kansas State University. February.
- 1978                      Manhattan Artist's Pool, Union National Bank, Manhattan, Kansas. May.
- 1973                      Group Show, 20th Century Gallery, Williamsburg, Virginia. June - September.

#### EXHIBITIONS, ONE-MAN:

- 1980                      "MFA" Thesis Exhibition, paintings, Union Gallery, Kansas State University. June.
- 1979                      "Beyond the Border", paintings and drawings, Union National Bank, Manhattan, Kansas. July.
- 1978                      "Passages From the Dance", paintings, Farrell Library Gallery, Kansas State University. May.
- 1977                      "Recent Work", drawings, Farrell Library Gallery, Kansas State University. May.
- 1977                      "Sky Canyons", 46 drawings, McCain Auditorium, Kansas State University. January - February.
- 1975                      Collages, Manhattan Public Library, Manhattan, Kansas. November.
- 1974                      Transparent Collages, Manhattan, Public Library, Manhattan, KS.
- 1972                      Collages, Manhattan Public Library, Manhattan, Kansas. December.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: TEACHING:

- 1980 - Present              Assistant Professor, temporary, Environmental Design Studio I, Pre- Design Professions Department, College of Architecture and Design, Kansas State University.
- 1977 - 1980              Graduate Teaching Assistantship, Design I, Department of Art, Kansas State University.  
  
Entire responsibility for instruction of a foundation course of design principles. This course requires conceptional outline, art historical examples, and studio supervision of the design sections curriculum. This curriculum includes presentations and exercises in the areas of visual isolation and balance, line usage, value observation and control, color interaction,

shape usage, symbolism, and various insights into the visual image development process to include formal usage of design vocabulary.

1971 - 1979

Founder, Director, and teacher of The Climbing Tree School, Manhattan, Kansas.

The implementation of a Piagetian based cognitive program for children between the ages of three and six. Responsibilities included developing a learning oriented curriculum based upon observation, concrete manipulative activity, play, visual signs and symbols, and the spoken word. It required training and supervision of teaching staff, maintaining supplies budget, building operation, research and curriculum planning. Added responsibility was the supervision of student teachers from Kansas State University. Much emphasis was placed upon the usage of visual image making as a process of learning and communication. June 1971 - May 1979.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: DESIGN

1980

Scenic Designer, The Masque of Queens, A Mid-America Shakespearean Chautauqua, Shakespeare: The Globe and the World, Nelson-Atkins Gallery and Museum of Fine Art, Kansas City, MO.

Conception and transmission through research, photographic work, and model of the total scenic design. This process included selection of materials, artists, and entire supervision of construction, painting, and installation. It included the estimation of expenses, purchasing, location of working space, transportation to and museum installation. March.

1978

Scenic Designer, Destined, original dance choreographed by Laura Donnelly, Forum Hall, Kansas State University.

Conception, purchasing, construction, and installation of scenic design.

1978

Scenic Designer, William Shakespeare's, 12th Night, Manhattan Civic Theatre, Manhattan, Kansas.

Conception and transmission through drawings, model, and personal supervision of the scenic design. The process included estimation of materials cost, location of such materials, purchasing, and fabrication of design. September - October.

1978

Scenic Designer, Oliver, Manhattan Recreation Commission, Manhattan, Kansas.

Conception and transmission through research, drawings, and model of massive outdoor theatre set. Included supervision of construction crew, purchasing materials, budget, fabrication of forms, painting, and site installation. June - August.

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- 1978                      Scenic Designer and Technical Director, Arthur Miller's, The Crucible, Manhattan Civic Theatre, Manhattan, Kansas.  
Conception and transmission through research, drawings, and model of scenic design. Included locating skilled craftsmen and theatre technicians, supervision of budget, purchasing and location of materials, direction of personnel, fabrication, painting, and lighting of design. January - February.
- 1977                      Scenic Designer and Technical Director, Pine Cone Theatre Summer Repertory, Grand Lake, Colorado.  
Conception and transmission of six scenic designs for the summer season. Included supervision of shop personnel, tools, theatre equipment systems, purchasing of materials, set budgets, fabrication and repair of designs and location of furnishings. June - August.

#### ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE:

- 1977                      Instructor, Temporary, Colorado Northwestern Community College. August.  
Instruction of beginning and advanced creative dramatics and scenic design for the Children's Theatre Workshop, Pine Cone Theatre, Grand Lake, Colorado.
- 1968                      Instructor, Temporary, Department of History, Kansas State University. January - May.  
Entire responsibility of lecture presentation of two, three-hour blocks of undergraduate Western Civilization course. Included academic evaluation of student performance.
- 1965 - 1967              Active Duty, Officer, Medical Service Corps, United States Army. January 1965 - January 1967. Reserve Duty, highest grade held: Captain, January 1967 - March 1971.  
Duties included Platoon leader, combat medical platoon, payroll officer, defense counsel for special court martials of Medical Training Center, executive officer medical training company, assistant supply and services officer, post hospital.

#### HONORS AND AWARDS:

- 1976                      Honorable Mention, 18th Annual National Print and Drawing Exhibition. April - May.
- 1970                      Phi Alpha Theta National History Honorary.
- 1970                      First Prize, 1st Annual Kinetic Arts Film Contest, Kansas State University.
- 1968 - 1971              Fellowship, National Defense Education Act. September 1968 - May 1971.

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1960 - 1961 Parent Teacher Association Scholarship. September 1960 - June 1961.

1960 Junior Achievement Association Scholarship. September.

#### MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES:

1980 College Art Association, Member of M.F.A. Forum/  
Roundtable.

#### UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

1980 Chairman of Graduate and Undergraduate Demonstration Activities, and Public Information, Art Department, All University Open House Day, Kansas State University. March.

1979 Presentation: "Stain Painting", for All University Open House Day, Kansas State University, representing the Art Department. April.

1979 Advisor to the Long Range Planning Committee, Manhattan Arts Council on the needs of visual artists in the local community. March.

1978 Co-founder of the Flint Hills Area Artists, a group of area artists organized to exhibit together. May.

Guest speaker as part of KSU telenet courses, local preschool association and KSU Department of Education on children and their relationships to Piagetian theories and curriculums on learning; and the evolution of the young child's image making process.

Guest speaker on the nature of collage and symbolism to other design courses, Art Department, Kansas State University; extension art courses, Department of Continuing Education, Kansas State University.

Technical advisor and co-builder of the theatre facility of Manhattan Civic Theatre.

Designer and builder of local playground.

Coach, children's summer ball teams.

#### PERSONAL INTERESTS:

Making and listening to music; historical reading; oriental and modern American art; designing of historical simulation games; theatre and dance.

#### PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVES:

To develop my painting and sculptural forms through self-inquiry, discipline and receptivity, and thus add to the body of current American art.

To understand the visual creative process so as to communicate its purposes, its usage of media, and its

GEORGE H. THOMPSON  
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value to those who wish to learn the traditions of Art.

#### REFERENCES:

##### Pertaining to studio work and teaching of art:

Jerrold Maddox, Head	LuAnn Culley
Department of Art	Art Department
Kansas State University	Kansas State University
Edwar Sturr	John Vogt
Art Department	Art Department
Kansas State University	Kansas State University
Oscar Larmer	
Art Department	
Kansas State University	

##### Pertaining to historical ability and teaching:

George Kren	Marion Grey
Department of History	Department of History
Kansas State University	Kansas State University

##### Pertaining to abilities as scenic designer:

Carl Hinrichs	Charlotte MacFarland
Department of Speech and	Department of Speech and
Theatre	Theatre
Kansas State University	Kansas State University

##### Pertaining to educator of children:

Richard Hause  
College of Education  
Kansas State University

References are on file, and may be requested from The Career Planning and Placement Center, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

ART - THE EXPRESSION OF EQUIVALENCE

by

GEORGE H. THOMPSON

B.S., Ohio State University, 1964  
M.A., Kansas State University, 1971  
M.A., Kansas State University, 1979

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER OF FINE ART'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

Department of Art

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1980

The power and meaning of art is its expression of equivalence. In both its content and technique the mutually interacting opposites of expansion and limitation govern the production and the content of artistic expression.

The painter confronts this fundamental condition through the disequilibrium resulting from the execution of painting. He seeks equilibrium from this disorienting phase through material control and through self understanding of his source of inspiration. The latter requires choosing to show nature's visible figurative particular or its opposite the less visible non figurative universal nature. In either choice content is guided by technique and vice versa.

The act of painting becomes an act of the negation of time. It is like language in its quixotic denial of its state, and through its denial is able to create the sensation of timelessness.

This thesis of painting chooses to negate its actual direct visual sensation of nature with the result that its product is the opposite of its negation the non figurative abstract sensation of nature. Its use of material for surface is opposed by color. These two mutual opposites interact in demonstration of the process of expansion and limitation as governing forces of construction and content. The principle of equivalence is demonstrated in paintings use of a transparent plane opposed by an opaque, the wet on wet working opposed by limits of evaporation, color intensity limited by viscosity, positive mark to negative ground, light reflection to light absorption, advancing color to receding color, and horizontal pattern to vertical form.

The result of this process shows that equivalency not only describes technique, it shows that painting's meaning is the statement of the consciousness of this process, and as such defines its perception as the acknowledgement of these interacting forces. It strives to refine the experience as a change of



boundary between expansion and limitation in the perceiver's consciousness. In so doing the mutual relationship of its construction in material and color are used to create a dynamic equilibrium that shows both in an ambiguity of structure and indecision.

The result is a composition of continual movement in which breakdown and reforming is in continual operation. Its visualization denotes equivalence's realization that neither may one affirm or deny the other without complete contradiction.

Art's process through description as equivalence states that it is not a one way door but rather a two way in which either sides of the threshold are equal and lead to one another.