Stand Still A Moment

Mehla Goodrich
Bard College, mg833@bard.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_f2011

Part of the Art Practice Commons

Creative Commons License
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_f2011/2

This Open Access work is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been provided to you by Bard College's Stevenson Library with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this work in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.
I began senior project with the intention of creating an entirely sculptural body of work. This ambition changed with my summer internship at the Solomon R. Guggenheim museum in New York. It was here within the exquisite architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright’s museum that I decided to focus on two-dimensional work. This change came about because I was inspired by the Lee Ufan retrospective: Marking Infinity, on view at the time. I was specifically intrigued by Mr. Lee’s use of emptiness. The vast empty spaces within his paintings and prints provided the viewer with a moment of meditation. Curator Alexandra Monroe described this phenomenon as “stand still a moment”, and I witnessed bustling tourists and city dwellers do exactly that, daily, for an entire summer. I too wanted to encourage the viewer of my work to Stand Still A Moment.

By contrast I was mesmerized by the bustling aesthetic of Julie Mehretu. Mehretu’s work seemed to convey the constant motion and evolution of the city outside of the museum. The tension between these two artist’s works interested me as I began the second semester of my senior project. I was determined to create images both teeming with motion and filled with resonant empty spaces. Yet while I knew my objectives, I had no idea what any of the final pieces in my show would look like. With these objectives in mind I began to experiment with materials immediately.

Material initiates my work. I knew that the sculpture, cascade, on view in my senior show, would be made of recycled inner tube tires before I had any idea that it would be a wall sculpture. I knew that Cascade would be made of rubber because I was obsessed with the versatility and color variations in the rubber, which I seemed to have an
abundant and free supply of. Once I discovered a way of working with rubber that
yielded a result that I liked, I envisioned a composition for the finished piece and
executed it with clarity. My printing process was similar in that the accidental discovery
of a technique transformed my material explorations with rubber stamps, gampi paper,
and cardboard colographs into finished piece.

I was attracted to printmaking because of its process. The act of carving into
woodblocks, dry point, and making colograph plates resonated with me as a very physical
process, more related to the sculpture-making techniques that I was comfortable with
then drawing and painting. Although it is a physical process, printmaking yields a two-
dimensional image, which was important to me because my sources of influence were the
two-dimensional images of both Julie Mehretu and Lee Ufan. I enjoyed the process of
creating a plate, inking the plate, dampening the paper, printing the image, then washing
the plate. The repetition of these steps becomes a meditation. The meditative state that I
reached while printing reminds me of the state that my work invites the viewer to enter as
they Stand Still A Moment with each piece.

My hope is that the 10 prints and two sculptures exhibited in my senior thesis
show will share a visual language that unifies them into one body of work. The show is
hung in a progression from two-dimensional to three-dimensional pieces. I hope that this
dimensional shift will encourage the viewer to first experience the prints as a meditation
of the mind, then gradually shift to a meditation of the whole body, or vice versa.