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Senior Thesis : Memory
School of Art and Design, University of Michigan
April 2008

Come, Look with me inside this drawer,
In this box I've often seen,
At the pictures, black and white,
Faces proud, still, serene.

I wish I knew the people:
These strangers in the box,
Their names and all their memories
Are lost among my socks.

I wonder what their lives were like.
How did they spend their days?
What about their special times?
I'll never know their ways.

If only someone had taken time
To tell who, what, where, when,
These faces of my heritage
Would come to life again.

Could this become the fate
Of the pictures we take today?
The faces and the memories
Someday to be tossed away?

Make time to save your pictures,
Seize the opportunity when it knocks,
Or someday you and yours could be
The strangers in the box.

Treasures in a Box - Pamela Harazim

Memory

“ Memories create me: Without them, I lose the vitality in life.
While living, I have gone through lots of different emotional feelings:
Happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust etc...
See how incredible my life has been because of them.”

From my diary - September 2007

The word “ memory” has the power of charm. The word itself is quite addictive, like espresso coffee. The word reminds me of love for lovers; it is very emotional and extremely powerful. Memories let me keep the significant events that have been positioned as big parts of my life, which I never want to forget. I often am absorbed in memories of my childhood life and lean on. Even if the memory is something you do not want to remember because it is left as a wound, as time passes, after years and decades, it remains as a precious reminiscent of the past. It is almost like a silent, invisible gift for myself. When I think of memory, a big smile automatically imprints on my mind.

A beginner in three-dimensional world & Inspiration

I have considered myself a painter for almost more than a decade; my grandmother, one of my favorite painters whom I truly respect as an artist, has been the biggest inspiration for my art development. However, one of the advanced studio classes I took last year became a great turning point. For the first time of my life, I considered working in a big three-dimensional sculptural form. I finally got excited about the breakthrough at the end of the project, and the work incidentally made me wanting to become a three dimensional artist, in the concrete, a sculptor. By creating the very first sculptural piece using collected found objects, I realized that I was a full of enthusiasm and fanatical about becoming an artist, and I truly felt that this would be what I would like to do for future.

With my interest in metalsmithing and three-dimension sculpture, I took a couple of classes that deal with metal, and I, so often, read magazines and books from the school library to get some inspirations for my project. Among the great three-dimensional artists' works, I fell in love with Albert Paley's work, *Sentinel* (2003), at the first sight. Symbolizing "the fusion of art and technology," *Sentinel's* naïve three dimensionality, activeness in size and the feature, genuineness, and aesthetic power, have become the primary reasons why I am so attracted to this particular piece. Paley's pieces are certainly much more intense than any other works of other sculptors' work. Moreover, the enormous energy and the vitality coming from his pieces are the further reasons why I like so much of his work up until now.

Work

With this project, I take the opportunity of what Integrative Project gives me, for entering a different art world to which the world is quite a bit unaccustomed. For a yearlong project, I combine two of my biggest interests, memory and three-dimensional work, and create sculptural pieces of retrospection of my past.

Like every artist's creation has a mission and a style, my work is aimed at creating free-formed sculptures for autobiographical memories. Memories usually are not tangible; however, I incorporate my experiences with emotional feelings for the specific moment that are often recalled in my mind and make them tangible. I create three sculptural disclosures using different mediums to create textures, depth, sensibility and actions for retrieving the moment.

The three pieces incorporate different stories I want to articulate. The time period for each piece is different as well. I choose the stories from kindergarten, elementary school, and middle school life. Each piece comprises of my experience at that time with emotional truthfulness, visual and aesthetic abstraction, and movement. At this moment, I want to leave expressions of three different retrospections of my past in written words; therefore, I write three different stories of my experiences of when I was at the age of 6, 2 to 11, and 15.

6: Happiness

I am a black sheep of Lee family. I am smaller than the average six-year-old kid, never quiet, and full of eagerness. People call me “almond” because they think that I am small, but have a strong personality. I do mostly everything of what boys do. Baseball is one of my favorite sports. Oh, I forgot to mention that I like to run, too. I do not ride tricycle, but bicycle. Roller-skating is so much fun except the fact that I fall too often. Falling... Yes, I fall too often. My knees are never spotless. They seem like a pop art-like collage painting in one of the pages of my sketchbook. Full of different colors with a variety of textures, color changes in the surface over times...I try to think of these everyday-accidents in positive way.

I love to hang out with friends at the playground, which is located right in front of my apartment building because it is easier for my mommy to find me for meal time. It is the best place for strengthening my body. It is also the best place for socializing. My outgoing personality perfectly fits for playing at the playground. My friends and I often play a game, who will be the first person climbing the top of the jungle gym. A very tall, colorful, built in geometric forms attracts me so much that it never makes me stop climbing up. Wearing proper shoes are very crucial. Slippers are the worst shoes you can ever wear for this game because there is a greater possibility that you fall from the jungle gym while climbing. The accident did not stop as one-time accident, the same accident happened so many times. I hate to wear socks. It feels like my toes scream for being uncomfortable when I wear them. My mommy yells at me to wear socks except when I wear flip-flops, thus I wear flip-flops anywhere I go, and thus I fall all the time when I climb the jungle gym. It is fun to try and is quite thrilling.

2 to 11: Euphony to Cacophony

With my mother's background in music composition and her sudden renunciation due to marriage, she becomes covetous of me becoming a musician. She tries to make me a world's greatest musician.

I have a story of my very first reaction towards the piano, from my mother: At the age 2, I self-sit on the piano chair, walk to the boom-box, play the tape of Liszt' over and over again, and pretended that I am actually playing the music. At the age 5, I start a private piano lesson twice a week as my entrance into a music world. The lady who teaches me is a graduate student studying Piano as a major and Viola as a minor. From one lesson to the next lesson, she is amazed by the significant improvement I make, and my interest in music changes to zeal. She also finds out my endowment in absolute pitch, thus I learn music mostly with my ear, not with eyes. I get a letter from the second grade homeroom teacher at the end of the school year. " Yoon Ji, I believe that you will be the world's most well-known pianist. Please do not forget that I said this, when you become famous. I will be looking forward to seeing you on TV."

I start to learn Violin as well. I spend at least couple hours after school on appreciating my fervor towards music. I love it. Age 7, after school, someone tries to kidnap me after the Violin lesson. I eat lunch at a small fast-food restaurant near school. A woman comes up to me. She pretends that she is my father's college friend. She asks me my father's name, phone number of his office, my address etc, suddenly grabs my shoulder, and comes to me even closer. The owner of the restaurant, she realizes that something weird is happening to me. She winks at me. She gives me a sign to run away, and I run super fast. All the sudden, I am at school. Fear is all around me. I put the fiddle bow down and hurry home because I do not want to be the only person left alone at school. I am overly scared because I imagine myself dying painfully. I cannot stand going back to school to learn violin anymore. A couple years later I start playing Cello. But God! Why are you playing with my destiny? The cello instructor disappears with the payment I pay in advance, and the piano instructors are changed more than five times in a year due to their personal businesses. I am sick and tired of dealing with all these issues

at my young age. I just turned 11. Maybe I should accept the fact that going into the music world is not what I should go for the future.

15: Confinement

I am at the stage of being whimsical. I have no interest in studying, and my parents, I think, are the worst people I can ever have in my life. Spending time alone in a peach-dark room, I fantasize. Indulge in reverie every night.

There are tons of restrictions for teenagers both inside and outside of the school. The spirit of insubordination is quite large. Hair coming one inch beneath the ears is the rule, but how about two inches beneath? Plain black shoes without any decoration, but I prefer wearing shoes with a little bit of metal decoration. Tucking in my blouse is less stylish, but if that is the school provision, my thought is never important. No accessories, no make-up, no ear-piercing, nothing except textbooks, notebooks, and sharpened pencils in the book bag... Do you have any idea how ugly we all look? We look like complete idiotic robots, manufactured by the company named " School, " or prisoners who have no freedom except for going to the bathroom. After school, students are forced to get extra intensive educations from lots of different places. High-priced English tutor who is a native speaker is one of the most popular education students get. It really costs a lot of money, but all the students become victims in reality, I am no exception.

Where is my time of carte blanche? There were definitely times when I was run about with total freedom. They fade away as I grow, and all I see now are the negative aspects of life. I am longing for getting my old times back. I want to stop the time that is running immediately. If I have supernatural power to rewind time, I would make my time back to the age 6, when I thought that the world was all mine.

Conclusion

For the last two semesters, I have walked back to where I have been, to regain my precious memories. Now, I continue walking to make even more blood-tingling memories.

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