

THESIS

THE PARTICULAR IN PRINTS

Submitted by

Kathleen Frye

Department of Art

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

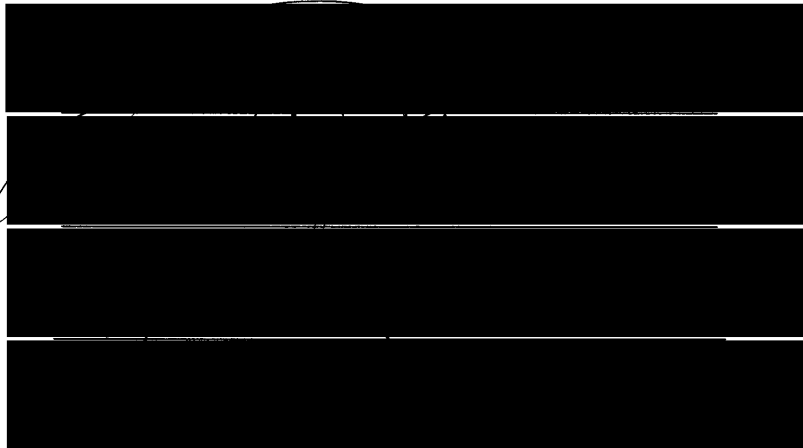
Summer 1995

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

May 23, 1995

WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR  
SUPERVISION BY KATHLEEN FRYE ENTITLED  
“THE PARTICULAR IN PRINTS”  
BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF FINE ARTS.

Committee on Graduate Work

A large rectangular area of the document is completely redacted with black ink, covering the names and signatures of the committee members.

Adviser

A rectangular area of the document is redacted with black ink, covering the name and signature of the department head.

Department Head

ABSTRACT OF THESIS  
THE PARTICULAR IN PRINTS

I make art because I like to look at things and I want to make images which describe how I feel about what I see. My work is based on a cycle of seeing and responding to the visual world as well as to the images that develop as the artmaking progresses. I choose subject matter which is visually exciting to me and has compelling formal qualities which offer an enticing opportunity to make descriptive marks. These formal qualities include: the abstract structure of forms; how forms are altered by shifting points of view or distance; the impact of light on forms; repetition of forms, pattern; and finally, the nature of large spaces (landscape) and intimate spaces (interior, figures). I prefer to work directly from what I see in front of me, rarely using intermediary sources such as photographs or slides. The mark-making possibilities inherent in the printmaking media of intaglio and lithography are well suited to my direct approach to making images. In addition, printmaking offers a means of creating a tactile surface with deep rich blacks, a surface which I find to be particularly expressive. If an image communicates something of how I experience both the external characteristics and the underlying reality of the visual world, as well as my love for the printmaking process, then I consider it complete.

Kathleen Frye  
Art Department  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523  
Summer 1995

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This body of work developed as a result of the sensitive and steadfast encouragement of the CSU printmaking faculty -- Jim Dormer, Jack Orman and Steve Simons -- whose support enabled me to continue working in the face of demanding personal circumstances. By way of his insightful critiques, far-reaching discussions of artists and artmaking and by his own example, Jim Dormer, my advisor and mentor, has motivated and inspired me to make artmaking my life and to do so with ambition and integrity. Jack Orman's enthusiasm for printmaking and his profound knowledge of all aspects of the process nurtured my love of prints and printmaking. Steve Simons' discerning criticism always managed to get to the heart of how and what an image communicates. I would also like to thank Dr. Ron Williams and Gary Voss, other members of my graduate committee, whose insights into my work were greatly appreciated.

I would like to acknowledge the invaluable support of my colleagues, graduate students past and present. They are: David Haskins, Alex Canelos, Jean Jones, Maddie Weisz, Mike Javernick, Melissa Neuville, and Kathrine Niles. I am grateful to my sister, Melinda Edwards, for her humor, support and hospitality. Finally, I would like to thank my husband and partner, Greg Rose, for his understanding of my commitment to my work.

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my son, Julian Rose, whose love, optimism and delight with life have inspired me enormously throughout the last four years.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
THESIS .....	1
REFERENCES .....	4
PLATES .....	5

## LIST OF PLATES

PLATE	PAGE
I. Berthoud Exit Lithograph (9 x 21 inches) .....	6
II. East of Mead Exit Lithograph (32 x 21 inches) .....	7
III. South of Masonville Etching (10 x 4 inches) .....	8
IV. Near Johnstown Etching (9 x 5 inches) .....	9
V. North of Mead Etching (9 x 4 3/4 inches) .....	10
VI. Isabelle Road Etching (9 x 6 1/4 inches) .....	11
VII. North of Masonville Etching (9 1/2 x 6 3/4 inches) .....	12
VIII. Wednesday Afternoon Lithograph (24 x 7 inches) .....	13
IX. The Corner Lithograph (6 3/4 x 5 inches) .....	14
X. At Home, Afternoon Lithograph (5 x 7 inches) .....	15
XI. Interior Lithograph (5 x 6 inches) .....	16
XII. Allison I Lithograph (5 x 7 inches) .....	17

XIII.	Allison II Lithograph (5 x 7 inches).....	18
XIV.	Untitled Lithograph (5 x 7 inches).....	19
XV.	Standing I Lithograph (7 x 9 inches).....	20
XVI.	Standing II Lithograph (5 1/2 x 9 inches).....	21
XVII.	Amy Standing Lithograph (11 3/4 x 21 1/2 inches).....	22
XVIII.	Allison Reclining Lithograph (19 x 30 inches).....	23



## The Particular in Prints

My motivation for making art originates in my delight with the visual world. In his notebooks from 1941, Bonnard described this passion for the visual world as the “adventures of the optic nerve”.<sup>1</sup> Participating in such adventures implies an active way of seeing the world, one “which interprets by seeing and sees by interpreting, a seeing which is observing”.<sup>2</sup> My way of seeing and observing transforms the “things” that I see, i.e., a sofa, table, human figure, cloud, field, into an assemblage of formal elements in my mind. My response to these visual stimuli is based on a three way relationship between me, the object or scene observed and the image. When I begin a drawing, I look carefully at what I want to draw and make marks to record what I see. As the marks develop into an image, the image reveals nuances in the observed object which I hadn’t noticed before. These newly observed nuances suggest new mark-making activities and, in this way, a cycle of seeing and responding to the visual world, and to the image, begins. This way of seeing and making marks is provisional and mutable, going beyond an attempt to simply describe or enumerate.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, my approach to art-making is based on my response to what I observe as well as to the subsequent two-dimensional image that develops from that observation. I characterize this response as direct, immediate, expressive, physical and deeply involved: characteristics which seem to be best expressed through the printmaking media of intaglio and lithography. By their nature, these printmaking media offer the opportunity to make

an initial drawing with immediacy and directness while at the same time requiring intense and physically demanding involvement to process and print an image. Though the technical aspects of intaglio and lithography differ in many ways, my approach to drawing the image is similar with both media. I draw what I see in front of me directly on the stone or metal plate in one sitting, rarely re-working an image during the processing phases or using intermediary sources such as photographs or slides. I also prefer to work without a pre-determined idea of how an image will develop or be resolved. If an image communicates something of how I experience both the external characteristics and the underlying reality of the visual world, as well as my love for the printmaking process, then I consider it complete. A final reason for choosing printmaking is that the medium offers the possibility of creating an expressive, tactile surface with deep rich blacks, a surface which I find to be unique to intaglio and lithography.

My choice of subject matter depends on what I find visually appealing. A subject must have formal qualities which are compelling to me and thereby offer an enticing opportunity to make descriptive marks. In my recent prints I have chosen to work with the landscape, the human figure and interior spaces. Antoine Terrasse, in his introduction to the letters of Matisse and Bonnard, suggests that “Matisse experiences outdoors and interior in one and the same sensation -- ‘they are united in my mind’, he would say -- and seeks to create this sensation on the painting’s surface...”<sup>4</sup> In a like manner, my “sensation” or internal response to this different subject matter is the same because I see similar formal elements in all of it: the abstract structure of forms; the way in which forms are altered by shifting points of view or distance; the impact of light on forms; repetition

of forms and pattern; and finally, the nature of large spaces (landscape) and intimate spaces (interiors, figure). In addition to these formal elements, my manner of calligraphic, linear mark-making is common to my handling of all subject matter. A final unifying element in my work is the use of both abstraction and representation in an image. My interest in the abstract is evident in how I use formal elements to structure an image as well as in the abstract nature of the marks. At the same time, I am also interested in making images that express the reality of what I see. In summary, I want to make images which describe the visual world through the use of abstract means.

As mentioned, my work begins as a three way relationship involving me, the visual world and an image. However, I hope that the resulting images can initiate another, new relationship with the viewer: one that communicates my passion for the visual world and the joy of making marks to create an image.

## REFERENCES

1. Bonnard/Matisse, Letters Between Friends, trans. Richard Howard, Intro. Antoine Terrasse (New York: Harry M. Abrams, Inc, 1992), p. 14.
2. Arikha, Samuel Beckett, Richard Channin, Andre Fermigier, Robert Hughes, Jane Livingston, Barbara Rose (Paris: Hermann, 1985), p. 17.
3. Arikha, p.32
4. Bonnard/Matisse, p. 20

## PLATES



PLATE I. Berthoud Exit  
Lithograph (9 x 21 inches)



PLATE II. East of Mead Exit  
Lithograph (32 x 21 inches)



PLATE III. South of Masonville  
Etching (10 x 4 inches)





PLATE IV. Near Johnstown  
Etching (9 x 5 inches)



PLATE V. North of Mead  
Etching (9 x 4 3/4 inches)



PLATE VI. Isabelle Road  
Etching (9 x 6 1/4 inches)

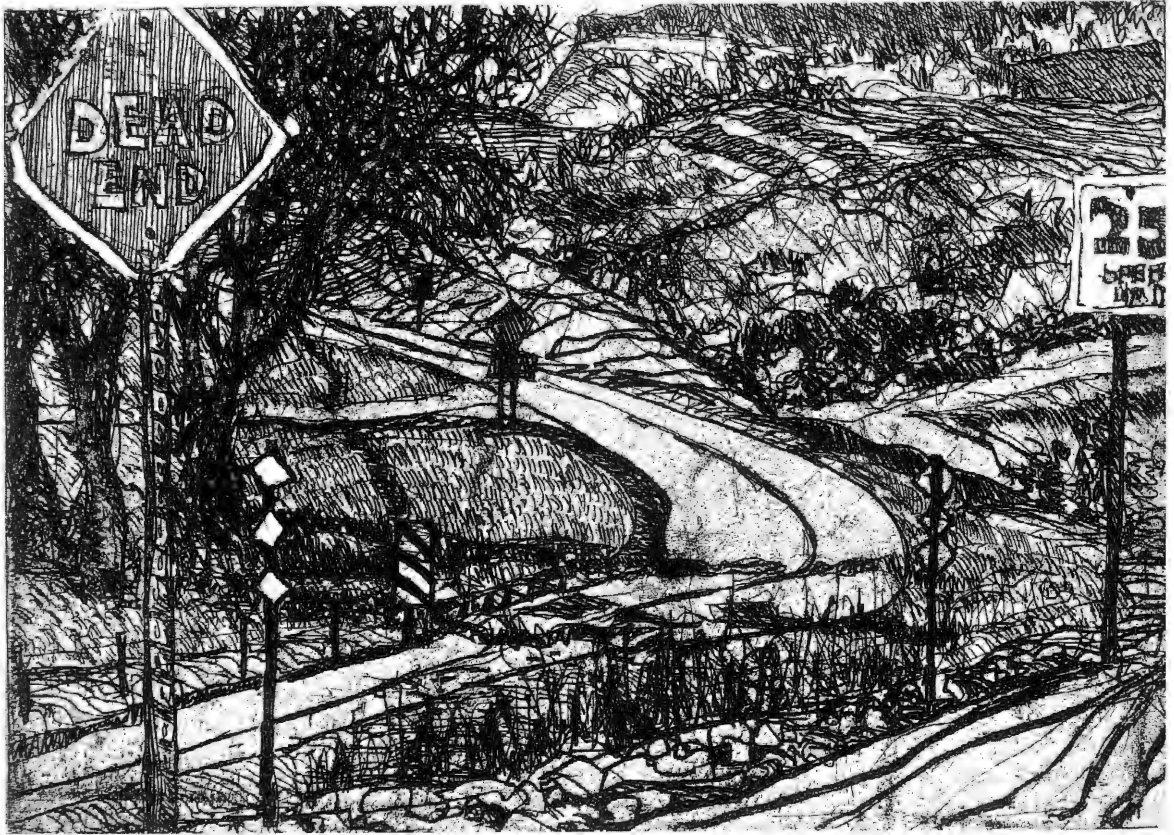


PLATE VII. North of Masonville  
Etching (9 1/2 x 6 3/4 inches)



PLATE VIII. Wednesday Afternoon  
Lithograph (24 x 7 inches)

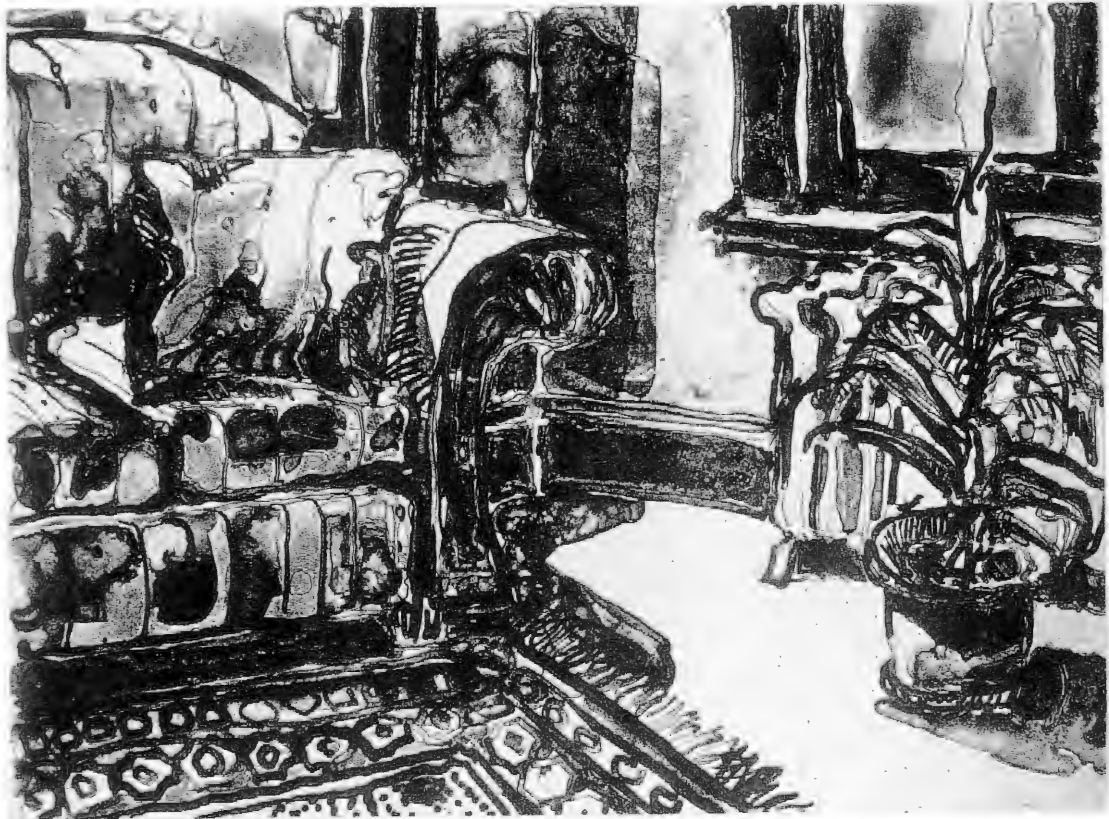


PLATE IX. The Corner  
Lithograph (6 3/4 x 5 inches)





PLATE X. At Home, Afternoon  
Lithograph (5 x 7 inches)



PLATE XI. Interior  
Lithograph (5 x 6 inches)





PLATE XII. Allison I  
Lithograph (5 x 7 inches)



PLATE XIII. Allison II  
Lithograph (5 x 7 inches)



PLATE XIV. Untitled  
Lithograph (5 x 7 inches)



PLATE XV. Standing I  
Lithograph (7 x 9 inches)



PLATE XVI. Standing II  
Lithograph (5 1/2 x 9 inches)



PLATE XVII. Amy Standing  
Lithograph (11 3/4 x 21 1/2 inches)



PLATE XVIII. Allison Reclining  
Lithograph (19 x 30 inches)