

On 'Things'

Preface

I feel the word philosophy generates a rather academic perspective; I'd like for this collection of writing to be understood as a personal 'ethos'. I make no claim to be a philosopher or intellectual on these topics, I simply hoped for the opportunity to express the thinking that supports my work. This amalgamation of words is an ongoing attempt to share my rather scattered thoughts.

It's important to see this book as a point of departure, to be read and forgotten about, this document is frozen to see this ethos as fact would leave you and me stationary, causing any further development to cease. So please, take what I say with a pinch of salt and make your judgments. These are my thoughts and I'm sure yours may differ; in fact, I truly hope they do.

The Grid and The Elusive

I've become increasingly aware of this human trait that is applying rigidity to the

curvaceousness of the world I believe this definition constricts the beautiful. For the most basic of examples, take a squiggly line, in order for this line to be translated into a linear format we cast a grid upon the form so that we can see how many squares it goes to the left and how many it goes up, giving us a series of numbers or coordinates to express the path of this squiggle. This grid system works but in no way does it truly and entirely express the full range of movement this line moves through.

Moving forward this net like grid system has been implemented in the ground plans for cities, the plotting of graphs and the mapping of landscape. But this division and sorting of landscape will always remain means of deduction, it does not truly represent the natural world. If say, we were to attempt in any way to express through symbolic or linguistic means the experience of a single point in time, it would take an absurd amount of time and effort to describe. The only way we can truly understand this moment in time is to be present and to witness it personally.

While I am painfully aware that language and mathematics are necessary things that have helped our race progress and communicate in deep complexity. I do believe my point is worth arguing; my point is as follows, for us to truly understand something it must be experienced, without the worries and complications of description and definition through any kind of medium. This first-hand experience is what we learn from throughout most of life. Education teaches us factual knowledge but there is no way to learn of love or fear other than to experience it.

This has caused me to work in defined rectangular steel sheet as if I am taking a single square of this enormous grid system, aiming to rediscover the romantic curvaceousness of nature that is trapped within the confines of human definition.

The Elusive

As mentioned in the previously there is no way to capture nature, landscape, art or experience through a single description or viewpoint. This

applies very directly to my sculptures because no single perspective can convey its reality. To understand the form and to be able to make your personal judgments on a sculpture you must first toy with it. It needs to be walked around, tantalised over, teased out of its shell. Viewing the same piece from all possible angles allows you to understand more entirely what this entity is.

That concept does not just apply to my sculptures but many things, to understand our thoughts you must view them from different perspectives. To understand a mountain range, sitting in a café looking at the view from a window does not show its true worth. But exploring the mountains from within, standing at the bottom to look up at the vast monolithic structure, climbing the peaks, feeling the texture of the rock. To understand something, you must involve yourself in it. There is no single external perspective to anything. We are three dimensional beings and we must explore internal and external landscapes through all dimensions and mediums possible if we wish to discern any kind of true meaning.

Consuming the mind – Meditative methods

My goal as a maker is to help pause the mind, to find stillness. I achieve this through making. It's more challenging to share this with someone viewing the work, for the viewer my goal becomes confining them to the present moment to be sucked into a space where their heads aren't tangled up with thoughts of mundane daily rituals, but instead cultivating feelings of beauty, nature and human experience.

Meditation is often thought of as thinking about nothing, but I believe it should be understood as thinking without effort or decisiveness. The mind is left to wonder, no thoughts are forced, and no thoughts are blocked or avoided. Thoughts arise and are left to do so of their own accord. You take a step outside of your mind and attempt to watch your mind from an external perspective that is confined to the very present moment simply witnessing thoughts float through your mind like clouds in the sky. This is no

easy task; it's all too tempting to get involved and try to steer your thoughts. Trying to think of nothing is like trying to flatten water with a board, it only causes more disturbance.

This then informs how I would like to affect someone viewing my work, I'd like them to be encapsulated in the present moment letting their mind wonder as they rest their eyes on a sculpture. They shouldn't be making any effort to deduce the work and decide its meaning but instead to let their mind think what it thinks freely. As Alan Watts explained "No amount of working with the muscles of the mouth and tongue will enable us to taste our food more acutely". Forced effort to think more profoundly or to discover a deep embedded meaning to the installation won't get you anywhere, but instead by just enjoying a present experience you may find meaning presenting itself to you.

Flow state

The maker aims to find a similar flowing state in making where not only do his thoughts do

as they wish but so do his hands. A state of flow allows one to dissolve into the act of making, to find oneself in the sculpture. It is as if the artisan does not make the decision of action but instead something else is acting through him. Each piece made is born from the internal landscape, like all these thoughts that cannot be put into words manage to flow out of the hands of the maker and into an abstract physical format. It's a cathartic process that flows in all directions, He learns something from the metal and the metal has learnt its form from him, there was no tension in the flow state only a sharing of energy.

The artlessness of art

There's an artlessness to art, a free-flowing state where controlled accidents cause a body of work that balances between the refined and the chaotic. The chaotic becomes lost within its own pandemonium, while the refined becomes rigid and confined, therefore lacking enjoyment in the making. By toying with this balance an equilibrium is discovered which

implements chance into an equation of decision and action.

The result of this artlessness is a cultivation of freedom, and the dissolution of barriers that would otherwise constrict decision making in the act of creativity. The freedom of chaos contrasted with an eventual refinement of an individual piece gives a romantic curvaceousness to the process and object. After all to be lost in making, to see oneself in the object, to purge yourself of emotion and to observe this feeling externalized in an object is wonderfully similar to meditation. The flow state allows you to act as if you were not the source but instead a medium that some other energy flows through, a mere observer to the creation and externalisation of emotion and form. *It's such an incredibly beautiful way of creating art, like you are being drawn about it all by some cosmic force.*

'Poetry is. It just is.' By Chandrama Deshmukh

Poetry doesn't just happen. It's not just a bunch of words grabbed hastily and

arranged to rhyme, it's not even a so-called overflow of emotions. Poetry is much more than that. It's the silence that echoes within your being,

Every time a thought moves into the symphony of my being, I start searching for a pen and paper. No, not to write a poem but to get it out, to empty myself and see this newborn breath on its own. It could all happen on a dull Tuesday afternoon out of nowhere like a butterfly resting on your shoulder asking you to look up at the sky and mute the chaos around. Like a possessed soul poetry flows through me. I feel like a medium, not the source. It's like someone is pouring these thoughts into me, and wants me to give them shape. After each poem I look at it for a while.

In the silence my poems mature, they learn to talk amongst themselves, derive their own meanings and in the process of writing poems, I often wonder who is making whom? So, each time when someone asks me, 'but how do you manage to go about it' I am so completely blank. The matter of fact is, I don't know how it go about it. I am just taken about

it, by some cosmic force. And I get so lost into it, that after a point immense joy and immense pain seem the same.

Context

Our environment is vitally important to understanding any situation, the context of any event can drastically change its meanings. There's a big difference between the blood in our veins and blood in a test tube. Just as external factors can cause meanings and events to differ, our internal context effects how we perceive events.

I see skin as something porous, permeable, a material that selectively allows matter to pass through it. It both separates and joins the outside from the inside making them connected, part of the same system. All opposites are two aspects of the same system.

Making in the flow state causes this barrier of internal and external to dissolve, so that feeling, and form can flow from your internal landscape and into a physical sculpture.

On Polarity

The human brain sends information through a series of electrical pulses. The neurons in our brain are capable of changing between just two states off and on. Much like the binary computer systems we have created that use a series of 1's and 0's to create a myriad of wonderfully complex functions. The binary language of computers can create entire programs, in a similar way to our nervous system conveying information around the brain and body.

It seems logical then to realise that the physical world also operates similarly. Our senses take waves of sound and light, converting them into this binary kind of language. Sound and light waves themselves are comprised of the same two states, off and on. These waves or vibrations consist of peaks and troughs or compression and expansion, which represent the very same off and on that our synapses use. Sound is both sound and silence, light is both light and darkness for without the off aspect we cannot experience the on. All sound that we hear has hidden within it

silence, our neurons then translate these intervals into the binary language that our brains can understand.

I would like to bring this to a broader point, this complicated explanation is simply the groundwork so that I may express a more applicable concept. Often, we see every aspect of our world as being isolated things or events. But just like the off and on, the 1 and 0, the peak and the trough, each aspect must have its other half. In the realm of emotion love has hate and joy has sorrow. The day has the night and life has death. without one the other cannot function.

It's important to note that these opposites are not in conflict, there is no war waged between them, to see if light can overcome dark, or for love to conquer hate. These aspects are not enemies fighting but instead they are like lovers wrestling. To experience joy, we must understand and experience sorrow in the words of Kahlil Gibran 'the deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy it may contain'

Many people have an anxiety surrounding death, a fear

of the unknown. Death causes fear because it is seen as something to avoid and conquer. But just the same as other systems of opposition. Light is comprised of rapid flickering between light and dark, because it is so rapid, we are not consciously aware of it. To then slow these intervals of off and on to the time period of night and day we become very aware of it, but we are not fearful of it. Why then, when the intervals are lengthened to the time scale of life and death are we so fearful of the *off* period. The off is just as necessary as the on. It is death that gifts us with life. It reminds us of the beauty of our fleeting mortality.

Conclusion

The reason I'm describing this to you is for you to grasp what human experience is, as I aim to create something wonderfully human without need for definition and categorization. I aim for myself while making and others while viewing to simply experience time outside of time. Removing any worry of translating your thoughts into words, to let this present

experience consume you. There is no goal and no achievement it is to be present and allow any emotion to occupy your mind. After all, I've contemplated what it is that we learn from, what it is that makes us human.

I believe emotionally stimulating and consuming experiences teach us. It teaches us about love it teaches us about loss and all the other wonderfully beautiful things that make you and I human. Our lives take place in the present, we have memories of the past and aspirations for the future. But this moment right now is the only thing you can experience the only thing you can alter, so live with me here and now and realise that you have the gift of autonomy, the freedom to think, feel and do whatever you please. Just keep is moral.

- S.S.K