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ANDERSON, DENNIS RAY. Sidewalk Pubings, A Study in Flatness. (1973)  
Directed by: Mr. Walter Parker. Pn. 2.

The thesis consists of 6 sidewalk drawings done with India Ink on newsprint.

This thesis was exhibited at the Weathersnoon Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro from January 8 - 14, 1973. On file in the Jackson Library of the University are 35mm color slides of the thesis.

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

Approved by

1973

Approved by

Thesis Advisor

SIDEWALK RUBBINGS, A STUDY IN FLATNESS

by

Dennis Ray Anderson

A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

Greensboro  
1972

Approved by

Wally Barker  
Thesis Adviser

11/1/72  
Date of Examination

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Thesis Adviser Walter Barker

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Robert Watson

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1/11/73  
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## CATALOGUE

### Sidewalk Drawings

| <u>Title</u>    | <u>Date</u> | <u>Size</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Sidewalk I   | 1972        | 73" and 54" |
| 2. Sidewalk II  | 1972        | 53" and 72" |
| 3. Sidewalk III | 1972        | 73" and 55" |
| 4. Sidewalk IV  | 1972        | 56" and 63" |
| 5. Sidewalk V   | 1972        | 73" and 55" |

Important in the consideration of my work is the concept of flatness--"Having an even and horizontal surface, or nearly so, without marked prominence or depressions; level and smooth, lying at full length, or spread out upon the ground; level with the ground or earth,"<sup>1</sup> is the way Webster defines "flat." The interest in flatness is derived from the personal moral conclusion that three dimensional space existing on a two dimensional area is illusionistic.

After an extended study of "flatness" in painting ranging in size from 3' x 4', I increased the painting sizes to 10' x 25' to eliminate the spatial consideration of the wall by creating the wall. The increase in size and scale appeared to make me more aware of the wall. The conclusion made was that the wall itself was a spatial statement, existing quite arbitrarily in the traditional panoramic space. Sky space represents the same unending, boundless void, that exists in the panoramic space.

It was then concluded that ground space is different from the other two types of space. The ground space is physically occupied and concrete.

The concept of mountains and valleys does not interest me, as I am dealing only with the concept of flatness. Sidewalks, as a manifestation of "groundness," then appeared to be logical as the theme of group of studies. Painting sidewalks on canvas in a realistic manner was of course eliminated as a process of recording flatness. It was decided to do rubbings of "selected" sidewalks, since rubbings deal with the actual

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<sup>1</sup>Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, 1965, p. 317.



objects manifesting themselves. The aspect of originality can be justified in terms of signing a landscape painting or a soup can print. The originality of a rubbing lies in the selection of the surface and in the choice and handling of the media.

The process of recording sidewalk surfaces went as follows: large sheets of newsprint paper (72" x 52") were moistened on both sides and placed over the area to be recorded. India ink was diluted in water and applied to the paper in a pounding motion with a large hard ball of cotton cloth. After the ink had been evenly applied, a brush was used to push the paper down into the crevices. This contrasted the areas of flatness in the sidewalk. After the drawings had dried, the excess edges were torn off, not cut, to emphasize the nature of the paper. The rubbings then were placed on the floor, without being mounted. This eliminates somewhat the marble, object aspect of the pieces.

In summary, I realize that absolute flatness in painting (drawing) is practically impossible to achieve. However, in relative terms, one can reduce ten-mile panoramic space to one-inch space and in those terms, one inch is flat.