RICHARD MONINSKI

S.A.I.F. GRANT FINAL REPORT

“INVESTIGATING LEVELS OF REPRESENTATION IN PAINTING AND PRINTED TEXTILES”

TYPE OF PROJECT

Creative Endeavor

SUMMARY

The chief idea behind my project was to make a body of work that mixed both representational and abstract painting styles in each painting, overlaying this painted imagery on printed camouflage fabrics and ideally integrating all this information through color choices, use of decorative pattern, and themes of subject matter.

While my initial proposal called for the creation of ten paintings of approximately 72 x 48 inches, the body of work I have produced in the past year is much more diverse in terms of scale: I have to-date completed twenty works ranging in size from 76 x 56 inches down to 11 x 8.5 inches.

In each of the paintings, I have included flora and/or fauna (some painted or drawn directly from observation, some appropriated from historical sources); loose, gestural abstract brushwork; and some kind of acknowledgement of the printed camouflage fabric as both abstract pattern and at the same time a stylized representation of foliage. As the project evolved over the year, I began to get a little more focused in terms of how the
imagery worked conceptually. In the latest works I’ve been making oblique references to New England, in particular the 1600s. To this end I have been including such elements as seventeenth century portraiture and references to Native American place names in southern New England, as well as choosing specific animals with Native American names (chipmunk, squeteague, tautog, quahog, etc.).

I do not yet consider this series of paintings finished, as I would like to make about five to eight more large and medium-sized works that pursue the New England themes in greater depth. I anticipate that this next group of works will be painted between now and the end of this year. Two of the most recent works are reproduced here below:
BENEFITS

Individual: As a university professional in the Fine Arts, artistic production is an important and expected part of my practice. Having support from the University has been crucial to this production. It has allowed me to return to making paintings on a large scale, and has been instrumental in the evolution of my thinking about how these paintings should be made. Most importantly, it has given me a body of thematically related paintings with which I will pursue exhibition opportunities at public and private galleries.
Department: It is important for me as a member of my department to be a role model to my students. Students need to be aware of the professional activities of their instructors outside of the classroom, as that deepens their learning experience by providing tangible evidence of the applicability of their artistic training. I strive to give my students as full a sense as possible of my own professional practice as a visual artist. Sharing the results of this project with them as well as with my departmental colleagues is an effective way to give insight into my studio practice.

University: Contributing to the professional enhancement of its instructors provides the university with a more competent, dynamic and knowledgeable teaching staff, which allows the student a fuller and more relevant university experience. Since I will be seeking public venues to exhibit the works in the near future, any resulting publicity will reflect positively on the university as well.

**DISEMINATION OF RESULTS**

In the interest of sharing my results with the university community, I intend for some of paintings to be exhibited at the next faculty exhibition at the Nohr Gallery here on campus, most likely in March of 2011. In addition, I will exhibit the paintings in October and November 2010 in my gallery, Green Lantern Studios, in Mineral Point, and will inform the university community of the exhibition. As mentioned above, I will also seek out public venues farther afield. It is my hope to get the work shown in a gallery in Chicago if possible, and I will pursue opportunities to show in other cities as well. The paintings I produced as a result of
my previous SAIF grant in 2005 have to date been shown in one-person exhibitions at the Dubuque Art Museum, Dubuque, IA, and the Woolen Mill Gallery in Reedsburg, WI; and in group exhibitions at the Wright Museum of Art in Beloit, WI, and the Rahr-West Museum in Manitowoc, WI. I fully intend to exhibit the new paintings even more widely.