

The Fact that the world is Hapining

Althea Fultz

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Committee:

Amie Mcneel

Jaime Walker

Michael Swaine

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Abstract

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Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Amie McNeel

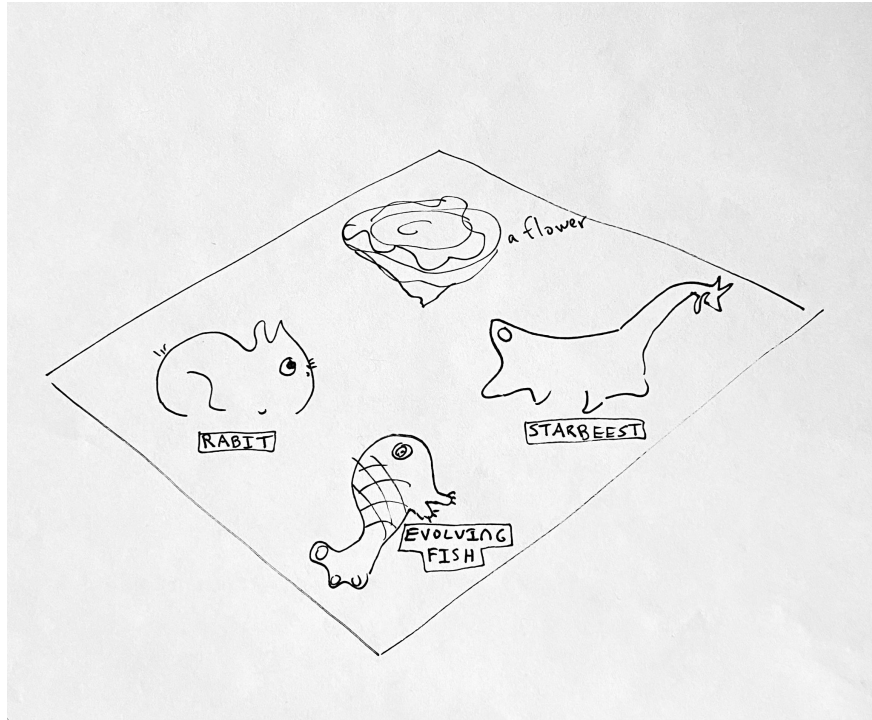
Art, Art History and Design

A red curtain opens to reveal a world in which rabbits are left responsible for the sky. Whoever thought this was a gud idea for rabbits is silly. Despite their unasked for tasks, they are somewhat flaffy. Details remain subjugated to a dim orange light, and Verdi is playing to summon the souls of departed tragedies. Every viewer must part the curtain, and stand on a stage and perform for this world. Starbeast, Rabbit and evolving Fish partake of magick upon the floor of the House of Mistery. Later, they will dance a sarabande in consummation of their meeting. In the distance, a cemetery is organized in a grid. Berbus, most solid and dignified of Birds, looks askance at its cage, which it is too heavy for, being made of solid clay. For this reason it is also not flying. The moon is about half up its ladder. A river of disregarded objects flows by, and metal flowers bloom along a paved road of plaster.

One reason flowers bloom is because that is how they receive things. Sometimes I feel as though I've never understood or possessed or received anything, except in strange moments where a stranger sets you free, or it starts to snow or your heart is so broken that the pain itself feels like a kind of emancipation...in such moments, naked and lost even to yourself, the road is suddenly illumined with unhelpful moonlight and from pure spite at its own pain the soul crawls forward and invents another body -exactly like the old. Only now it is a gift: this time it is asked for. I have this body to offer others through my activity, as though I made the tool. I cannot claim my work because it is a gift, but the tool -my body- has cost a lot and to not use it for its most appropriate purposes is a disservice to myself and to my community.

My thesis is proof of this continued activity. That the world is happening and that my physical being partakes.

Intro



To make the case that the world is happening is less complicated than it sounds. One unity calls to be divided, two halves call to be united: the thing that unites them creates a trinity. The viewer that observes two objects united by related or unrelatedness or any other principle creates a quaternity. A complete, tense system is built by a quaternity: the cross or square or checks represents this. In my thesis sho, "The Fact that the world is Hapining," diverse objects unity and disunity in a habit or patternation that is omnipresent in the world. One, two, three, four. I made a room full of stuff not to make a room full of stuff, but in the mirroring and repetition of objects to lead myself to the place where objects summon up the space between them.

These kinds of demonstrations, observations, patterns also behave like numbers because they imply the next one or the previous one. I am pointing to the human experience of viewing the world as a valenced phenomenon: that is, things have meaning and we move towards or away from them. I am not making *a* meaning, but the implication of it. As Pablo Neruda says, truth is something like a rabbit in a bush...you can point vaguely to the bush and say..."somewhere in there is a rabbit." So I will point to the bush. The first section of my thesis is this sort of intimation.

Everything I relate is a circumambulation around my own activity. Things are only relevant as they are useful to me: other people's words that I have received are used only as a tool for my own learning. They left me a gift, not a loan, and if I get the words wrong: well, those are still the ones that were left to me. As such, I dispense with scholarly precision.

The second section is a direct attack on making some words out of what was in the North Gallery at the Ceramic and Metal Arts building, May 10th-17th, 2022.

Things It Would be Useful to Kno

Words

Words are great. They mystify by giving the illusion of precision. When you clarify one thing, you preclude all the other possibilities, thus casting them into obscurity beyond the realm even of question, since the positive word distracts the mind from the reeling cosmos of infinite alternatives. There is also sadness in the definitive word, as there is a lot of "what might have been." Of beauty lost in the crystallization of meaning. Poetry recaptures this by putting words together in a way that doesn't make exact sense, and rhymes sometimes. Visual art (the kind that

people like to look at I mean) is a concrete entity, the energy and time of an individual, the evidence of their life force, without a concretized verbal meaning. Therefore I like words and text together because they are kind of opposites, and together form a complete system: a little world where the viewer is not needed.

Words, in the place between them, help triangulate meaning. They are not in my humble experience meaning itself. If you believe my words too much you will leave with nothing.

Meanings

Meanings you know are communications. What are these communications? Well I put my art up at the park, and some man asked me what I was trying to tell him. “Nothing at all! And whatever you would like to receive.” I think he would have bought something if I was not such a twit about it. But my desire is not to communicate “things” to people, it is to receive communication from myself in some definite enough form that it can be made use of. Meanings are tools that can be used to shape things: say yes to one thing and no to another. Each meaning has its own sensibility, aesthetic, even personality. Sort of like a personal archetype, in the Jungian sense: an evolved (or earned) pattern of behaviors across time.

Bills

Artists have to pay bills, so you have to convince people of the necessity of what you are doing so that they pay you so you can pay bills. But no one is ever convinced of anything. Therefore, in making work faith is required to believe that someone will experience the thing of manifest value. To uphold this faith (that what I am doing is valuable to people) requires more energy than making the work itself.

Getting Worse

A lot of making comes down to loneliness and insecurity. It's the last post in a dismal frontier for people who need to be seen completely and constantly, and have no ability to ask for this. No human being can supply the amount of audience that my psychology requires. Nor, if I was given them, would they satiate my need for connection. Ironically the solution is in solitary making. Then you communicate with the cosmos, or god, or one's soul...sometimes they too can get tired. But the more times you meet them the easier it is to go back and speak.

This may seem to you to suggest metaphysical existences. If it does, well, my particular experience is suggesting to you a universal one: and you must decide for yourself, is that reasonable?

The point is, I am, experientially, inviting a communication with something beyond the self and also in conversation with the self. I am inviting duality into the singular act of being. Creator and created. It saves me from insularity.

The purpose of making a physical objects is I think sometimes to reach one person, once, and maybe they reach the next person, and going on through time the people that need to speak to each other, do. Antoine de Saint Exupery describes the process of art as that of lighting a beacon for the next soul that may be in kinship with yours.

This feeling of communication is enough of a justification to continue making for daily use. It's really an appetite: so far out of my reach to choose that all I can do is satiate it.

Getting Better

I don't know what my work is these days. It's like I'm between gears and I can't really get anywhere until it shifts into place. Me, I, the mechanism that makes this work, has a kind of history now, and knowledge that is so imbued in the system that one piece means them all: in this way I can communicate, while at the same time the things that are for me stay intact. One object then stands for many things, in the same way that one word stands for many meanings, and in the illusion of precision more mysteries crowd silently around the thing itself.

Mistry

"We told her she was beautiful

We told her she was free

But none of us would meet her in

The House of Mystery"

It is a rabbits job to do what Rabbits do

And sometimes Rabbits do some things they rue:

What Mistry can be thus revealed?

Why must your questions be so fixed?

All must pay with shitty times

And life is sealed with many Magicks

And love itself is full of sorry crimes.

I want to know sum ancient things:

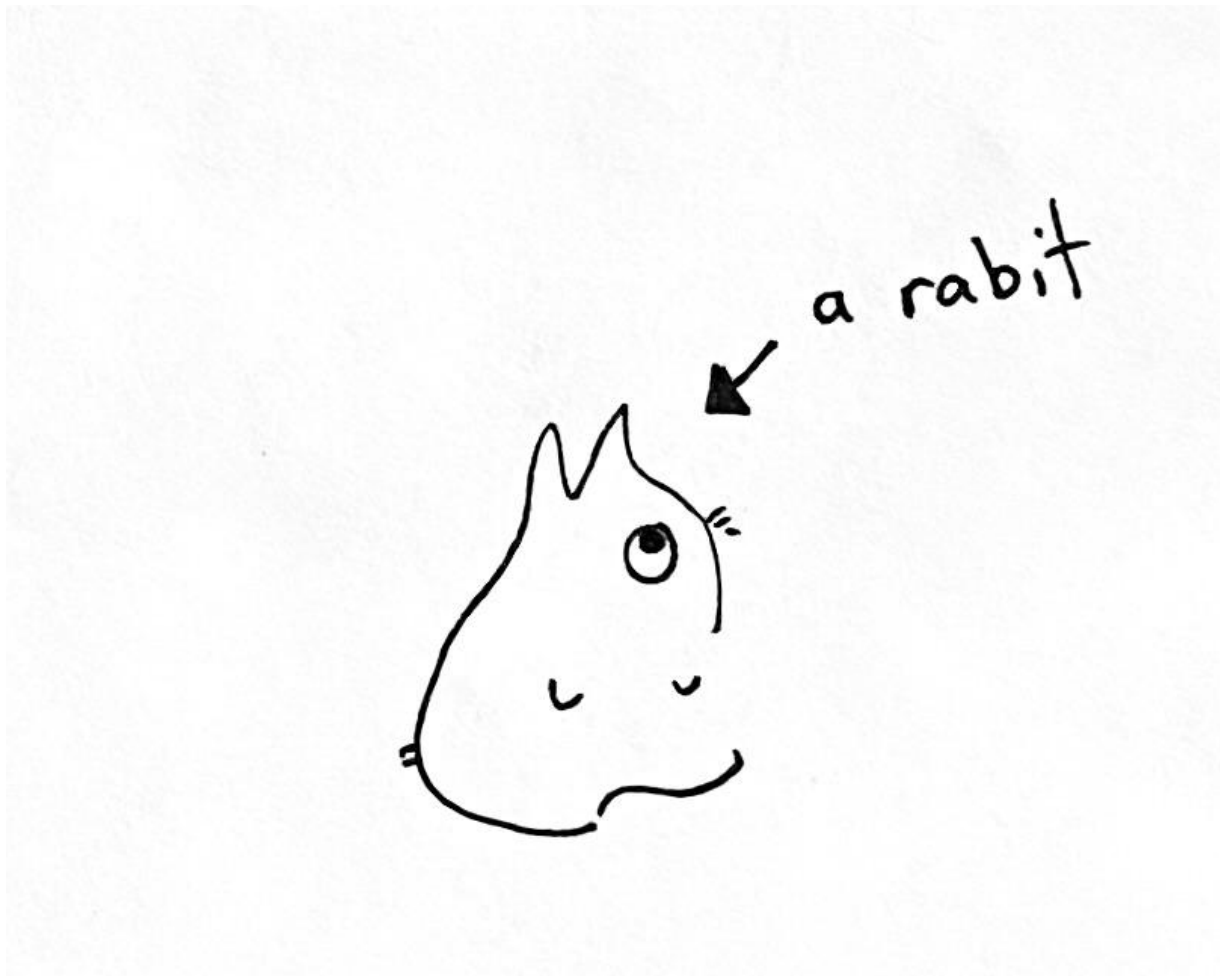
And what eternal siren sings

And why the fishes are so supple in the sea

And why the earth and sun and moon make three:

But only through the ruin and the sorrow that Rabbits sometimes sow

...And then there's all this stuff that has to go!



What is the point of mystery? And why do I spell it wrong?

The point of Mystery is that it is the fountain at the center of a garden: The place of charm and grace and chaos...

And where do small fluffy rodents go on a balmy spring evening? To the fountain. There you may find rabbits copulating cheerfully, and humans -if they have any sense- doing the same.

It is spelled wrong to cast confusion in the mind of some and joy for others. We spell things wrong when they are casual and unimportant. Mystery is so mysterious and important that it does not need me to spell it right.

When you have a never-ending supply of some material, you tend to be pretty casual with it, even if your work still relies on that stock for material existence.

Material Existence

I can't remember all the time

That every poem is not a rhyme

And when the song is out of tune

I tend to run too soon

And wail upon a waning moon

And when the flowers fade

I forget I picked them on a raid

So forgive me a little for making Art a lot

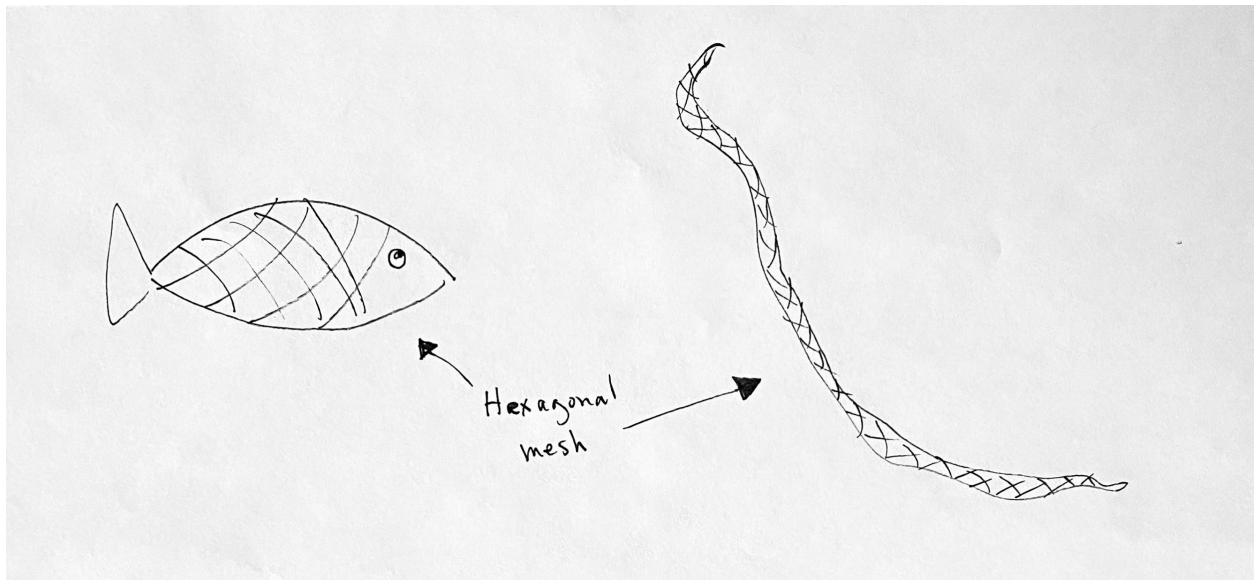
Because it's balsam for an aching "ought"

Even the most random group of objects can be herded into a pattern, the bell curve being the obvious example. Anything that is actualized can be organized.

My job then is frequently just to make the actualized items, the data points so to speak, until their cohesion in a pattern structure or narrative manifests itself.

I first started really thinking about the inevitable (sometimes it feels inescapable) patternation, the necessity for patternation that occurs in the world, when I read a book called "The

Cylindrical Nature of Organic Forms.” The jist was that because of internal and external pressures of water and gravity, anything that is going to conduct water around (e.g. be alive) has to have cylindrical forms, and what's more, has to have a hexagonal membrane, which allows for both flexibility and resistance to punctures. Blood vessels and fishes have the same hexagonal



pattern.

What I mean is that there is a sort of overwhelming necessity in the world, from the physical patterns of fish to the actions of individuals in my life. I can't claim to understand it or even anticipate it, but one necessity speaks to another, so that a cross hatch on a tubular shape calls to the roiling proliferation of inevitabilities. Or Foucault's pendulum, which in its movement participates (theoretically) in the movement of the cosmos. There's no reason to suppose that some things are organized around these necessities and others are not.

At the same time that I was reading the cylindrical book, I went to Portugal and was reading Joyful Wisdom. For whatever reason I kept wondering why Nietzsche went insane, supposedly at the sight of a man whipping a horse to death. It seemed essential to understanding him, in the same way that understanding why Jesus was crucified explains his actions up to the point.

While taking a walk by green lake, it came to me that the reason Nietzsche went insane at a man whipping a horse was because he realized it was necessary, if one is to have all other facets of material existence (i.e. beauty).

As he says in Birth of tragedy “for it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified.” Suffering and such are not experientially redeemed by happiness, and we have no way of saying there’s X amount of bad for Y amount of good. Many people whose names I forget have claimed that the humane choice would be self-annihilation so as to not give rise to more beings that can consciously suffer. That’s stupid to me because that assumes the point is to be happy and free of suffering: to me the point is to construct a beautiful pattern that accepts and incorporates whatever is extant in the world. At a more metaphysical level, this is my obligation to experience: it’s my obligation because I’m capable of it.

Contents of the world

One of the problems in making is that I end up making something before I have any idea what it is. Finding a way to keep working on something is a way to live in the piece long enough to discover what it is. For my thesis show particularly, I asked myself to keep moving: to treat every piece like it is a drawing and find out what the pieces are in their interrelatedness and in making more of them. I wanted each single item to just say one thing, so that in arranging them and playing off them I established the narrative or structural content.

I often forget where I am going. The particular phrases listed below are (some) of my organizing principles. Because they are so appealing to me emotionally, I accept them as something valuable that my sensibility is trying to communicate, as though I had come up with them myself. As Montaigne says “I quote others only in order the better to express myself.” If I think of my physical being as the result of my genetics and experience, then my sensibility reads out those factors. It doesn't even matter where these words come from: what matters is that I have lived with them to produce the work that I did. I do believe that all learning, all receiving is re-learning, because how do we recognize things as important if they have never been important before?

It is interesting (for me) to find out what I *am* through what choices I make.

The Lists

“Down here where we live it is two”

I relate this to Jung's discussion in *Aion* the syzgy, which is simply put the thing that unites two other things. He discusses the ancient land beast Behemoth and sea beast Leviathan as reaching their syzgy in Aion, who as a fish-man is symbolically a harbinger of Christ. You just have to read the book.

For instance if you have a man and a wife, you have a marriage: the marriage is the syzgy. So in this way two objects imply a third, and therefore a trinity. Trinity is community and holy balance.

Two also implies a singularity, and longs to be one, since any unity halved becomes a duality.

The tension of taking things apart and putting them together has energy, because it implies more than itself in whatever principle unites them.

“Crimes against the moonlight”

When the moonlight is pouring through an open window and you don't have sex when you want to because you are afraid, and you deny your own passions and feelings and physical manifestation: this is what that's about. The moon looks down and judges, and like a small rodent that is afraid you find an even deeper hole. The moon in my work often works as an eyeless recorder and judge, though not really an observer. It does not crystallize experience so much as moralize or structure it. The moon that is being raised in my thesis sho demonstrates the structure slowly arising. Because it is on pulleys, there is the implication that this indictment against disorder could be removed as quickly as it is placed. So goes material existence.

“Petit bateau sur l'eau, vogue, vogue...” (Soeur Sourire) / “Little boat on the water, sail away, sail away...”

This has to do with the inevitable sailing away of one soul from another, of one part of a soul from another part, or of moments in time escaping. Also of one becoming two as well. When something leaves it becomes a duality, since there is where it is, and where it is not. To establish a pattern and then break it, and interrupt it usually implies this phrase. A boat on the water displaces the pattern of the waves. Starbeast, Rabbit and evolving fish congregate on a grid below the house of Mystery, and such is their function: to disturb the rigid order of that which is unknown.

“I needed so much

To have nothing to touch

I've always been greedy that way”

“Hungry as an archway”

Archways and greed are related. The sense you get of an old archway through which innumerable things, significant and otherwise have passed and been birthed exactly as they were before. And always the longing for more things to be inseminated and birthed. “Come in, go out.” I saw my best friend smoking in this ancient doorway in Porto (probably medieval) and he was looking kind of beautiful and fancy in a leather jacket and long curly hair, and he was very pleased with himself because he was having an affair with a spaniard. And he was at the delta of a thousand other people whose significances had parted about that arch, and he didn’t know. I took a picture. I feel like people become ugly so soon, almost like they part from their beauty because it’s so hard to have that much to lose. Archways carry this sort of abandoned weight and lust about them.

At the back of the gallery in my show is a small archway on the Cemetery on a hill. It is strange how the most significant element in my head was so underrepresented.

“...days of wine and roses...”

Some people think time and memory are changeable, that the past is negotiable, etc. I believe that it’s carved in stone and every moment is more carven stone, irretrievable and unalterable. Each moment is soft like wine and rose and then it’s hard as stone in the past. Plato describes time as a sphere, the individual being that invisible yet essential axis. The individual and the observed present are commensurate (to me). This concept is also important to my work in terms of existence as an observed phenomenon. If the viewer completes a system -makes something “real”- then what happens to art when there is no one there, at least in terms of the narrative? For

this reason I place observers as actors within my work, so that it continues constantly and does not need the viewer. This gives the viewer a certain latitude. They can see, or not, care, or not.

You may say that small clay figurines are not quite as sentient. Well have you ever asked them politely? Ancient people were more sensible and fed their deities flowers and snacks: we have lost this knack and consider ourselves more clever than the earth we are made of.

“...*cinnamon turrets...*”

Oh city of the gypsies!

Banners on street-corners.

The moon and the pumpkin

with preserved cherries.

Oh city of the gypsies!

Who could see you and not remember?

City of sorrow and musk,

with towers of cinnamon.

I went to Sevilla and had this experience. I have no idea if F.G. Lorca was referring to Sevilla or not.

“...*lights, metals, aromas...*”

everything carries me to you,

as if everything that exists,

aromas, light, metals,

were little boats

that sail

toward those isles of yours that wait for me.

I feel this way about my work, probably the “woman in my life.” In the sort of romantic sense.

When most confused or lost, whatever comes my way seems *for* me and to *direct* me. Similar to the hermetic ideal of the philosopher that carries within himself all that he needs. Though deferred obviously, because i carry nothing but appetite. I think appetite is the philosophers stone, since it is the lowest human trait and carries me to the highest things. “Every valley shall be exalted...”

“...time is a flat circle...”

From True Detective, though I think it’s from Nietzsche. “In the end is my beginning.” I would say that fate is quite unavoidable and the patterns that we draw in all things must be fulfilled.

“Va pensiero, sull’alli dorate”

“Under the marble and the snow”

Soft and hard, but all white. Colorless lends things potential.

“That your eyes might be shining for me, when we came home”

Who waits at the end is not my business.

Method and Materials

For my thesis show I started in the summer with the artifacts from the world I was building.

Slow things that took time made out of wood and clay. A moon, a fish, some little boats.

Through my drawings I knew that world existed and I was summoning it into the flesh.

Gradually the burden of evidence deepens through the smaller objects, and arena and actors start converging. I play around with stuff a lot, once it exists. I consider this “making” the object as much as physically generating it. It gives it history and compiles a set of interrelationships: some I remember, some I don't. What things can get inserted into each other, balance, placed, etc.

Another way to keep the objects in play, is to keep them living and aging is surface work.

Carving, polishing, drawing, etc. surface texture also makes the meaning of things more specific to me. Smooth things have a kind of eternalness and emptiness, as though they have meant many things or will mean many things, and have lost their specificity. Like things that have been in the ocean for a long time.

A fuzzy or spiky texture immediately implies a personality, a function, etc. And therefore it becomes specific, in whatever the thing is going to be, and what arena its going to be in, and with what.

Drawing is somewhat luxurious, because one mark can mean as much as a whole object. And of course paper -the surface- is already pre-made. It's a very swift way of wrapping activity around artifacts and landscapes.

Another thing that I do on paper is I'll get some really quick lines or topography down. Doesn't even matter that much. Then I'll come back and start filling it in, adding things and erasing things (more rare) to interpret and understand what it is I did. Sometimes this drawings depict objects and sometimes landscapes or what looks like a map or switch board.

Objects that look like they could have been tools, and drawing that look like they could have been maps perform similarly. They both imply a physical relationship with something exterior to themselves: they point elsewhere and imply meaning.

Timelines

So all these pieces go along various timelines, and sometimes they are displayed at different level of “understanding.” In this way time itself becomes a medium.

Time has *a lot* to do with material. The lessons and struggles of clay have a lot to do with gravity, time and moisture. Once something is fired there are some things that can no longer happen. Metal is weird because I don't feel like something is ever done. Last night I was thinking about how to chop up older stuff I made with metal and turn it into something new. Drawings wait for you patiently, even secretly: they take up so little space that they allow themselves to be forgotten, and of course change only as much as I change. Wood feels oddly familiar, like the skin of a lover. It seems extremely unromantic and matter of fact, friendly even. It's nice because it feels like the sculpture is already made and you are just moving stuff around until it transpires. I suppose it feels like this because no chemical transformation is involved: the wood is still going to be wood.

What material I use *when*, also has something to do with time, and what level of urgency there is for something to exist. What material I use for what object to me is a moot point, since often the material says a lot about what it is going to become.

Material selection also has to do with sensory experience. When I used to work for artists, whatever I was doing for them I wanted to keep doing in some form, until that behavior was

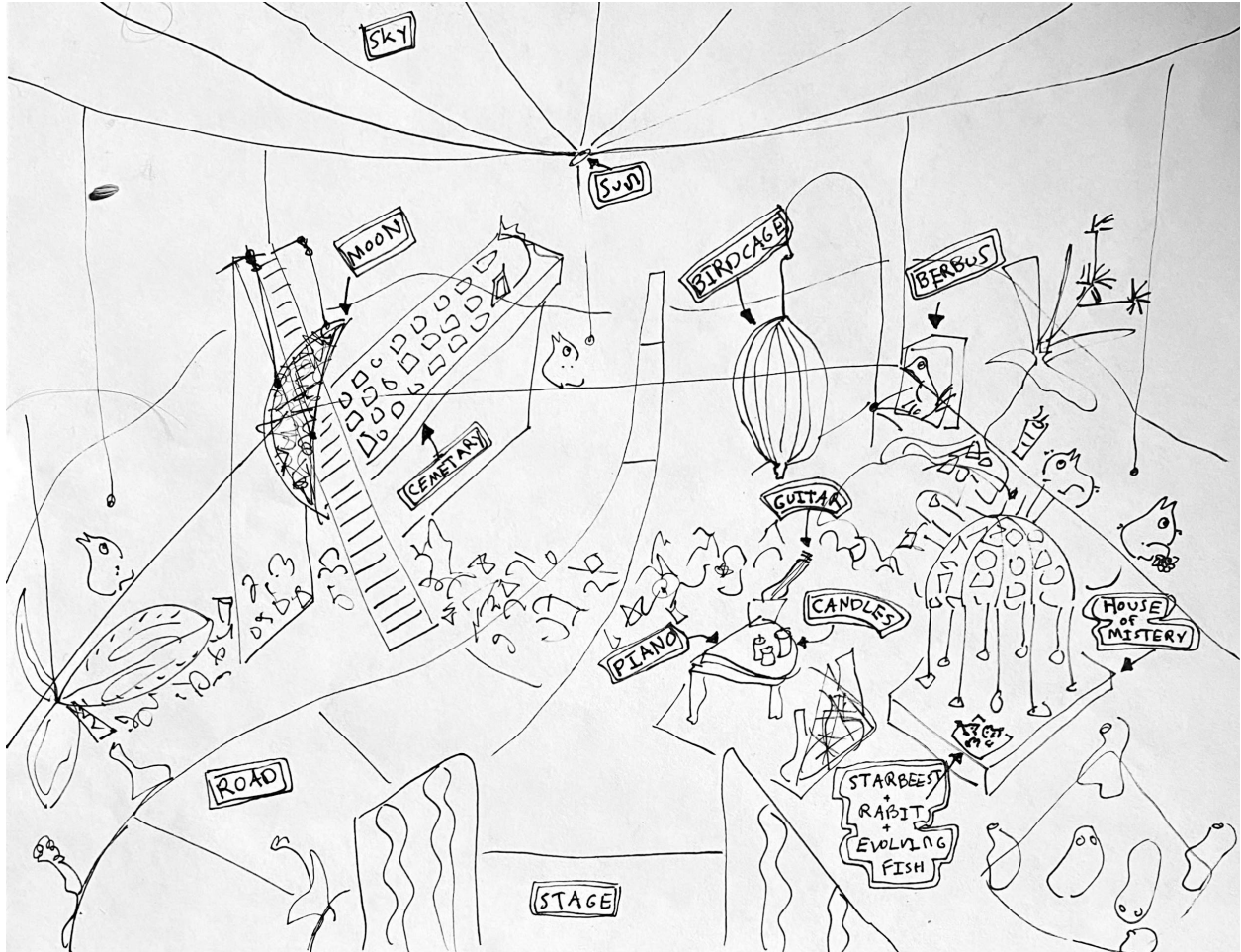
exhausted. So once I am doing something with a material, and have some repeated action, there can be a really insistent impulse to *keep* doing it.

MY THEESIS SHO: a meditation on the crossroads

“An artist has got to be careful never really to arrive at a place where he thinks he’s AT
somewhere”

In a dream it was near dawn and I was going down these broad steps to a valley, trying to get to my studio before it was too late. A blue motorcycle picked me up. We rode and rode and on the streets were people, and more and more of them were sick, deformed and disgusting. There was a slow panic building. Everyone was going the other direction than my studio. People were turning pale blue, pink and yellow and they had no clothes on. There was a steady stream of them going down the other side of the freeway. I saw a mother and daughter completely naked and blue, eating leaves outside their house. Inside the same mother and daughter were braiding eachother's hair by a yellow light. We wound up into the hills and at last came to my studio. Everyone there had already succumbed and was naked and pale white. In pity and despair I reached out to them, realizing I was never going to get my work done, and they embraced me and I became like them.

I believe in this dream totally. I accept it. As such, in my thesis show I resigned myself to *not* getting there. My only obligation to the work was to try and get there everyday in the full humility of knowing I wouldn’t succeed. To give myself something to do under these impossible conditions, I wrote a list of the symbols and things I consider important and wanted people to know about. The objects in my show were the result of this list.



To enter into the world of Va Pensiero you must have a litl drama. Go up sum steps and part a beeeautiful red curtain. Then! Oh then u will be on a stage with a world before you. It is true that none of the rabbits will be that interested in you, but that is because they are trying to get a darkling sky up the horizon. A lot of yellow rope was necessary, and that is how the sun came about. The orange glow that glares across the landscape at you, poor performer on a litl stage, is not the sun. It is the glow of turbulent time, which is both melancholic and warm: time gives almost anything romance. And therefore time is orange. Some people stay upon the stage because they are shy of the world and thus they are condemned to being actors. Others wander down amidst the rabbits and become the world themselves. At the center, if they are brave, they will find the crossroads, where abandinned objects flow across a road that leads all the way to the

horizon. In the river is all so much trying: the hubris of the maker is subjugated to the greater effect.

A dim and chaotic copper moon is halfway up the ladder: the rabbits, who were responsible for that situation, went elsewhere. They are lazy and like to drink coffees, and throw tantrums at the smallest difficulty. This thesis proved to be a small difficulty. Anyway the moon did the best it could.

Far away on a hill is a cemetery, where, for once, the graves are not for the convenience of the gardener: this is because there is no grass or trees, so no need for a gardener. The soil is clear and plastic, and the secrets of the past have been veiled in fanciness instead. Cemeteries are a parade of problems that no longer exist, and great release, and there should be celebrations for that.

Berbus is a very dense bird that some wanderer may meet. There was a cage for Berbus, but it is precarious and the former is very heavy: the rabbits gave up and set Berbus free. Berbus is watching the room, and is particularly interested in the pyre across the room. It is somewhat fragile and Berbus would like to land on it and poop a bit. Pyres are interesting because they are always very polite and organized in how they arrange the wood, as though, since no one is going to get to arrange the person in neat little rows later on, the dead wood does just as well.

At the other corner of the landscape is the Temple, Pagoda, and the House of Mystery: they are all the same object. Starbeest, Rabbit and Evolving Fish reside within, and represent the divisions of Behemoth = Rabbit = Land Beast, and Leviathan = Evolving Fish = Sea Beast. If Starbeest did not exist it would be necessary to invent him. Together, they dance a sarabande. Which in the courts of Louis Quatorze was the noblest of dances and symbolized the order and music of the spheres. Time operates as a sphere with the individual as its axis: they do a dance of time. Far off, Berbus's cage materially represents the concept. Time is a sort of cage.

A tiny yellow piano is tinkling invisibly; flowers bloom heavily, because they are made of steel. Candles rest for bit, almost destroyed and overflowed by their own heat and a litl guitar longs to be played, but it was too badly designed to ever make melodies.

The viewer descends and becomes one of these creatures that stray in a strange land, all exiled from the past, from their futures and from death, wandering minute by minute like kinfused rabbits in a haze of failures. They come to a crossroads, and their path transforms. They may look back to see that everything was hapining: like a map explains topography or a score explains a symphony, and find themselves in the place where representation and reality become one.

I travel slowly

-you know this-

And come late,

full of dust and full of skins to shed

And there is no room I find

And those by the fire say “because you come late”

And it is dark now

But I must go

Because I will rest where there’s a place for me

That is warm

And though I go all night

And come bewildered with the dawn

I’ll lie where they keep welcome

For those on halting pilgrimages.

And so my father! Why was it just too late?

Why must it feel like fate

Because the time refused to wait?