

EIGHT SEATTLE ARTISTS

Jeffrey B. Bishop

Jeffrey Bishop's current work: charcoal drawings, watercolors and wall drawings/sculpture, are predominantly concerned with depicting movement through space. He also addresses scientific and/or formalist concerns such as spatial and phenomenological suspension, the rupturing of geometries, and the use of odd and twisted perspective.

Bishop is attracted to the quadrant form and often uses it in his work, projecting it, floating it, and interpreting its planes.

Bishop employs a washed charcoal process in his four by six feet architectural blueprint-like drawings to achieve a softer image. In these drawings he plays with geometric perspective: for example, he projects the plane of one geometric form angled from the bottom of a rectangle across the page. His solid drawings are slightly disturbing because of their irregular planes and twisted perspective. Pursuing his interest in traversing space, he created a series of watercolors called *Prairie Schooners*, where he uses the quadrant, stops it in movement, and creates a sail-like image.

In *Queequeeg*, the wall drawing in this exhibition, as well as in the earlier *Harpoon*, Bishop evinces a preoccupation with trajectory—hence the repeated use of the harpoon. Here, however, Bishop moves away from pure formal or scientific content to a literary reference from *Moby Dick*. In the novel, *Queequeeg* moves through time and over the earth carrying the markings of mankind on his body in the form of “all over” nonrepresentational tattoos. In this exhibition Bishop includes analogous markings on the walls—the two wooden objects he uses to balance the piece vertically are reminiscent of the harpoon as well. Bishop also concentrates on materials and boundaries played against the schematic elements of planes and gravity. His selection of readymade materials for this piece is influenced by the geometric properties of the forms he uses, but his concerns are linear, not volumetric. Even the central quadrant reads as a shape rather than a volume. Bishop, like Martin Puryear, is interested in the surface of his materials—Puryear more in contour than Bishop, who explores projected transversements. Bishop is not so much concerned with the substance of his materials, but their geometric-linear qualities. He is concerned with grounding his wall works, and in this work Bishop uses plumb-bob shaped wooden forms for that purpose. Both Bishop and Puryear use familiar tool pieces, but Bishop's collection of lines maps a trajectory while Puryear's objects seem to stand for line itself.

Bishop's charcoal drawings seem austere and tightly controlled. Their effect is solid and steady—they have definite shape and boundaries. By contrast, his wall drawing, while sparse, is not controlled by a system; it is an exploration of the idea of trajectory.

Jeffrey B. Bishop *Queequeg*, 1980 wood, paint, steel 11' x 38' x 1'

