September 1972 - June 1980

Age 5.7 - 13.4

## CATALOGUE SUMMARY OF (GUS') WORK

Ages represented:

5.7 - 13.4

Years represented:

(8) September 1972 - June 1980

Total production

all years:

approximately 478 visual works approximately 259 written works approximately 127 number work approximately 6 reading booklets approximately 870 all years

## VISUAL WORK

Motifs: Houses are by far the most dominant motif in the file, over 60 examples appear in year 3, although they begin to diminish in number in years 5 and 6 and are virtually absent in years 7 and 8. Often they appear as a single image, without setting or context. Other times sky, sun, and sometimes trees appear and occasionally people or vehicles. Less often houses are depicted in groups or maps or threatened by fire. Other dwellings include hotels, castle, treehouse, and underground cave.

Non figurative color work is another strong motif, especially well represented in years 4, 6, and 8 and in the undated work. A variety of elements are used and sometimes combined: solid blocks of color; swirling lines; straight intersecting lines; organic and geometric shapes; repeating patterns and pointed arches; splatters; mazes; letters and numbers; spirals of rolled construction paper. Also included are samples of folded-paper paintings, marbled paper paintings, and monoprints.

A variety of other motifs appear recurrently throughout the file but are less numerous overall. People appear as stick figures and huge giants, police and firefighters, football, hockey, and baseball players, Martians, and faces. Ghosts, monsters, dinosaurs and robots are well developed when they appear. Vehicles include cars, race cars, airplanes, helicopters, motorcycles, boats, rockets, police cars, fire trucks and ambulances. The natural world is depicted in landscapes, trees, suns with and without faces, flowers, sunsets, the constellation Pegasus, bones, and animals including fish, horses, cat, and whale. Flags appear occasionally and in year 8 there is a large poster of the flags of the Olympics.

Style: The most striking aspects of the file are image and color. Attention is focused on image not on context or setting and each piece seems to be a unique expression of individual character. This is achieved primarily through the use of color which is usually bold and intense, applied with force and pressure, but can also be soft and muted. When color occupies distinct regions there is often a contrast or tension between hot and cold colors. Layering and blending of colors also occurs at times. There are a few pencil drawings with no color.

Forms remain basic and unadorned or archetypal throughout the file. The forms of the houses often seem insubstantial, barely able to contain the intense energy of the color or line which fills them. Images are not always set on a ground line. Although there are some straight-edged, geometric forms, they are more usually organic with malleable, not rigid, boundaries; trees and cars often look like mushrooms. There is both unrefined and more sophisticated, stylized work throughout.

Line is used to outline forms, to provide atmosphere, and sometimes, in the non-figurative work, as a medium of expression in itself. It can be rambling and exploratory, quick and sketchy, wild and exuberant, or precise and deliberate. It is sometimes repeated in patterns.

Humor is sometimes an element of the drawings, expecially in the faces of the suns. Sound also seems to be an element although not explicitly. The houses, or their exteriors, sometimes seem wild and noisy. In the non-figurative work there are some pieces that give a sense of a conversation between the colors and others that might be described as depictions or portraitures of sounds or of music.

Major Shifts and Transitions: There is only one drawing in the first year but production increases in the second year and visual work is quite numerous until production drops off sharply in the last two years. Similarly, the dominance of the house motif begins to diminish in year 5 and is virtually absent in the last two years. Non-figurative work is particularly abundant in years 4, 6, and 8 and in the undated work. Other motifs appear recurrently and stylistic characteristics remain quite consistent.

## WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: Houses, though not as numerous or central as in the visual work, do provide the starting point for a number of pieces. Occasionally the house is the main character, but more often activities inside or around it are described or the house is described in terms of colors and/or location. Color is sometimes a motif itself; houses and the world are constructions of color. In one piece regions of devildom are delineated by color and a tree is transformed into a stairway to heaven. Ghosts, monsters, dinosaurs, vampires, skeletons and mummies sometimes inhabit houses and are often involved in battles and fires. They threaten people and houses and usually die.

(Gus) borrows characters from books, movies, comics and cartoons: Frankenstein; Bat Man & Robin; Curious George; Spiderman. At times movies and books are the topics of descriptions. Other characters are usually generic, "the boy", "cops", "farmer men". In autobiographical pieces (Gus) refers to numerous friends and describes relationships, disputes, and shared activities. Sports and famous sports figures are an important topic in the later years.

Fires, accidents, and explosions are common occurrences caused by bombs and natural forces including lightening and thunder, the sun, and fog. Fire trucks, cops, and ambulances come to the rescue.

Other vehicles include boats, rockets, cars, motorcycles, helicopters, and planes. The natural world provides a number of topics for description: an apple, a pumpkin, a rock, clouds, the jungle, the constellation Pegasus. Animals appear in a few stories: fish; dead cows; a fox; a lost horse; a wild wolf.

(Gus) also composed a couple of Christmas songs.

Themes: There is a strong thread of interest in notions of life and death. Destruction, disaster, and rescue is a recurrent theme as are biographies and relationships. Unseen transformations and potentialities are also a frequent theme.

Style: The early work consists of descriptions of dramatic visual images with little narration or connections between events. Pieces seem to begin in the middle of things without preamble or explanation. The work is generally in the present tense and has a 'chatty' quality as if (Gus) is talking while he's drawing, either with the adult writing the words, with himself, or with his work. From year 4 on, this interactive quality diminishes and the work becomes more formal and structured. It is economical consisting of factual statements with little elaboration. In year 6 the work becomes autobiographical and some conversation appears. Happenings are described but not always concluded or resolved.

There is a strong interest in character in the early work. Not only does (Gus) borrow characters from other media, "spider man's guys come right out of the comic" in one

piece. Also houses are sometimes characters themselves with motives. In the later work portraits of famous sports figures become important.

Periodically throughout the work a strong rhythmic quality is achieved through repetition and elements of playfulness (double-meanings) appear. Details of time and place, colors, and numbers especially large ones, are often important elements. There is also much copy work, practicing, and rough drafts throughout. Until year 6 the writing is connected to or illustrated with drawings.

Major Shifts and Transitions: Writing is closely connected with visual work in years 1 through 5. In years 6 through 8 it becomes independent and production drops considerably. The early work is characterized by a 'chatty', interactive quality which diminishes after year 4 when it becomes more formal and structured. Autobiographical anecdotes and biographies gain prominence in year 6.

Final Summary: Much of the work, both visual and written, has characteristics of portraiture; the houses seem to be portraits of energy and the stories of sports figures are portraits of their lives. These portraits are full of intensity in the visual work and full of details in the written work that suggest that much more lies beneath the surface or behind the face. The brief glimpses (Gus) gives into the world behind the portraits indicates a reservoir of abundant and lively possibilities.

Other Sources of Data Available:

-Reference Edition includes approximately 240 slides and transcripts of teacher notes and observations.

Catalogued by: Susan Donnelly Date Catalogue Completed: March, 1986

Year 1: 1972-73, Age 5.7 - 6.4

Total Number of Items: 3

- 1 visual work
- 1 dicatation of dreams
- 1 written work

#### Notes:

Additional work in the undated section of the large file is probably from this year.

# VISUAL WORK

Motif: The visual work consists of one non-figurative piece.

Style: This piece is drawn in pencil and colored with craypa. There are evidences of many stops and starts in the exploratory, yet deliberate, line which encircles the looseleaf holes in the paper and creates a large roundish form. Distinct regions of color give a sense of mass. Both heavy and light strokes are used.

## WRITTEN WORK

Motif: The recorded dreams involve monster battles while some people are safe in a rocket. In the other piece (Gus) copied the words 'fire engine' and 'tow truck'.

Style: The dreams are very visual and active and the telling of them is descriptive and dramatic.

Year 2: 1973-74, Age 6.7 - 7.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 97

54 visual work

30 written work

10 number work

3 color and alphabet booklets

#### Notes:

(related drawing and dictation) 6.11-6.12; 6.34-6.35; 6.36-6.37; 6.42-6.107; 6.48 & 6.73-6.74; B6.125-B6.127; (booklets) 6.23-6.26; 6.57-6.61; 6.62-6.67; 6.77-6.103; (possibly related drawing and dictation) 6.27 & 6.105-6.106; 6.28 & 6.109; 6.30 & 6.110-6.111; 6.31 & 6.112-6.113; 6.32 & 6.114-6.115; 6.40 & 6.116; 6.49-6.74; 6.50-6.75; 6.53-6.104.

## VISUAL WORK

Motifs: Houses are the dominant motif, sometimes appearing as a single image and other times set in a landscape with sky, sun, and trees; a few have several chimneys. One house is a high rounded dome; this shape also appears as the ground in some drawings. Other motifs in the figurative drawings include cars, an airplane, flags, animals. Non-figurative work includes some labelled scribbles (a fish, clouds, a map of the war in Cambodia) and designs and collages using blocks of color.

Style: The emphasis in the drawings seems to be on energy and atmosphere rather than on form or narration. Feeling of abundance or multitude is suggested both by the number of houses drawn and by the repeated segmentation of forms in the drawings. The energy expressed in the work is often exuberant with quick repetitive strokes going every which way but it can also be deliberate and controlled with heavy, purposeful lines. Houses are often surrounded by atmospheric lines. There is minimal detail in the work but a great deal of color which is sometimes layered and tends to be impressionistic rather than realistic although some pencil drawings do not have color added. Images sometimes 'float' on the paper rather than sit on a ground line and some pieces are cut out. Mathematical elements are often present and geometric forms are sometimes combined with organic ones.

Changes: There is a proliferation of visual work this year. The form of house, suggested in last year's drawing, appears in abundant variety. Other motifs which continue throughout the file appear this year.

# WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: Most of the writing describes and extends the drawings. The houses contain a variety of unseen potential, both domestic and fantastic: a stove left on by a previous occupant; dinosaurs spraying a fire; a mother fixing supper; ghosts, skeletons, mummies and monsters; army men painting the houses. One house "caught on fire on purpose because he hated fog." Fog also appears in another story in which an Indian is drowning. Explosions and fires involve houses, boats, planes and trucks; ambulances, cops, and fire trucks come to the rescue. Lightening and thunder also cause destruction. Other occasional motifs include the alphabet, colors, a fish that

is going to get cooked and eaten, the war in Cambodia, dinosaurs, a rocket blast-off, a guy with a bleeding ear.

Themes: The writing combined with the drawing suggests an awareness that appearances do not tell the whole story; forms contain many potential meanings; there is much that is unseen. Destruction, disaster, and rescue are recurrent themes in the writing.

Style: Most of the work is dictated and written by an adult; (Gus) then copied some words and phrases in his own hand. The emphasis seems to be on descriptions of dramatic, dream-like images rather than on narration of events. All the work is in the present tense and often seems to begin in the middle of things (e.g. "Everybody is dying in the fog") with no explanation for what is happening. Large numbers and a knowledge of detailed information appear frequently.

Changes: The drama of the dream descriptions of last year is now apparent in the descriptions of drawings. There are many more samples of language and writing this year.

Year 3: 1974-75, Age 7.7 - 8.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 192

109 visual work

63 written work

17 number work

3 reading booklets

#### Notes:

(related items) 7.1-7.4; 7.6-7.7; 7.20 & 7.22; 7.90-7.90.1 & 7.223; 7.91-7.92; 7.93-7.94 & 7.224; 7.131-7.132; 7.134-7.135; 7.160-7.162; 7.186-7.187; (booklets) 7.8-7.19; 7.23-7.31.1; 7.31.2-7.31.10; 7.34-7.49; 7.55-7.58 & 7.165; 7.59-7.67; 7.96-7.108; 7.109-7.112; 7.114-7.135; 7.138-7.146; 7.148-7.152 & 7.32; 7.166-7.175; 7.192-7.194; 7.197-7.222; (possibly related) 7.82 & 7.191.

## VISUAL WORK

Motifs: Over sixty examples of houses appear this year, usually as a single image, sometimes with sun and sky and occasionally with ground and a tree. The suns often have faces. People are seldom included but police and paper-plate faces appear. Robots, ghosts, and monsters are relatively few in number but well developed. Vehicles include cars, fire trucks, motorcycles, and helicopters. Segments and repeating arches also appear

Style: Although the forms of the houses remain very basic there is tremendous variety in their characters, moods, and atmospheres. Forms seem to be containers or surfaces for the expression of energy. The use of bold colors is very striking; they occupy distinct blocks and regions but forms and boundaries are not rigid. Strokes seem rapid and choppy. Some drawings are sketchy and sparse while others are more elaborately colored; detail continues to be minimal. Suns are sometimes very elaborate with humorous faces.

Changes: Production has increased and houses are especially abundant. The color block design which appeared last year is further explored and elaborated.

# WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: Houses are the starting point for several pieces: events inside involving daily life of a family or the adventures of Batman and Robin; explosions and fires and attempts to rescue people and put out the fires; and the colors of the houses and their surroundings. Vehicles are also involved in explosions and fire trucks and helicopters are occasionally prominent. Ghosts, monsters, robots, and characters borrowed from books, comics and T.V. appear in the writing: Curious George; Frankenstein; "Spiderman's guys"; and Hot Rod Rabbit. Other occasional motifs include a pumpkin, a car getting built, dead cows, and the growth of (Gus) and his friend (Einar).

Themes: There is a continuing interest in the hidden or imaginative potential of things; seemingly solid forms can change and transform. Notions of death and life are explored.

Style: Pieces continue to be descriptions of pictures or visual images that seem to be episodes of ongoing dramas or isolated dramatic moments. Most of the work is ver-

bally dictated and recorded by an adult; it is often 'chatty' as if (Gus) is talking while he's drawing and he sometimes refers to himself as the 'artist'. (Gus) makes use of the imaginative potential of the world, e.g. "the comic characters ('spiderman's guys') came right out of the book". There is a playful use of language, "He's a big little boy - 2 years old and 10 feet tall.". Colors and numbers, especially large ones, are frequent elements in the work and occasionally a repetitive, rhythmic quality as well.

Changes: The amount of written work is greatly increased but still connected with the drawings.

Year 4: 1975-76, Age 8.7 - 9.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 112

53 visual work 47 written work

12 number work

#### Notes:

(related writing) 8.82-8.83; (booklets) 8.36-8.39; 8.44.1-8.44.6; 8.104-8.115; 8.116-8.119; (drawn and probably written by Title I teacher) 8.88-8.103.

# VISUAL WORK

Motifs: Houses are not as numerous as last year but continue to be a dominant motif. Many are single images but some appear in towns with roadways. Sun, trees, vehicles, and people are sometimes combined with the houses and sometimes used as separate motifs. Non-figurative drawings and paintings are numerous this year including fold paintings, marbled paper, and designs using large blocks of color. Other motifs include flags, a fish, and a boat.

Style: The paintings seem to be constructions of color, explorations of ways of creating boundaries and organizing space. There are a few pencil drawings with no color but generally the work continues to be very colorful. There is some layering of colors in the crayon and craypa pieces. Although some pieces are very geometric, probably drawn with a straight edge, most of the forms are quite organic, e.g. trees look like large puffballs. Motifs from previous years, particularly houses, are becoming more stylized but there is lots of experimentation with color work.

Changes: There is a decrease in the amount of work but an increase in exploration of color and design. Some forms are becoming more stylized.

## WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: Stories include a burning barn and a car accident with accompanying fire truck and ambulance, also injuries and death. There are descriptions of dwellings, particularly who lives in them and their locations, and references to (Gus') friends. Other motifs include a rock, clouds, motorcycles and a Santa Claus song (Gus) made up. There are also a number of assignments: copying; filling in blanks; lists of words; rhyming words.

Themes: There seems to be a continuing interest in destruction, death, injury, rescue. A developing thread might be relationships, (Gus') place in a community of people.

Style: More of (Gus') own handwriting appears; there is a lot of practice work. The writing is less 'chatty' and interactive and more formal and structured. Statements are factual and numbers continue to be a frequent element. Strong rhythms are created through repetition and the Santa Claus song is done to the tune of Jingle Bells.

Changes: Writing is beginning to appear separate from the visual work and is becoming more structured and formal.

Year 5: 1976-77, Age 9.7 - 10.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 170

82 visual work

32 written and language work

43 number work

3 mazes

#### Notes:

(related items) 9.34-9.35; 9.70-9.71; 9.82-9.83; 9.86-9.88; 9.106-9.107; 9.111-9.112; 9.114-9.115; 9.143-9.148.

# VISUAL WORK

Motifs: Although there are still several examples of houses and other dwellings including a castle, hotels, and an underground cave, they are less dominant than in past years and several have people looking out the windows or standing outside. Trees, hillsides, and suns continue to appear as do vehicles, particularly race cars, and also ghosts, dinosaurs, and monsters. Football players and a booklet of funny faces (angry, sad, jealous, etc.) are additional representations of human figures. Other motifs include a cat, a Christmas tree, a hat, numbers, mazes, and non-figurative color work using ameobic shapes, splatters, and fold painting. One piece with regions of color and a ladder is described as "The pink is when you're going to turn into the Devil. The blue part is when you're a full pledged Devil. It was a tree once, until they turned it into golden stairs. They lead up to Heaven."

Style: Organic forms are prevalent in the work; trees, people, ghosts, dinosaurs, and cars all appear amoebic or fungus-like, suggesting maleability or loose, flacid boundaries filled with a viscous substance. The rounded forms are often outlined with one smooth flowing line and regions of color then delineated within it. Some pieces, including the houses, are more geometric. The suns are less frequently drawn with faces on them. There is experimentation with a variety of mediums and a range of effects is achieved with layering of color.

Changes: Production again increases but the dominance of the house motif is diminishing.

# WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: There are several autobiographical statements about wading in a river, sports, emotions, and work. Dwellings are referred to and described: a dream-house/castle; a hotel wrecked by dinosaurs; the builder and occupant of a house; a haunted house. The slow death by poison of the dinosaur that wrecked the hotel is described in subsequent episodes. Other motifs include a fox, an explosion of a bomb involving cars, and the regions of devildom and stairway to heaven referred to in the visual work.

Themes: Sports is becoming a recurring topic. Transformation continues to be an underlying thread.

Style: The writing consists of short factual statements with little elaboration. It is usually illustrated with drawings. There are several examples of practice work in which (Gus) has copied what an adult has written.

Changes: Much of the written work this year seems to be assignments. Drawings are now sometimes illustrations elaborating the writing rather than vice versa.

Year 6: 1977-78, Age 10.7 - 11.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 65

53 visual works 12 written works

#### Notes:

(related items) 10.45-10.46; B10.49.1-B10.50; B10.50.1-B10.51; B10.53.1-B10.54.

#### VISUAL WORK

Mitifs: Although they are not dominant this year, there are still some examples of houses, usually with sun and sky and sometimes with a tree. What does seem to predominate is non-figurative work involving intersecting lines, large regions of color, swirling scribbles, patterns, mazes, and letters. Other motifs include monster figures, large people, vehicles, fire, horses, a rocket, and a whale.

Style: In some of the work the emphasis seems to be on mood and atmosphere and in some it seems to be on construction, organization, order. As houses become less dominant the unique character of individual pieces and the full range of motifs and mediums becomes more apparent. In pieces done with felt pen colors are bold and distinct but become soft and blended when craypa or crayon is used. Forms continue to be simple, basic, and unadorned but are expressive nonetheless.

Changes: Production decreases this year and dominance of house motif continues to diminish. Non-figurative work increases.

## WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: (Gus') relationships, with his brother and with friends, are the topic of several pieces and involve a dispute over Christmas presents, fights, and throwing snowballs at cars and running from the police. Other motifs include sports and sports figures, speculations about bringing home a lost horse and a wild wolf, and a rocket crash and subsequent trip to Mars.

Themes: Notions of justice are explored this year.

Style: All the work this year is autobiographical and none is connected to drawings. Some pieces are written by an adult and several are begun by an adult, then completed by (Gus). Factual statements, lists of details, and some conversation appear in the writing.

Changes: Writing is separate from the visual work. Conversation appears as an element in the writing.

Year 7: 1978-79, Age 11.7 - 12.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 43

20 visual work

19 written work

4 number work

Notes:

(related items) 11.2-11.2.1; B11.25-B11.26; B11.34-B11.35.

#### VISUAL WORK

Motifs: House is virtually absent this year except for a turkey house illustration for a Thanksgiving piece. Several landscapes depict night, day, and sunsets. There are also a few non-figurative pieces: collages of organic shapes and mono-prints. Other motifs include people, animals, a monster head "coming through a time door", trees, and still-life.

Style: Pencil drawings are quick and sketchy, without color. In the large work felt pen, crayon, and craypa are used. Qualities of light are emphasized in the landscapes.

Changes: Production is greatly reduced. House motif is virtually absent.

## WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: There is one story involving a strange man, a baseball game, and a Thanksgiving dinner and another short piece in which (Gus) speculates about being a Thanksgiving turkey. There are also descriptions of an apple, a Hardy Boys story, and sports figures and a letter requesting Braille samples.

Themes: There is insufficient work this year to suggest themes.

Style: The descriptions are brief and factual; details of place and time are important. When (Gus) speculates about being a Thanksgiving turkey there is a playfulness with words and double meanings.

Changes: Most of the work seems to be assignments, brief and factual. There is little story writing.

Year 8: 1979-80, Age 12.7 - 13.4

Total Number of Items: approximately 87

36 visual work 43 written work 8 number work

Notes:

(related items) 12.16-12.16.1; 12.62-12.66.

#### VISUAL WORK

Motifs: There are a variety of non-figurative pieces: rolled paper collage; paint splatters; arches; designs, patterns, intersecting lines; prints. Landscapes, in which a couple of houses appear incidentally, emphasize trees, hills, and sun. Other motifs include people and faces, martians, vehicles and fire truck, hockey and baseball, flags of the Olympics, Christmas, Pegasus, and natural objects.

Style: There are several pieces in which the image seems to emerge from the process; this has appeared in the past but is more evident this year. A variety of mediums are used and techniques are adjusted which maximize the potential of each and which place the emphasis on either image, atmosphere, or design. There is a lot of variation, but not within a theme as in past years; pieces seem to be more independent of one another.

Changes: Production increases somewhat. Non-figurative work continues to dominate and process is more evident. Pieces are more independent of one another; less variation within a theme.

## WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: Games, sports, and sports figures are a prominent motif this year. A number of other pieces refer to people in one way or another: a battle with Martians; letters with a Russian pen pal; a husband and wife dispute about being late from work; Martin Luther King; a character from a book; an irresistable force pulling (Gus) to a place of the Movie Stars. Other motifs include ponds, streams and lakes, Christmas, the jungle, the constellation Pegasus, and (Gus') Third Eye.

Themes: Games and sports, particularly life stories of famous sports figures are a thread of interest. A variety of ideas are explored: relationships; fame; irresistable forces; the natural world.

Style: The writing is economical; important facts and details are given without elaborate description or tangents. There are several first and second drafts with corrections. A couple of pieces are left open-ended.

Changes: There is more variety in the written work this year and there seems to be some attempt to explore ideas through writing.

Undated Work: all years

Total Number of Items: approximately 99

67 visual work 11 written work 21 number work

Notes:

(related items) nd.15-nd.20; nd.24-nd.29; nd.30-nd.36; nd.61-nd.62; nd.70-nd.71.

# VISUAL WORK

Motifs: There are several examples of houses and buildings, occasionally on fire or in the rain. Non-figurative designs, prints and fold paintings are also numerous. Other motifs include ghosts and giants, people, sun, vehicles, hills, a viking boat, and flowers.

Style: In several designs the suggestion of music or sound is created by the combination of straight lines with circles or with wiggly or jagged lines. Repetition of pattern and line, offset by contrasting elements gives a feeling of counterpoint, exclamation, or punctuation. There are a few human figures with large bulbous bodies that fill the page. Several houses are surrounded by atmospheric lines.

# WRITTEN WORK

Motifs: Most of the writing consists of captions and stories for the drawings: houses on fire; rain and sun; ghosts and giants; a tow truck; a viking ship; and a tree house. There is also a book in which a variety of monster movies are described.

Style: The monster movies are described in the style of promotional advertisements with dramatic language and details include actors, film companies, and year of release. In one story (Gus) creates his own version of Jack in the Beanstalk.

umentation Name:	(Gus)
Academic papers	s, speeches, theses, child studies:
Catalogue Notes	S:
Contrasts:	
Curricular issu	ues:
Descriptions:	Narrative records
	Visual work
•	Writing
Overviews	
Presentation of	file:
	s:
Reports:	
Summaries:	