

PASCAL



Dep	Mod	Ran	Sect	Shelf	Tray	Item
P	1	07	06	19	04	008

PASCAL

T
1977
D232

FOR REFERENCE
DO NOT TAKE FROM THIS ROOM

ARCH
T
1977
D232

SOLILOQUIES

By

Benjamin G. Dann III

B.A., Dickinson College, 1974

A thesis submitted to the faculty of the Graduate
School of the University of Colorado in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

Department of Fine Arts, Creative Art

1977

University of Colorado Libraries - Boulder

This Thesis for the Master of Fine Arts Degree by


Benjamin G. Dann III


has been approved for the


Department of

Fine Arts

by


John B. Wilson


Luis Eades


Jerry W. Kunkel


Jean-Edith V. Weiffenbach

Date May 6, 1977

I believe that to be most fully successful and rewarding, a work of art must stimulate the viewer's imagination and challenge him to investigate. It must be able to suggest that there is more to the work than may be immediately apparent through cursory visual examination (if that, indeed, is the case), and provide the viewer with enough information to be able to at least attempt to discover the more subtle workings of the piece. This can be accomplished through provocative use of materials, forms, titles, and installation in any and all combinations. In the most ideal of situations, the viewer will be enticed to draw from his own background and experience to arrive at a conclusion which very closely resembles the artist's intent.

In Soliloquies I have presented an environment composed of a suite of three major works using latex rubber as the primary material. As the title implies, these works are very personal and, in fact, are largely autobiographical. They represent my reactions to an extremely difficult and emotionally painful period earlier in my life with which I have only recently been able to deal objectively.

My work in latex rubber began about a year and a half ago and was an outgrowth of earlier tension-balance structures of fabric and wood. The technique I have developed over this time is well suited to various diverse aspects of my personality and, in fact, the results simultaneously reflect quite accurately what I had long thought to be irreconcilable opposing traits -- obsessive, meticulous compulsion and light-hearted, unbounded resilience. Layers of liquid latex rubber are painted onto a flat surface and rubber bands, ropes, and other materials are embedded in the resulting rubber sheet to form regular geometric patterns. When this process is complete, the sheet is removed from the

preparation surface, allowing the rubber bands to contract, causing the sheet to become more irregular and extremely organic. The rubber is then treated with a liquid which slows the natural deterioration process while producing a glossy, tactile surface. The resulting forms present a juxtaposition of opposing tensions: an externally applied stretching tension and an internal contracting tension. They are subject to a wide variety of interpretation, but almost without exception these interpretations center around human (especially visceral, sexual) themes. Most observers find the pieces to be simultaneously attractive and repulsive, an approach-avoidance reaction resembling the human fascination with the obscene or distasteful.

The multiple or modular existence of the forms tends to deemphasize the importance of individual elements while intensifying the emotional response to the types of forms presented. Repetition of form also extends the possibilities for visual and conceptual association.

The physical layout of the installation was carefully designed to lead the viewer through the space. On entering the exhibition hall one sees parts of several pieces simultaneously -- looking through one piece to see the others -- and is drawn to the center of the space to see all three pieces before an individual examination can begin. Two of the pieces are hung away from the wall, creating the sense of an enclosure which is sometimes inviting, sometimes repellent. Despite the great number of objects in the space, a sense of sparseness and sterility is maintained. The pieces are monochromatic and almost two-dimensional and are hung so that almost nothing actually touches the walls and floor. This, along with the intense but contained lighting on the large, white expanses of the walls, tends to deny any sense of volume, pro-

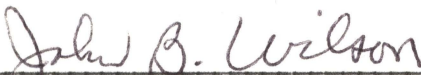
ducing a feeling of emptiness.

The lighting was calculated to produce strong and varied shadows which, while adding to the starkness of the space and the unsettling associations of the pieces, enhances the realization of various qualities of the materials (such as translucence). I consider light and shadow to be equally as important as the latex as a material. The pieces are grossly incomplete without proper lighting.

The three pieces which comprise the installation, Soliloquies, work together to create an atmosphere which is simultaneously inviting and intriguing while unsettling and somber. I suspect that they could be approached on a purely formal or material level, but I feel that sufficient enticement has been offered to cause a viewer to immerse himself in the very personal and emotional aspects of the work, which will hopefully greatly enhance the appreciation and satisfaction of the experience.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Fine Arts
Benjamin G. Dann III
has submitted this written thesis
as a supplement to the creative thesis
and twelve slides
which are in the permanent possession of the
University of Colorado and recorded with the
Department of Fine Arts

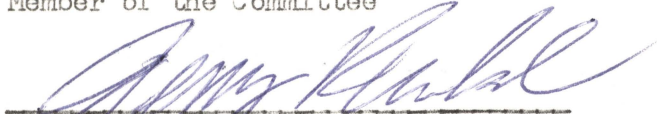
Approved by



John B. Wilson
Chairman of the Committee



Luis Eades
Member of the Committee



Jerry W. Kunkel
Member of the Committee



Jean-Edith V. Weiffenbach
Member of the Committee



George E. Woodman
Chairman, Department of Fine Arts

Number of Slides and Medium

Latex rubber
and assorted
materials

Soliloquies
three installation
views

Latex rubber, 22' x 6.6'
rubber bands, each unit:
jute rope 14" x 76"

Soliloquies
hanging piece
four views
(three details)

Latex rubber, 40' x 4.33'
rubber bands, each unit:
jute twine, 2" x 52"
cotton braid

Soliloquies
wall piece
two views
(one detail)

Latex rubber, 12' x 12.6'
rubber bands, each unit:
jute twine, 4" x 152"
wood

Soliloquies
floor piece
three views
(two details)

