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APR 24 1995

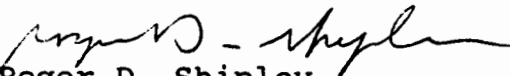
To: Jean Wagner, Registrar
From: Roger D. Shipley
Re: Elenore Lubas; Departmental Honors
Date: April 25 1995

Elenore Lubas has successfully completed a portfolio of 17 artistic images based on the short story The Yellow Wallpaper. These works were completed in the studio areas of drawing, painting, photography, Printmaking, and sculpture.

Elenore has also participated in three discussions about her work with the committee and has had a public exhibition of this work with an accompanying gallery talk.

Elenore has successfully defended the creation of these works before the Honors Committee. The Committee feels that Elenore has completed the goals of her original project and at a level of academic excellence worthy of Departmental Honors in Art.

Sincerely,

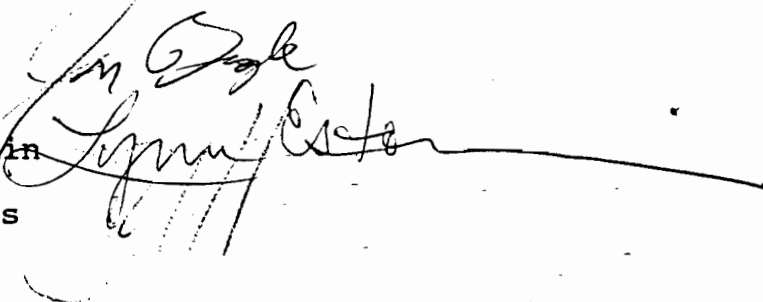

Roger D. Shipley
Honors Committee Chairman

Remaining committee members:

Jon Bogle

Lynn Estomin

G.W. Hawkes



Elenore F. Lubas

Honors Project Proposal for 1994/95

Submitted March 31, 1994

The Yellow Wallpaper takes its reader on a downward spiral of the narrator's (the main character's) mental state. During a summer's stay (warranted by her "nervous condition") at a rented estate, this woman is left in a room cursed with faded, shredded wallpaper and other indications of childish havoc and general misuse. Her husband, who is a physician reassures her that bed rest and isolation will cure her "state." The husband's sister is at the house to watch over her, but she makes few appearances and consequently does not do much good.

After spending numerous days and weeks staring at the perplexing and invocative patterns in the wallpaper, the narrator begins to identify with the "women" she sees trapped behind the wallpaper. These "women" creep about outside during the day (much like the main character when her husband is out) but return to their barred existence at night (when the speaker is "sleeping" with her husband). By the end of her last week's stay, the narrator has torn off the wallpaper, freeing the women whom she begins to refer to in the first person. Her husband returns home on the last day and finds the narrator crawling around the perimeter of the room with her shoulder fitted in a groove that runs along the perimeter.

The surroundings of the estate, as well as the room in which the narrator spends her time, provides overwhelming imagery. The main character, an obvious victim of neglect, yields an excellent psychological case study which conjures mental images and pulls me farther into the story.

For my honors project, I intend to complete a portfolio of

works inspired by this short story. As a visual person, I couldn't help but jump at the chance to illustrate such images and concepts from the story and use them in two and three dimensional art forms. I will work in the areas of drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture. At the close of the year, I intend to exhibit the finished works of art and take each viewer on a visual journey through the mind of a victimized woman who was isolated and allowed mental illness to consume her. I will include twelve images from the works completed in the previously mentioned areas. I will also explain my images by participating in an open discussion concerning the exhibited works of art. This experience will increase my skills as an artist, in setting an exhibition, and in articulating my thoughts about my work. Through the process of producing these images, I will increase my competency and grasp a better understanding of art as a means of conceptualizing literature.

My plan to pursue a future career in art therapy, a combination of art and psychology, will be complemented by the opportunity to present through visual imagery the decay of this particular woman's mental functioning. With the help of this story, I expect to gain an enlightened view of what it is like to experience a mental breakdown.

Elenore F. Lubas
Honors Project Reaction Paper
Spring, 1995

The Yellow Wallpaper

It is interesting how incidental occasions in our life can lead to more monumental moments. A little over a year ago, I casually flipped through an anthology of short stories I had received as a gift. In this voluminous monster, I stumbled upon an eerie tale, *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. My spine still tingles as it first did, every time I read the story, a reminder of the impact that prodded me to further exploration and digestion of the story.

My intention was never to illustrate the static words resting on the pages of the story. Rather, I noticed a strong connection between my way of thinking and what I interpreted as the author's thought process. While initially I did not know much about the author, I felt a meshing, a connectedness of our solutions to the creative process. I was comfortable in drawing imagery from the story and this afforded me the opportunity to delve into the world of the victimized female protagonist.

All of the seventeen completed works that constituted the

project are based on the main character's perspective, and all but one of them contain elements of the human figure. I began working in printmaking and photography last semester. In printmaking, I utilized the collagraph method because I like the dimensionality of the finished paper surface. Both of the prints I completed are white on white relief surfaces. I avoided using any inks or colorations with the prints, because I wanted quiet images that required closer inspection. I also felt the images spoke strongly without the use of color. In "...it becomes bars!", the light and shadows of the depressions in the paper change when the image is tilted, becoming animated as the women behind the paper in the story did.

The other collagraph "...when I creep by daylight", is mask-like in appearance. As humans, we immediately seek out other traces of human forms in works of art. Because of this intrinsic relationship and the pronounced facial expression in the image, this colorless collagraph is indeed a potent image. The face scowls as the woman sinks deeper in the tunnel of madness, alluded to in the story by referring to herself in the first person as one of the captive women breaking free from the wallpaper.

I also explored the protagonist's descent into madness

within the photography aspect of the project. I began the black and white photo series by contacting a studio model and preparing a time and place for a modeling session. We used a vacant apartment with outdated, fading, papered walls. We spent the afternoon exploring the story from the woman's experience. The resulting eleven prints, printed and manipulated in the darkroom, highlight the main figure's deterioration in her wallpapered room as well as the women emerging from their imprisoned status. I used flowered silk and lace coverings during the photo session to give the effect of a woman behind wallpaper. This technique was quite successful. In the darkroom, I sandwiched negatives of the wallpaper and the model to achieve the same idea, although each technique resulted in different effects. Using the same model in all of the photos reflects the protagonist's own madness and how she eventually sees herself as one of the figures in the wallpaper. This continuity also allowed for a more eye pleasing final presentation.

During the spring semester, I worked in the painting and sculpture areas. I completed three sizable paintings, two of them engage the human figure and the third, largest painting uses landscape settings. One of the canvases was inspired by the main character's color description of the wallpaper. She describes it

as being "a smoldering unclean yellow, ...lurid oranges in some places, a sickly sulphur tint in others." I employed this color concept and wove a woman's figure through the center of the painting using colors similar to the undulating background. The other figurative painting is a white on white canvas. I used titanium white as the main medium and introduced small amounts of pigment into it. Light blue figures emerge from the background as an all white predominant figure leans backward in the foreground. Subtle yellow hues spring the latent figures forward. These hues also warm pieces of the predominant figure's hair as well as a cascading pattern that serves as a continuation of the pattern of the hair.

The landscape painting was created based on the idea of the character's description of what she saw from her window. I drew heavily from the grape-covered arbors and box-bordered vegetable paths imagery. I utilized one point perspective in the field patches to entice the viewer into the landscape and created a mysterious yet inviting skyline as well. The arbor pulls one through its tunnel in a swirling motion, sharing a similar color concept with the vegetable patches. This painting is halved by the two landscape elements. However, this duality interestingly lends itself to the schizophrenic thought patterns of the

protagonist, simultaneously creating a visual image of her state of mind.

The sculpture piece was the last in *The Yellow Wallpaper* series to be completed. A woman's sorrowful face peers through tattered wallpaper. The face is painted using mainly achromatic tones in contrast to multi-colored wallpaper. Adopting the same color description as the one previously mentioned painting, the colors used for the wallpaper are "unclean" hues of yellow and orange.

All of the pieces were presented during a one night exhibition which included a reading of excerpts from the short story and my own presentation. The evening went well and was both completely exhilarating and exhausting. The reading and presentation were recorded on video. A proposed future project is to create a documentary of the honors project using the taped presentation, and editing music and still takes of the works into the existing video.

This project also held an interest for me in combining art works and a psychologically troubled protagonist. I am interested in art therapy, which is a blending of art and psychology. This unique area of psychology is used diagnostically and therapeutically in its application. This

project becomes interesting when considering an art therapy perspective. Because the act of creating art is usually non-verbal, art therapy allows the client or patient to express what affects them without the use of words. In a certain dimension I was able to probe and uncover the mentally troubling world of the victimized woman through the use of different art media. Possibilities of what the protagonist would have produced herself, if given the chance, often crossed my mind while creating my works of art. For some of the pieces, I drew from such conjured ideas.

While the theory of art therapy added another dimension to this project, and provided an atypical means of inspiration at times, my foremost interest was not in the analysis of the main character's underlying psychosis. The foundation of this project rested in the mental imagery **I** experienced when reading the short story, and my own creative processes which followed.