Contemplating Mortality

Tyler D. Rahl

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
https://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/1243

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact sara.parme@iup.edu.
STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE THESIS.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME
CONTEMPLATING MORTALITY

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts

Tyler D. Rahl
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2015
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of Art  

We hereby approve the thesis of  

Tyler D. Rahl  

Candidate for the degree of Master of Fine Arts  

__________________________________________________________________________  
Susan Palmisano, M.F.A.  
Professor of Art, Advisor  

__________________________________________________________________________  
Nate Heuer, M.F.A.  
Assistant Professor of Art  

__________________________________________________________________________  
Sean Derry, M.F.A.  
Assistant Professor of Art  

ACCEPTED  

__________________________________________________________________________  
Randy L. Martin, Ph.D.  
Dean  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  

ii
Title: Contemplating Mortality

Author: Tyler D. Rahl

Thesis Chair: Ms. Susan Palmisano

Thesis Committee Members: Mr. Nathan Heuer
                        Mr. Sean Derry

The MFA Thesis Exhibition, *Contemplating Mortality*, explores human responses to the realization of one's mortality and the fear that arises when confronting the inevitability of death. To ease this fear, we adopt differing cosmological belief systems to help explain the unknown. *Contemplating Mortality* consists of mixed-media paintings, which explore humanity's quest for meaning in the inescapable moment of death and the psychological stages we move through while coming to terms with our impermanence. The idea of death and its embodiment through materials is expressed by integrating within the paintings the cremated remains of a young man who died tragically. The mother of this individual provided her son’s ashes for this exhibition as a way to honor her son’s short life. The paintings serve as a spiritual vessel for this individual and to memorialize his moment of passage from this life to the next.