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Once-Removed (And Other Familiar Relations)

Emily Newman
University of Nebraska at Lincoln, eanewman00@yahoo.com

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ONCE-REMOVED

(AND OTHER FAMILIAR RELATIONS)

by

Emily Newman

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Conventional perceptions of space rouse my investigation of images as stand-ins for an object's reference. Removing the context of an object changes the once tangible form. No longer able to be touched, used or relate to its original environment, an object transformed into an image exists solely for our visual and psychological perceptions.

In substituting one for the other, image for object and vice versa, a hierarchy occurs. Its previous existence now establishes a mental presence, shifting the future recollection of such an image to precede or replace the actual object in memory. Proxy of image for object and object for image affects the experience had with each. Like a photograph, the proxy recalls events the mind seems to have misplaced or remembered otherwise. This replacement of perception allows the combination of both experiential associations and factual information to create a simulation in real space.

Objects and images vie for psychological room to distinguish an order of importance within the mind. Reverence towards objects, our experiences with them and the images they produce, conjure an emotional value. As value and status are customary symbols associated with an original object, the mass made object adds confusion to the perceptual and psychological hierarchy of images. In the physical presence of an observer, the multiplied object becomes individualized, contradicting the meaning of its own existence. Replacing a singular image through multiplication
produces a successful retention in memory but by process may also diminish the strength of the image. The multiple asks the mind to remember how many and in doing so sacrifices details of the individual.

By retaining specific characteristics of a familiar object, an observer will discover a new context of each image encountered. The objects and images I recreate begin their existence in three-dimensional form. Either they remain in this state or return to two-dimensions during the process of drawing. Formal decisions such as lack of a traditional picture frame, transparent materials and a singular application of color act as devices to enhance the spatial relationship between object and image.

My interests in objects continue, as each image exists as form occupying both actual space and aesthetic space. These spatial and perceptual differences produce psychological associations made between object and image. Associations that change over time as images and objects repeat themselves within new contexts, forms and experiences.
“Waiting For Higgs Boson With Higgs Boson” Wood, vinyl, foam, March 2008 National Geographic.
“Substitution On Rye” Auto body filler
(Back wall) “Scape” Graphite on duralar, “Waiting For Higgs Boson With Higgs Boson” Wood, vinyl, foam, March 2008 National Geographic, “Model” Expanded metal lath, wire, paint
(Back Wall) “Documentation of Model” Charcoal on duralar, push pins
“Prop” Expanded metal lath, wire, paint
“Model” Expanded metal lath, wire, paint
(L to R) “Seat” Charcoal on duralar, “Model” Expanded metal lath, wire, paint, “Understudies” Two 2008 March National Geographic, charcoal and prisma color on duralar
“Model” Expanded metal lath, wire, paint
“Reverie” Brass, cross-stitch canvas, thread
“Understudies” Two 2008 March National Geographic, charcoal and prisma colored pencil on duralar

“Reverie” Brass, cross-stitch canvas, thread