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"The Inclusion of Light"

Michael James Lambrecht

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This creative work submitted by Michael James Lambrecht in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts at St. Cloud State University is hereby "THE INCLUSION OF LIGHT"

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by

Michael James Lambrecht

B.S., St. Cloud State University, 1992


Chairperson

A Creative Work

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Arts



St. Cloud, Minnesota

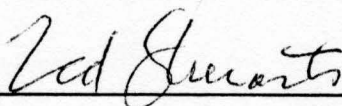

Dean
School of Graduate Studies

May, 2003

This creative work submitted by Michael James Lambrecht in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts at St. Cloud State University is hereby approved by the final evaluation committee.

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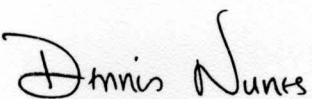

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this process of confidence and esteem building that self-disclosure takes place. Once an individual has committed to disclosing himself or herself, the door is opened for compassion and a greater ability to internalize the true emotional quality and individuality that art allows.

Working for the past eight years in both a juvenile institution and a maximum security prison has had a profound effect upon my ideology and my work. The prison environment reflects a sharp dichotomy between the outside world and the inside world. Hope and a positive attitude are rare commodities inside the prison. If left unguided, inmate work depicts a dark and terrible life where guns, murder, and criminal activities are the norm. By using basic theories that permit prison students to be constructive rather than destructive, and by stressing the emotional aspects of art, I have personally seen a very

STATEMENT OF ARTISTIC INTENT

Art provides a forum for the subconscious mind to express emotions that the conscious mind either cannot, will not, or is afraid to express. It is in absolute freedom of expression that the true beauty of art lies.

The healing ability of art is undeniable. Art builds self-confidence and self-esteem through the structured use of techniques and concepts, culminating in small successes, each building upon the previous. It is through this process of confidence and esteem building that self-disclosure takes place. Once an individual has committed to disclosing himself or herself, the door is opened for compassion and a greater ability to internalize the true emotional quality and individuality that art allows.

Working for the past eight years in both a juvenile institution and a maximum security prison has had a profound effect upon my ideology and my work. The prison environment reflects a sharp dichotomy between the outside world and the inside world. Hope and a positive attitude are rare commodities inside the prison. If left unguided, inmate work depicts a dark and terrible life where guns, murder, and criminal activities are the norm. By using basic theories that permit prison students to be constructive rather than destructive, and by stressing the emotional aspects of art, I have personally seen a very

positive change in my students' attitudes towards both their work and their lives.

I try to create an atmosphere where students feel liberated, both in their freedom to express themselves and in their freedom from persecution by others. However, that liberation is only possible through sincere attempts by students to divulge their inner feelings and emotions artistically. Once they do so, a transformation occurs that affects not only studio work but, holistically, the individuals as well. The way these students walk and talk—even their personal hygiene—are indications of some fundamental aspects of human nature like pride and self-worth, which art can restore and augment.

The work in my M.A. exhibition displays my personal growth over the past eighteen months. As I develop as an artist, I am constantly striving to make my next piece an improvement upon the previous piece. I am constantly searching for new ways to interpret the world and convey my perspective through art. The most important thing I have learned is to never take even a single day for granted, to slow down and see beauty in the simplest of things: a sun-filled room, the rain as it displaces the water of a puddle, the laughter of a child. The beauty of life surrounds us every day, and we should cherish every unique experience. If you do not believe me, try a life without freedom, surrounded by cement walls, where even simple beauty can be difficult to find and where sometimes all you can rely on is what you create: self-understanding, self-confidence, and hope.

CREATIVE WORK



Plate 1

Remember When...
(Pastel on Paper)

The process I use constantly evolves in an attempt to better my artistic interpretation. I was fascinated with both the visual and emotional quality of the image above, with its warm intense light offset by the dark, complementary colored background magnifying the warm, safe feeling implied here. The vertical lines of the window flowing toward the doll's feet, through the little girl's arms, and back out to the window help to keep the viewer visually in the piece. The dream-like quality, reinforced in the window with its controlled scribble-like quality, sharply contrasts with the softer handling of the flesh tones in the little girl and the doll itself. This piece is meant to display the beauty of life through this child's quiet moment.



Plate 2

Simple Pleasures
(Pastel on Paper)

In "Simple Pleasures" a strong, bright, warm light is cast upon a young girl as she patiently awaits the next play in her game. The subtle warm tones evoke an innocence and beauty that only children seem to possess.



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(Pastel on Paper)

In "Simple Pleasures" a strong, bright, warm light is cast upon a young girl as she patiently awaits the next play in her game. The subtle warm tones evoke an innocence and beauty that only children seem to possess.

This image is based upon a black and white photograph. It was critical that color, light, and texture play important roles in the development of this piece. As you look closely, there is a mystical pink light behind the girl, which becomes more figurative as you examine the work. As you extend your gaze into the background, you will notice an uneasy feeling within the trees, as if they had eyes. To combat this uneasy but very literal implication of the dangers our children face in society today, I made the mystical pink fog act as a protector of this innocent child.

As I develop as an artist, I see my style change and loosen up. I'm much more concerned with atmosphere quality, color, and impressions rather than idealistic renderings. It leaves more opportunities for the viewer to connect with the work.

Plate 3

Unrecognized Beauty
(Pastel on Paper)

"Unrecognized Beauty" employs a technique that is basically a controlled scribble. I wanted to present this image in a loose format, hoping to instill a calm sense of beauty for the subject matter. The emphasis is more on the technique used to create the image than the image itself. I was intrigued with the movement of shapes on the boat and attempted to create a strong focal point by decreasing the undulating pattern and use of color in the foreground and background. This undulating pattern is carved out in future work as well.



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Plate 4

Nostalgia
(Pastel on Paper)

I was attracted to this image and wanted to show the beauty in both form and texture in these brilliantly colored old gas pumps. These pumps represent a piece of America's history, and I wanted to portray a strong image displaying their unique character and beautiful curves. The weathered and beat up memorabilia begins to take on a life of its own. The bright colors, while

dominating the piece, effectively complement the rust and neglect. The sturdy, curving structure of these machines symbolizes humanity as much as anything.



Plate 5

Life's Journey
(Pastel on Paper)

The imagery in "Life's Journey" retains the undulating quality of earlier images. Its lush green foliage is full of life. The sunlight trickles across the path and leaves the viewer wondering what's beyond the curve. The layers upon layers of green foliage represent a walk through life, where one is never quite sure what the next layer will bring.

Experimentation with different mediums has exposed me to the flexibility and vibrant colors possible with pastels. The brands I prefer are prisma-color, Derwent, Rembrandt, Nouvel, and Sennelier. When I begin, I start with a textured or sanded paper using the hardest pastels first. Layer upon layer is applied until the desired image begins to take shape. I gradually work into softer pastels such as Rembrandt and finally Sennelier for extreme highlights. To keep the image from being contaminated by other pastel, I work from the upper-most part of the image down when working on any type of landscape. When working a portrait, I prefer to work from the focal point out, blowing any residue away from the focal point.

In creating this body of work, I continued to grow and refine my style and use of materials. I am excited about the direction I'm going in and as long as I continue to produce work and always strive to do my best, I can succeed as an artist.