

ROSEMARIE CASTORO

WRITINGS

PRESS RELEASE ROSEMARIE CASTORO: 1974-2003 ARCHES ARE TUNNELS (June 10-July 12, 2003)

Arches and Tunnels vs. Arches are Tunnels

Enumeration and declaration

Containment with permeation

The arch is proliferated in sculptures and drawings. Having the properties of containment and permeation, it is constructed in perspective. (26 May 2003.)

E-mail to the gallery (February 1, 2001)

History:

1999 Two separate angioplasties, with stents in my arteries. I made 22" x 30" drawings, using graphite or prisma color pencils starting with my idea of platelet aggregations, then enlarging details. I continued with arterial sculpture, the linear dance drawing imagery, welding stainless steel.

2000 Double by-pass surgery: I made "Orbital" drawings, "Circuits" linking and overlapping one another, some prisma color, most graphite on 22" x 30" paper, to help "circulation" through my arteries.

The drawings were started in Italy, coming out of the "circuit" drawings I made after by-pass surgery, this time, part of the oval becoming an "Arch." I had ample inspiration in the Etruscan cities, matching what was in my mind to what I selected to see. The graphite "Arches" (...) are precursors of plaster on mosquito net sculptures that were simplified "Flashers Apses," the niches that one finds in overly Catholic countries.

"Mosquito Net Works" were an attempt to make an "Arch" in perspective. After playing with the net and the plaster, I preferred the net by itself, its reference to the mesh I have within my arteries and the clarity of process and form. The net is not unlike graphite drawings, continuing the process of making works that seem spontaneous, like drawing, into something that has presence in the third dimension. If you don't wear gloves to handle the net, you will find the reference to the mosquito quite applicable. (...)

STATEMENTS OF BEING (1999) (see separate hyperlink in thumbnail picture of the same name)

PRESS RELEASE ROSEMARIE CASTORO: GALLERY FLOATING (March 12-April 10, 1999)

Floaters are debris within the vitreous. You can watch them with closed eyes. If you soft focus, they will sail across your vision. Two years ago I was entertained by an inordinate amount of floaters. I made watercolors trying to capture the elusive amoebas. The room space became the inside of my eye, the watercolor floaters inhabiting its interior. Starting from the corner of the room, radiating a stream of consciousness, the floaters reached into the inky depth and with the rhythm of undulating waves, spilled their energy into the room container.
(1/19/1999)

PRESS RELEASE ROSEMARIE CASTORO: SYNCOPE (May 23-June 5, 1998)

Syncope shortens the distance between two points by alluding to the presence of another. What is the other? That not yet born? That to become? That, an ever-present fertile nurturer? What is the space we are hurtling into? The space between the objects.

Time is an element like titanium, tungsten and tin. The increments of seconds give our minds a rhythm of tangible pulses. How many seconds does it take to see? Until identification? Do we need to objectify to feed perception? Does naming permit use? It may be an invitation to participate in the space between the objects. (4/24/1998)

PRESS RELEASE ROSEMARIE CASTORO: 1964-1994 (SMALL) WORKS (March 4-April 29, 1995)

I return to myself and reach into the future like an ever expanding stretched spring. As a child, to escape from chaotic family life with 3 siblings, two of them fraternal twins, I drew fruit tree filled deserted islands. A protected lagoon stocked with fish was fed by a drinking water stream. For company, an occasional sailor washed up on shore. At age 15, I won a painting scholarship to the Museum of Modern Art, my first entrance to an art museum where I discovered Matisse and Cézanne.

During my graphic art studies at Pratt I choreographed and acted, creating space relationships which later resurfaced in sculptural groupings. Walking around the cobble stone streets of lower Manhattan reinforced meditations on repetition, acrylic fields of mosaic tile wall paintings. In 1965 a dominant element emerged: the "Y." I answered its question by painting "Y's" on 7' square single color fields. The "Y's" extremity became larger, extending into graphite and paint interlaced grid. The canvas became a gigantic drawing board by using a T square and cut-out cardboard triangles. Saturated color was eliminated. A wash of acrylic sunk into the canvas on which a monochromatic field was drawn with prisma color pencils.

Objectifying a visual perceptual split, I took inventory of my surroundings, left and right eyes seeing objects in separate fields of view. Five was a maximum number, zero, a quality judgment: Three people on the left side, and on the right, two people, a mailbox and a lamppost. Or 3-4. A load of garbage and an open doorway, 0-1. The numbers accumulated and were used to plot paintings. The periphery of the canvas was incrementally marked and points were connected with arbitrarily selected prisma colored pencils. The world was cryptically catalogued with dream lines crossings.

The canvas as object. Tape was in use to make "hard-edged" paintings. I made tape paintings. Tape as a line of substance, as a trail of traveling, as a division of space.

A psychological consciousness opened up. Needing more clarity as to living and working functions, the loft was divided with a shiny aluminum taped line. On one side were living functions and the other, art. Line as reality. Drawing to describe function. Setting up a barrier and crossing it. Walking into a painting.

I attended Art Workers Coalition meetings in 1969. Poets and artists produced "Street Works." I made an atoll out of Manhattan Island by "cracking" the sidewalk with the shiny tape, bringing to mind my childhood paintings of deserted islands. I timed myself for a week, a weekend and a day. My stopwatch works examined the inventory of my daily activities. While waiting for a huge school clock to be cleaned in a Canal Street surplus store, I fixed my attention in a box of casters. Art as traveling. Anywhere you care to go. I moved my ceiling, letting in more light.

The linear division in the studio led to building a wall with a door triggered so that whoever entered the room shut off the light. When closing the door behind them, the light, connected to a rheostat, began to glow, reaching full brightness in three minutes and staying bright until the door was again opened. In the show Lucy Lippard curated in Vancouver, some people thought their eyes were adjusting to the 200 watt light bulb. Whoever enters a room changes the consciousness of that space. The clear bulb was in the middle of the floor. Shadows of visitors were cast on the white walls.

The shadows were temporary. Through a strong desire to strike blackness onto those walls, I bolted together Masonite panels, gave up the straight edge and broomed thickened gesso onto hollowcore doors to make graphite oceans, seven feet tall. My free standing walls turned into corners, foyers, stalls and parts of rooms. *Rotating Corners* were four corners that got together. What comes through revolving doors? People came through in the form of cut-out broom strokes. I studied groups of people in the subway and crowds on the street. I squeezed their exoskeletal auras onto Masonite, and cut them out with a saber saw.

In Fresno, the new apartment where I temporarily lived as Visiting Artist, resembled a coffin. I made roots growing down from the ceiling. Using epoxy and steel, forms resembling tops of tree branches after a hurricane were attached to the ceiling. Finally released, they danced on the ground. In a dream, I was on a tall ladder, flying high over branches, under bridges, yet still attached through the chimney of a house. The ladder bent, straightened, multiplied, and fragmented into parts of the body. In Colorado, discarded tree branches became thickened linear shadows. I carved sharpened sticks and balanced them in front of glass doors to protect me in my faculty apartment.

The leaf of the tree. The bark of the tree trunk. The opening up of the tree. The *Flasher* came out of turning the two dimensions of paper into three dimensions, by wrestling steel. The sacred and profane, the flasher as nun and monk, the shadow as dancer.

I found concrete encrusted surplus lead bringing to mind the slices of mountains I drove through in New Mexico. The density of lead prompted me to examine concrete. With expanded metal lath, I formed super-structures on which to plaster concrete *Flashers*. Observing a *Flasher* for its geometry, I saw triangles and curves. The cardboard triangle tool from the 60's became the building element for the *Flasher*, now called a *Shrine*. Through mixing concrete I saw graphite and charcoal as three-dimensional dust.

In 1984, I began again to wrestle steel. I cut heads and shoulders into sheets of galvanized steel and left the *Angels* unpainted, as sculptural equivalents to the charcoal *Portrait Flasher* drawings. Color returned through using a propane torch to anneal stainless steel. I discovered how to paint with fire. Members of monarchies ensued: *Kings, Queens, Princes* and *Dwarfs*, paying homage to the games of chess I played.

In 1985, I began drawing at the opera and the dance as a spectator's response. The drawings were sequential, following the visual unfolding of character and place. Using them, I paralleled steel to reinforce my drawn image. To stay with a character, I constructed the archetypes with triangles, welding them into architecture.

1991 completed the opera series. The "Queen of the Night" from Mozart's *Magic Flute* turned into a cave. You could step inside and wear it. A closed keyhole. A door so safe it could not open. A hole in my heart began the two year building of *Cathedral*. A mate for *Cave*. Two seven foot tall keyholes.

The keyhole elongated the triangular dimensional line. In 1994 I taped myself with a 2" wide long paper strip, dividing myself in half. I bent steel to actualize and solidify the line. I sliced the self, taking a part without disturbing the flesh. I extracted my friend's profiles and subjected their image to trophy significance as sarcophagi. (11/6/1994)

Letter to the Gallery (August 10, 1992)

THE KNEE-HIGH FLASHERS ARE AN INTERACTIVE SPECIES, EACH A VOYER + PERFORMER.

AL CHARYN HARDWARE STORE IN SOHO WAS CLOSING OUT OF BUSINESS IN 1978. I SPIED OUT RUSTY STOVE-PIPE CUT SHEETS. HARRY LET ME HAVE A FEW FOR A DOLLAR.

I BROUGHT THEM HOME AROUND THE CORNER + WITH A METAL CUTTING SHEAR, SLICED OFF THE FITTING EDGES. WHEN I WENT BACK FOR MORE THEY WERE READY TO THROW THEM OUT SO I PICKED THEM UP FROM IN FRONT OF THE SUNLIT STORE WINDOW + CARRIED THEM BACK TO MY STUDIO. I CLEANED THEM UP + DE-RUSTIFIED THEM, PAINTING A PROTECTIVE LAYER TO SEAL. WITH GLOVED HANDS + STRETCHER PLIERS I COLLAPSED THE RECTANGLE OF THE 2 DIMENSIONAL PLANE INTO THE 3 DIMENSIONS OF THE FLASHER.

JOURNAL (excerpts)

Rosemarie Castoro, 10/28/2004: I am cleaning up and organizing small drawings and words, and am amused by this very same artist. Am I beside myself? I'm having too much fun.....

11/1/2004: Range of sizes of *Journals* 1967-present: 32x26 cm to 20x13cm, —3 cm to 1 cm thick, mostly written on right side of pages (I'm left handed,) with many Polaroid black and white self-timing photos in mostly earlier books, until accidentally destroying my favorite cameras, at which, by that time, in the 80's, Polaroid stop producing models with an electronic eye easily fooled into natural lighting conditions.

11/1/2004: *Journals* started as a "to do" list, an appointment calendar, a diary, and ultimately, as my own best friend.

JOURNAL: September, 1969- August 24, 1970, October 9, 1969, p. 17.

Eve of event

Before the time of exposure

After you pierce the crust

You get to taste the apple

Starchy wetness

Leathery Foam

Peel off

Poke into

Pass through

Emerge from under

Scrape your eyes

Clamber about

Trip over mound of dark hardness

Land backside

Stop breathing

Collect beads

Pile up

Climb up

Pierce the crust

Emerge out side

I want to show you what I learned

The thing that I passed through from which I emerged

is again ended.

JOURNAL: September, 1969- August 24, 1970, June 19, 1970, p. 75.

Art products are about what you are, what you have seen, what you want to be, the gift of the future to the members of your chosen family.

JOURNAL: September, 1969- August 24, 1970, June 29, 1970, pp. 107, 108.

What do you do, where?

What is the function of your activity?

How do you do it?

What are the rules?

Who asked you to do it?

Why did you comply?

If you said no, what are the reasons?

If you are smart, say yes to do it.

How do you function?

If you buried yourself more than once, who prodded your shoulder?

What time do you have?

If the interchange during purchase erupts reflection before activity, how much time do you have?*

Whose time do you have?

If the activity produces manifested results, you have your own body time.

What do you do?

What form does your flesh assume to do it?

If you sit in your father's chair, how do you justify your power?

What do you do?

How do you spend your time?

Do you pass through crowds?

How have you been stopped?

What stops you?

How have you stopped?

What do you do?

* Rosemarie Castoro, 10/28/2004: In examining time elements between events that are enacted by an agreed activity between strangers, such as a purchase of an article (e.g., \$1.00 for a newspaper), there is an energy exchange that I acknowledge on my part which I felt triggered another time/space experience, other than that which was obvious. To find the extraordinary in the ordinary, and asking the question "how much time do you have?" is asking how long can you sustain the space between the beginning and the end of the event.

JOURNAL: August 24-May 28, 1971, September 8, 1970, p. 19.

I am in dirt continually. The closer I am to myself the dirtier I become. My studio is covered with graphite. I am Diogenes sitting in a pile of dust. My ocean is made of graphite in front of which I stumble, chase, flop over. Paintings are the places where you watch yourself. Paintings are reflections. They are the manifestations of sexuality.

JOURNAL: August 24-May 28, 1971, September 29, 1970, p. 51.

What is poetry? Is it the romance of a way of life? Does it excuse behavior ill suited to a human healthiness? Is it instant reflection? Does it remove you from relating to your loved ones? Does it remove the guilt from destructive behavior?

JOURNAL: August 24-May 28, 1971, November 21, 1970, p. 131.

How can anyone shift emphasis? By prolonged denial. What is time but the measure of activity. What is activity but the manifestation of thought. What is thought but the rationalization of behavior. What is behavior but the decision to do something in the on-going space of a continuum. What is a continuum but the living of the gift of birth. How many gifts of life can one person have?

JOURNAL: May 29, 1971-June 15, 1972, October 19, 1971, p. 127.

The act of doing, the process of making, has become as natural a part of my life as living is itself.

JOURNAL: May 29, 1971-June 15, 1972, November 25, 1971, p. 183.

Arm Muscles have begun their ache of two weeks of not drawing. The last bit of an edge is now drying on 4 sides of two out of eight panels.

I speak to my arms:

"Biceps, you will feed from the furnace of my belly on the energy emitted through frontal lobes. So wait until the time is lit."

I disassembled the corners that turn to sweep whiteness in horizontal directions on facing panels. I can not yet find the shadows until more turns are completed. One day of facing turns, sixteen facing turns perhaps eight turns through, one turn of four sides is drying.

I am trying to sleep. I am awakened by a deep voiced need. It is asking my spirit to come, to be in a vast space, to be a god in that space. It is a love beyond sexuality, beyond physical manipulation in sensuality, beyond insatiable orgasm. It is a need to meet my soul. I will not go out. I know who my soul mate is. I will let him read this entry. Will you live with me? Will you inhabit my being? Will you

pierce my gut? Will you come through me? Do we have a space as lovers? Shall we find a place with each other to be two gods transcending the world?

JOURNAL: May 29, 1971-June 15, 1972, February 21, 1972, p. 239.

Primary art. Pry is to uproot secrets. Marry is to conjoin.

JOURNAL: May 29, 1971-June 15, 1972, undated (between March and May 1972,) p. 273.

I am moving inside of myself.

I close my eyes and see Rosemarie Homunculus. RH does not see me. She dances in a warm light, caged, alone, within this leathery person I am. Will the demise of this person me free RH? Does RH know to be free? I know she is within, but she doesn't know I am without.

JOURNAL: May 29, 1971-June 15, 1972, June 15, 1972, p. 295.

From dense forests of chaos a single twisted branch floats over head.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, September 15, 1972, p. 45.

The eye grips the totality of the experience, relaxes into purpose and sets off energies to make accomplishments.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, September 25, 1972, p. 49.

survival =

depth of roots

elbow room.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, October 4, 1972, p. 53.

I could say that my work has sexual content. It is about people and how I feel they relate to one another and myself.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, June 22, 1973, p. 215.

When I danced I leapt through air and continued to remain up there. From that moment on I dreamed I could walk around up there if I ignored science. I felt a self-propelled air stretch. It was a way to leave this earth to think in an other path,

to bring coherence to reality, to find the path again, to deepen the grooves and push through the forest of the half-blind.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, July 31, 1973, p. 229.

I wish I could be guaranteed a long life. My art is slow. Changes and desires come through neuro-muscular brain hemisphere switches.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, August 16, 1973, p. 257.

Do all my problems center around space? At one time—time was my problem. Now, space. I want to carve space. I am carving space. Functional objects get in the way.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, August 17, 1973, p. 261.

An elbow was in my heart.* I swung out and away. It touched my shoulder. I went to sleep at the foot of the forest. A new piece started yesterday afternoon: crouching crotches in a circle. Art bridges the gap between the self and the other. I don't know what is going to happen with my psyche or my soul. I am making a forest. It will crowd out anguish and misery. Structure comes from chaos, from quiet contemplation after engaging experiences.

* Rosemarie Castoro, 11/1/2004: The elbow was prodding me from the outside. I turned it into crotches.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, September 12, 1973, p. 285.

New York is Dante's Inferno, extruded up from the horizon of roof tops meeting sky, down through the layers of dirt polluted façade levels. New York is buried down from its roofs. It is female from the chimney to basement. You might think upon approaching New York from Brooklyn or New Jersey that it is a rectilinear mountain... male you say. Not when you are in it, occupying any level of coffin space chimney down from the roof.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, September 22, 1973, p. 297.

Clarity comes from the experience of change. I wanted to make a jungle (chaotic experience). The form of the doing and the grouping that evolved demanded clarity and led to the truth that at one time I was afraid of the experience of people. Although I have come through the tunnel and don't need to return to it right now, this week I did as a form of escape to find what is my path. I am thinking I have a balanced anima/animus. I wanted to be rooted (anima needs penetrating). I buried people on the ceiling and made roots growing down from the ceiling. I extended my animus (to penetrate) into reality and released suspended crotches/double penises/legs into three—related in proximity, scale, progression of size and time of execution—interdependent groups, all having

qualities of each other in their anima (crotches), animus, (penises) and the third quality (legs) which has no differentiated sex.

JOURNAL: June 16, 1972-September 22, 1973, September 22, 1973, p. 299.

My tunnel thinking has to do with the left and right hand coming together and not touching, as if to hold an imaginary body.

JOURNAL: September 23, 1973-February 22, 1974, October 6, 1973, p. 13.

Arches are tunnels you can see through.

JOURNAL: September 23, 1973-February 22, 1974, October 8, 1973, p. 17.

It is the way it is because of the way it looks. It is a tunnel made of arches. You can see the inside from the outside. It is ragged and suspended in mid-air. I used to tumble around on ropes and suspend myself in mid-air. My work is adapting itself to all those things I am. When you bury something it grows in a different form.