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"An approach to creative design" relation of composition to expression with a particular emphasis on color relationships.

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" AN APPROACH TO CREATIVE DESIGN" RELATION OF
COMPOSITION TO EXPRESSION WITH A PARTICULAR
EMPHASIS ON COLOR RELATIONSHIPS.

by

KAY J. MOULTRIE

A THESIS

submitted to

PORTLAND STATE COLLEGE

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

June 1966

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PAINTINGS

| | | |
|-----|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. | "City-scape" No. I. | 22" x 24" |
| 2. | "City-scape" No. II. | 12" x 24" |
| 3. | "Mother and Child" | 16" x 20" |
| 4. | "Yellow-light" | 12" x 16" |
| 5. | "Flight" | 14" x 24" |
| 6. | "Moon Flowers" | 16" x 20" |
| 7. | "The Band" | 16" x 20" |
| 8. | "Flowers" | 20" x 30" |
| 9. | "Drops" | 16" x 20" |
| 10. | "Flowers" | 18" x 24" |
| 11. | "Rhythmic Movement" | 22" x 22" |
| 12. | "City-scape" No. III | 12" x 24" |
| 13. | "The Covered Bridge" | 2' x 3' |

All photographs unless otherwise listed were taken with a Phototrix 25 mg camera using Kodacolor film and Plus X for the black and white prints.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Key Moultrie for the /Master of Science in Teaching/
(Candidate's name)

Date thesis is presented: May 4, 1966
(Date)

Title: "An approach to Creative Design" relation of
composition to expression with a particular emphasis on
color relationships.

Abstract approved: 

The main concentration of study for my project was a series of color studies on canvas in which I explored varying proportions of primary color mixtures, unfamiliar color relationships and value ranges. I was particularly interested in exploring varying proportions of color complementaries in working to achieve neutrals. Through-out my studies I worked for a unity in the sequences of color mixtures. For part of my project I worked with collage materials, which were subordinated to color but released me from pure representational subject matter such as still lifes. After a series of these studies I again returned to representational subject matter as a departure for new creative expression.

APPROVED

[Redacted]

Thesis Adviser

[Redacted]

Administrative Officer, Department, Division or School

[Handwritten Signature]

For the Graduate Council

[Redacted]

Dean, Graduate Studies

Date thesis is presented: May 4, 1966

" An approach to Creative Design" relation of composition to expression with a particular emphasis on color relationships.

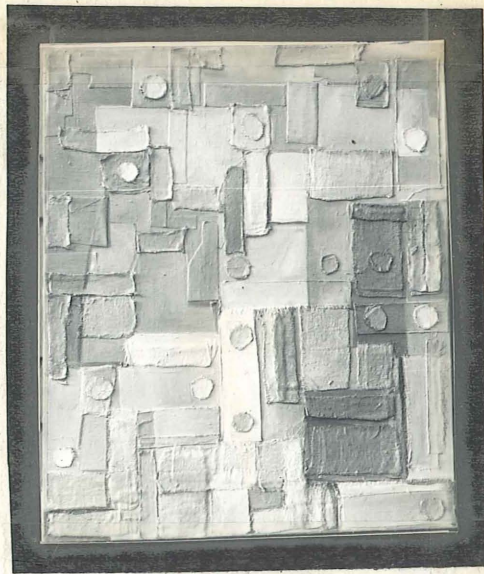
The main concentration of study for my project was a series of color studies to explore varying proportions of color mixtures, unfamiliar color relationships, value ranges and to work for a unity or tonality through these color combinations and relationships. I did some research on collages and found these most exciting. I decided to do a series of collage painting, which would be subordinated to color but would release me from pure representational subject matter such as still lifes.

I have a particular affinity for geometric shapes and I was drawn to the work of Mondrian. I was interested in his works particularly where he reduced man made structures to their purest form, which resulted in geometric squares and rectangles to convey a landscape. Mondrian was in turn influenced by the cubist movement and from previous studies, I was also influenced in the knowledge that a painting could have a life of its own. The greater the departure from the subject resemblance, the clearer the dynamic qualities of the plastic forces, such as the expressionistic quality of color. Also at this time I did a study on the works of Paul Klee. These studies were to influence the direction

my color studies would ultimately take. I observed that Klee was able to show through his works that contrasting expression could be obtained by the very extensive employment of all the tones from black to white or the employment of the lower register, which was deep and sombre. He literally invented color relationships through experimenting exhaustively with all possible variations of color within set limits. He produced color combinations which were innumerable. Many of his compositions were created through manipulating inventively varied shapes, colors and rhythms alone and to these I paid particular attention. To mention a few which I was influenced by "Fugue in Red", in 1921 in watercolor, "Intensification of color from the Static to the Dynamic", 1920 in oil, "Yellow Signs", 1937, "Garden in Bloom", 1932 in oil and "Captive Pierret", 1923 in oil.

Under these varying influences I began my studies. For the collage materials I chose a rather limited range of materials for textural effect (gauze, burlap, corrugated paper, and canvas) but each did have a distinct textural quality and movement from smooth to rough. I did several studies of cityscapes and worked to combine a reduction of the city to basic geometric shapes and at the same time give a feeling of the textural qualities of the various building surfaces you would find in the city. I adhered these shapes with gesso which I found preferable to Elmer's

glue.



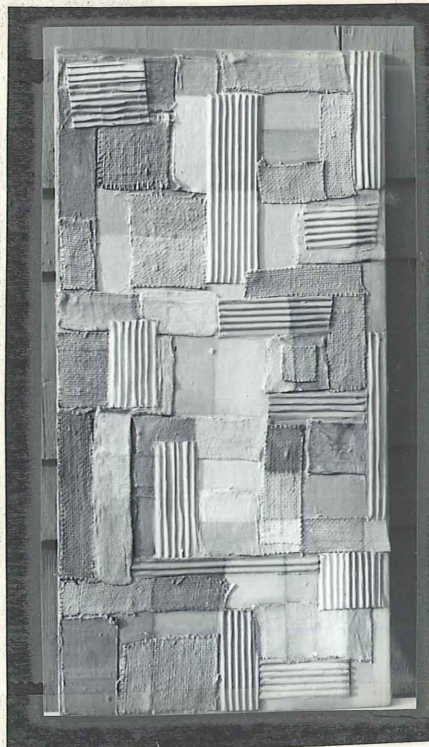
"Cityscape" No. 1 22" x 24"



This is the fourth painting on this particular canvas which was not reworked in succession but by returning after working on other canvases and after gaining other insight into my work. I regret I did not photograph the various steps. Observations from my first canvas was a lack of tonality, a unity of total color impact. I had chosen to paint the first canvas with a green hue but the resulting fourth canvas was divided vertically into four hue areas. To each basic color I added varying proportions of other primaries on the color wheel. In some areas I added complementaries together to achieve neutrals. By adding complementaries I achieved varied color sequences. Another consideration soon became apparent, that of the absorption rate of the various collage materials and how absorption affected the brilliancy of the color.

At this time I began a new evaluation of color fundamentals which had considerable influence upon my later works.

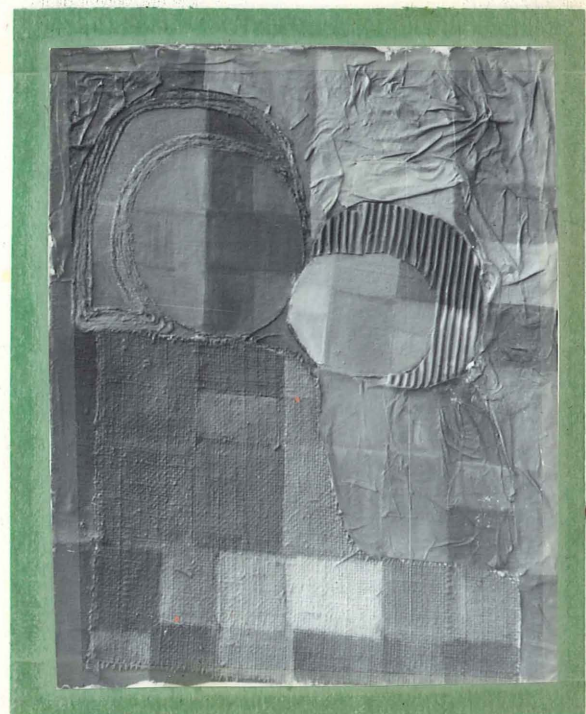
I became familiar with Edwald Hering's theory that all hues and mixtures could be derived from the four coupled colors, red-green, blue-yellow plus black and white. I also studied Munsell's, Ostwald's and Prang's color systems. Also the works of Paul Klee as previously stated were of considerable influence upon me. I was able to preceive a whole new dimension of color in reference to my own color appreciation and use.



"Cityscape" No. 11 12" x 24"

I began this canvas following the same steps as in the first canvas, only this time I worked for a red-orange dominance. To red I added varying proportions of orange

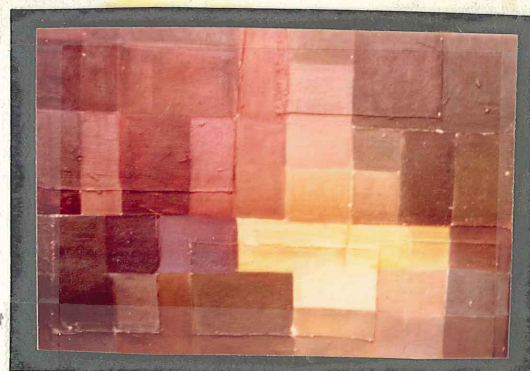
and blue to achieve subtle changes which in turn implied movement as sun fleeting over the city. A warm sun that softens the harshness of the city and gives the city a feeling of warmth. I observed how the pigment red lost its brilliancy in terms of the amount of color lower in the scale that was added to it. Through subtle changes there is both a vertical and horizontal movement, but not to the point of destructive movement, but one of unity. I feel that this is a successful painting with a good tonality. The red-orange is in medium value range and follows the natural order of values. I selected the value of the hues used together in the same order of value that are found on the value scale.



"Mother and Child" 16" x 20"

I began the canvas following the same basic steps as

in the first two canvases. But this time I wished to couple color studies with the image of form, making the slight suggestion of the form of a mother and child. I also experimented with the manipulation of paper towel-ing in gesso. I worked to subordinate the forms to color and I chose the hue green anticipating that green denotes life and living things and mother child symbolizes the eternal recreation of life. Subtle changes were achieved by adding varying proportions of orange, yellow and blue to green. Color movement exists on both vertical-horizontal planes emphasized by dividing the canvas area into squares of various color combinations. I feel that this is a successful painting. This is the second painting on this canvas, previously I had chosen blue as the dominating hue and form tended to dominate color sequences. The resulting painting has a pleasing tonality, is in low key and follows the natural order of values.



12" x 16"

"Yellow-light"

I applied only one material that of canvas to give a

slight sensation of textural depth. I divided the canvas into four dominant hue areas those of red, orange, blue and green. This painting is sombre, in low-key with very subtle changes. It was interesting to observe how yellow-green was affected by surrounding color areas and how movement was created by these surrounding areas converging upon the yellow-green area.



"Flight" 14" x 24"

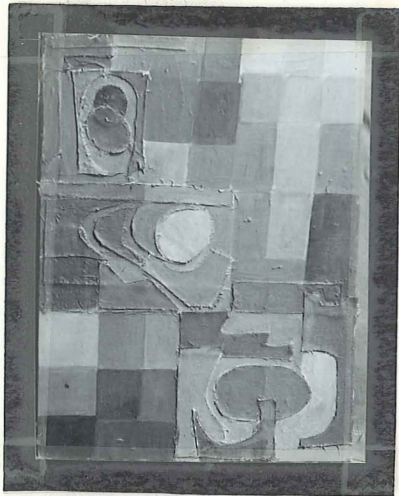


On this particular canvas I changed my approach by not reducing the collage materials to geometric shapes but was interested in more freedom of materials and movement. I took paper toweling and manipulated the toweling with my hands, to create greater movement and rougher surface texture. These textural qualities were again subordinated to color relationships and this is the second painting on this canvas I chose the basic colors of green, orange, red, blue and yellow and worked for a movement of those hues across the canvas from left to right. I added white to the various



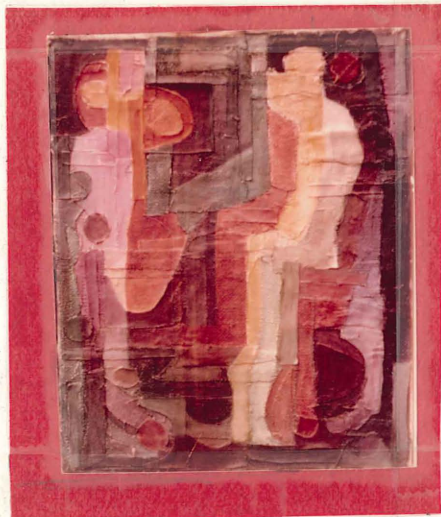
These photographs were taken with a Poloroid Land Camera, No.900 using type 48 film and in full sun. I included both of these photos because of the differences, one showing the textural effect better and the second nearer a true reproduction.

color and no where in this canvas does color exist as pure color. The resulting painting is one of medium key with several neutral areas and I feel a pleasing color movement.



"Moon Flowers"
16" x 20"

This time I became more interested in circular geometric shapes and irregular edges of the collage materials. I did not adhere materials to the whole surface area but worked in a vertical movement with the materials and form. I broke the rest of the canvas into squared areas where I worked out my color sequences. The dominant hue of this painting is blue. I added varying proportions of yellow-orange and green to blue to achieve subtle changes which led to movement of color. I feel this painting has a good tonality or unity and is a successful painting.



"The Band"
16" x 20"

This is the second painting on this canvas. The first was a study in blue with red added in varying proportions and the resulting painting was displeasing in its lack of movement and tonality. This canvas was approached as a collage color study with an increased textural depth built up with layers of material. My second painting was an attempt to suggest human form through vertical hue movement. By adding white to primary colors I produced tints which were emphasized by shades in smaller areas. There is a feeling that the collage materials might have been denied to such and extent that the results are displeasing.



"Flowers" 20" x 30"

At this time I returned to flowers for study. I did a series of pencil sketches to work for the feeling and movement of the flowers. Through previous studies I was able to use color in a more arbitrary sense. The primary reason for this kind of departure is the increase in emotive power which these departures furnish. I was not basically interested in form but only as a departure from which to work and experiment. I used the full range of the color wheel, red, orange, yellow, green, blue and worked for tonality, unity of color impact. I had to work to keep the colors in their proper spatial plane, knowing that warm colors advance and cool recede. Colors shift in hue and value relative to the hue and value of surrounding color and I feel this painting is very successful in that respect. Light source also had to be considered, a



"Flowers" 20" x 30"

This photograph was taken with a Poloroid Land
Camera, No. 900 using type 48 film.

each color reflects a variety of wavelenghts. I made a side trip in my studies in studying the various wave lenghts of the primary hues. In this painting I have red which has the longest and blue which has the shorest, but since pigments are neutralized by adding complementary colors they are in harmony with each other. By adding complementary colors I subtracted from each other's wave length. Through-out my studies it was interesting to observe how the eye records and creates effects, such as after-images, color fringes, and visual mixtures of color. Works by Seurat, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso and Renior were influential in studying color.

Color harmony can not be controlled by rules but a fundamental understanding of color is essential. A painting that affects the eye and mind agreeably is successful. Color harmony includes unity, consistency and fitness. I feel that through these various studies I made a real advancement in my use of color and creative expressionalism.



"Drops" 16" x 20"

This is the second painting on this canvas. The first was a study of daises, and from it evolved this painting. From the movement of flowers I derived a feeling of the nature and growth of the flowers. I used color arbitrarily working with primary colors to produce intermediate or secondary colors. Then I used complementary colors to produce neutrals, but did not work for a complete neutralization, but to lower the values and retain basic hue areas. I feel this is a successful painting with good value relationships and tonality.

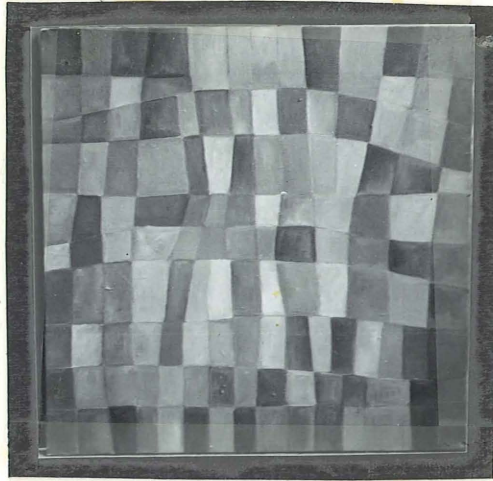


"Flowers" 18" x 24"



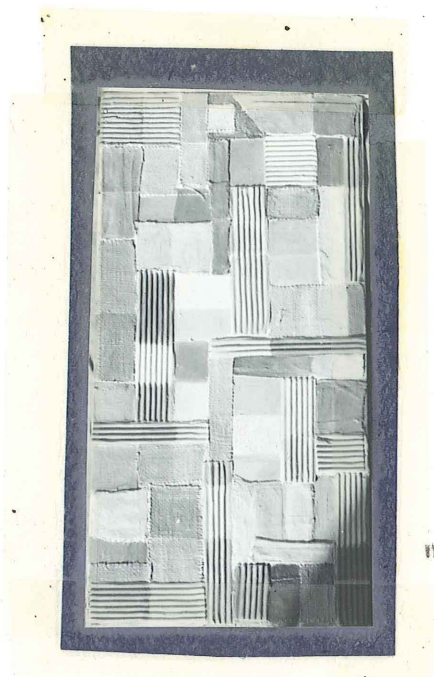
This is the second painting on this canvas and the subject I departed from was zinnias. This time I worked for a higher-keyed painting, applying pigments closer in its pure colors. I worked for color movement through-out the painting. I added white to the pigments producing tints and I worked for a few complementaries to produce several relatively small neutral areas. The colors are

a cool warm.



"Rhythmic Movement" 22" x 22"

This painting is divided into rectangular areas, I avoided static straight edges and gave movement to the edges of the rectangular areas by varying the angles of the edges. From primary colors, red, yellow and blue, I experimented with adding varying proportions of color in each rectangular area to achieve varying color sequences. I worked for a vertical-horizontal movement, noticing how each rectangular areas was in turn influenced by surrounding color areas. I find this painting pleasing, in color movement and unity.



"City-scape"
12" x 24"

I adhered materials as before in my collage studies. On this canvas I chose the complementary colors orange and blue, and by adding varying proportions of blue to orange I achieved a sequence of browns ranging in dominant hue from orange to blue. I worked for a vertical-horizontal movement, subordinating collage materials to color. I divided the canvas into four areas, each area having a dominant hue. Moving through-out the center of the canvas on a vertical plane is a sequence of squares in which I mixed varying proportions of yellow to either orange or blue. I feel this is a successful painting with good tonality.



"The Covered Bridge"
2' x 3'

Through exploration in the various color studies I have gained further insight into color mixtures, value relationships, value ranges and particularly a new and exciting area for creative expression. Included is a painting, "The Covered Bridge", finished previous to my work on the color project and by comparison I can see a real advancement in the tonality and color relationships in the work I have recently completed.

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