Curiosity Killed Schrödinger's Cat

By

MOTOKO INOUE

B.A., Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, 2003

A Report Submitted to the Lamar Dodd School of Art
of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment
of the
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF FINE ARTS
Curiosity Killed Schrödinger's Cat

By

MOTOKO INOUE

Approved:

Glen Kaufman, Major Professor

April 25, 2008

Date
I utilize cotton, dye, stitching, crochet, polyester filling, and print to create my three-dimensional figure-like pieces. In dealing with my work fabric is synonymous with both skin and emotions, metaphorically akin to a Moebius strip. My work explores the relationships between reality and fantasy, within their ambiguous and uncertain borderlines. Although I discover duality everywhere, I believe what is significant is the searching that lies amid two opposite ideas or different worlds. I would like to talk about my thesis work and examine the process and development how I have created my thesis work, comparing my other installation done in 2007.

I created an installation for my thirty-hour review entitled I think :: I am ...............?.

I used representational patterns of spirals, coils, and snakeskin patterns, in order to illustrate repetition of thoughts and questions.
of trifle matters with in philosophical matters in our life. I am fascinated by the concept of infinity, obsession, bizarreness, and the absurdity of our existence. This installation piece was the first attempt to realize this idea into three-dimensional objects, and the breakthrough piece that solidified my own unique language as an artist.

I entitled my thesis work for the M.F.A. Exhibition Curiosity Killed Schrödinger's Cat. I utilized a quilting technique sewed in a circular fashion to create a repetitive and obsessive pattern that represents cycles of time and infinity. The spiral pattern also shows that endless curiosity and wonder of our existence, the world we live in, as well as the world(s) we don’t know. I maintained the similar concept to that of the previous installation and developed the idea and unified the visual element for the thesis piece.

I placed a round mirror floating slightly above the floor. Mirrors are a way we observe ourselves. Without a reflective surface such as a mirror, we cannot observe our face, which is the most readily identifiable part of the
body. Once we see our face in the mirror, it splits the body from the mind and creates a duality. We can become confused if we are inside the mirror or outside the mirror, or both at once.

Schrödinger's cat, which the title of my piece is borrowed from, is a thought experiment that was developed around 1935 by an Austrian physicist, Erwin Schrödinger (1887-1961). I borrowed the name of his experiment for the part of the title of this piece, since the idea of his experiment and my idea of this installation pertain to each other.

Schrödinger created the experiment to illustrate the quantum mechanics concept of superposition, which is the combination of all possible positions of a subatomic particle. Superposition only undergoes collapse into a definite state at the exact
moment of observation. More simply, all possibilities are open until it is observed.

The experiment is that a cat is in a sealed box with a particle detector, a radioactive substance, and a device that releases poisonous gas. If the radioactive substance in the box emits an alpha particle, the detector senses it and poisonous gas is released so that the cat dies. This illustrates that the cat is simultaneously alive and dead until the box is opened. In other words, two opposite realities coexist within the same space, but once the box is opened, we will see only one of those states: either the cat's alive or the cat's dead. Imagination and speculation becomes reality, but not necessarily how we think it will. In a sense, a thing is not tangible or real until experienced.

In summation, I don't think there is absolute certainty, but I believe that there is always infinite room for possibilities that make our life so interesting and also meaningless. Through these three years in graduate school, I discovered my own unique way to express my ideas to create art. I will keep seeking myself through the riddle and complexity of life in between the world of eternity and limitation and realize my reality into tactile objects and environment.