SILK AND BARBED WIRE
CONSTRUCTIONS

An abstract submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Art
by
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ABSTRACT

SILK AND BARBED WIRE CONSTRUCTIONS

by

Anita June Segalman

Master of Arts in Art

Death moves through my work with the destructive teeth of barbed wire and the sensual hand of silk. It seduces, punctures, bludgeons, strangles. It grows tumors and ciphers senility. It scars the past and threatens the future. The work is a memoir and a memorial seeking formal structure.

The structure is tense with antitheses: the barbed wire's rigid containment against the silk's supple fragility, the grey grid's horizontal and vertical stability against the bright wire's diagonal tipping, the texture's tactile invitation against its pointed threats. Warm and cool greys emphasize surface, quiet and mystery. Colors used under veils of grey fabric or as linear elements woven on the surface create contradiction and ambiguity.
The linear qualities come from strands of barbed wire, covered wire, strips of China silk and of silk screen "silk," which is really transparent polyester. Plaster is used for its dull roughness and as an adhesive to hold wire and fabric to the canvas. Where barbed wire and fabric are attached to canvas without plaster, sewing and white glue are the binders. Wire on the wall is supported by nails or attached with poultry staples. Colored lines are plastic covered copper wire.

Black sumi ink used as dye produces a cool grey that resembles barbed wire and serves as a foil for warmer hues. Warm greys are from a combination of red and black ink. Within each piece the same solution of water and ink that dyes the fabric is used to mix the plaster. In order to achieve a degree of flexibility and a cracked surface that would not flake off, rhoplex is added to the plaster.

Cracks, contradictions and ambiguity reflect the disquiet we experience in approaching the unknown. The work is presented not as a definition, but as an exploration, not as despair, but as an integration of experience.
48° 13' N  16° 22' E, 1982

Silk, barbed wire, plastic coated wire
10 x 5 ½ feet
32° 45' N  96° 48' W, 1982

Silk, plastic coated wire, rope
10 x 11 1/6 feet
53° 05' N  25° 19' E, 1982

Silk, polyester fabric, plastic coated wire
36 x 24½ inches