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THE CONSTELLATIONS OF PALOMAR

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THE CONSTELLATIONS OF PALOMAR

BY

Shane Haley

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Major: Art

Under the Supervision of Professor Aaron Holz

Lincoln, Nebraska

March 2009

THE CONSTELLATIONS OF PALOMAR

Shane Haley, M.F.A.

University of Nebraska, 2009

Advisor: Aaron Holz,

Palomar is one of the oldest observatories in the United States with one of the largest telescopes built; Thousands visit Mount Palomar each year to stare through a lens and get a glimpse of distant constellations and to view what is beyond unaided vision. For me, this physical observatory is a perfect metaphor for the internal Palomar I have created. Palomar is not just a location on a map or a building on a mountaintop. Palomar is a place of quiet contemplation where I go to connect with all that is good in life. It is where the tangible meets the intangible. My visions are not of distant stellar objects but of constellations within. I convert them to graphite and place them on paper for others to contemplate.

My current work is a study of tree-like forms rendered in a gradient with a stark white background. On these forms, I create unique, meticulous, patterns and textures that reference nature. Pattern is a major part of my work as evident in the treatment of each structure. The surface of each tree is covered with shapes and lines that have an obsessive man-made quality but seem to make sense in the context of nature. I choose not to use a ruler or compass to produce a more exact line but instead want to show, or perhaps expose, the perfect flaws found in freehand drawings. I use graphite because it offers a value and range that works best with the subject and makes the scale of the work possible. I like the simplicity and materiality of graphite as well as its long history.

My approach to work is a direct result of structure both externally enforced and internally imposed. This includes time I worked as a teacher and time spent in the setting of the Air force and reflects my own desire to create order and make sense of the world around me. Spending time in the highly structured environment of the military, where everything has a place and time with little left to chance has taught me to organize and restructure my time, my thoughts and my physical surroundings. My artistic thoughts are just as planned and structured as the drills we ran in basic training or the classes I teach. I seek out order in chaos. I build structure where there is none. I organize and categorize the organic. I use line to control the viewer's gaze. I use grids and patterns to enforce order. The grid created by the frame offers a cropping and control to the viewer. The window-like frames separate the viewer from the work and add an element of protection and comfort to the experience.

Palomar is a place of order. I try to plan every detail on every image. The white spaces are just as important to me as the drawn image. There is no scrap or useless material in my work. Everything has a predetermined use or purpose. That being said, the real subject for me is not a tree or bark but what I feel about them. I am not interested in drawing the perfect rendering of a tree or a photographic description of the real world. I want to explore what is beyond the reach of realism but still in the realm of possible. Like looking through a telescope, I want my work to magnify the world beyond reach. I want others to experience *The Constellations of Palomar*.

Works by Shane Haley
Final Thesis Exhibition 2009
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

(01) <i>Defying Gravity in Six</i>	Graphite on Paper	96"X99"	2009
(02) <i>Defying Gravity in Six UL</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2009
(03) <i>Defying Gravity in Six UC</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2009
(04) <i>Defying Gravity in Six UR</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2009
(05) <i>Defying Gravity in Six LL</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2009
(06) <i>Defying Gravity in Six LC</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2009
(07) <i>Defying Gravity in Six LR</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2009
(08) <i>Look Ahead Together</i>	Graphite on Paper	72"X96"	2008
(09) <i>Look Ahead UL</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(10) <i>Look Ahead UR</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(11) <i>Look Ahead LL</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(12) <i>Look Ahead LR</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(13) <i>Solitaire</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(14) <i>Twisted</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(15) <i>Bend</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(16) <i>Close</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(17) <i>Friendship</i>	Graphite on Paper	33"X44"	2008
(18) <i>Defying Gravity</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008
(19) <i>Don't Look Back</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008
(20) <i>Life Restricted</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008
(21) <i>Relationships #1</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008
(22) <i>Relationships #2</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008
(23) <i>Stressed</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008
(24) <i>Night Visions</i>	Graphite on Paper	12"X12"	2008













































