

Leah Reynolds August 1993

(These are listed in chronological order)
Artist's Statement

"Examined Life" (for Anna Mae A.)

This piece resulted from reading about the 1976 murder of Leah Reynolds received a BFA in Printmaking in 1980. Around that time she began printing on fabric and building mixed media constructions. During the three years between undergraduate and graduate school she installed a number of temporary works in public places. During graduate school, (this time for sculpture), she began making small models for environments, then moved to making full-sized "sculptures", free-standing and wall-mounted. Eventually she returned to her interest in making "places" rather than isolated objects. This is represented by the work currently on exhibit. All along Ms. Reynolds has worked on dance and theatre sets, and site-specific installations whenever the opportunity arises. ("Venus" was part of a recent installation at the University City Arts League.)

Working Process

There is a sheer joy that I took from an earlier piece. The primary materials used in these works are cheesecloth, acrylic paint and, recently, rabbit skin glue. The fabric is hung with whatever other materials are desired in what will basically be its final form. The whole thing is then sprayed with watered-down acrylic; this starts to build up the color and also stiffens the material. Eventually, paint is applied with a brush, using a lot of acrylic medium to produce translucent layers.

was continuing with the shell imagery.

Specific works

"Shroud" (I am working on this one now and hope to have it (These are listed in chronological order)

"Examined Life" (for Anna Mae A.) with the rabbit skin give as a base for this one. I am interested in its

This piece resulted from reading about the 1976 murder of a Native American woman associated with the American Indian Movement. When the decomposed body was found, the death was dismissed as being accidental- just another drunken Indian. Despite this, the hands were cut from the body and turned over to the FBI to be sent to Washington for identification. A later autopsy determined that Anna Mae Aquash, (now identified), had been shot and possibly raped. The murder was not solved, but there was plenty of speculation about the role of the FBI, given their interest in disrupting AIM.

"Funhouse"

The title for this is partly ironic. I was still using hand imagery; this time including fists.

"Venus"

There is a shell form that I took from an earlier piece and put on the top of this one that made me think of the Botticelli painting "The Birth of Venus". I then spun off from the painting and the mythology surrounding the goddess to make an installation around the piece.

"My Summer Vacation"

The title for this is meant to be both literal and ironic; working on this really was my "summer vacation". I also

was continuing with the shell imagery.

"Shroud" [I am working on this one now and hope to have it finished by Nov.]

I decided to really go all the way with the rabbit skin glue as a base for this one. I am interested in its translucent quality and the way it reflects light. What got me started was a large piece of clear plastic that I had hung on a white wall to keep it clean. The folds in the plastic reflected light. I noticed it moving slightly in the wind from my fan which caused the reflection to move in an interesting way.

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