

FORMALISTIC CONSIDERATION
OF ARTISTIC ELEMENTS

by

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B. F. A., Wichita State University, 1979

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF FINE ART

Department of Art

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1985

Approved by:


Major Professor

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Nonobjective Art- I make nonobjective Art.



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Quite often people relate the term "nonobjective" with something that is ambiguous or confusing.

I feel my paintings are quite the opposite. My art work contains a certain degree of clarity when viewed with an open mind.

The foundation of my work relies on three basic concepts of art: color as related to its own inherent visual quality under optimum lighting; the relationship between particular color combinations and their harmony or discord; and finally how these colors interact within a given space. I see my art as a progressive visual analysis of these elements. Each element held in its place by another, each shape, each color, interacting; sometimes in subtle harmony and rhythm, other times in strong contrast or opposition.

I am concerned with issues I believe to be deeper than those of the mere imitation of the subject matter. The concept of "suitable image" has provided the artist and viewer with new visual vocabularies. The participation of the viewer plays a key role to the understanding of nonobjective art. Twentieth century investigation of new concepts has allowed artists to express what they feel to be the true issues of art in an environment conducive to artistic freedom of expression.

A main artistic concern of mine is the relationship between contrasting and/or equivalent elements of color, shape, size and intensity. Another concern is the development of a visual rhythm of interacting colored shapes within a geometrically shaped canvas. Through the organization of individual colors, the painting develops various degrees of illusionistic space. Each painting has its own particular visual character, due to the sum total and arrangement of the elements. Each character has a distinct personality, some are bold and contrasting, others are slight and subtle. Each character has an effect.

I think about color in a plural sense. First, each color contains its own physical appearance and has the ability to evoke a particular emotion or response within the viewer. The combination of colors, expands the possibility of emotions or responses. The interaction of colors and their relationships is established by varying the amounts and shapes. This interaction creates a visual rhythm.

The paintings are conceived through preparatory drawings and color studies. Consideration is given to the shape and size of the painting. The shape of the canvas and the breakup of space within the external

boundaries are considered integral. The organization of space within these external boundaries is a direct reflection of the outer edge. These reflected angles and the resulting shapes develop the basic composition and spatial quality of the piece. Once the linear breakup of the work is established, I, then consider the value and intensity of the colors used to develop the painting's character or personality.

Once that I feel I have the basis for a successful piece I begin to paint along this prescribed arrangement. At this point, the painting has a color pattern established and a certain visual tone. Through color examination and comparison, the painting is now assembled like a symbolic puzzle or icon. Colored shapes interlock piece by piece. The choice and commitment to a particular color within a given space will influence the coloration of adjacent or neighboring shapes. Again, these choices can exist in opposition, equivalence or all possibilities in between. The character is developed by these choices.

The painting process will often follow a particular fashion or course. Sometimes it is predetermined and expected, other times suspenseful and surprising and sometimes frustrating and meritless. The emotional

response felt by the viewer will vary with each and every individual.

During the process of interpretation, the viewer's aesthetics come into play. An appreciation of a particular thought requires exposure and interaction with its concepts.

I feel my visual statements are of value and contain an element of fantasy which has the ability to induce new visions and/or questions.

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The purpose of my report is to offer, for the viewer of my paintings, an explanation of the various formal artistic elements that are considered during the creation of my paintings.