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Creating an Aesthetic Construct Drawing From Contemporary American Behavior and Borrowing Characteristics from Persian Paining of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

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CREATING AN AESTHETIC CONSTRUCT
DRAWING FROM CONTEMPORARY
AMERICAN BEHAVIOR AND
BORROWING CHARACTERISTICS
FROM PERSIAN PAINTING OF THE
FOURTEENTH, FIFTEENTH AND
SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the degree
Master of Art

by
Peter Christian Wesley Jorgensen
August 1967

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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THIS BRIEF PREFACE IS WRITTEN
AS AN EXTENSION OF APPRECIATION
FOR ASSISTANCE RENDERED BY MY
LOVING FAMILY. I AM INTIMIDATED
AND HONORED BY THEIR COOPERATIVE
ENCOURAGEMENT.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

During the past few years, the writer has been interested in representing certain aspects of urban American behavior in pen and ink drawings. In these drawings, which are usually small, the curvilinear character of the human body is contrasted with an architectural line representative of twentieth century technology. Only recently, however, has the writer discovered a similar approach in Persian miniature painting of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This stylistic revelation proved to be an appropriate means of representing the behavior of our society.

Since there were many "schools" within Persian painting of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and many artists, who in turn had many students (who copied their master's style), all their diverse characteristics must be reduced to a few communicative essentials. The "Persian Style" is therefore representative of an approach to line, pattern and composition. These Persian characteristics will occur in a variety of combinations with contemporary subject matter and previously developed personal stylistic tendencies, varying from piece to piece. No indications have been found of previous experimentation with this type of contemporary expression.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study to develop an aesthetic construct by selecting aspects of our contemporary society appropriate to the rather elegantly ornamented expression of fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth century Persian painting.

Limitations of the problem. Technical limitations: Subject matter will be drawn from some random observations of contemporary, urban American behavior. These observations will be made freely and originally on the basis of understandings rising from personal and abundant, contemporary literary research. The means of expression will be derivative of:

- (1) The qualities of line pattern and composition characteristic of Persian painting during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.
- (2) The qualities of linear and color contrasts characteristic of pen and inks, acrylic polymer colors and emulsified vehicles on a two-dimensional ground of regular geometric shape and varied size.

Philosophical limitations: It is the writer's intent that the opinions expressed in evaluation of his pieces reproduced herein are solely the writer's own and may remain unconfirmed if they do not hinder the purpose of the study. It should be understood that an interpretation and explanation of observations leading to the development of such opinions will be offered, if deemed pertinent and

necessary by the writer.

Consideration has been given to only the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of Persian painting because it was during that time that the manuscript illustrators had achieved what the writer believes to be the apex of their style, at least partially owing to a certain degree of artistic influence from the Chinese.

All works are titled in a manner relevant to their expression, although they may suggest more than the title statement.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

COMPOSITION	The arrangement of shape, color and line on a given surface; or having reference to the totality of effect produced by such an arrangement.
CURVILINEAR	Descriptive of the expressive qualities of curved lines.
PICTURE PLANE	The visual depth or working surface of a two-dimensional work of art.
SCALE	The size or mass of an art work in relation to that of another.
SURFACE CHARACTER	Descriptive of suggested or actual texture of the outermost layer of a piece of art work.
FORMAT	The area prepared to receive the media; descriptive qualities (such as the shape or surface) of this area.
MEDIA	The physical material of which a work of art is created.
FIGURATIVE	In reference to any visual representation of the human figure.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"What does it mean?" commented one gallery goer when confronted with a life-size 1938 Chrysler made of grey and black vinyl collapsed in a tired pile. "Who knows?" replied a lady at his elbow.

A magnified picture of Jesus, quite out of context, pops onto the screen in a crowded dance hall just long enough for spectators to lock him into their private associations. Their quivering moire' patterns slither behind an interminable array of translucent colors (32:12).

Twiggy (31" - 22" - 32"), the world's No. 1 fashion model and London's 1967 "Girl of the Year," has thatched male hair, stands five feet six, weighs ninety-one pounds, wears short pants, sucks her finger and answers reporters with "I dunno." She's seventeen and earns a hundred twenty dollars an hour (29:34).

The twenty-year olds who live in a basement room partitioned off by Indian tapestries are smoking marijuana in a hookah filled with lime soda while watching a daytime quiz show on television (32:34).

"The Electric Prunes", "Mogen David and The Grapes of Wrath," "The Grateful Dead," "The Jefferson Airplane" and "The Magic Mushroom" have recently recorded such hits as "The Eggplant That Ate Chicago," "Semi-detached Suburban Mr. James" and "Pandora's Golden Heebie Jeebies" (11:10).

Comedian Lenny Bruce read these newspaper headings as a part of his nightclub routine: "Johnson Denies Mining Rivers," "U.S. Shells North in Excalation of War" and "Calls Moves Military Steps Toward Peace."

Andy Warhol, New York film-maker, subjects his viewing audiences to eight hours of watching the image of a sleeping man projected on a screen.

United States Senator Dirksen recites a basso oratorio extolling the virtues of marigolds, before the Senate (29:34).

"What Does It Mean? - Who Knows?" asks a recent headline of the New York Times, and its echoes resound in museums, concert halls, publishing houses, advertising agencies and the sanctified seats of government throughout the world. To put it in the vernacular, "Man you know somebody's leg is being pulled." Or at least you think it is.

According to Jacob Brackman (29:34-72), this leg-pulling phenomenon is inherent in the arts, and has been especially apparent during the last forty years or so since the advent of Dadaism. Gertrude Stein and E. E. Cummings were warned that they would never put their nonsense over on the public, as was Salvador Dali. Atonal musicians such as Schoenberg and Webern were asked "Who are you trying to kid?" But the mass aristocracies referred to by George Harris (30:42-45) have risen to testify in favor of what they hope is or will

be, art. This uncertainty is further agitated by critics referring to "real art" and "false art" (13:27). What the critic doesn't like, he deems anti-art or simply a put-on. When a person challenges another's viewpoint on an authoritative level such as is the case with critics, he is no longer talking about specific works of art, but is telling the public that his colleagues have been taken in by fraud. Furthermore, critics' statements are often in the form of revelations to the public that they, too, have been hoodwinked, and in fact, that none of us really knows for sure anymore whether anything is real or good. (29:35).

Naturally, this uncertainty or confusion comes about as the result of art critics, dealers and curators protecting their professional identities as people of distinction. Museums as the ultimate sources of artistic authority and advisors to the cultural establishment, must also continue to insist that they understand the distinctions between "phony" and "real" art and are fit to advise the public (13:27). The attitude toward museums held by the captains of industry who often serve as members of boards of trustees for such institutions, is quite positive (18). The American museum is possibly the last institution in which big money can act with no government meddling (34). Consequently, like big business, museums grow simply for the sake of growth, and, contrary to the traditions of

government support for museums in Europe, offer the prospect of healthy tax deductions to generous "philanthropists". The museum also enjoys a certain degree of academic freedom of thought and action which is often a tantalizing prospect for the executive who has grown accustomed to life amongst the outer community of philistines.

Trustees, being all powerful within the museum, often view it as a second business or a lucrative, civic socially lauded pastime (19). Therefore, the decisions of the respected museum official as to the validity of art is a contributing factor to some of today's uncertainty.

Consequently, the building of larger facilities and the tripling of attendance figures which justify the need for more money from public donation to build larger facilities, etc., seems to be the American museum trustee's primary logic (19). But success in museums as in business, is sometimes measured by headlines, and museum directors, like football coaches, are dropped after a few seasons of non-production. As a result, the temptation to "discover" new talent and exhibit the latest fad is hard to resist. And the more controversial the display is, the better. But the situation is not entirely negative, for although it populates the art world with an over-abundance of innovative twenty-year olds, it assures quality in the work of those forty-year-old artists luck enough to remain on the scene

most, however, are off the stage before their bows have been taken (18).

The production of innovative works has been encouraged since the philosophical abolition of the French academy, by and for artists. Not until well into the twentieth century, however, was this encouraged by the cultural establishment. Today, according to Brackman (24:36), an across-the-board acceptance of the arts is all but prerequisite for membership into certain prestigious eastern social circles. On the other hand, Wolfe (1:86) states that certain New York critics envision art as a giant "con game" a necessary evil which exists for the purpose of providing visual variety in advertising, fashion, packaging and so forth. This "put-on" or hoax perpetrated on viewers has taken advantage of a sort of confused sophistication on the part of the viewing public and has become a fundamentally commercial form. It finds expression in television, the "top ten" records, Hollywood cinema, advertising and even some best-selling literature.

There was a time when an artistic hoax took the form of a talented playwright or composer writing under an assumed name, such as Fritz Kreisler's "lost" compositions of Vivaldi (29:38). Fraudulence has a great deal of American precedent. P. T. Barnum's "Greatest Show on Earth" taught people to accept fraudulence as a legitimate form of

intertainment, and during corrupt times, it has served as a sort of relief from actual life, similar though it may seem. Kidding the public has become a major form of communication between artist and critic and the critic and society. Making plausible but wrong replies has become a convenient ploy for artists when confronted with stupid questions. The only alternatives are to not answer and appear surly, to reply on a technical level and risk loss of communication, or to play along with the interviewer and look stupid or inarticulate (29:50).

With the most innovative art forms, there has always been a credibility gap. Art, like sciences and general technology, racing ahead, has learned how to provide developments, concepts and cultural creations that the public, having seen no precedent, is reluctant to pursue (30:47). Allan Schoener reveals in his article "2066 and All That," possible cooperation between art and computers (16).

Art and Science, working together in our ever-expanding economy and culture, is often associated with industrial money (34). Even though the "Industrial Belt" of America extends along the rail and river networks from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic coast, the "culture capitols", at one time in Europe, cater in New York City, recently have followed the population movement to the fastest-growing state in America; California (14:29-116). Its wealth and

imagination in general and its two megalopolitan areas in particular, has allowed social and artistic penetration into previously unexplored areas. Skydiving, surfing and test new ways of motion or feeling are just the beginning. Los Angeles is still the "Pop Art" capitol of the nation. Custom car builders George Barris and Ed "Big Daddy" Roth construct "mobile neo-baroque sculpture" as Tom Wolfe calls it (1), for movie studios and people so rich they can afford to kid their own taste (14:50). Also in Los Angeles is La Cienagor Boulevard, the largest concentration of art galleries on the west coast and Sunset Strip, where the artists' ideas on dress, hair styles and interior design come pre-digested for "teeny-boppers" on weekends (14:75).

In New York, gallery and museum-hopping has replaced church-going for the Park Avenue set on Sunday mornings (1). This phenomenon is limited to New York or Los Angeles either, for that matter. Wolfe (1) titles his first chapter "Las Vegas," "What's That, It's Too Noisy," "Las Vegas," "What's That, I Can't Hear You," and describes it as one of the two architecturally uniform cities in the world, Versailles being the other. However, beneath the neon tapestry and stacco smiles of Las Vegas and cities like it, runs a chill undercurrent of violence. Robert Harrison, the former publisher of Confidential, was perhaps the first person to predict a popular interest in pornography and

violence (4:59). In describing the success of a newspaper called "The Enquirer," he named eight imitators who had entered the violence press business. Soon a competitive free press began shrieking headlines such as "I Run a Sex Art Gallery," "Teenager Twists Off Corpse's Head to Get Gold Teeth," "Dad Hurls Grease on Daughter's Face," and "Man Buries Wife Alive" (4:59). The Presidential association brought about a series of single issue magazines such as "Death of a President" and "Four Days That Shook the World". Harrison has this to say of such magazines:

"You want to know why people buy those things? People buy those things to see a man get his head blown off."

Norman Mailer (20) foresees murder as the ultimate art form. A folk-rock singing group which calls itself "The Rolling Stones" deliberately resemble a bunch of street toughs and sing songs representative of threats to middle class life (4:65). Titles of recent Broadway "musicals": "Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You In The Closet And I'm Feeling So Sad" and "The Assassination Of Marat As Performed By The Inmates Of The Asylum At Charenton Under The Direction Of The Marquis De Sade". Andy Worhol, New York artist previously described as a film-maker, has recently been silk-screening photos of electric chairs. So-called "comics", replete with "POW" and "WHAM!", as expressions of aural violence accompany bone-crushing and maiming episodes

have graduated to color television (5), and only recently the state of Texas, alone, has given us Charles Whitman, Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby and the Orange County Massacre.

Violence, however, has produced its own counterreactions. The United States Supreme Court, although understandably reluctant to become involved with the arts, has retaliated with a series of decisions regarding obscene art or literature (12:25). The judicial approach seemed to be cautious, with the primary concern being those who profit from the sale of obscenity (the panderers to use a term from Life magazine), rather than the originators, alone. LSD, in spiritual doses, is championed by Dr. Timothy Leary (11:23), who acclaims himself "The Reincarnation of Christ," as the only vehicle for a non-violent existence. Thomas Hess, editor of Art News, has still another solution (12:25). He suggests that the Government Printing Office distribute "prurient" art and literature to curious children and deviates much as they offer pamphlets on Japanese beetles to farmers.

Hugh Hefner, son of a devout Nebraskan Methodist family, but better known as editor-publisher of Playboy magazine, offers still another way around violence and pornographic sex. In 1950, in a college humor magazine, he wrote:

"Our hypocrisy on matters of sex have led to incalculable frustration, delinquency and unhappiness (7:77)."

As his playboy philosophy reads:

"Sex can become at its best a means of expressing the innermost deepest-felt longings, desires and emotions. And it is when sex serves those ends -- in addition to and apart from reproduction -- that it is lifted above the animal level and becomes most human. You get healthy sex by emphasizing it (7:80)."

Since Hefner has been so successful with his form of emphasis, Playboy has opened the door for more freedom of discussion of sex. Since regular discussions of religion and philosophy are also included, a large number of seminarians and members of the clergy subscribe (7:78). In some quarters it is considered the mark of a "cool" contemporary minister to refer casually to Playboy in sermons.

Other entrepreneurs, operating on the theory that whatever makes dollars makes sense, have "emphasized" sex in somewhat the same manner. Ian Fleming, in his 007 books (15) certainly has no intention of separating sex from violence. Although he uses sex and nude females decoratively, as does Hefner, he does not seem to take himself as seriously. Fleming's Names; Miss Money Penny, Kissy Susuki, Odd Job, Pussy Galore and Mary Goodnight, are all fairly poking the reader in the ribs (a fact which seems to be understood, as evidenced by the number of comic spy thriller movies engendered by the James Bond series). A recent 007 is entitled "Casino Royale". It is a comic romp with none of the thriller pretensions of the other Fleming stories,

and all of the sex. As Bond became self-mocking, others followed (29:69). From revivals of the old "Batman" serials, it was a short step to network productions of "Captain Nice," "The Green Hornet" and "Mister Terrific". Thereby has the cinematic form been initiated.

In February of 1964, The Beatles, a British rock n' Roll group, first arrived on American soil (7:63). They were admittedly derivative, having learned their trade through slavishly copying an American entertainer named Buddy Hobblym whose group was named The Crickets. But The Beatles have changed. They have recently developed into the single most creative force in popular music today (7:63). They have combined the seemingly uncombinable, mixing elements of Bach, Folk music, American rock n' roll, electronic sounds and Oriental rythms.

This trend toward eclecticism and tendency toward things Oriental can also be found in social sub-cultures such as "The Hippies" (32:31), whose name was apparently derived from the one-hip position opium smokers used to assume. American Jazz musicians used it to refer to anyone who was on drugs, and later, to a person who was up-to-date in thought and deed. But its present use suggests looking past reality either with or without psychedelic aid. The hippie movement in Seattle and Portland at least, owes much to the Oriental religions Zen and Hinduism. There is also a degree of respect and imitation of the American Indians'

harmony with nature. Their collective goal is not as obvious as their individual direction, which seems to be motivated by a desire to attain a state of enlightenment called Satori. Zen Buddhists accomplished the same end with breathing exercises and meditation. Some hippies claim that, on occasion, LSD (Lysergie Acid D'ethylamide) can lend the same sense of separation between mind and ego (32:32). Eason Monroe, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union on southern California had this to say about those people:

"The Hippies are moving in their own way, through confusion and social distrust toward honesty. I admit they are a difficult group to understand. But I think they've looked into our present society as well as they're able, and they see inequities they seriously want to correct. Despite their hair and beads and generally scruffy exterior, they may well be more high minded and cleaner inside than any other generation to come along yet."

But in the background, among the tinsel and soot, can be heard Growlings and bleatings, crowings and cat-calls, black vs white, hawk vs dove, young vs old, hip vs square, homosexual vs heterosexual.

Robert Rauschenberg is hanging his last all-white painting and Ad Reinhardt is hanging his first all-black one.

Somewhere a public address system can be heard, crying, "Look, see the wonders of the world!"

Sonny and Cher are left, singing, "And the beat goes on....and the beat goes on...."

CHAPTER III

EVALUATIONS

This is an evaluation of the pieces comprising the thesis. Judgments were made on the basis of all the criteria mentioned in the first chapter as well as other more personal considerations which are always involved in the achievement of personal satisfaction with one's own work.

Each piece is described and dated in order of completion.

DRAWINGS (Described in Order of Completion)

- (1) Box with Children. May 1966. (11 x 14) A continuation of architectural line contrasted with the rounded silhouettes of playing children. There seems to be a compositional split between the "top" of the box and the active area contained within the square.



(2) Tribute to the Rodeo Cowboy. May 1966. (11 x 14) The figurative "action" takes place in boxes as does the last one, but it doesn't seem as honest. A wee bit contrived. In a first attempt at Oriental color, I feel the use of two separate reds and a violet for a mixing base has kept the combinations unified and rich, not muddy. There are too many separate ideas going in this composition, though.



(3) Icarus Over Oakland. June 1966. (11 x 14) I feel positively about this idea. I think it is exciting. Color relationships do not work as well as they could for the spatial division. This idea should be developed on a larger scale.



- (4) Theater. June 1966. (11 x 14) In an attempt to change the surface character of the paint, I began using polymer emulsion as a vehicle. This play of pattern against pattern brings the technical comparison of Persian work with Op or hard-edge painting more to mind than any of these completed so far. The green-white checks should be repeated somewhere else, though, and my pen and ink drawing is not what it should be.



(5) Persian Nights. July 1966. (11 x 14) A softer, more romantic approach. I feel quite positively about this piece and plan to use the overall pattern created by the white star-dots in something else.



(6) Feisal's Arabia. July 1966. (11 x 14) I feel I didn't really do justice to a good idea on this one. The upper and lower areas relate only from the standpoint of subject and color. The upper area is verging on being overdone and seems to exist as only an excuse for color. Black on white accents may be a good idea, however. Inspiration for this piece came about through articles I have read on the great amount of progress King Feisel has brought about since he ousted his brother Saud in 1946.



(7) I Am The Light Of The World. July 1966. (3 x 5) The expression is appropriate to the idea, which is not profound, but is meant as an observation about the relationships between utility and theory in religion and life. Color relationships are not unusual, or exciting, however.



(8) Garden of Gayety. July 1966. (18 x 28) I have noticed in my reading and from personal acquaintances, that as a group, homosexuals often show a distinct and sensitive awareness to the avantgarde aspects of our culture. Their forthright I don't care attitude and exhibitionistic tendencies are representative of a direction in which I think the post-war baby generation is moving. This change of physical dimension in my work has proven exhilarating, and represents a direction which I hope to follow with the next few pieces.



(9) Near Miss. July 1966. (11 x 14) This small painting is a reaction to the present destruction in Asia in general and the philosophical conflict between the occidental view of beauty and that of the Orient, in particular. The visual fact that the exploding bomb looks a bit crysanthemum-like is intentional. This profundity is probably a good deal more personal than public, I would imagine. I consider the piece pretty but weak in communication.



(10) Mother Earth And The American Moon. August 1966.

(20 x 25) The expression and attitude of the mother figure and the small band of pen and ink drawings represent the crazy, greedy delirium of 20th century society gambling trillions on the moon while missing or ignoring some simple bets at home. The general expression of this piece is more effective than specifics, which is as it should be. I feel the lower band of black-white drawings could have been compositionally included with the rest in some better way.



(11) Bomb Flower. August 1966. (4 x 5) This small piece is a development of the ideas pursued in Near Miss (No. 9) previously described. As I work more in this manner, I am beginning to discover the expressive qualities of the pen line in contrast with broad color areas.

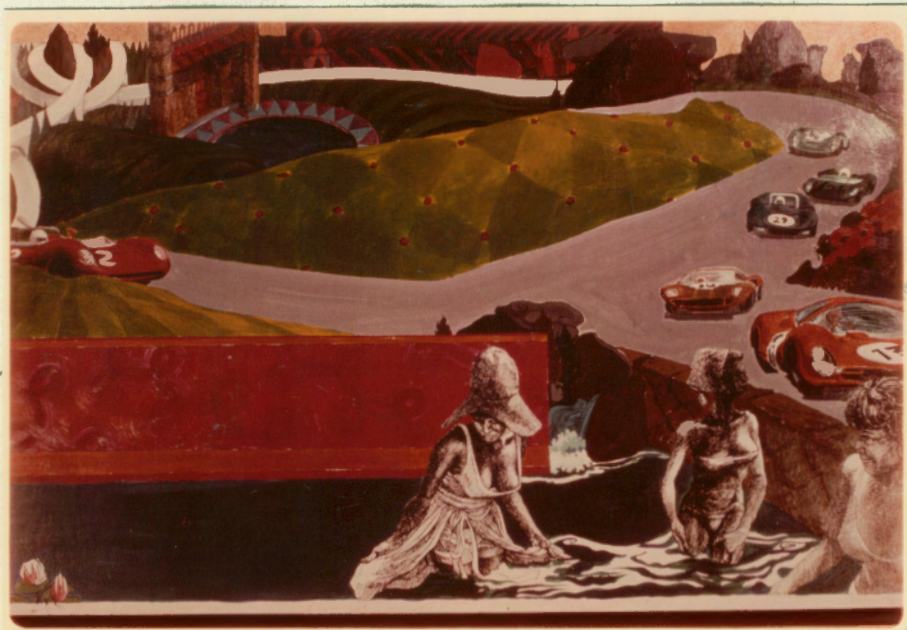


(12) Clubhouse. August 1966. (18 x 28) This composition, concern for profuse pattern and shallow picture plane, is a more obvious return to Persian stylistic tendencies. I would rather not adapt my subject matter to a Persian-type of composition, as I have done here. It is better, I believe, to utilize some of their color and drawing styles in carrying out my own, more contemporary appearing composition. This drawing has led me to think in terms of increased scale which I intend to develop with the next few pieces.



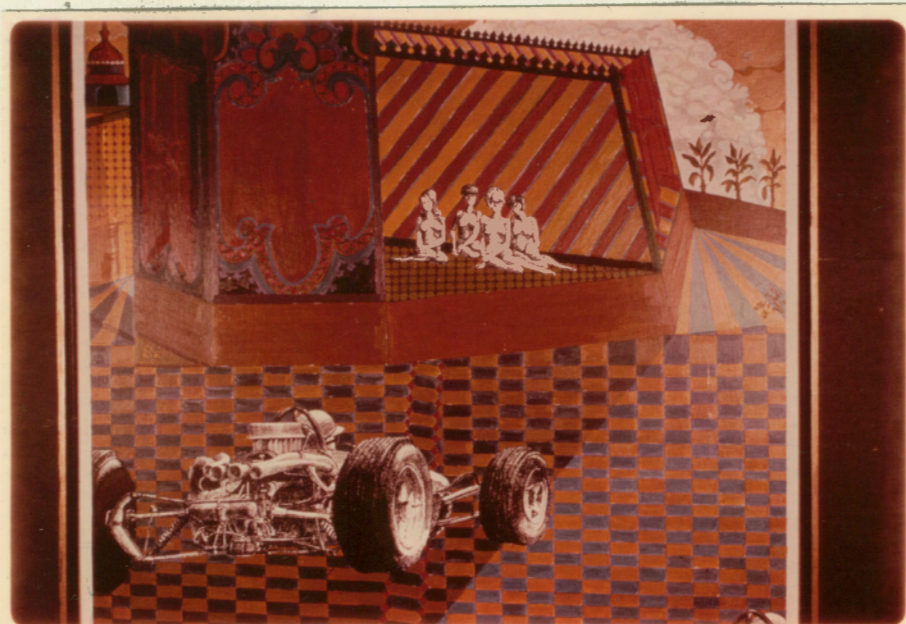
(13) The Utopian Grand Prix. September 1966. (15 1/2 x 28)

The destructive attacks of our highway system upon the countryside, however necessary it may be to whisk traffic cross-nation, inspired this composition. In it, six racing cars are roaring over an imagined freeway through a Persian garden, past three maidens basking in a lily pond. Up to now, 20th century subjects have been expressed in pen and ink. In this composition, however, the racing cars are painted in the same manner as the surrounding garden. It doesn't seem to make much difference either way.



(14) Roarin' Through Rajpur. November-December 1966.

(28 x 28) Since compositions based upon diagonals have often proved challenging to me, and are characteristic of many Persian paintings, I felt Roarin' Through Rajpur would be appropriate at this time. It is in this piece that the possibilities of gold tempera paint were first explored, in combination with the other media used throughout the previously described works. Though the Persian manuscript illustrators rarely showed the effects of shadow or highlight on architecture or figures, the cast shadows aid this work by creating additional diagonals which are in harmony with the rest of the composition. An interest in speed represented here is in the last piece, by racing cars, shows the expressive potential which could be utilized for others in this series.



(15) The Garden of Love (back door). February 1967.

(11 x 14) In this composition, figures are grouped in what may appear to be a small crowd at the edge of a walled garden. On the wall and over the garden entrance are representations of females, emphasizing breasts and the sensual and physical aspects of love, in general. The breast idea is carried out in mountains and trees in other areas of the composition as well. Foreground figures were drawn with the intent of showing an attitude of surly denial of others. On the right, a shadowy figure is lunging at the symbolic female form on the wall which was previously described, representing the violence and stealth usually associated with sex crimes.



(16) The Icon Depository. March 1967. (28 x 44) This is the largest of the series. The size was certainly a healthy challenge, but I didn't meet it as boldly as I should have. By that I refer to a fragmentation of composition. The "bullseye effect" of the breasts represent the strength on the right side while the ornate architectural detail attracts the eye on the left. This would be fine if they worked cooperatively, but they don't in my estimation. The reason for the headless "busts" is simply that the face represents individuality, and it was my intent that these look as much like mass-produced objects of worship as possible.



(17) He Brings Me Luck. May 1967. (28 x 28) As somewhat of a departure from the geometrically patterned Persian paintings, this composition uses fully modeled figures while still retaining the two-dimensionality so characteristic of Oriental work. The subject is an expression of the national misuse of religion. The idea of Muhammad Ali, self-appointed Muslim minister pounding men senseless for fun and profit, is expressed in the lower central portion. Other hazardous pastimes which may require divine guidance are also illustrated. A shallow picture plane has been achieved by juxtaposing colors of similar value, as did the Persians. The masacara'd eyes in the sky and smiling Christ are meant to show that Christianity, even after almost 2000 years, is still hip.



(18) Coastal Route. June 1967. (23 x 11) This composition has a number of good ideas within it, each one of which could be developed farther in other compositions. However, in combination, there are too many divergencies. The idea was a little weak and lacks conviction, I believe.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Persian attitude, as expressed by the book illustrators of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, seems to show an interest in decoration as well as information. While subject and background seemed to cooperate in the deliberate reporting of an event, the compositions illustrated in this series only hint at this sort of visual documentation. Since it is the writer's belief that ideas rather than deeds have the most historical import, symbolic items of our culture appear in these pieces where action would be, in the Persian paintings. In this way, a cultural object (such as a revolver) may simply be placed before the viewer for investigation. Furthermore, to insure that the presentation is an objective one, the item of scrutiny is usually situated in decorative surroundings. This approach, like many others dependent upon creator-creation-patron communication, is very uncertain and in some pieces degenerates to seemingly random combinations.

If the idea is sound, the still apparent upon completion of the composition, then it has been counted as successful. The art work has been personally judged by separate criteria such as would be applied to any drawing

or painting regardless of subject.

It has been my good fortune to have stumbled upon these meso-oriental techniques at a time when my other artistic interests were somewhat parallel. This series of compositions, for the purposes of summary investigation, is complete; but it is by no means finished.

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