The Physicality of Art

by

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Art is the ultimate tool for communication, it is used as a vehicle to deliver concepts and guidelines set up by the artist. The concepts that fascinate me are athleticism, exercise, sex, labor, competition, identity, and a degree of excess. What I find interesting is creating objects that exploit my abilities, my limitations, and myself. I am currently working with an aesthetic that I was introduced to as a child.

I was about nine years old when I became conscience of the concepts behind athletics, competition, and identity. Simultaneously, I understand that I needed to pay close attention to the specific details of these ideas. Early on I think it started with a couple of specific topics. First was the physicality of athletics, being able to use my body to compete with others. I felt that I was good at competing, which became beneficial in order to gain a level of confidence. This was very meaningful; it gave me the capability to express myself, as well as demonstrate what I believe is important. I always felt a level of competition among my peers. Not necessarily competition that I felt I needed to win, but a level in which I felt I needed to succeed.

The second initial motivation was labor; my family owns an auto-salvage on the south shore of Boston that has been in business since 1959. This was my first place of employment. I honestly enjoyed sweeping and cleaning the shop on Saturday’s for about five dollars. This activity gave me the feeling of accomplishment and self worth. While working at the shop I was able to develop a relationship between labor and detail. I had never associated this relationship with art or the art making process. It was only recently that I discovered this way of working was the inspiration that has driven me to make art or more importantly introduced me to making art.
As an athlete, the idea of training gave me the discipline to focus on one specific goal. My goal was to center all of my energy in the preparation for an event. This has become a valuable way to work, I have trained myself to become project oriented in the fact that I develop an idea and discipline myself to execute it as proficiently as possible. This is why athleticism has played a major role within my art making process. The idea of training has transformed into preparation for developing sculpture. As an athlete one must practice his/her skills day in and day out in order to compete at a professional level. This is where practice and repetition become a very important exercise in the outcome of being an artist. I am conscience of the actions of practice and repetition while working in the studio. It is very meaningful for me to utilize this mind set while creating art.

I feel that I need to practice a process and repeat it until I can not stand it any longer. The process begins to sicken me, which, leads to discomfort and, eventually moving on to hating or disliking the idea. One aspect of my work is that it leads to self-destruction. I am building upon my physicality, as well as, my psyche, at the same time slowly approaching an ending point. I feel driven to work this way because if I try something only once or twice I never get to learn the true nature of the material. If I practice and repeat the process over and over again the material becomes clear. At this point, one can completely understand the material and recognize it’s beauty and it’s fate.

My work is an autobiographical investigation. It is a psychological fantasy that is guided toward self-destruction. I am interested in dealing with a vocabulary that embraces humanity while, developing an idea that directly plays off the self-conscience. Within this type of visual communication, effectiveness becomes the most important part between the viewer and myself. My goal is to be effective in many different ways but,
more specifically, in a way to get the viewer to feel pleasure and discomfort. This becomes important to display certain types of objects that build the viewer up and break them down simultaneously. My work carries a specific aesthetic that is capable of functioning on more than one level at the same time.

The idea of utility has also been a meaningful aspect in my current work. I am not advocating the direct use of an object but, simply implying an aesthetic that alludes to a number of actions. I appreciate giving the sculpture a tactile quality but, do not intend for the work to be manipulated. The work should exist solely as an object and appear to have a visual interaction from the viewer. In addition, we live in a consumer-based society, so as artists we have to compete with this type of visual information. We are trained as small children to decipher if an object is worthy or not within a matter of seconds. I am aware of this type of competition and criticism that exists, so as an artist I need to prepare my work to be able to compete at the same professional level.

As I create art I am constantly trying to challenge myself as much as possible. I do not rely on previous process or knowledge to develop a sculpture. Each work of art is very different from the last while the aesthetic of a psychological fantasy is still present. By constantly challenging myself with variety, it feeds the fire that drives me as an artist. This is what makes art so magical, the idea that a material can be beautiful and self-destructive at the same time.
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