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R. F. Buckley: Landscapes, A Sculptural Discourse

The Visual Arts Gallery at Florida International University Frost Art Museum

The Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum

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R.F. Buckley
Landscapes: A Sculptural Discourse
Prevailing Wind  27"H x 7'2"W x 3'0"D  Aluminum

VISUAL ARTS GALLERY
Florida International University, Miami, Florida 33199, Presents:

R.F. BUCKLEY
Landscapes: A Sculptural Discourse • June 15 - July 20, 1984
Acknowledgements

The Visual Arts Gallery of Florida International University is proud to exhibit the work of R.F. Buckley. This is an opportunity to provide an environment for sculpture that externalizes a personal vision, heroic imagery and unique craftsmanship.

The cooperation and interaction of many individuals make an exhibition of this scope possible. I would first like to express my gratitude to R.F. Buckley for so enthusiastically providing us with his new work. He aided in the organizational process and was in continuous communication with our staff regarding the publication of this catalogue and all aspects of the exhibition.

I would also like to express my thanks for support to the project from the Student Government Association. They offer enlightened general support to the Gallery and make much of our program possible.

Many of the critical operations of the Gallery, including installations, are in the capable hands of Gallery Manager William Humphreys. His skill and patience are a source of wonder to me. I am deeply indebted to him.

A special word of gratitude must be expressed to Wynne Leavitt, our Administrative Assistant. Her good humor and organizational skills make working with her and the Gallery interns and assistants a pleasure.

Dahlia Morgan
Director
Visual Arts Gallery
The Discourse of Sculpted Form

Metonymy, the trope that establishes associations between things and ideas through continuity rather than resemblance, is the central force in the sculptures of R.F. Buckley, as it is also the force behind the most distinctively North American patterns of visual thinking. Buckley’s metonyms are elaborated between forms, silhouettes, volumes as these suspend themselves conceptually between reference and abstraction. Thus, folds of fiberglass which evoke the draped, abandoned presence of a human wearer are echoed in the cloud-like stratifications employed in Finnian Fantasia. Likewise, the muted allusion to the human figure inherent in works—like those of the Quicksilver series—which employ fiberglass drappings emerge in the pieces which evoke geological forms, mountains in particular, as is the case with Outward Bound and Transpassage T.L.S.

It is clear that the metonyms forged by Buckley at the visual level stand for metonyms on a more profound, conceptual level. Transposing fluid drapery into cloud silhouettes might seem more like a metaphor than a metonym, until the transposition is conceived in sculptural or, more exactly, in spatial terms. The sculpture positioned in the open terrain picks up the whole range of volumetric and textural values that surround it. Leaf and mist, shadow and facade, the indifferent passer-by, bird, nimbus, and yesterday’s wind torn news are images and shapes which the sculpture dialogues with, as it does with memory and art history. Night clothes that acquire a ghostly presence in a child’s eye. The rhythmed, abrasive buffings and grindings of metal surface left to stand as images, at times sharing the surface with paint, which recall David Smith. The very conception of the creative act in terms of welding, a tradition that is presently very rich and which springs from Julio González.

What metaphors emerge in Buckley are subordinated to metonymy. The erect, anthropomorphic posture of some of his sculptures, or the use of convulsive spaces and jagged outlines that conjure wreckage or violence are the result of that dialogue, that contiguity between forms which is the essence of Buckley’s spatial discourse. The draped form in the studio or installed in the open casts the cloud shadow. There is no break, the sculptures seem to say, between forms that echo each other, between the human shell of cloth, the mineral bones of the terrain, and the sculptural canopy of mist on the horizon. The sculptures of Buckley draw on these fluidities to make rather poignant statements on the frailty of life and creative vision. Through metonymy’s door, Buckley has passed to find an unarticulated suspicion that in the constant dialogue between forms lies the final testimony of their punctual insignificance as discreet entities. In this sense, then, Buckley’s sculptures are as much cenotaphs of a commemorated finality as they are metal prisms that speak of continuity and the infinite language of formal thought.

Ricardo Pau-Llosa
Adjunct Professor of Latin-American Art History at F.I.U., and a Senior Editor of Art International.
Gateways & Clouds & Other Means of Uncertain Passage 9’2”H x 9’8”W x 8’3”D  Aluminum
"Transpassage T.L.S." 20'H x 20'W x 20'D Aluminum
Biography


**Teaching Experience** — Associate Professor, 1977-Present, Florida International University, Visual Arts Department

**Selected Exhibitions and Awards**


1980 — Group Exhibition, Environmental Sculpture Competition, Georgia Botanical Gardens, Athens, Georgia

1978 — Invitational Exhibition of large outdoor sculpture, New World Center Bicentennial Park, Miami, Fla.

**Private Collections**

- Chesterfield Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio
  1 cast bronze sculpture, 40” high
- Mark Twain Bank, St. Louis, Missouri
  3-piece architectural landscape group
- Cor-Ten steel, brass, copper, 16’0” high x 12’0” x 12’0” commissioned
- L’Hermitage Corporation, Miami, Florida
  1 sculpture — aluminum and fiberglas
  17’0” high x 6’0” wide
List of Works

Sculpture

1. Outward Bound
   6’0”H x 6’0”W
   Aluminum & paint

2. Model for Transpassage — T.L.S.
   4’6”H x 5’0”W x 4’7” D
   Aluminum

3. Photo — Transpassage — T.L.S.

4. Gateways & Clouds & Other Means of Uncertain Passage
   9’2”H x 9’8”W x 8’3” D
   Aluminum

5. Midnight Approach
   6’5”H x 9’0”W x 5’3” D
   Aluminum & paint

6. Ultra Violet
   8’11”H x 3’0”W
   Aluminum & marker

7. Blue Line Prefiguration
   6’0”H x 3’0”W x 8” D
   Aluminum & paint

8. Distant Memories
   35”H x 9’0”W x 9’0” D
   Aluminum

9. Prevailing Wind
   27”H x 7’2”W x 3’0” D
   Aluminum

10. Carbon Cut
    34”H x 7’4”L x 34” W
    Aluminum & paint

11. Riparian Way
    3’0”H x 8’0”L x 2’6” W
    Aluminum

12. Prairie Confluent
    5’0”H x 10’0”W x 4’0” D
    Aluminum & paint

13. 4043 — HQ
    6’0”H x 7’0”L x 4’0” D
    Aluminum

14. Scree Line
    8’11”H x 5’0”W x 5’0” D
    Aluminum & paint

Paintings

1. Transpassage — Red
   5’0” x 3’6”
   Acrylic on canvas

2. Transpassage — Blue
   4’6” x 3’6”
   Acrylic on canvas

3. Canyon Cutter Series #8-105
   20” x 16”
   Oil on canvas

4. Canyon Cutter Series #8-63
   14” x 12”
   Oil on canvas

5. Canyon Cutter Series #8-97
   14” x 12”
   Oil on canvas

6. Canyon Cutter Series #8-111
   12” x 9”
   Oil on canvas

7. Canyon Cutter Series #8-113
   12” x 9”
   Oil on canvas

8. Transpassages #20-20
   20” x 30”
   Acrylic on illustration board
Model for Transpassage — T.L.S. 4'6" H x 5'0" W x 4'7" D  Aluminum

Credits

Gallery Staff
Dahlia Morgan, Director of Galleries
William B. Humphreys, Curator
Wynne Leavitt, Administrative Assistant

Catalogue
Juan Urquiola, Director
Terry Cwikla, Design
Publications, F.I.U.

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