

THESIS

POWER IN TRANSFORMATION

Submitted by

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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION  
BY SANDRA FENÉ  
ENTITLED POWER IN TRANSFORMATION  
BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

### POWER IN TRANSFORMATION

I am interested in exploring and clarifying the concept of contrast. My intention is to emphasize the transformation of opposing forces to create harmonious balance. Paper is a natural way for me to express these ideas with power and elegance. I am interested in the power which unites these elements into a whole that is interacted upon and supported by all its parts. I want to recognize and explore the matrix of change and the fusion of energy to create order in my life and in my art.

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## DEDICATION

My thesis show is dedicated  
to a special person in my life,  
Donald Young III  
who gave me unending support and love

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
POWER OF TRANSFORMATION. . . . .	1
PLATES . . . . .	6

## LIST OF PLATES

<u>Plate</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	"Chaotic Harmony." 9' x 5' handcast paper, wood paint and pencil. . . . .	7
2	"Aquatic Transformation." 9' x 7' handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil. . . . .	8
3	"Vertebrate in Rhythm." 10' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil. . . . .	9
4	"Evolutionary Magic Ladder." 9' x 7', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil . . . . .	10
5	"Sacred Vibration." 8' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil. . . . .	11
6	"Primal Electric Power." 9' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil. . . . .	12
7	"Preoccupation Interplay." 8' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil . . . . .	13

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## POWER IN TRANSFORMATION

Making art is an expression of ideas: of felt, emotive life. In my art work I am striving for wholeness and cohesion, attempting to create a harmonious interplay and transformation between contrasting elements. I am interested in the power that unites these elements into a whole which is interacted upon and supported by all of its parts. I want to recognize and explore the matrix of change and the fusion of energy to create order in my art.

Through the course of my thesis, a change has occurred. The art has come off of the wall and addresses more sculptural ideas. A revival of energy and an active goal has been set towards creating works of art that stand as a cohesive body. This goal I feel I have achieved by utilizing the idea of structure which has spurred ideas that pull together with more clarity and understanding the concepts I set out to achieve from the beginning.

My art represents my past struggling to understand the present. I bring to my art, all that is important in my life. My art is my metaphor, standing for who and what I am. For me, the art acts as a symbol for many layers of meaning, and yet, it remains elusive and ambiguous.

Contrast is not incompatible with harmony, but it does introduce an element of tension, an unavoidable circumstance of life with which we individually all learn to deal. This contrast or harmony of

elements, both in life and art adds to the intensity of expression of life. This learned behavior of coping transforms us, just as day turns into night, and hate into love. The conscious relationship of pairs helps to convey this tension and transformation of ideas. The intimacy and connection between "two" is vital in making these images work.

Musical tree-like images, figurative animal-like images, and totem-like images, suggest something primal giving a presence of power, magic, drama and life. Standing amongst my art, I feel humble, because of the scale, and yet powerful because of the fact that I created them. After living with them, I feel charmed by their presence and sense of movement which project for me a kind of musical, lyrical, dance filled with life and energy. Being amongst them, I feel a part of something special -- something primal that is within the core of my existence. This primal feeling is also captured through the structural use of the vertical which contacts the ground, and is partly made of wood, alluding to a totem or tree. The appendages, and the groups of pairs could also suggests figures or animals. This questioning of imagery offers an active, participatory role upon which the imagination can take hold, not only for the viewer but also for the creator.

I feel a real power from this series of images -- a power that aids in the control of facing the terror of the unknown and my survival in the future. It is a power which gives me my identity and allows me to continue on my road of self discovery. It is an important source which arose out of an intuitive and inner need. It is a reaction to my terror, symbolizing change and creating order.

I react to materials, such as paper, wood and paint, in a spontaneous, sophisticated, yet child-like manner offering magical

presence. The physical manifestation of texture, three-dimension, scale, paint and line variation help to create that energy within me which allows ideas and emotions to surface, and arrive at a conclusive harmony of technique and concept. I aim for this quality in my work which is a never ending struggle to honestly represent the workings of my inner spirit. I feel that art occurs during the process of creation; action determines the form. I don't regard my art as a conclusion, but as an evolution: a becoming.

The use of the imagination can be described as fantasy. I have an inner urge to travel, and my journeys have led me to exotic, fascinating places in which I explore and study, receiving many lasting memories. My most recent trip to the Carribean is no exception. My work always goes through noticeable changes after such excursions. This particular trip was a fantasy come true; this is evident in my work through the use of color, exploration of ideas, materials and ideas of inner struggle. I believe in "getting away," which I feel aids in being objective. This could be one reason for the change in direction and the new found clarity in my work. This fascination with journeys, which has made up a large portion of my life, also helps offer a magical quality in my work.

The drama of the images attacks the senses making us alert to our own feelings. The images are initially, visually stimulating; the presence of their scale alone can attract interest. The combination of formal elements, such as color, line, texture, and form are important considerations in the creation of this drama. The manipulation of materials also adds to the dramatization of life and how we, as humans and artists, bring order to it.

The color red keeps reoccurring and for me it has become a strong, emotional statement. The brilliance of color, its combinations, and exploration is exciting. I allow color to flow from me unconsciously, reacting spontaneously to exterior influences and my inner feelings.

My lines are like my secret diary; no one can read them literally, not even I, and yet there is understanding. My lines are like roads traveling across a topographic landscape. They are like music singing to a lyrical vibration. My lines tell the story of who I am more clearly than any other formal element in my work; they remain elusive and yet, have direction.

The sensation of touch is important. The texture and three dimensionality of the work causes a phenomenon of tension. It leads beyond the mere visual sensation and into a full sense awareness.

Nature is a constant supplier of imagery, both for the idea it offers and for the structural understanding of form. My past represents a deep connection and awareness with the beauties of nature. I grew up spying on grazing buffalo at Roosevelt National Park, hiking through lush mountains of green on the Blue Ridge Parkway, viewing the wonders of changing colors at the Grand Canyon, and playing amongst Indian ruins of ages past at Mesa Verde. These images of beauty are ingrained in my perceptual memory bank and subconscious.

Living, studying and working in this area of diverse beauty, of grandiose mountains and vast plains has given me the impetus for change and development. The unusual formations, the brilliance of color, the solitude of space and the energy it provides are important aspects of my art. The bridging of time between ancient and new

elements of life, is a statement that is conducive to the connection between nature and my inner soul.

The culmination of experience, ideas and persistence has brought clarity and energy to my thesis work. Having a focus has generated ideas for creating a cohesive body of work which stands as an incredible learning process and as a means to push forward into the future.

## PLATES

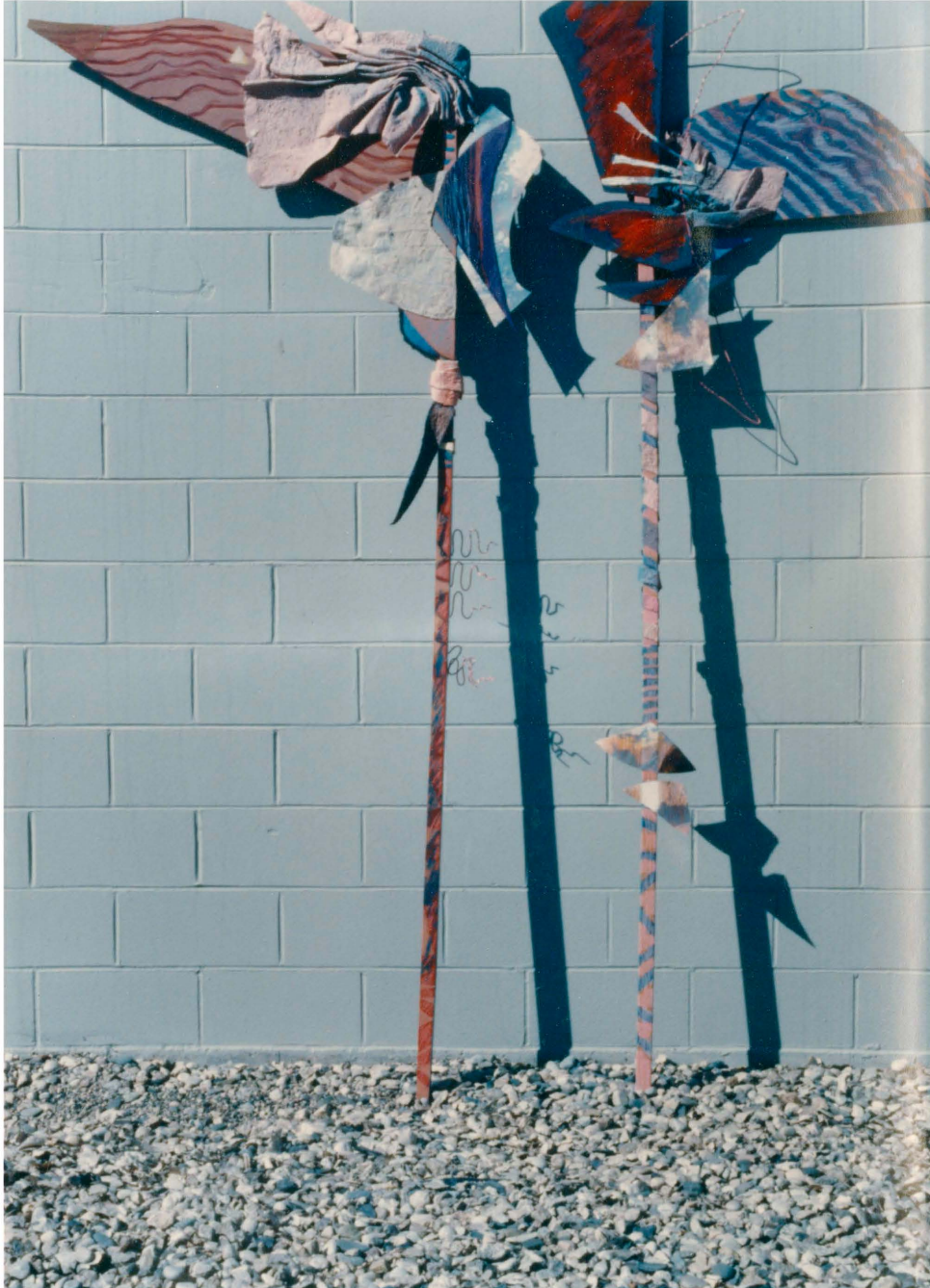


Plate 1. "Chaotic Harmony." 9' x 5' handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.



Plate 2. "Aquatic Transformation." 9' x 7' handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.



Plate 3. "Vertebrate in Rhythm." 10' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.



Plate 4. "Evolutionary Magic Ladder." 9' x 7', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.



Plate 5. "Sacred Vibration." 8' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.



Plate 6. "Primal Electric Power." 9' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.



Plate 7. "Preoccupation Interplay." 8' x 6', handcast paper, wood, paint and pencil.