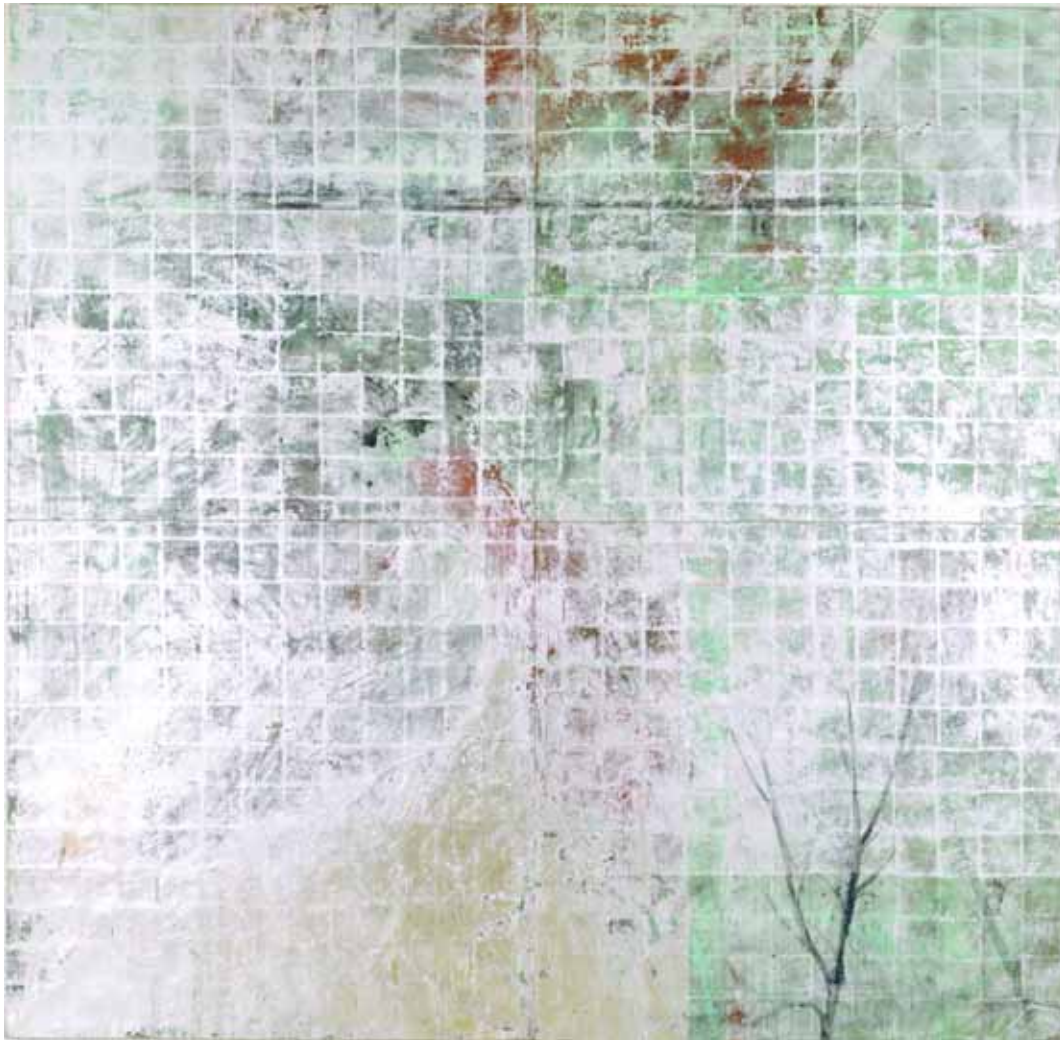


CIVIL XXV

FAITH + VISION



MAKOTO FUJIMURA *Futako Tamagawaen #19, Jeremiah #32*, silver, mineral pigments on Kumohada paper over wooden panels, 120" x 117 1/2" 1993

CIVANXV

FAITH + VISION

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF CHRISTIANS IN THE VISUAL ARTS

edited by CAMERON J. ANDERSON
and SANDRA BOWDEN



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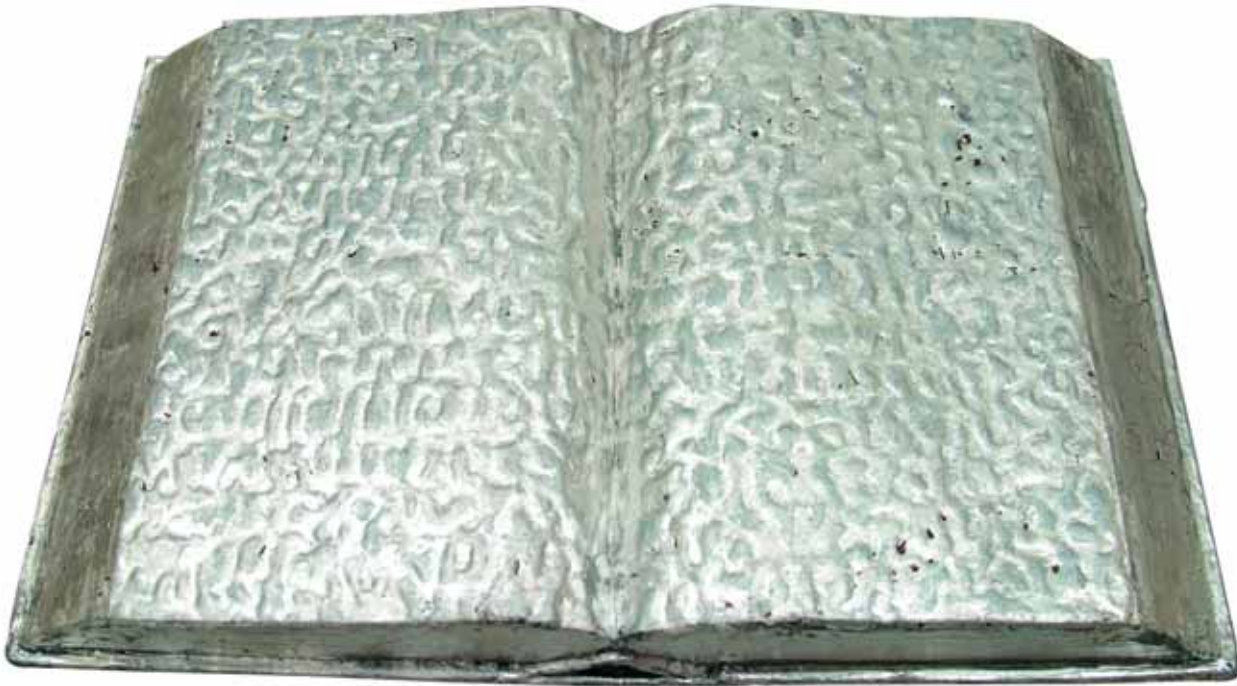


In Christian art, the square halo identified a living person presumed to be a saint. Square Halo Books is devoted to publishing works that present contextually sensitive biblical studies, and practical instruction consistent with the Doctrines of the Reformation. The goal of Square Halo Books is to provide materials useful for encouraging and equipping the saints.

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SANDRA BOWDEN *The word of the Lord is flawless, like refined silver . . . (Psalm 12:6 NIV)*, mixed media with silver leaf, 7 1/2" x 11" x 1/4" 2004

As any casual review of American art and culture will confirm, throughout the twentieth century it was mostly impossible to gather a community of Christians in the visual arts. Apart from the enclaves of several Catholic and Protestant colleges and seminaries, those communities that did form were usually short lived.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is the record of a remarkable exception—the story of Christians in the Visual Arts on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary. Its publication is a tribute to the prodigious efforts and insights of many friends, apart from whom this project would not have taken form.

We offer special thanks to Dayton Castleman, Tyrus Clutter, Edward Knippers, and James Romaine, who joined us early in May 2004 to begin the arduous yet engaging task of selecting images. In turn, Kimberly Garza carefully reviewed and confirmed the quality of each of the photos. Our review of more than 4,000 slides—a fascinating and pleasure-filled exercise—caused us to recall many CIVA gatherings, exhibitions, and colleagues as well as the tangible ways in which our affiliation with CIVA has stimulated our spiritual and artistic growth.

In the intervening months, the collection and editing of texts required equal attention. To that end, we extend our thanks to Howard N. Fox, Karen Mulder, James Romaine, Alva Steffler, and Nicholas Wolterstorff for their contributions. Moreover, we also thank C. K. Anderson, Jennifer Disney, Bobby Gross, and Sara Scheunemann for carefully reading the manuscripts and proposing many fine suggestions. Dal Schindell and Cara Stevens invested special effort in completing the artist index. Given this bounty of expertise, if this book contains unfinished thoughts or errors, the responsibility is surely ours and not that of any of those mentioned above.

We also express our appreciation for excellent institutional partnerships. And here we





At age twenty-five, Christians in the Visual Arts is a dynamic association of some 1,500 contemporary artists in the United States and Canada, with affiliates throughout Europe and Asia. Committed to exploring the relationship of artists to art, religion, and culture in general, CIVA has a long history of realizing its goals. CIVA has produced a

HOWARD N. FOX lively newsletter and organized well-attended biennial conferences and regular exhibitions since its inception in 1979; over the years it has published many books and limited-edition print portfolios; it has operated a website continually since 1998; and its thoughtful and handsomely designed award-winning journal, *SEEN*, has been issued since 2000—quite a record of sustained achievement for an organization for which ongoing survival relies primarily on membership dues and the largesse of a few dedicated patrons.

The artists who are CIVA's members create their works in a broad spectrum of styles and aims, from realistic paintings depicting Old and New Testament themes, to abstract sculpture that might evoke an ethereal sense of beauty and order, to conceptual art that at first glance might not seem to have any relationship to spiritual matters at all. Yet the practitioners of this artistically wide-ranging group are all related in their inspiration by basic Christian faith and experience.

CIVA's longevity and sound health are testimony to its members' fidelity to a common sense of purpose. But while CIVA itself is a robust twenty-five years old, its achievement is subsumed by the two-millennia-old tradition of Christian art in which it partakes. Far from diminishing CIVA's work, that tradition edifies and ennobles CIVA's sense of purpose, and CIVA's accomplishment has been to extend and enrich that continuum of faith expressed through art.

CIVA has managed to nurture its members and interested observers—and there are many—by being open-minded, eclectic, and ecumenical in its embrace. Artists of many



Living
WORLDS

NICHOLAS WOLTERSTORFF

alienat-
ed from

From the three narratives that follow regarding the founding and growth of CIVA, it becomes clear that CIVA emerged from the bruised consciousness of Christian artists in the late twentieth century. The Christian artist is a member of two societies—that society which is the church and that society which is the art world. The Christian artist feels both. Worse still, her acceptance by one merely heightens her sense of alienation from the other. The story of CIVA is the story of the formation of a society in which Christian artists have found themselves accepted both as Christians and as artists.

In the opening essay, Karen Mulder makes the point this way: CIVA, she says, began out of “the overriding sense that artists were either wayward orphans of the church, on one hand, or the embarrassing descendants of a religious tradition considered passé by academicians and art critics, on the other . . .” James Romaine, in his contribution, remarks that artists “have been drawn to CIVA because of their experience of alienation from other religious and creative communities. They often felt marginalized in the art world because of their faith and ostracized in the church because of their art.” And Alva Steffler introduces his narrative with the remark that the story of CIVA is “the record of men and women of vision who faced both their own alienation as artists and the seeming ambivalence of church and culture.”

In this introduction, I want to reflect a bit on this bruised consciousness of the Christian artist in the late twentieth century—this sense of double alienation, alienation from fellow Christians and alienation from fellow artists.

It is sometimes suggested that the alienation of the contemporary Christian artist from the church is just one more manifestation of the iconoclasm that has periodically erupted within the church. That assessment seems not correct to me. The roots of the destruction of images that took place within Orthodoxy in the eighth and ninth centuries were differ-



Over the course of twelve centuries, the ancient Egyptian art of alchemy evolved into a medieval obsession for converting rude substances into gold. In its modern incarnation, alchemy often implies transformation, a word that surely describes the results of CIVA's persistent activity on many fronts since 1979. To be an agent for transformation, CIVA

KAREN L. MULDER

has confronted misperceptions regarding the value of art in the

church-at-large and has asserted the validity of religious meaning in the contemporary art world. Wielding the instruments of prayer, vision, and creativity, CIVA has, in essence, gradually converted paper, pigment, stone, textile, and celluloid into silver.

CIVA's alchemical potential emerged as it undertook ambitious strategies that challenged cherished stereotypes about religious art, both in the church and in the art world. Its membership constructed proofs, in the physical form of artworks, that showed the trustworthiness of art as a contemporary expression of faith and demonstrated that art created from a biblical matrix could exhibit a higher level of conceptual vitality and skill than the professional art world had come to expect. Emerging from the cauldron of 1970s culture that seemed to brim with dross, creating silver represents an achievement that, at certain angles, even glints like gold.

From the beginning, CIVA's prime directive entailed the uncomplicated goal of encouraging *fellowship*. Biennial conferences, the newsletter, and a network of personal relationships supported CIVA's drive to build a community of visual artists. Eventually reaching a critical mass of shared identity and morale, this community provided the springboard for broader networking, allowing CIVA to exchange ideas or innovate projects with other religious, educational, and artistic institutions. *Collaboration*, in turn, supplied CIVA members with greater *exposure* through exhibitions, workshops, and publications. Newsletter features such as "In Public View" listed members' recent exhibits,

THE LORD SPOKE TO MOSES:

SEE, I HAVE CALLED BY NAME BEZALEL . . .

AND I HAVE FILLED HIM WITH DIVINE

SPIRIT, WITH ABILITY, INTELLIGENCE,

AND KNOWLEDGE IN EVERY KIND OF

CRAFT, TO DEVISE ARTISTIC DESIGNS,

TO WORK IN GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE,

IN CUTTING STONES FOR SETTING, AND

IN CARVING WOOD, IN EVERY KIND OF

CRAFT. . . I HAVE GIVEN SKILL TO ALL

THE SKILLFUL, SO THAT THEY MAY MAKE

ALL THAT I HAVE COMMANDED YOU.

[EXODUS 31:1-6]

There is now emerging a generation of artists who are younger than CIVA. These artists have benefited from growing up in communities, churches, and cultures that, to greater and lesser degrees, have been affected by CIVA's twenty-five year presence, and they have the challenge of leading it into the new millennium.

JAMES ROMAINE

CIVA is a movement as much as an organization, concentrating its energy toward fostering growth in four separate yet related directions: facilitating artists' exploration of their relationship to the Creator; developing a greater sense of kinship among artists of faith; working to reestablish a richer interchange between churches and the visual arts; and participating in the wider culture. Over the past quarter century, remarkable advancements in all four of these areas allow us to imagine the possibilities of an increasingly dynamic interrelationship between the Christian faith and the visual arts. CIVA provides artists with tools and opportunities for spiritual and artistic maturity. It also fosters a worldwide community of scholars, patrons, and artists who represent an amazing diversity of spiritual and artistic viewpoints and are committed to love, support, and challenge one another. Together, the members of CIVA are making significant inroads within the church to encourage artists of faith to participate in a renaissance of the historically rich relationship between the Christian faith and the visual arts.

ARTISTS AND THE CREATOR

Any Christian working in the visual arts has to consider the fundamental question of how his or her faith and art interrelate. There is no single answer to this complex problem. Yet without a clear sense of one's relationship to the Creator and its implications, artists cannot as fruitfully engage in their own creative activity, relate to other artists, or enrich the church and culture. CIVA is a place where many artists are able to ask hard questions

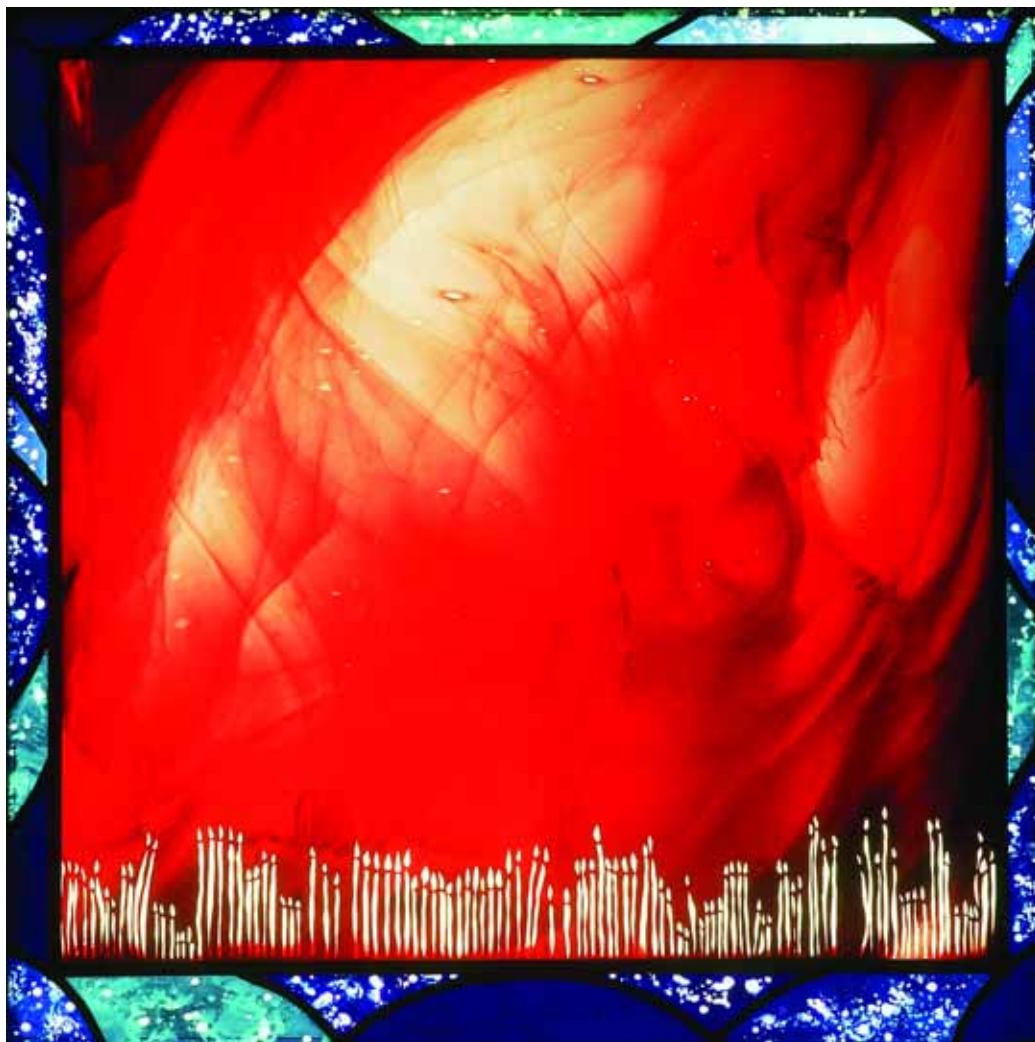


silver
INTO
GOLD

**THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE
SURROUNDED BY SO GREAT
A CLOUD OF WITNESSES . . .
LET US RUN WITH
PERSEVERANCE THE RACE
THAT IS SET BEFORE US,
LOOKING TO JESUS THE
PIONEER AND PERFECTER
OF OUR FAITH.
[HEBREWS 12:1-2]**



GUY CHASE *Untitled (legal pad diptych with apparition)*, gouache and Prismacolor pencil on paper, 17" x 11" 1989



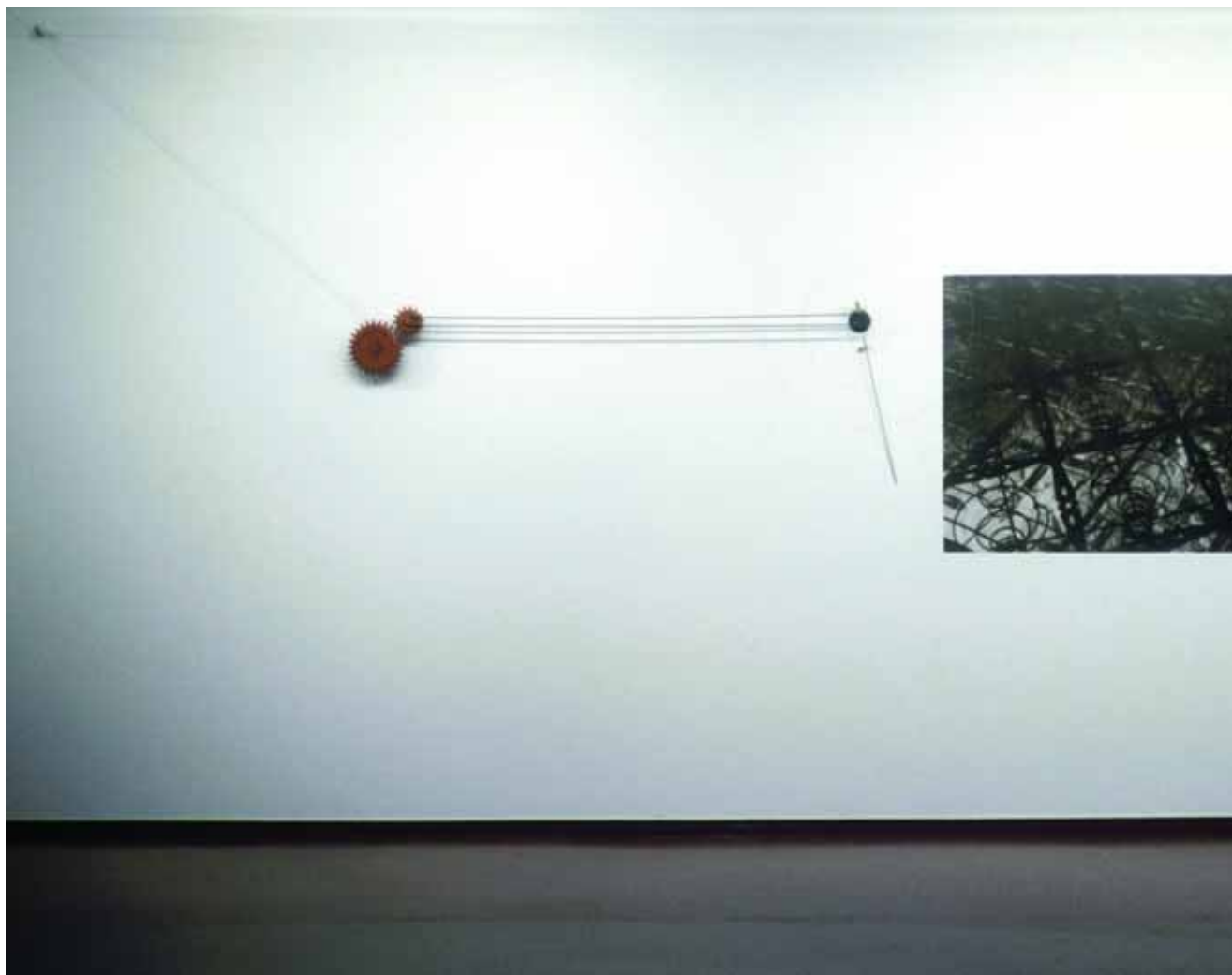
SARAH HALL *More Red than Blue*, etched and sandblasted handmade leaded glass, 28" x 28" 1999



GREGORY KING *Three Constants*, oil on canvas, 65" x 72" 1999



ROGER FELDMAN *Inside Outsiders*. wood, fabric, mixed media, 14' x 30' x 14' 2000



ALBERT PEDULLA *Springbed of the Universe (A working model)*, bottle rocket, photo emulsion, manipulated wall surface, and mixed media, 12' x 60' x 27' 1999



MARK HILPERT *Blood & Fire*, copper with transparencies, 12" x 72" panels



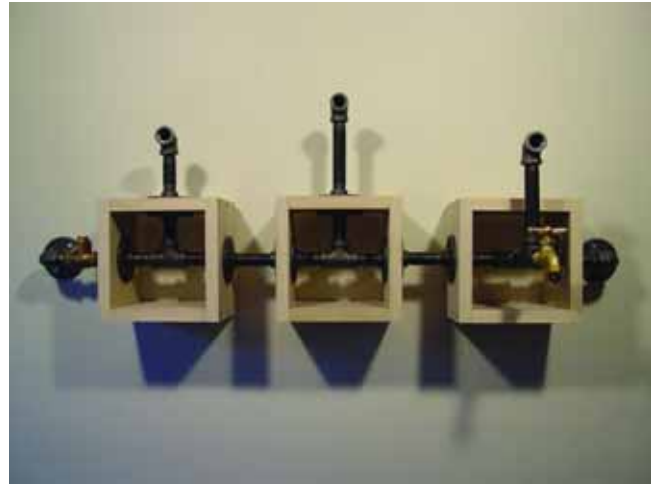
LOREN BAKER *Icarus Confronts Vanity*, mixed media, 84" x 72" x 48" 1999



AARON LEE BENSON *Sacred Burning Stake*, clay, 120" x 24" x 12" 2000



ALAN S. VALENCIA *Going Home*, mixed media assemblage, 6 1/2" x 9" x 1 3/4" 1996



ROBERT DAYTON CASTLEMAN *Rank for Intelligence*, poplar, pipe, pipe fittings, brass valve, and hose bibb, 14 1/2" x 42" x 12" 2004



ALLISON LUCE *Fact*, acrylic latex on vellum, 22 1/2" x 15" x 4" 2000



BENJ ALBRECHT *208 Laminated Beam*, I-Beam (steel), and laminated plywood, 14" x 8" x 14" 1998



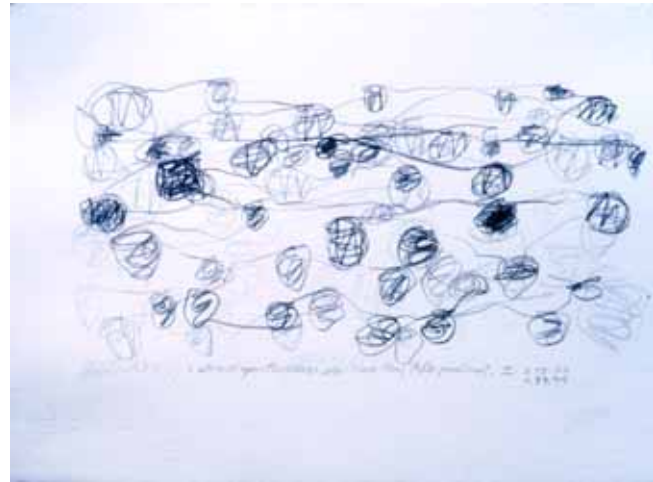
SCOTT KOLBO *One Flesh*, acrylic, ball-point pen, charcoal, pastel, and copier toner on paper. 30" x 40" 1999



JONATHAN MILLET *Brooklyn Clock*, mixed media on metal plate, 24" x 18" 2001



CHONG KEUN CHU *Gardener*, mixed media, 30" x 22" 2003



KYLE TALBOTT / *Will Call . . .*, graphite on handmade paper, 7" x 10" 1999



STEPHEN DE STAEBLER *Winged Guardian*, bronze, 164" x 84" x 24" 1993



WILLIAM CATLING *In the Open Wound the Heart Surrenders.*
ceramic, wood, and twine. 62" x 16" x 16" 1999



ERIC OUREN *The Temple Curtain Torn from Top to Bottom.*
wood. 72" x 18" x 18" 1997



ERICA GRIMM-VANCE *Swimming in Existence*, mixed media, encaustic, and steel with 23K gold, 40" x 34" 2002



CHRIS ANDERSON *History Repeats Itself: The Standoff (Surveying the Philistines)*, oil on canvas, 48" x 72" 1989



CLAUDIA ALVAREZ *The Bruised Sky*, clay, 14' x 18' 2002



LYNN ALDRICH *Island* (close-up), plastic figures and enamel on half of a globe, 168" x 14" x 9" 1997



CATHERINE PRESCOTT *Map: Portrait of Brendan*, oil on canvas, 36" x 24" 2003



MELISSA WEINMAN *St. Agatha's Grief*, oil on canvas, 42" x 42" 1996



PATRICIA DALZELL *Anatoli Belkin. Painter in His Studio. St. Petersburg, Russia.* gelatin-silver, selenium-toned black-and-white photograph. 20" x 16" 1992