

Stony Brook University

MFA THESIS EXHIBITION 2007

ALTON **FALCONE**

ANGELA **FREIBERGER**

MELANIE **GERULES**

KARSTEN **GRUMSTRUP**

TAKAFUMI **IDE**

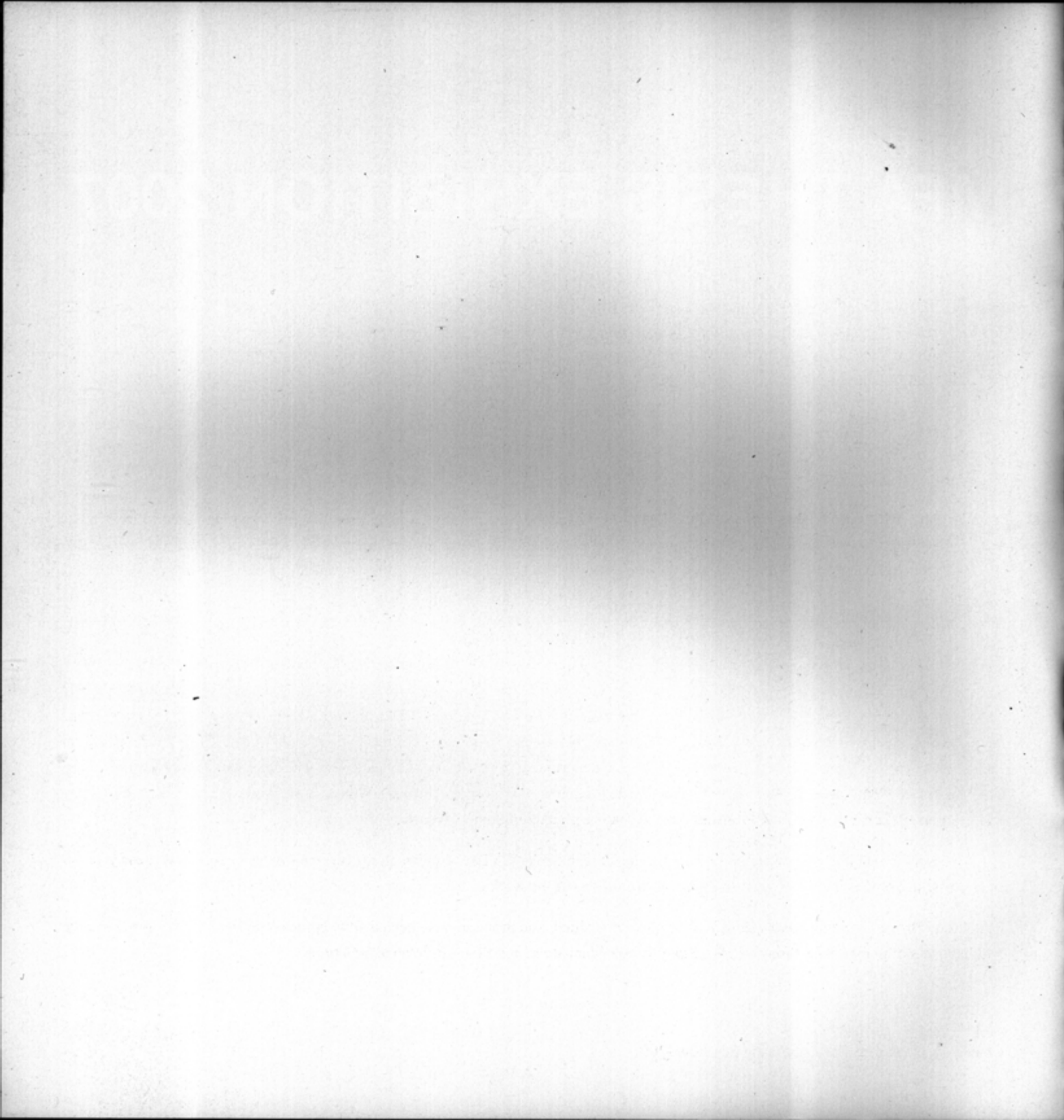
ATHENA **LATOCHA**

TIM **MURRAY**

WILLIAM SHERROD **TYSON**

MARCH 17 - APRIL 14

University Art Gallery, Staller Center for the Arts, Stony Brook University



MFA THESIS EXHIBITION 2007



INTRODUCTION

Our MFA is 22 years old this spring, and this is our 19th MFA Thesis Exhibition. While young, the degree has developed during a period of great change and growth in the visual arts, as well as in our department. To our original curriculum of Painting, Drawing, Sculpture, Photography and Printmaking, we have added Digital/Electronic Media, Performance, and Public Art. Unlike many university art departments and professional art schools, we have encouraged from our beginnings the crossing over from one medium to another, one set of tools to another — whatever would serve the artist's needs best — as is quite evident from the current exhibition.

Another contributing facet to our program's diversity is the wide spectrum of nations from which our MFA's come: the USA of course, and Canada, Mexico, Brazil, China, Denmark, England, Germany, India, Japan, Korea, Russia, Taiwan — and more.

The Master of Fine Arts at Stony Brook is a unique, three-year, sixty-hour terminal professional degree that's designed to maintain a small enrollment (we allow no more than twenty candidates in residence) and to encourage the availability of our professional faculty on a constant basis. It takes advantage in many ways of our proximity to the center of the art world, while at the same time offering insulation from the density and pressures of the City in newly rebuilt private studios sixty miles away, yet closely bound to New York through the professional ties of our faculty and curriculum.

We also take advantage of our being an integral part of a large, renowned research university. We benefit from Associate Faculty from Theatre Arts, and Affiliate Faculty from Philosophy, the Humanities Institute, and Women's Studies, all of whom are available to our MFA candidates. There is also a nine-credit liberal arts requirement and a written thesis, and our MFA's have profited in many other ways from their being situated here at Stony Brook: They've blown glass with the chemists, studied metallurgy with the engineers, done theatre design in Theatre Arts, computer science with that department, optics in Physics, and so on. The MFA candidates, as well as our MA and PhD students, may pursue concurrent certificate programs in Philosophy, History, Women's Studies, Cinema, Cultural Studies, and programs in other affiliated departments. And we have a good employment record.

All of us want to thank Rhonda Cooper, Director of the University Art Gallery, very much for her remarkable energy over these years in so successfully presenting these often challenging exhibitions of the works of our Master of Fine Arts candidates.

Like Stony Brook University as a whole, we are pleased, excited, and proud to have been able to come so far in so short a time, and we still have lots of plans — for Stony Brook, Stony Brook Manhattan, and Stony Brook Southampton.

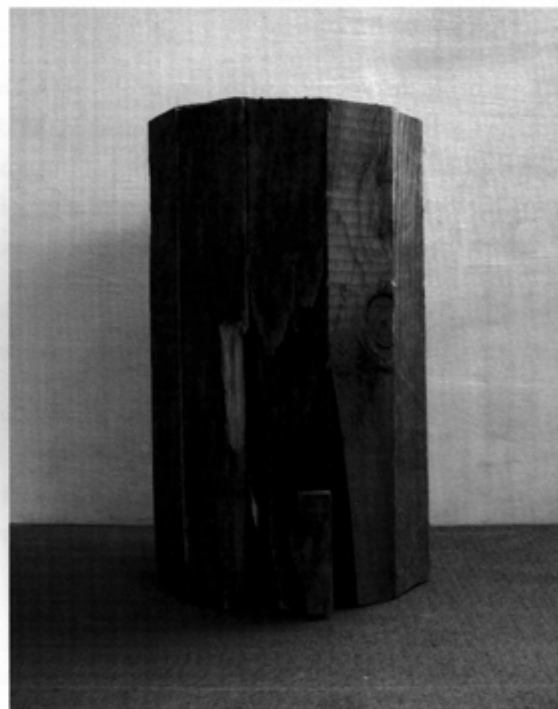
Mel Pekarsky
Chairman, Department of Art, Spring Semester, 2007

Alton Falcone

The simple, monolithic, centripetal quality of the form is meant to contrast with the breaks and openings from torn wood edges and knot holes. This should give the viewer the sense of both solidity and openness; the imagination is perhaps drawn to the inner space of the sculpture in much the same way that we feel closer to those around us from whom we draw strength. The negative space of the center offers itself as a presence whose interaction with the outer world is seen in the textured surface; the openings and breaks make this a two-way exchange.

Worn wood, rusted iron, and other such materials, corroded through the slow insistence in time of atmospheric elements and human abuse, offer a contrast to the purity of the geometrical form, a cylindrical dodecahedron. This may give to viewers of the sculpture a feeling of melancholy, as if the work, like the fragment of a Greek sculpture, was once whole and lighter. There is a beauty to endurance, a dignity to aging, and an existential quality of *fragility in firmness* to works of this nature.

The repetition of the same form allows me to deepen my contemplations of these qualities. The successes and shortcomings of each work serve to inform the next sculpture; hence they are intimately connected variations on the same theme.



Variation, 2007
Recovered wood, iron, 13" high



Variation, 2007 (detail)

Angela Freiburger

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My work explores the idea of “body” through “negative extensions” derived from my own body. The objects contain impressions of my hands, fingers, or toes as my signature embodied within the marble. The sculptures represent and contrast the finitude of the human body. I incorporate performance art to challenge and transgress physical and mental boundaries. The use of video and my physical interaction with it are also an element that adds to the tension between the material and the immaterial.

My thesis installation, *Mood Swings*, integrates video projection, sound, and two sculptures. There are two video projections: one is on the wall and another is on the ceiling. Then, one projection is my point of view and another one is the point of view of the spectator. Hanging in front of the projection are two swings made of marble. By layering references to woman, body, and landscape, the installation merges feelings of desire, sensuality, and childhood memories to create an emotional experience. Through dual video projections, large-scale installations that envelop the viewer, my work aims to dissolve the conventional boundaries between artist and audience.

My work is on display at the Contemporary Museum of Art in Rio de Janeiro in the Joao Sattamini Collection. Since the late 1990s I have been producing live performances in Brazil and New York City. My work has been featured in the April 2005 issue of *Sculpture Magazine*.



Topsy-Turvy, 2006 (detail)
Stony Brook, NY



Topsy-Turvy, 2006 (video performance)
Melville Library Gallery, Stony Brook, NY

Melanie Gerules

My objective in painting is to create a believable world that comes alive through the play of color and form. I seek to show a certain drama with the objects or people; to more or less find the tune of what I am looking at. The narrative should come from the forms not from any social concerns or trends.

For the past few years I have been painting and drawing self-portraits, flowers, and still lifes.



Roses, 2006 (detail)
Oil on plywood, 24" x 30"



Self Portrait, 2005
Oil on canvas, 12" x 18"

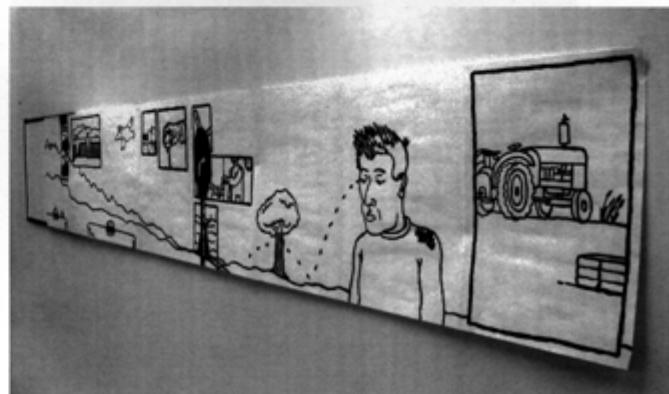
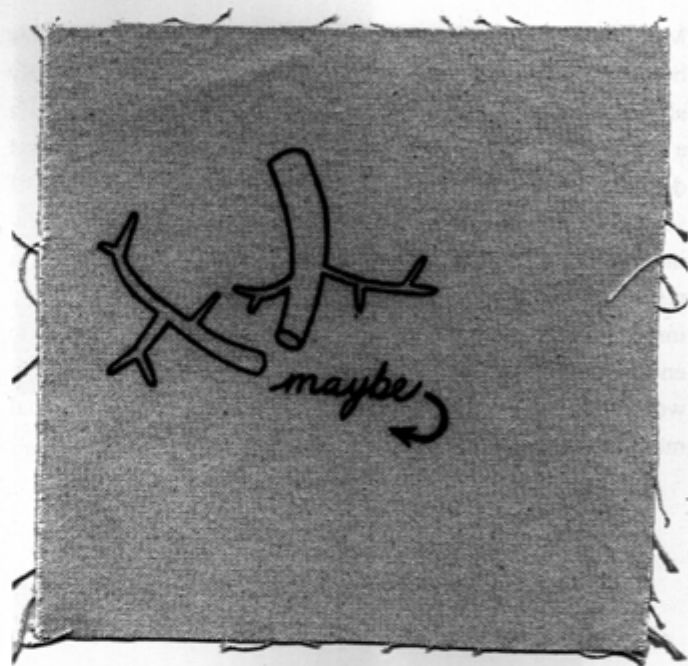
Karsten Grumstrup

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Comprised of symbols, the pictorial acts as an emblem, but as an emblem of what? How do we arrive at meaning? The proliferation of signs and their *collectively* agreed upon meanings obscures an important possibility; pointless mundane life has more to do with meaningful experience than it is given credit.

My formal decisions are intended to lead the viewer into the picture, making the act of looking fun. It borrows comic/cartoon language, and like a comic, asks to be *read*. These kinds of subject matter, format, and source material then provide a space to question and confuse the conditions of popular pictorial representations.

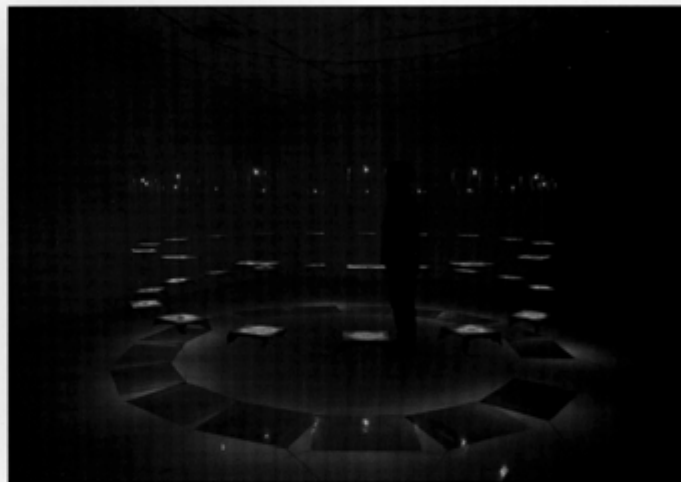
I try to create a situation that poses questions to viewers concerning their understanding of the world through visual standards. I want to lead them down a familiar path, every moment going further into unfamiliar territory. I want viewers to answer their own questions and come to their own conclusions.



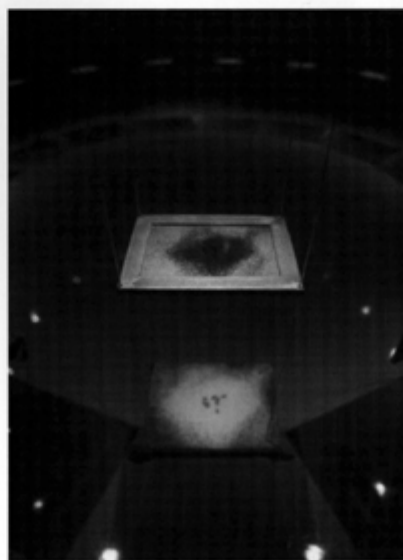
foldout book 1 (big red), 2005
Acrylic on paper, 19" x 116.5"

Takafumi Ide

My work often incorporates small fragile objects, such as branches, gold leaf, hand-made paper, small lights, or tiny shards of metals. These delicate elements are meant to touch a chord with the audience and suggest a moment of calm and delight—the harmony of the small objects offers a sense of solemnity and elegance. I have controlled my installation by incorporating delicate objects, sound, video, and light. As a result, the viewer can feel the harmony and participate in my installation, rather than only see and feel the individualistic energy from only one. I hope the experience created by my work encourages audiences to reflect on important transitional moments in their own lives.



propagate, 2006 (installation view)
Amplifier, ash, canvas, wood, LEDs, MacBookPro, MOTU sound I/O, speaker cable, speakers, steel rod, and transparent film



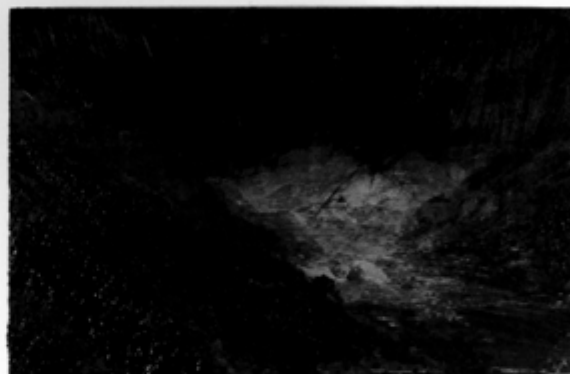
propagate, 2006 (detail)

Athena LaTocha

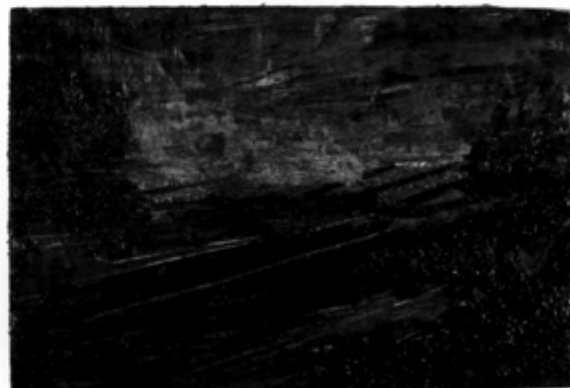
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My landscape imagery implies a state of unrest and a sense of discomfort through the struggle, as well as the tension, between representational and abstract imagery, the known and unknown, the other and the self. I am concerned with the ideas and sensations resulting from conflict, doubt, rejection, and resistance. My work is process-based, dependent upon the manipulation of the paint surface and sense of movement and forms found inside the recurrent image.

Working directly on the floor, I utilize unorthodox painting techniques. Using the floor as a support for canvas and birch panels introduces an intricate relationship between myself and the image and reflects the physical and psychological struggle while developing these iconographic images. My play between large and small scale on the floor allows me to work inside the image rather than from the outside as an easel painter. I evoke the familiar and unknown while incorporating the dynamic force of gesture.



Untitled XXXVII, 2006
Oil on birch panel, 14.5" x 22.25"



Untitled XXXVI, 2006
Oil on birch panel, 5.75" x 7"

Tim Murray

Every truth becomes a falsehood as it is written; yet the book accumulates truths through its existence.

Just as the preservation of truth is a false concept, so is the preservation of an individual.

Science is poetry in much the same way that life is death.

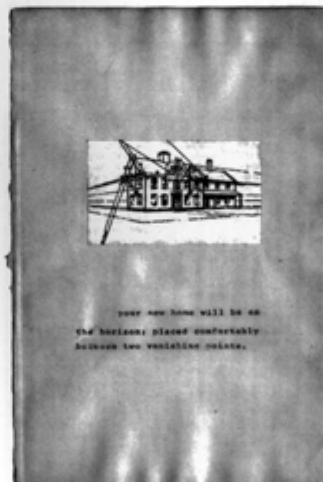
Poetry is a truth which cannot be written, just as it struggles to express in words that which words cannot express.

To subject an object to science is to sacrifice the real in the name of history.

History attained through scientific method is a fundamental falsity.

Poetry does not claim to be other than what it presents, yet it represents the other.

Representation is essential to poetics.



William Sherrod Tyson

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It seems my main thing was to be major paid.



PHOTO BY YANA KM



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my gratitude to Professor Mel Pekarsky, Chairman of the Department of Art; Professor Michele Bogart, Director of Graduate Studies; Professor Howardena Pindell, MFA Program Director; Associate Professor Stephanie Dinkins, Acting MFA Program Director; and Associate Professor Nobuho Nagasawa, for their assistance with this exhibition.

The 2006-2007 University Art Gallery exhibition schedule is made possible by a generous donation from the Paul W. Zuccaire Foundation. Additional funding for this exhibition has been provided by the Friends of Staller Center. We are extremely grateful to our sponsors for helping us to present our exhibitions to our students and faculty as well as to the local and regional community.

I also wish to express my appreciation to members of the Staller Center for the Arts staff: Fumito Hiraoka, Lawrence Mesich, Pat Moran, and Pete Pantaleo for exhibition assistance; Harry Weil, Assistant to the Director; Tommy Chui, Amy Marinelli, Christine Wagner, and Jian Yao, Gallery Assistants; John Alvarado, Mariko Aoyagi, Stephanie Hayes, Jillian Kehoe, Yirang Lim, and Derrick Tan, Gallery Interns; Liz Silver, Production Manager, and the Staller Center Technical Crew for exhibition lighting; and Amanda Meyers, Staller Center Director of Advancement, for Gallery fundraising.

Most of all, I wish to thank Alton Falcone, Angela Freiburger, Melanie Gerules, Karsten Grumstrup, Takafumi Ide, Athena LaTocha, Tim Murray, and William Sherrod Tyson for a very exciting MFA exhibition.

Rhonda Cooper
Director

Catalogue design: Karsten Grumstrup

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