

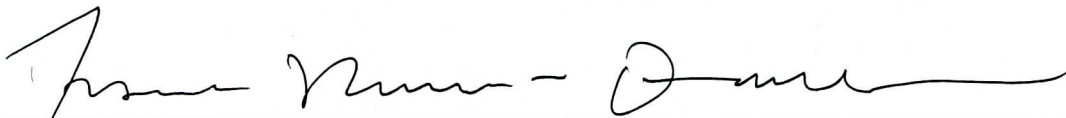
the (w)hole part.

askia nasir bilal.

Bachelors of Fine Arts, Columbia College, 2006

Masters of Fine Arts
School of Art and Design
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor Michigan
April 22, 2011

Approved by:



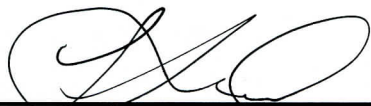
Franc Nunoo-Quarcoo, Graduate Committee Chair



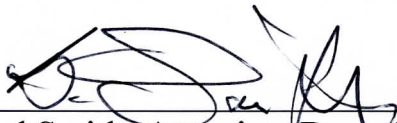
Jim Cogswell, Graduate Committee Member



Macklin Smith, Graduate Committee Member



Craig Wilkins, Graduate Committee Member



Brad Smith, Associate Dean for Graduate Education



Brian Rogers, Dean, School of Art and Design

Using the square and the cube as foundational elements that are rooted in art historical, architectural, and philosophical tradition, *the (w)hole part* installation explores mark making on a variety of materials and surfaces to create a non-linear, allegorical narrative that investigates cyclic transformation through an entire space. It serves to illustrate ongoing exchanges that occur between chaos and order, construction and destruction, clarity and obscurity, simplicity and complexity. The arrangement of the space, shapes, and forms creates layers that suggest complexity of meaning, and paradoxes that raise questions about notions of illusion and reality. The layering of materials, marks, and text connects to a larger human tradition of recording information, conveying different senses of meaning, time, and density. The juxtaposing of materials are visual cues that add to the layers and indicate intricate relationships that exist between the objects, surfaces and ideas. The use of found or recycled materials signifies the process of transforming objects and their meaning.



Figure 1: the (w)hole part Installation view. 2011.

An attempt to explain myself in a number of different ways is as follows.

The preamble.

How do I begin this? How do I end this. Well let me start frankly. In a sense I haven't the faintest bloodiest idea where I have been or where I am going. Pawing my way through the dark. And the light that I shine on things is only shining light on dark. Anti-chiarascuro if you would. The light reveals dark if you can imagine such a thing. If you can fathom such a thing.

What to call this?

Syntax error is just that.

The first thing we have to do is acknowledge a few things here. Namely I don't really know what I am doing here. Sometimes I wake up and feel like I was dropped somewhere suddenly and I don't know where that is. Disorientation.

I mean I may have gathered a few skills here and there and shuffled through a museum or two and spent a few hours meandering about pawing my way through the dark thumbing through a few artist's books, and had a few deep conversations about happenings in this nebulous entity called "the art world" standing in gallery openings nibbling on little pieces of cheese while having a conversation, trying to figure out who I am going to talk to next after the conversation I am currently involved in goes dead (you know thinking ahead) but the fact is there is always a sinking feeling, a sneaking suspicion that everyday I am leaning further into oblivion. That just around the corner there is something waiting. The unavoidable.

I am sitting in the Cave of Shadows¹ where I had been busying myself with the Lascaux painters² but now I am watching Al Jazeera muted television in Arabic old black and white footage of Communist China and some relationship to ancient China and back to the Middle East--- Arabic script news ticker flickering like a fire casting shadows across the bottom of the screen more shadow images than I can unconsciously digest but I digress point is it's in Arabic and I wouldn't understand it any better in English stack of papers on my lap sketching a picture laptop on the table 900 windows open to 9000 worlds quantitative data insert 4 word documents an outline a statement an example of an outline, a million digital pages of I don't know what to call it (this is the 1000000000th), compulsive-Facebook-status-checking-Itunes with 30 field recordings Iphoto nth images of a studio nth images of scanned sketchbook pages laid flat email inbox 18,000 messages (7,500 unread never will) and I'm talking to the man in the mirror portal.

Welcome to the 21st century. The age of ignorant information. Stone Age. Silver Age. Bronze Age. Guilded Age the Civil age—

¹ Plato. "Allegory of the Cave." *The Republic*.

² Adams, Laurie. "Upper Paleolithic Painting." *Art Across Time Volume one*. P. 33. (Boston: McGraw Hill College, 1999).

Civil predictability facsimiles of facsimiles that give birth to their own realities.
I lack energy despite this coffee Redbull-Benadryl-hypnotic-concoction-overstimulated
sedated-state. Come on try to relate mannnnnn. Woman. The surface is standing on the
edge of itself from what lie beneath Columbus or whoever it was was wrong- the world *is*
flat-screen my mind is in a dream maybe an illusion somewhere between the two and the
lights are jabbing my eyes looking for the triple knock out punch-drunk love 54491
words and still counting sheep still looking for what its amounting to.

I have surrendered myself to this. What is coherence anyway. I live in a Cave of
Shadows³ and I recognize that. And yet I hesitate to leave. I hesitate to leave because I
hesitate to sacrifice this comfort. Discomfort must become my state of comfort. To
embrace the stability of instability. To embrace reality. To embrace illusion.

I am on the verge of something. I am peering into something. It is peering into me. I am
peering over the edge looking in and it is looking into me.

“And if you gaze into the Abyss, the Abyss gazes back into you”-Nietzsche.

³ Plato. “Allegory of the Cave.” *The Republic*.



Figure 2: (w)hole part fragment. Detail of *Cube (Plato's cave)*. Layers of Cardboard. 2011.

Sight

The transparency of this overwhelming opacity. How can one look at something so opaque and see right through it? How can one show sight clearly when everything becomes so nebulous, at one moment clear the next not? For the time being that is, until the day when all of this would seem like a day or a part of a day, that day when the veils are lifted and the sight is keen? How far can one go and not move from the square one stands in? What is it to look? What is it to see? What is it to **perceive**? The challenge is to look. The challenge is to see. To perceive. What is the difference between looking and seeing and perceiving?

By that, I mean to take advantage of the two little organs that are plugging those sockets, those voids those holes in the skull rolling about hardly pausing too busy scanning gathering collecting the external environment capturing light rays of various lengths that criss-cross as they pass through the corneas in various amounts, various *layers*, depending on the level of dilation of the iris which depends on a number of factors none of which people think about twice in a lifetime, into the retinas, **upside down** because don't forget that the light rays were criss-crossed as they went into the cornea, **back** to the optic nerve that sends it to the brain combining two separate images that came in through those two organs that are plugging those voids and turns them **right side** up again, now registered as "visual stimuli" triggering senses reactions thoughts feelings emotions potentially activating areas of the mind you never thought twice about both old and new ones and the synapses are firing off left and right and middle depending on whether the visual stimuli has been previously experienced in that case it opens up some file or chamber or **passage** where the experience of that particular thing is located which then opens up a series of other files based on whether it is associated with pleasure or displeasure or neutral or other which may lead to memories which may lead to thoughts which may lead to feelings or emotions which may lead to other bodily reactions and so on, or perhaps it is a new file in that case it will be a slightly different process in any case chambers are opened and closed in an endless process that happens constantly in just splits of seconds and it is a process that is more nonlinear and cyclic than linear if one thinks about it, more give and take, in that you are taking from the world and giving back and taking and giving pushing and pulling as the muscles of the eyes contract and that happens as often as the eye moves which is a lot seeing as the eyes don't stay still for very long in their respective sockets and most never thought about it once in a lifetime.

Look again.

I challenge myself to look again to turn the bloody thing **upside down** and **right side up** again like the eyes do a billion times over without even being asked until the thing is no longer what it was when this began and yet still is in some way reminiscent of that but forever changed based on the fact **these eyes** have fallen upon it at this particular moment

in time and based on the fact **these** particular eyes have fallen upon it as opposed to some other eyes for some other eyes would change it in a **different** way unique in its own right. How far beyond can the eye penetrate and see nothing? To break something apart. to dissect it to bits and dissect those into bits and dissect those into bits and those into bits and those into bits until you are looking at molecules atoms the very atoms that the universe is comprised of now blink and you are looking at the universe in an atom and you never really thought about it the very elements that are underneath this thing I am enamored by. The **threads** that if you were to chase them, to sustain the act of pulling upon them for long enough you would feel that the whole bloody thing would come unraveling yes eventually the whole bloody thing would come unraveling but somehow it just keeps going back around twisting and spiraling and giving and taking expanding contracting from clarity to formlessness to nebulousness and that is how transparency falls into opaqueness and back. At least that's the impression I gathered from these impressions of objects that I have gathered along the way during this particular part of the (w)hole.

And so look again.

"Blessed is he who sees with the heart, but the heart is not with what he sees."-Jesus⁴

To capture the essence of looking again. You know, that kind of looking that children do. The sort of looking that children do the first time that their eyes fall upon some object in this world of senses, before the vision is dulled from routine and monotony. To appreciate the qualities of things. To appreciate sight.

⁴ Khalidi, Tarif. *The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and Stories in Islamic Literature*. P. 106. (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 2001.)



figure 3: (w)hole part fragment (nothing to see here folk). Detail. 2011.

Mark Making.



I find no form of expression like mark making,
with a pencil or paintbrush or crayon or charcoal or otherwise.

In a spontaneous movement of the hand that holds the mark making tool, I am able
to capture and articulate the existence of a cycle – between myself and the world the
world as visual stimuli that

enters through the eye to the brain the mind the heart down through the arm to the
fingers that hold the mark making utensil and now it is an expression that is
responding to the world and contributing new information to that world---an
ongoing cycle that we all are a part of.

Mark making is- primal sophistication.

Primal in the sense that it is stripped to its most basic elements.
It is raw. It is visceral. It conveys a sense of urgency.

Mark making is emotion actualized

it is feeling and at the same time it is meant to be FELT.

Sophisticated in the sense that there is nothing SIMPLE about this. Sophisticated in the sense that there is nothing simple about holding a mark making utensil in your hand and attempting to articulate the mind through the movement of that hand. Sophisticated in the sense that there is nothing simple about the millions of layers of meaning that we are surrounded by that we are constantly immersed in taking from and contributing to. Sophisticated in the sense that there is nothing simple about trying to confront the chaos of this world and of the mind and situate it into order through making marks on a surface.---(slide of chaos into order) through the act of mark making. I find nothing simple in hand eye mind heart world coordination. Trying to get all those things to line up in a series of marks is sophisticated.

In this act of primal sophistication, I am forced to consider the relationship between the mind and the heart and the world. What does it mean to think with one's heart? What is cognition?

Layers of marks are layers of meaning.

in many traditions outside of the west, thinking is an action ~~that is said to~~ take place in the heart as opposed to the brain.

The mind is actually considered to be the heart. What is the relationship of the brain and the heart when it comes to mark making when it comes to making things?

These are questions, areas of inquiry that I don't claim to have the answers to but I do attempt to explore whole-hearted in the whole part.

The act of relating myself to the past, a gesture of flattening time by engaging in a tradition that goes back 18,000 years or more.

In using mark making as a vehicle of expression, I am accessing a larger human tradition of recording information. To make marks is to begin a conversation of sorts—a conversation that began thousands of years ago or more. To make marks is to begin a conversation with individuals who made marks on the walls of a cave in Lascaux France --representations of their reality on a 2-dimensional surface. To reference those individuals through the act of making marks is to flatten time to bring those individuals right before me, It is to peer into that cave to attempt to unearth some truth about the origin of this.



Artist making marks in studio. 2011.

Word.

"Words spoken are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul; written words are the signs of words spoken. As writing, so also is speech not the same for all races of men [i.e., humans]. But the mental affections themselves, of which these words are primarily signs, are the same for the whole of mankind [i.e., humankind], as are also the objects of which those affections are representations, or likenesses, images, copies."⁵-Aristotle.



Figure 4: (w)hole part fragment (KFR/CVR). Detail of *Cube*. Mixed Media. 2011.

⁵ Aristotle, *On Interpretation*, I, 16a4-9, in *The Categories, On Interpretation*, translated by Cooke, Harold; *Prior Analytics*, trans. Hugh Tredennick, p. 115. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938)



Figure 5: (w)hole part fragment (this the stage...)
Detail. Mixed Media on Homasote. 2011.

The word is weight. A set of symbols that are combined to make communication easier. To help in the process of orienting oneself to the world. Their role in defining, in naming, in identifying, in relating. They carry *meaning*. Words are weight. The whole “sticks and stones” bit, I do not buy it. Indeed the letter, the *fragment* of the word, when truly considered, is a wonder. The pen can cut. Notice how I just referenced the pen, which is a reference to the act of writing which is a reference back to the word. Metonym. Words are elastic. Metaphor. Words

expand and contract. In these words, there is the history of man. In words there are journeys that transcend space and time. In words there are windows to beginnings, to middles. To ends and back to beginnings. A glimpse into the origin of meanings. A glimpse into where I come from. Where you come from. In words there is metamorphosis. How has meaning changed and how has it stayed the same? Words cover. They reveal. They provide information and obscure information. They are keys and they are locks. They include and they exclude. There are worlds embedded in words, spaces, surfaces, ideas, objects, embedded in words. There are words embedded in worlds, spaces, in surfaces, in ideas, in objects.

There is something funny in staring at a word, in recognizing all of its characters, knowing that it contains some answer, and not knowing. It is an enticement Visual puns, double entendres. Words are layers.

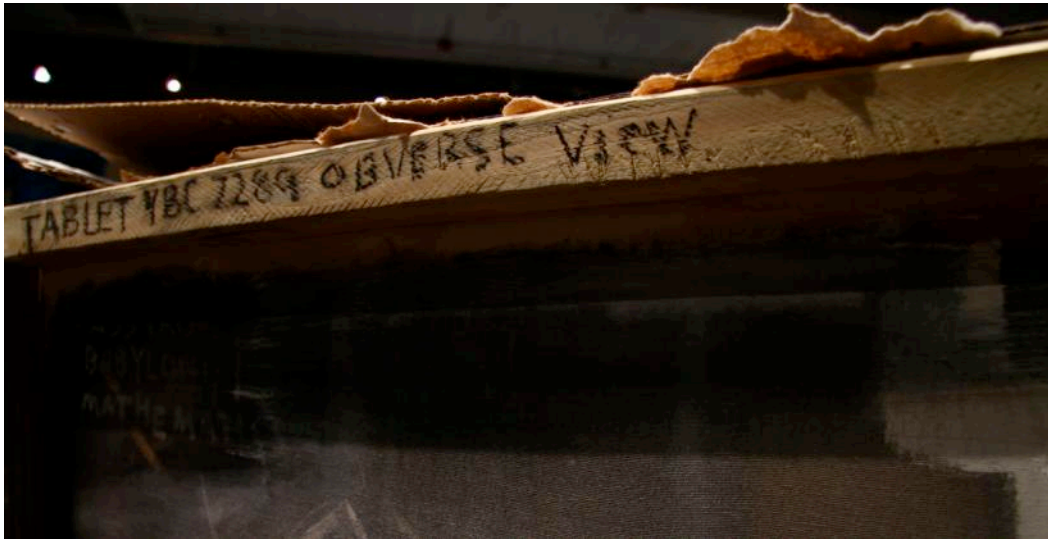


Figure 6: (w)hole part fragment (Tablet YBC obverse view). Detail of *Cube*. Mixed media. 2011.

The nature of the word and its relationship to its *referent* –how these things come to embody characteristics of one another and vice-versa. The process of saying or

writing a word is weight. The act of naming, of labeling, of referencing-- is transforming. If I gave you a piece of chocolate, and told you that it was feces while you were eating it, how would it alter the experience of that chocolate, even if it actually *was* chocolate? How would it actually change the *sensation*, the taste? Isn't the opposite true? If I gave you a box, in a certain context, told you something about it, what could I make you believe about that box? How could that box be transformed, translated into experience? How could that box lead to another world?

To take a small box, to paint it yellow and black, and to apply fragments of tar paper to it. To scratch away a layer of the black--covering and uncovering--to reveal a single word. "Pitch."

The word "pitch" brings to mind "pitch black" which means, "dark as pitch." What is pitch? A substance derived from tar that, among other things, has a history of being used to cover up, to hide, to conceal. As is the case with some pre-Islamic Arabs, who would use pitch to cover the diseased skin of a camel in order to sell it. The word for this act is "dajjala," which relates to, among other things, "impostor."



Figure 7: (w)hole part fragment (pitch box). Acrylic and Tar Paper on Cardboard. 8x14x5. 2011.

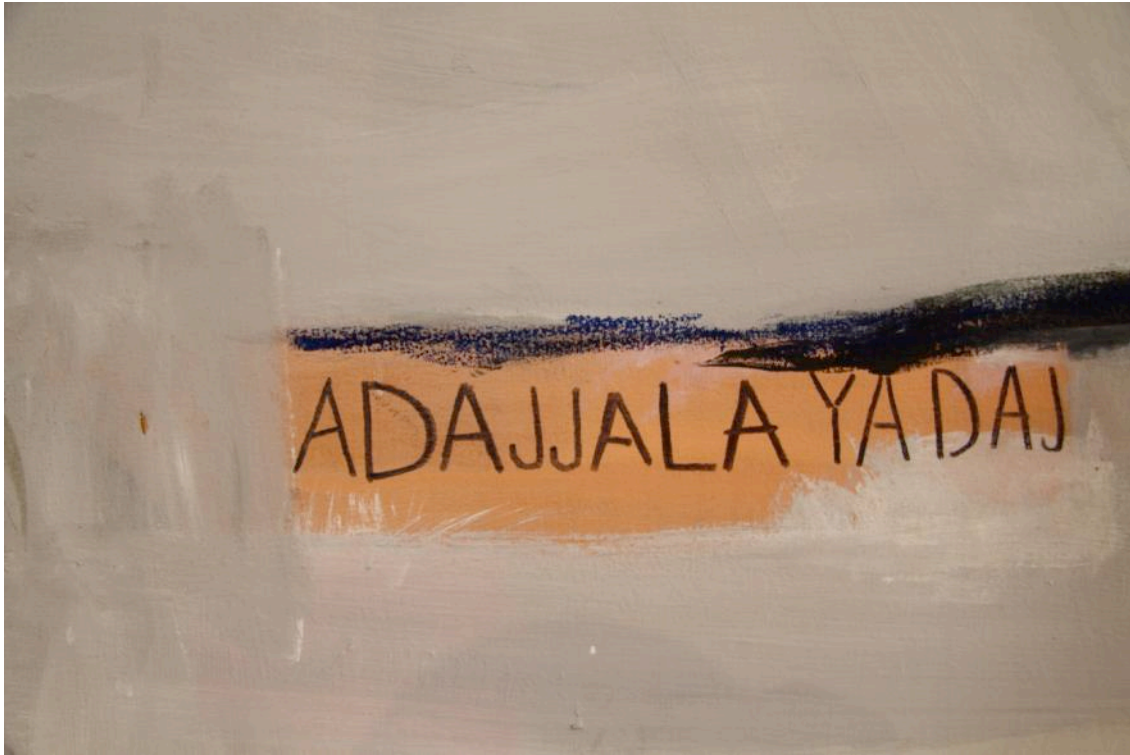


Figure 8: (w)hole part fragment (*yadajjala*). Detail of *Eidos Wall*. Mixed Media on Canvas. 2011.

Alchemy

'Alchemy'-an appropriate word to consider. In changing the essence of a thing. What is it to say this word, to write this word, to invoke "alchemy?" It is to reference a 2500-year-old tradition that has traversed space and time.

Alchemy is "from the medieval latin term *alchimia*," [which arrived in the occident from the orient via] the Arabic *al-kimia*⁶, from the Persian *kimia*, meaning Elixir.⁷ This is from the Ancient Greek *chemeia*,⁸ a version of the Egyptian name for Egypt,

⁶ Wehr, Hans. *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, Fourth Ed.* Edited J Milton Cowan. (Urbana: Spoken Languages Services, 1994.)

⁷ Alchemy, Oxford Dictionaries, "oxforddictionaries.com"

⁸ the etymology in Liddell, Henry George; Robert Scott (1901). *A Greek-English Lexicon* Eighth edition. (Oxford: Clarendon Press.)

which was based on the Ancient Egyptian word *kēme* (hieroglyphic Khmi, or kem), which means “*black earth*.”⁹

The four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, thought by the ancients to be the substances that all things are composed of, were influential in alchemy.¹⁰ Not to mention the inexhaustible volumes of information on these four elements and their omnipresence in human culture.

I ask again, what does it mean to invoke alchemy?



Figure 9: (w)hole part fragment (air, earth...). Detail. 2011.

⁹ Alchemy, <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=alchemy>

¹⁰ Mattern, Karen. *Canticle of Creatures*. http://knitandcontemplation.typepad.com/canticle_of_creatures/



Figure 10: *(w)hole part fragment (elements)*. Detail. Mixed Media on Homasote Panel. 2011.

The appearance of Greek and Latin root words in *the (w)hole part* are there to chart, to provide a glimpse into the origin of Western Civilization, its relationship to other

civilizations, its relationship to us. Because these worlds are intricately interwoven. Everything is. The Arabic words function in the same way. Many words have passed back and forth between the Orient and the Occident. You can chart the development of sciences, disciplines, cultures, ideas in that way. *Give and take. Cycles.* Secrets shared or handed down or appropriated. The word interacts with other sets of symbols in strange ways that appeal to me. Knowledge. Information. Some of them are paradoxical in their presence. Language is constantly changing. Meaning changes. Double entendres. The presence of roots and origin words does not so much open up the past as bring forth the realization that the past is right here.

The word is encoded like DNA rubix cubes and it's waiting on you to commit to yourself to twisting and turning



Figure 11: the (w)hole part fragment (cube). 2011.



Figure 12: (w)hole part fragment (plato's cave). Detail of Cube. 2011.

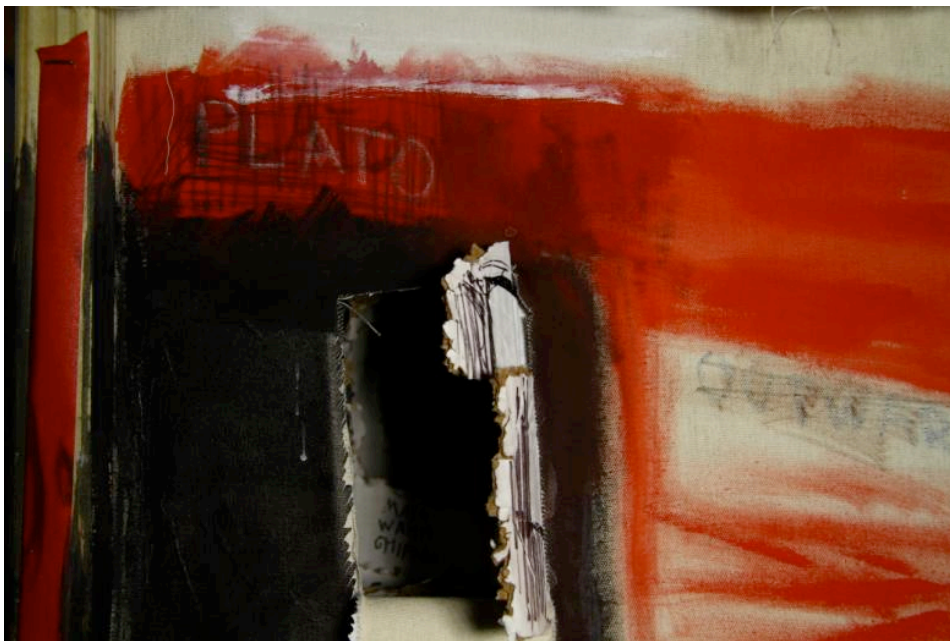


Figure 13: (w)hole part fragment (Plato's Cave). Detail of Cube.



Figure 14: (w)hole part fragment (plato's cave). Detail of *Cube*. Mixed Media. 2011.

To define and redefine the surface, the material, the object. To claim the object, to act upon it, to assign it a new identity, a new meaning, a new purpose. To engage in a process that somehow alters its properties, its very *essence* through some gesture that involves the intellect, the soul, the will, and the hand. My relationship to the thing changes it. Your relationship to it changes it.

“Humanity’s relation to things is the key; and the motivation towards logos...arises from the need to be in the right relationship with the inner and outer essence of the cosmos.”¹¹

Alchemy is transformation. Transformation of low to high. A journey from the “base” to the “noble,” if only for a moment. In another time it was metal to gold. But that has expanded. Gold is not just gold anymore. Neither is alchemy. And so you can say it has at once changed and stayed the same. One man’s detritus is another man’s treasure.

Meaning expands and contracts constantly.

These materials, these surfaces, these objects, are embedded with meaning by the simple fact that a human being has dared to imbue them with spirit. Spirit has dared to touch them. Has transformed them. Has made them clear. Has obscured them. Has allowed other people’s minds to touch them to shape them to derive from them to read into them to read out of them. To attempt to grasp the intangible. To use these things as conduits to point to *higher things, please do not get entranced by their ‘thingness.’* It is Plato pointing to the sun from the mouth of the cave! It is Aristotle pointing at the earth to reference the *heavens!* The quandry of trying to transform material objects that allude to immateriality. Advanced alchemy.

¹¹ Critchlow, Keith. “The Platonic Tradition on the Nature of Proportion.” *Geometry and Architecture*. P. 14. (Massachusetts: The Lindisfarne Association, 1980)



Figure 16: Studio shot of pizza boxes before alchemy.

I am enamored by this thing. The act of acting upon something low. The act of scowering the gutters on the periphery of academia looking for the pieces of something forgotten, the pieces I'd forgotten. The parts you'd forgotten. Or discarded. Or disregarded. One man's detritus is another man's treasure. And vice versa.

Circumventing academia digging through the academic gutters for the residue of consumer culture marginalized culture human culture. Every people's uselessness, what a palette it can make. I wandered the streets looking for these things. I wandered myself looking for ways to act upon these things to transform them. Humble materials are involved here. Noble materials are involved here. As an act of defiance. As an act of conformity. Look what I gathered from them, scowering the gutters, the periphery. These are the results of wandering in cycles with shutter eyes st st st st st st st st st st st st st st st st st stutter-ized discovering something new on each go around.

Gutterized (verb)

Circumventing a town a world surrounded by invisible barriers trying to find a place to make a space my own. Set your senses to euphoric sensoria. Cardinal coordinates designed to disorient you.



Figure 17: Pizza Boxes post-alchemy. *The whole part fragment (the wall)*. Mixed Media on Pizza Boxes. 2011.

There is something in taking a found object, a discarded cardboard box. Some material that had some unassuming function that no one particularly noticed because no one has particularly cared to look at it beyond its function as carrier of food or package or whatever. To take that same box, to take it to the studio, to cover it in fragments of tar paper, black paint, and to inscribe a single word on it: “cave.”¹² This act of labeling is an act of transformation. A passage. Suddenly it is not the same thing. “Ceci n’est pas une boîte.”¹³ This is not just some box anymore, some box that held a pizza and was done away with. It is a carrier of history, of meaning, of weight. Now to take that box and nail it to an opening resembling a door between two walls in a gallery, and that space has been transformed. Simple gestures can transform. Simple gestures can claim and reclaim. Simple gestures can subvert. And

¹² Plato, Lascaux.

¹³ This is my revision of Rene Magritte’s *The Betrayal of images*, or “ceci n’est pas une pipe.” Oil on Canvas. 1928.

now it is a portal. A passage that must be *dealt* with. The weight of the object when appropriately acted upon can be something.

Alchemy spreads beyond the page. It has transformed this square into a box into an explosive device. An explosive device that sprays fragments of shrapnel all about. And that is how this space has transformed. The alchemy has extended, expanded, transformed itself in a series of successive efforts, revelations, experiments. From transforming an idea, a psychological or physical or spiritual experience into a material, a surface an object. It works in stages. It goes from transforming a low material into something worth looking at for some. And that material cannot be contained after a point, once it has been inspired. Once it has been willed. It has to take over an entire environment. It has to be experienced, not as something that is isolated, distant, remote, alien. If you set off bombs and let them explode, the shrapnel would have an effect on its environment. That is the whole point. Or rather the whole part. Object has to become a space. And that is the journey of the square to the cube to the space.

I have been staring into this empty box and I have found things there. It has stared into me. Give and take. Cyclic.

These are futile attempts at defining something that tries to defy definition. These are parts of a whole. The presentation of the written component of this thesis may

appear disrupted, disjointed, disoriented, disarray, discombobulated; I assure you that is intentional. Incoherence is a myth.

It makes reference to illusion. Being trapped in illusory worlds that give way to other illusions. We all experience illusion. Layers of illusion. Our very eye has various aspects of illusion embedded in its very function. And that is just one layer of a multilayered multitiered process. They call it “trompe l’oeil” in French. A trick of the eye.¹⁴

“Beware of the eye. It can deceive you.” Obi Wan Kinboi, Star Wars. 1976.

And so I sit here speaking to the past. So I sit here speaking to the future.
So I sit here speaking to the present. Time collapses through these simple gestures.

I do not want to claim to have the answers. Even if I think I do. Even if I think I do have an answer. However I do not hesitate to offer questions. For that is what this is all about for me. Threads of inquiry. Following the threads of inquiry into places far and beyond that are near, examining what has been right before my very eyes this entire time, hidden in the most conspicuous of places.

¹⁴ Adams, Laurie. “Art and Illusion.” *Art Across Time. Volume one: Prehistory to the Fourteenth C.* Page 6. (Boston: McGraw-Hill College, 1999).

Space.



Figure 18: Artist working in Studio Space Installation of (w)hole part.

How to orient myself to these spaces? In these spaces? These literal spaces? These metaphorical spaces. These linguistic spaces? These psychological spaces? The overlapping, the simultaneous experience of these different notions of *space*. How to define these spaces? How do those spaces, in turn, define us? Or me? Because that is the case of course. Give and take. A *cycle*. What cultural forces contribute to the construction of perspective of space? Meditations on space? Improvisational space.

I am standing in a gallery. The gallery is a space. It is white. The walls are white. The floor is white. The ceiling is white. The pedestals, white. White on top of white on

top of white. Layers of white on the wall, covering previous attempts at something. Holes spackled, you can still see the scars if you look close though. I can go into many a gallery, and find that this is the case. White walls. Why? Well I don't have the answer to that. But I would endeavor to presume for the sake of more questions, well presumably because it is neutral. It is neutral. As in "not aligned with or supporting any side or position in a controversy."¹⁵ Synonyms such as impartial, disinterested, dispassionate, uninvolved, unbiased are telling. That brings to mind the next question. Is neutral really *possible*?? And if that is the case, then at what point does it cease to be neutral? Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Neutral. Is neutral still neutral or has it begun to occupy a different kind of *space*? And subsequently to the existence of a phenomenon in the real world? If I build a billion galleries. And each gallery has white walls white floors white ceilings white lights. And each gallery contains a certain kind of art that has certain associations, is it neutral? What happens when I *remove* something from that space? How much of the space is left in it when it enters a *new* space? Does it reflect or contradict my claim, the claim that I don't want to claim to have an answer? I want to make sure you understand ***that I am not offering an answer. I am following a thread, a line of inquiry that will lead to other spaces. To other worlds. To other times. Real or imagined or psychological or otherwise. That is how this works. Following the threads through time through spaces. To discover. To question?***

Where I am is what I become. Where I am becomes me. I impact my space and the space impacts me. It's a process of absorption and change. This is an endless cycle. I am a channel. Do not disturb me in the act of channeling.

¹⁵ Neutral. Dictionary.com.



Figure 19: Artist working in studio space installation of (w)hole part. 2011.

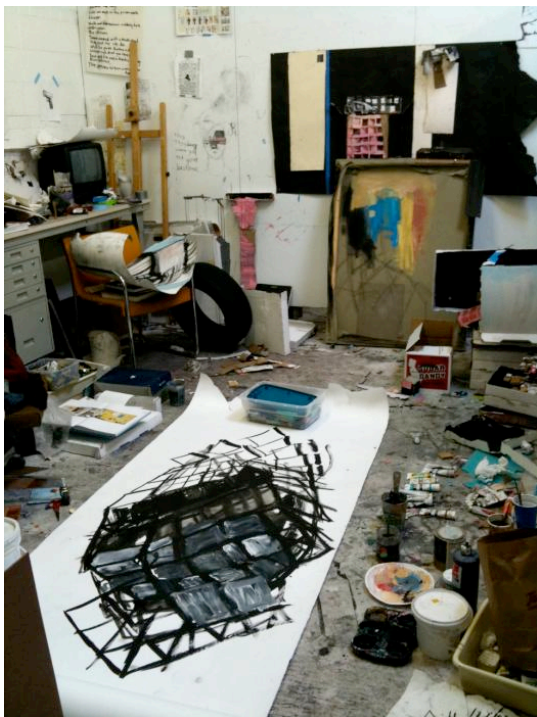


Figure 20: Studio space. 2010.

My Paleolithic moments are more Lascaux cave painterly if I stop to consider what it means to be 17,300 years old.¹⁶

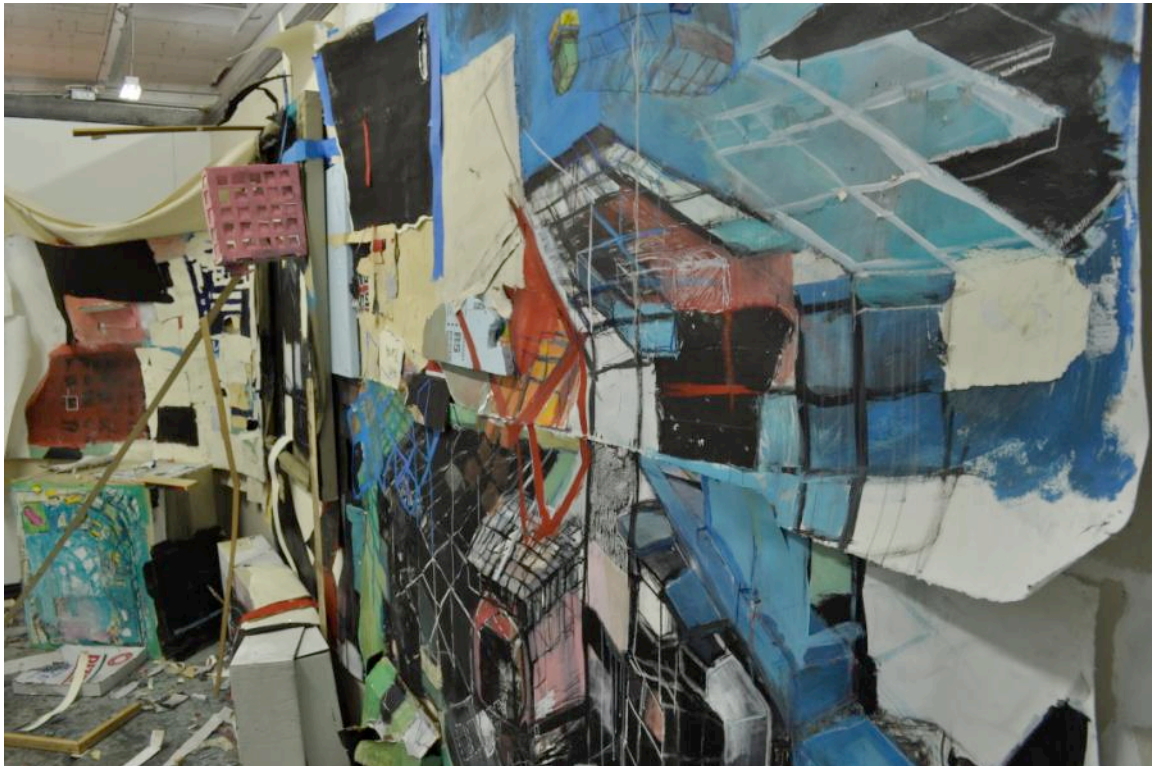


Figure 21: the (w)hole part-studio installation. Mixed Media. Enter dimensions. 2010-2011.

¹⁶ Adams, Laurie. "Upper Paleolithic Painting." *Art Across Time*. P. 33. (Boston: McGraw Hill College, 1999).

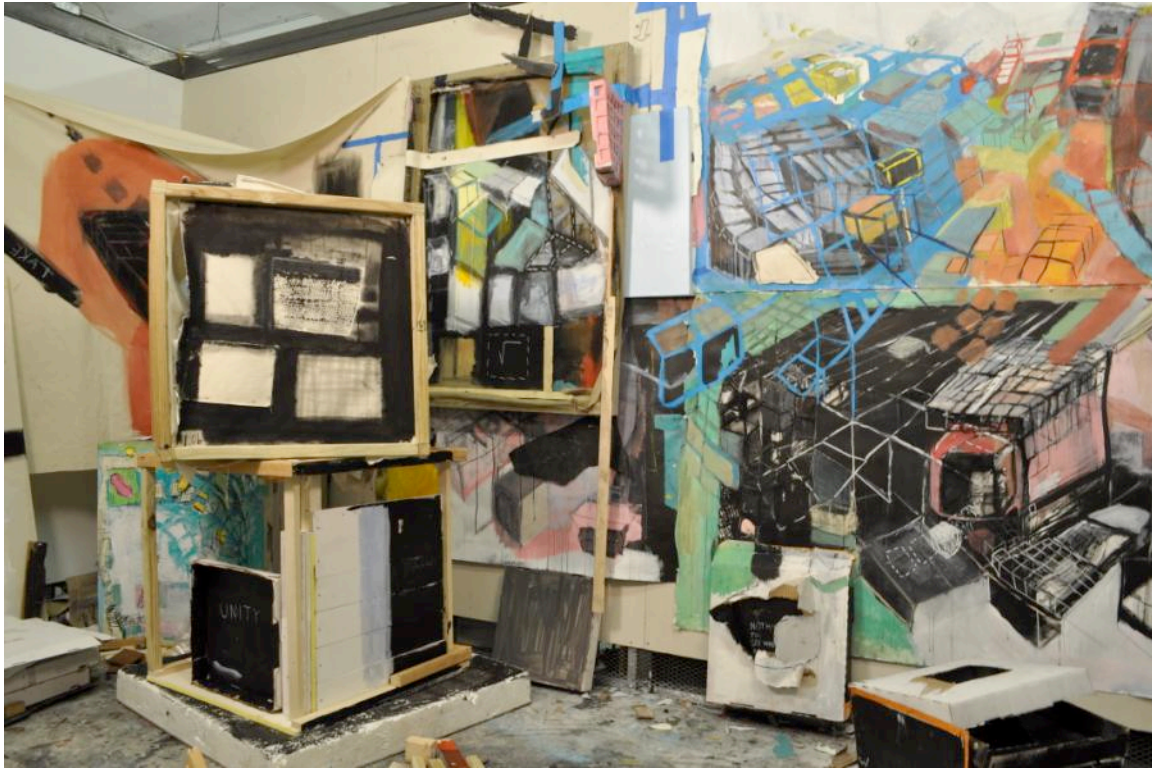


Figure 22: *the (w)hole part-studio installation. Enter dimensions.* Mixed Media. 2010-2011.

On the alchemy of space.

working definition on a theory of anti-space.

The spaces that aren't. Or the negation of space. Or the assertion of space through the negation of space. Or the act of defining space that defies or reacts to another. Antispace is formed or negotiated by the individuals who occupy those spaces, the individuals whose very existence, whose actions and the notions attached to them, both real and imaginary, conscious or unconscious, lead to the definition of such space. Those walking *voids*. Parts of the (w)hole.

The establishment of anti-space occurs in reaction to the psychological and/or physical experience of another space, or the notion of another space, or the

perception of another space (real or imagined), subconscious or conscious or otherwise. A slang- synonym word for the establishment of anti-space is “to gutterize.” That is a verb. To subvert a space and its intention in being there, stated, implied, or assumed through cultural norms, practices, expectations.

Creation of anti-space may occur in many ways that include but are not limited to the following:

1. *The mere presence of certain individuals in a space can gutterize it.*
2. *The actions of certain individuals in a space may result in its gutterization.*
3. *The residue of certain individuals in a space may gutterize it.*

The individuals who create anti-space can experience anti-space in “normal” space. As stated before, anti-space is sometimes formed in reaction to such a normal space. The irony of the space that is there, that yes, you may stand in it because you have been given permission to, that you may physically access, but understand that this is not *your* space, that you have no ownership there, that you may not feel 100% comfortable there, that you may be questioned at any moment while occupying that space, and it is an unstated rule that the space will always remain inaccessible to you on some level. And you know that. There is an invisible wall there. And you must get that through your thick skull. In the space is air, transparent as any space, and yet it is opaque. You can look right into such a space and derive nothing from it at times.

It may laugh in your face. It may mock you. It may scoff at you. It may intrude into your personal space and make you redefine your sense of personal space by

overwhelming you with its self, by making you hyperconscious of yourself, through what you are or what you are perceived to be, or what you are not and what you are perceived not to be.

It may force you into being a participant, willing or not, as you enter it, as you exit it as well. Your only choice once you know it exists, if you do not want it to defy you, is NOT to enter it. But the catch is this. If your purpose in not entering the space is to try to thwart its defiance of you, then you have already failed, because it has impacted your decision to avoid it. It hurls itself at you endlessly. It recedes if only for a moment to gather momentum, to gather up the energy to do it again.

Give and take. Cyclic.

Disorientation. Dislocation. Reorientation.

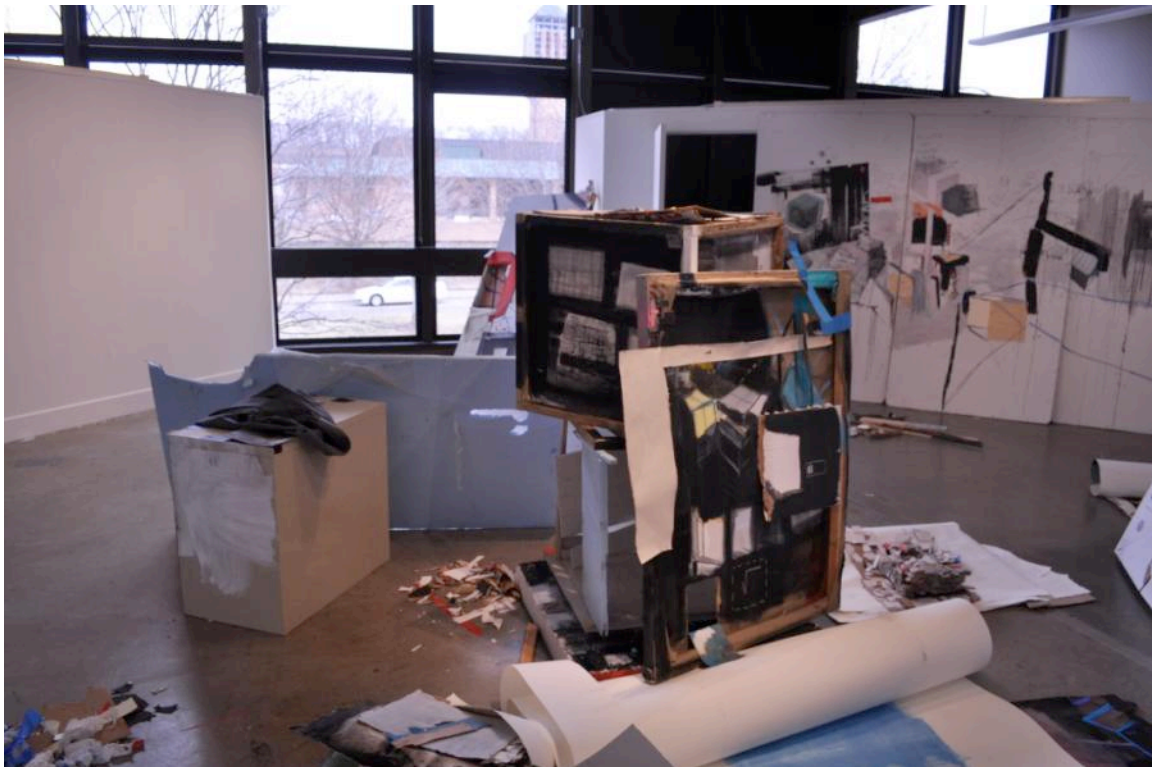


Figure 23: *the (w)hole part*- gallery installation process. (Establishing anti-space in Robbins Gallery. 2011).

More on Space

Space—How to impact a space.

Let these ideas lead into each other.

Build explosive objects, place them and take cover.

These objects are explosives. Land mines. Detonated devices.

To control a space to activate a space. Not to just place objects in a place but to really own an environment that you do not own. How to manipulate the space so that the space itself conveys the idea. To have the lines move through the space to have objects move beyond their conventional borders to let them actually flow or spill into other objects. The challenge becomes how to improvise. How to work with what you have. this is true both of the studio and of the exhibition. In my studio I work with the space that I had to convey an experience. The challenge becomes how to communicate that experience in another environment that was totally different, to adapt the content and the work to that new place. To go in there with a set amount of materials and work under the constraint of time to push that as far as I could. An experiment. A bomb. That in itself is a cycle. Give and take. This space has made me who I am. I have made it what it is in return. And the cycle will continue.



Figure 24: the (w)hole part- Installation view. Mixed Media. 2011.

Line

One day I was walking along and I noticed a thread. A line. It was lying on a paper, or in a book, or on the Internet, or on the street, or somewhere. Innocuous, inconspicuous and yet not, and yet it and yet it occurred to me like a burning bush of sorts might I perceived a fire and so I gathered my composure and committed to following this line. It climbed off that paper on a *trajectory*.

Line is something that extends beyond pages beyond the ages that allows me to talk to the sages that came before that came now and that *will* come perhaps.

Line is one element that enabled me to show connections between the various parts of the (w)hole in the exhibition. These lines have enabled me to make the connections apparent. To make the space relate to itself in ways that it wouldn't otherwise.



Figure 25 and 26: the (w)hole part-gallery installation views. Mixed Media. 2011.





Figure 27: the (w)hole part- cave view. Installation. Mixed Media. 2011.

These threads have taken me in and out. Down and around. Over and through. Cycles. I've enjoyed. Cycles that when followed they show me new things on each go round.



Figure 28: *the (w)hole part*-installation view. Mixed Media. 2011.

A line can connect one thing to another. And that's what will be done.

One loose thread on the sweater

Now the whole thing's unraveled.

One loose string and tada an unraveled sweater on my hands.

Pulling on this forever

The common thread

Its ending its beginning

A few sentences strung together

Strung out together

I found a thread and I started pulling on it

Now I'm holding a pile of yarn.

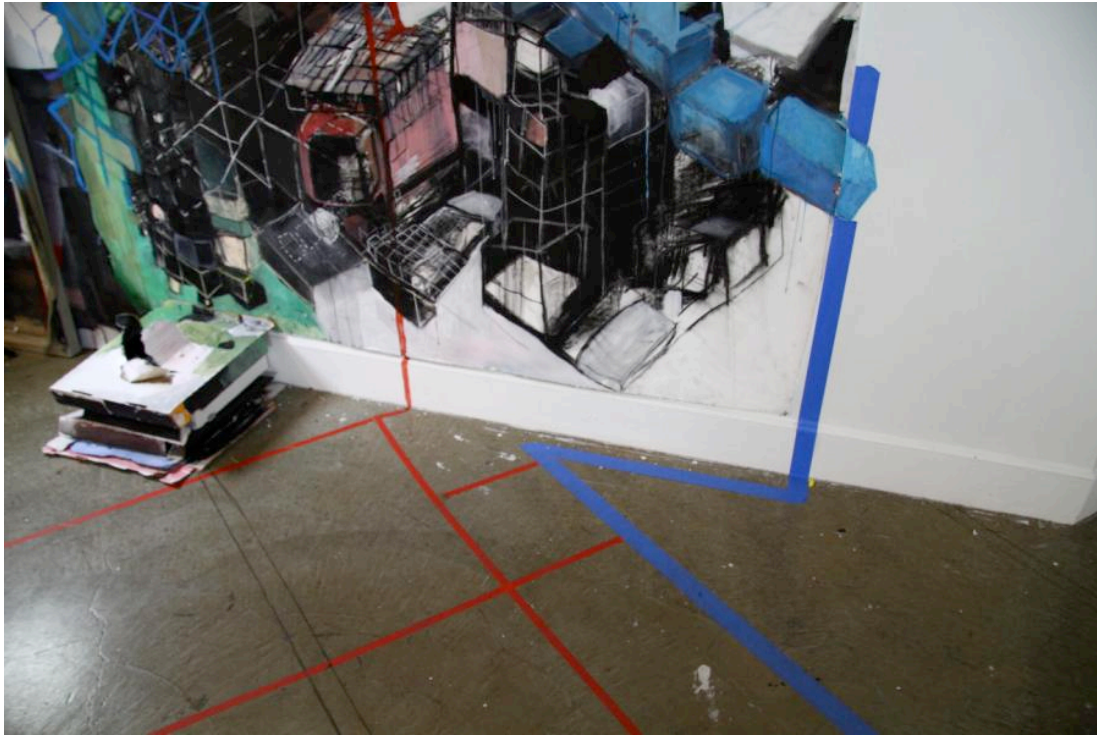


Figure 29: the (w)hole part-gallery installation. Mixed Media. 2011.



Figure 30: the (w)hole part-studio installation. Detail. 2010-2011.

Fragments



Figure 31: the (w)hole part fragment (post/ant). Installation detail. Mixed Media. 2011.

Several parts of this hole thing have developed through the experience of feeling like I am constantly being pulled apart and put back together. In a sense, at least on one level, I have projected my psychological and physical experiences into a process of making. Some parts of the text attempt to describe those experiences.

What is the fragment? What is the part, exactly? What happens when we only see a part? What happens to the mind? What is closed off, and what is forcefully opened? What happens when confronted with the reality, that I cannot see it all? What happens when intellectually the reality is realized and the intellect tries to reconcile what the eye perceives, that we face illusion on a daily basis?

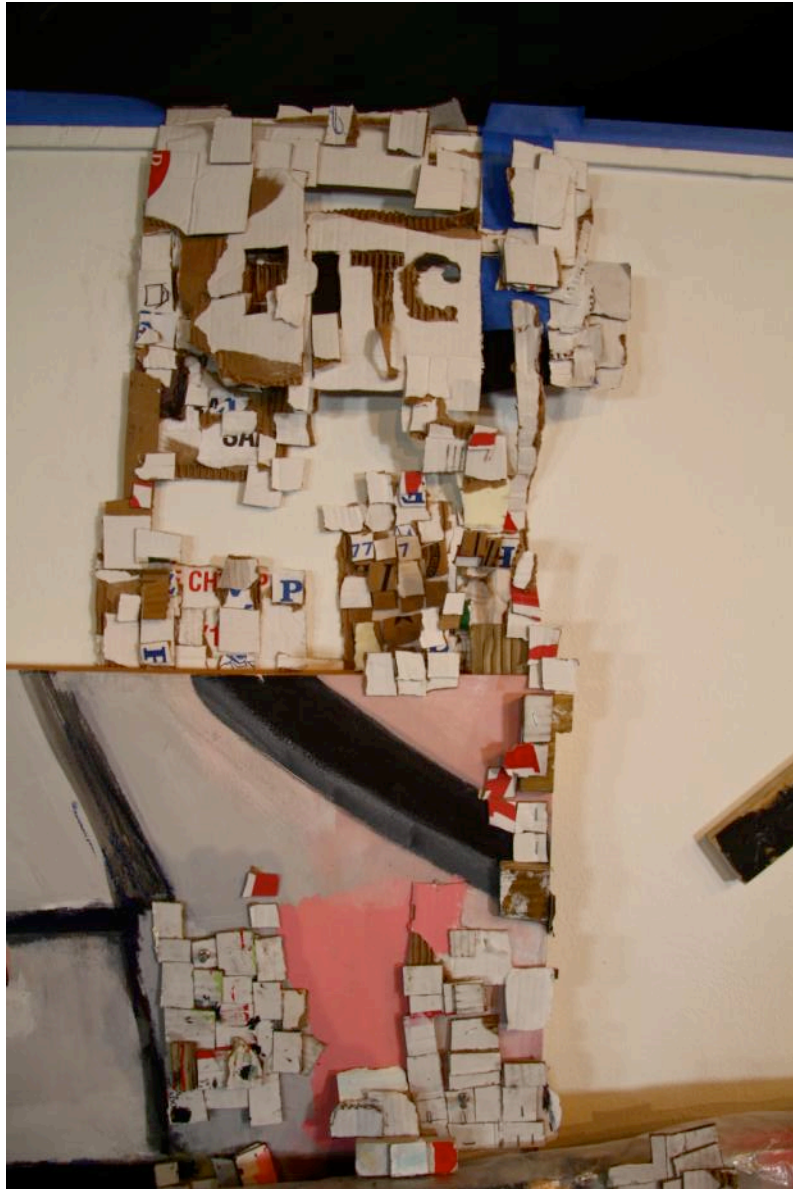


Figure 32: *the (w)hole part fragment (pitch)*. Installation Detail from *Eidos Wall*. Cardboard on wall, acrylic on canvas. 2011.



Figure 33: the (w)hole part fragment. Detail of Cube. Cardboard, wood. 2011.

Fragments of realities. Fragments of perception. Fragments of illusion. Little bits of many times many places, many ideas many forms, Forms, are present at once. This is true of everything. From words to space to people and all that is attached to them.

Think of it as shattering a glass. Shattering a glass in a space. Then another. Then another. All in that same space. Now think of one of the glasses as yourself. Now think of the other glasses as other people. Now imagine re-gathering yourself after that. How do you go about locating yourself? How do you go about orienting yourself? Who are you now?



Figure 33: the (w)hole part fragment. Detail from File Cabinet one. Mixed Media on File Cabinet. 2008-2011.

The constant act of coming apart of coming back together and forming meaning.
That is the story of this life.

In the fragments are the past and present and future as a continuous moment. I am
at once here I am at once there. I see the past in the present, and those with insight
can understand that while not being able to predict the future, they can understand

that there are parts *here* that will be present *there*, just by observing the nature of things. The cyclic nature of things.



Figure 34: *the (w)hole part fragment (Eidos Wall)*. Installation. Dimensions here. 2011.

The fragment is a piece of shrapnel. From a bomb that was planted.



Figure 35: *the (w)hole part fragment (Eidos Wall)*. Detail. Mixed Media on Multiple canvases. 2011.

And if you tamper with *explosives* long enough you learn little things about them.

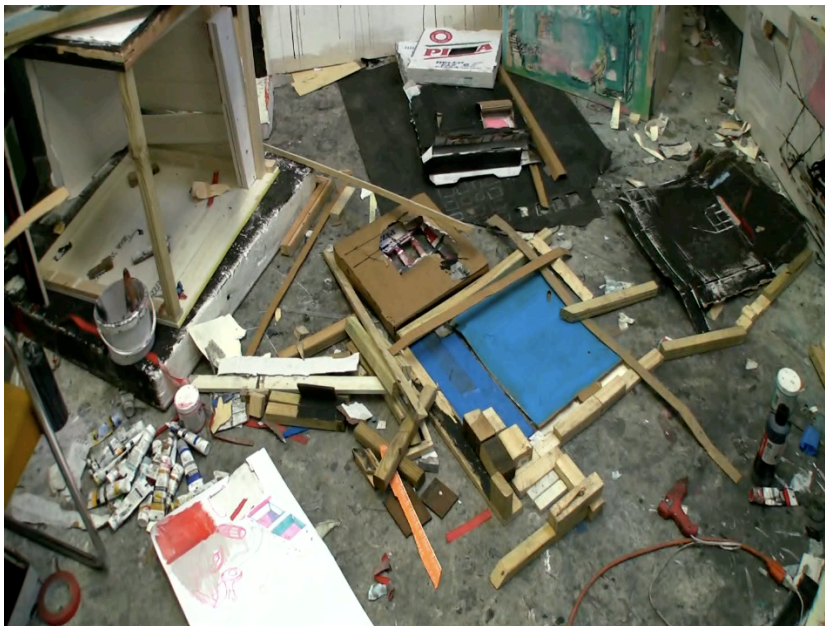


Figure 36 : *shrapnel fragments in studio*.

And how to control them. And the lack thereof. Because there will only be certain things that you pretend to learn how to control. Because there is always something that must be unpredictable about this explosion in order for it to remain that. There is something implicit in “explosion” that lends itself to lack of control. If a man could control himself, why would he explode when and if he does? I mean that explosion in the figurative sense. That’s an example of the flexibility of words. But there’s a reason for the reason we say that, something that is embedded in “explosion.” That is the nature of the explosion. But maybe that’s just me. Now you can talk to some demolition experts and they might contest that. That there are those who know how to blow things up and completely predict. They have reduced the act of explosion or implosion or whatever they call it to that. But I, in return contest that. That has become something formulaic. Formulaic.



Figure 37: *the (w)hole part fragment (“if you gaze into the Abyss...”)*. Detail. Mixed Media on paper.

So the fragment is a piece of shrapnel. From a bomb that got there and went off. And it's formed from all of these worlds that you climb in and out of on a daily basis. All you have to do is check the internet. The act of gathering things. Accumulating things. Both material and not.

And if you tamper with *implosives* long enough, well you learn some things.

Like ways of directing it, channeling it. But leave a little bit of room. That space between predictability and the acceptance of not knowing--that will be a rich space to tread. So you plan some things and let some other things happen. Because those things will happen. And as for yourself, just accept that those things would happen and greet them as things you knew you wouldn't know. If you approach it like that, you will see the results of the outcome as something entirely different. Acceptance. I don't mean indiscriminate acceptance. Remember that this is about balance, between control and not. Between the things you have learned through keen observation and things you have not.

The fragment is perspective.

Fragments are just that. A fragment is just another part. Yet there is something intriguing about this particular part. This piece. This fragment. You can think about this fragment in many different ways. The part is itself a whole, because contained within that fragment are fragments. Artifacts. And in those fragments there can be a wholeness. Synecdoche.

The fragments have been accumulated over time stored away for safe keeping to be transformed into this device.

For example:

I am part skeleton army of Jason and the Argonauts¹⁷ the teeth of the dragon sowed in the ground on the quest for that Golden Fleece. What does that mean to me, mean to you?

I am part Hollow Man.¹⁸I am part cave man stepping out of the mouth of that cave of Lascaux on the pavement because that is the origin of this. I never learned how to behave outside of this cube.

Paleolithic creativity summed it up quite well. By that I mean to grasp in these five digits something that can make a mark, some humble material humble beginning from the "black earth" (see previous paragraph on alchemy and its Egyptian origin), not unlike my own beginning and my own ending, dust to dust (cyclic reference) and proceed to apply pressure, proceed to apply pressure to a surface, a surface they say is impenetrable, a surface strong enough to hold the weight of the soul of man, the four humors, the four elements, the weight of the ability to articulate, to track to record, to convey--evidence of existing evidence of being ("I was here" scribbled on a bathroom wall and then covered up)--and then you respond to that mark--responses to responses-- and in that act in one spontaneous movement is the collapsing of time because in that moment I am peering into the cave, and in that cave there he is and he is me 17000 years in the making so we are now peering in a mirror late infant stage in the Lacanian sense¹⁹ and all of a sudden that surface has been *scratched*. Beneath it is another. Another layer. Responses to responses. Reactions to reaction. And so repeat the process.

Breathe these fragments are snapshots of how we got here and where we are headed. When I say that you have to visualize the image of the man emerging from

¹⁷ *Jason and the Argonauts*. Greek Mythology.

¹⁸ T.S. Eliot Reference-*The Hollow Men*. 1925

¹⁹ Lacan, Jacques, *Écrits : a selection*. ; trans. by Alan Sheridan. (New York : Norton, 1977.)

the cave and don't take it literally. By that I mean think of what a cave could be, and why restrict it to a word on this page? What does it mean to gather the strength from darkness into light to toggle back and forth as often as the night and the day (cyclic reference)? The point is not to imagine a body located in a cave but to experience that act of emergence of digression emergence digression (cyclic reference). Now if I follow that right up with the image of my own skeleton climbing out of my shadow what similarities will you find without me blatantly stating it? And how can you connect that to the repeated reference of little squares and cubes that move across floors, up walls, around corners, stacked on top of one another, falling into and covering dark gaping orifices as they transform a gallery space into something entirely different than that? Let yourself feel that. Feel it like the weight of earth. Black earth (see previous Egyptian reference to alchemy). Like the weight of air. Like the weight of water. Like the weight of fire. See the four elements as referenced in the (w)hole part. Don't let yourself think that. Let yourself feel that.

A part of the problem is the calluses on the heart, the cataracts on the heart preventing it from seeing as well as it once did, that disable one from seeing what is actually there. One part of the problem that contributes to the (w)hole thing is fear of relying on the sight that the heart has been given that is often more keen than those two organs plugging those holes in the middle of your skull.



Figure 38: *(w)hole part fragment- l'oeil (the eye)*. Detail. 2011.

What is it that the eye experiences in that moment of epiphany? I am part academic gutter animal scowering the corners for refuse to make this place my own. Make my marks on this place. I am part Hollow Man, hollow as in full of void something you may want to a.void as in hole as in whole. Please follow me. What are the different ways that one can consider the fragment. And then we can think about our own selves as fragments and wholes. I am myself a whole person. And yet I can very easily think of myself in a fragmented way. It is a literal and metaphorical way to convey a sense of falling apart, which I am experiencing at every turn of my life. Of coming back together, disassembled and reassembled. When I walk down the street I fall to pieces. When I look in the mirror I come to pieces. Because that is the story of this life, and what better story to tell.

What do I mean by fall to pieces? What I mean is, what I mean is, the sneaking suspicion that I am not who I think I am. That is a funny thing to me. I mean here we are discussing exactly the same person or if not the same person maybe an

object or an idea and we could both write a description and come up with a different description. The dilemma of “seeing” is the dilemma of “being”.

And I consider the world in the same way, in the “fall to pieces” sense. Everywhere I look there are pieces. Trails to other worlds. Subworlds. Gargantuan and miniscule. Then you can think about it as the act of continuously zooming in and out. Toggling between panoramic and microscopic. You are seeing wholes and you are seeing parts and they all lead into each other to form something else.

A fragment suggests incompleteness.

The story of my own work is the story of falling into my own shadow and attempting to gather the strength to once again re-emerge.

This is the story of me trying to orient myself in this place. This is me attempting to define this space. This is the story of a hole. A hole so deep a whole so deep that that if you commit yourself to it, it will commit itself to you.

On Voids



Figure 39: the (w)hole part installation view. Mixed Media on Homasote Panels and Door. 2011.

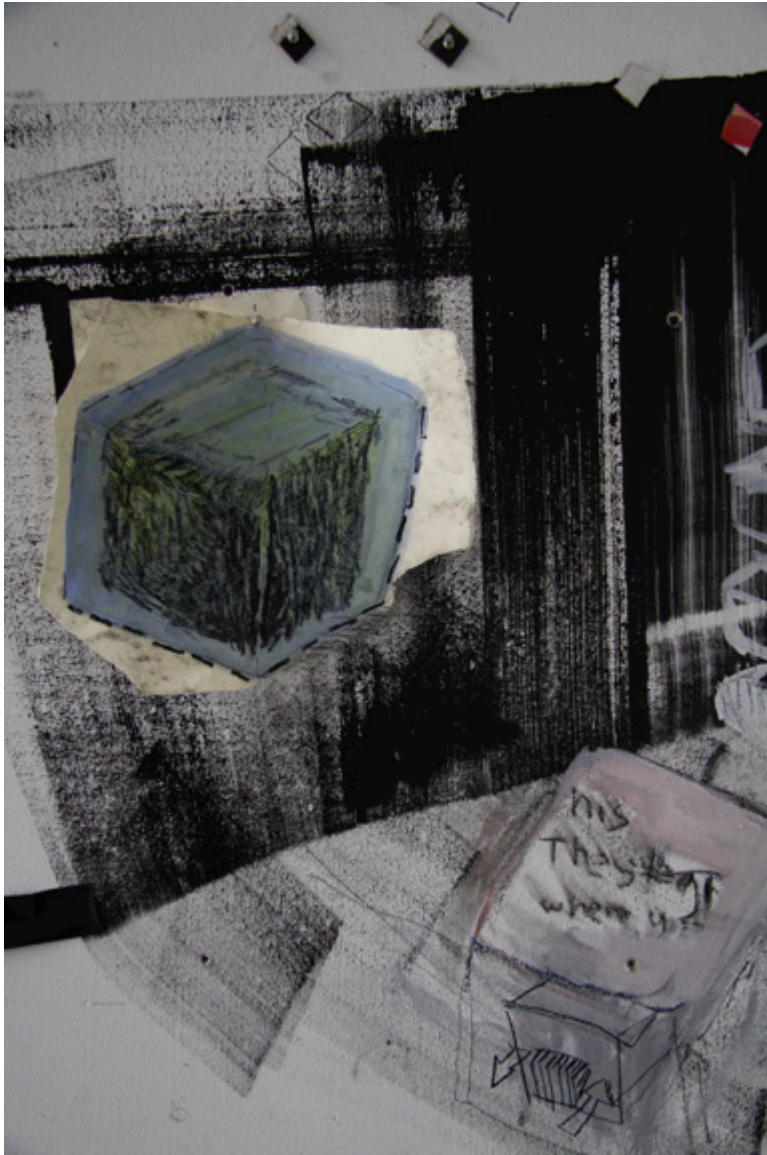


Figure 40: (w)hole part fragment. Detail. 2010-2011.



Figure 41: *the (w)hole part* Installation view (*devoid of meaninglessness*). Detail. Mixed media on Homasoat panels. Insert dimensions.

I had had my fill of voids. The void is something that refuses to be filled. The full void²⁰, as Kazimir Malevich called it, is irony.

*If you gaze into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you.*²¹

²⁰ Brenson, Michael. "Malevich's Search for a New Reality." *New York Times*, September, 1990.

²¹ Nietzsche, Friedrich.



Figure 42: *the (w)hole part fragment ("if you gaze into the Abyss...")*. Detail. Mixed Media on Paper. 2011.

Nietzsche found his niche in the abyss, the void. My skeleton crawling out of my own shadow -----a passage, a labyrinth it was. A labyrinth of a passage. How I came about falling into my shadow is an interesting story. Shadows are typically shallow things. They're flat (adjective that means they lack volume). I mean I really want you to think about what a shadow is, beyond that shallow thing. What your shadow is. What my shadow is. What is it? It is something that is attached to the body. It is external to the body. Now what's a skeleton? It's internal. The statement, "my skeleton crawled out of my shadow" first displaces the skeleton, externalizes the skeleton and then re-internalizes it through something that is actually external to the body. Thus, the essence of it is disorientation. Plus it's kind of an extension of the whole "standing in one's own shadow" to some extreme degree. And the fact that I have not yet mentioned the flesh, well that just adds to the frustration of trying to orient yourself in your body without all the necessary components. Plus it

may draw extra attention to the flesh, because negation is sometimes a means of assertion. But by now I have mentioned the flesh and so that negates that.

Giacometti's hands held the void in '34. Spiritual devastation if you ask me. People had died in his life. He had a hard time placing objects at that point. To put an object in one place. To COMMIT to placing an object in one place and accept that that was where the object was to be. I suggest for maybe several possible reasons: One because of the importance of placement. Two because of the act of commitment of placing the object in that space. Of being permanently fixed in a space. He would spend hours trying to put his shoes in the right place by his bedside.²² In that he found the contradiction of being and not being. He must have been aware of that thing growing in men. That massive shadow, that void, that whole that men fall into when *they* turn *our* backs on it or when *they* look into it.



Figure 43: *Hands Holding a Void*. Alberto Giacometti. Bronze Sculpture. Detail. 1934.

²² Lord, James. *Giacometti: A Biography*. P. 54 (London ; Faber and Faber, 1986)

And Bontecou. She put her hands in that Thing and then up to her arms and then there goes the head and everything above her waist and then one leg lifted after the other into it she came back out the same. Abyss galore.

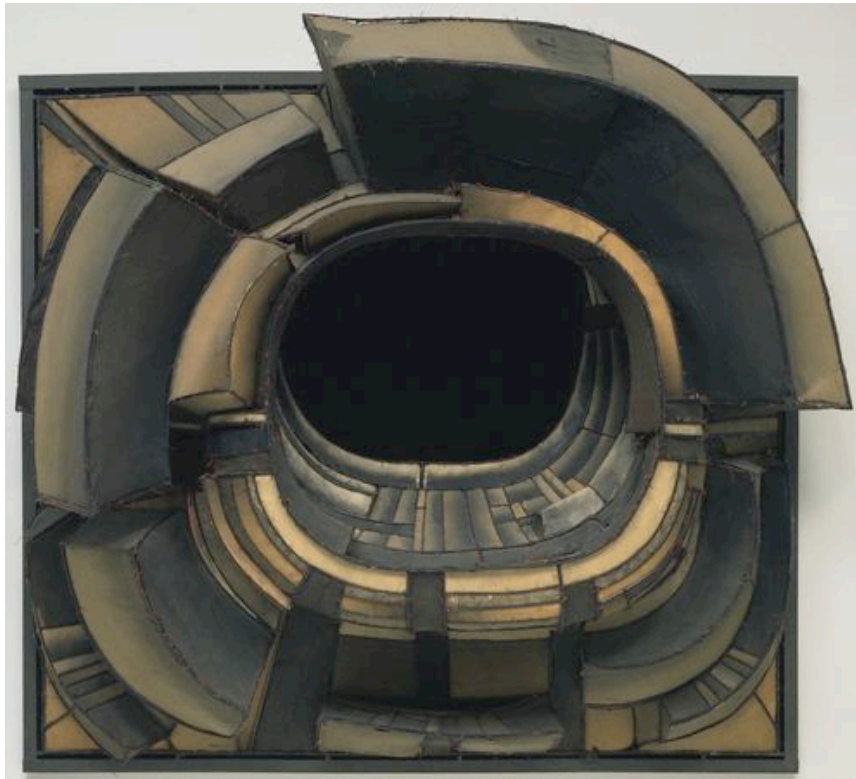


Figure 44: *Untitled*. Lee Bontecou. Welded Steel, Black Canvas, Fabric, soot. 1961.



Figure 45: *the (w)hole part Studio Installation (void)*. Acrylic, Paper, Cardboard. 2010.

*We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece full of straw. Alas
Our dried voices when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless
As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass In our dry cellar*

*Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion...*

-Excerpt from Hollow Men²³

²³ Eliot. T.S. *The Hollow Men*. Published 1925.



Figure 46: the (w)hole part fragment. Aerial view of installation fragment. Mixed Media. 2011.

The Role of Reference/Dialogue

We all have antecedents. It is inescapable. Un A void able. Standing on one another's shoulders in endless dialogues, intricate threads of narration that span across time, across the universe, across being. Reflecting one another. Sometimes consciously. Sometimes unconsciously. Sometimes it is deeper than either of those.

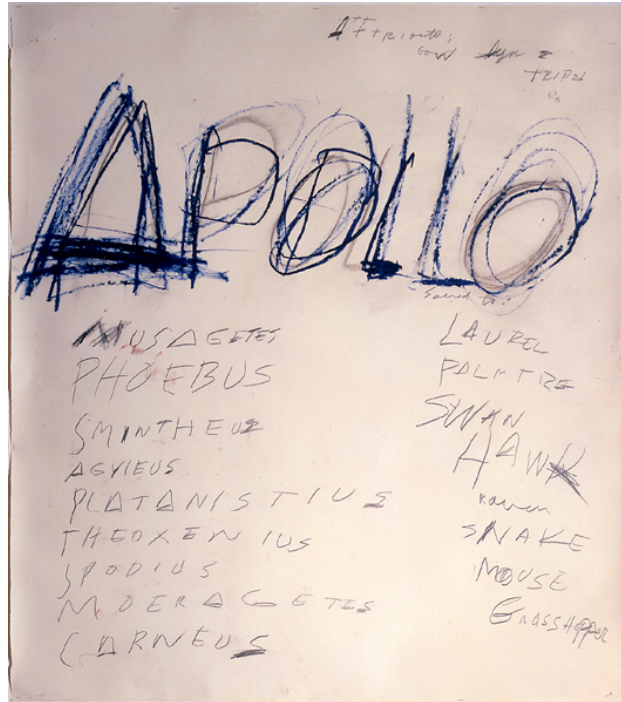


Figure 47: *Apollo*. Cy Twombly. 1975.

I cannot tell how many times I have set out to do something only to realize some time later that there was someone who had done it before me, someone I had no knowledge of. I cannot tell you *how many times* I have connected several things, not knowing exactly *why*, and forgive me for the cliché but intuition, the heart, the compass in the chest guided me to it. Only to find out that it resonated with the action or notion or idea of some ancient person. There is the dialogue. In that sense the past is alive. That is why the work is not only self referential, but full of references to the predecessors. Individuals like Rauschenberg. Magritte. Basquiat. Plato. Bontecou. Twombly. Giacometti. Aristotle. Pythagoras (Pytag for short). Da Vinci (Da Vinch for short). Malevich. Eliot. Etc. There are many others. It is an opportunity to conduct a private conversation. To have the greats speak to *me*. An honor. A **weight**. If you are aware of the dialogue, then take part. If not, it is no big deal. But at least for you to know that conversation is taking place in the work, to establish the fact that things *are* intricately connected, and that the past is here in your presence.



Figure 48: Plymouth Rock. Robert Rauschenberg. Mixed media. 1972.



Figure 49: *the (w)hole part fragment-Cube*. Mixed Media. Enter dimensions.

I see myself in Rauschenberg. The combines to be more specific.

The “codified” object if that helps more. I perceive the connection. There, nestled in that little inter-space. That space between painting and sculpture and whatever else. I don’t even like to call it that. Attempting to define the indefinable. That catch-all container called “art.” Things are more connected than they sometimes seem. It all becomes so fluid once you allow yourself to look. And it’s not that I looked at some book and decided, “oh I want my work to look like this.” It’s like two or more individuals arriving somewhere not knowing the other was headed there or already there or what have you. You do things and you see things. Things are actually quite

intricately harmonious. There is order in this chaos. The act of seeing, the act of perceiving, is to have a simultaneous experience of a multitude of levels, of layers, and the relationship *between* them. We actually peer into the past, we take part in the past through the present. What is so interesting about a painting in a cave somewhere in the hills of France or wherever? Why do we care? Because it is origin. To know about where I've come from. To peer into that dark place, to see if it is possible to unearth some Truth back there.

“Each [of the essential forms] manifests itself in a great variety of combinations, with actions, with material things, and with one another, and each seems to be many...”-Plato²⁴

These are dialogues between Plato and Aristotle. Toggling between “Knowledge through observation and through inspiration, the world of Forms.²⁵”

These are the revised dialogues through the filter that is me at this moment.

These Forms²⁶ are pure. These forms are pure. HA!!! Pure. They are manifestations from the World of Forms. The world of Forms is to be distinguished from the world of form, because they are not the same. The World of Forms in the Platonic sense, which is not always the easiest sense, since Playdoh tends to be dense, left not definite definition about this World of Forms, and yet spoke of it at great length. And yet it is a malleable

²⁴ Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Francis MacDonald Cornford. p 183.(London: Oxford University Press, 1941)

²⁵ The World of Forms, or Theory of Forms is a theory that Plato made multitudes of reference to in a number of his writings.. For more see: Welton, William. *Plato's Forms: Varieties of Interpretation*. (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002).

thing and we can hypothesize from our common understanding (which isn't that common) that what we are witnessing is not actually a box. This is not a box. This is not a box. Not a box. Not. Not. Not. Not. "ceci, n'est pas une pipe."—Magritte. Replace with box. It is something beyond comprehension, beyond the senses. An archetype. An ideal that I continuously reach for, always falling short because what point would there be to continuing to live if I could suddenly grasp it and the search was over? It is at once a Form, and a representation of a form and a representation of **formlessness**. Why? If I tell you why, you might become upset.



Figure 50: *The Treachery of Images*. René Magritte. 1928-1929



Figure 51: the (w)hole part fragment (*ici ce n'est pas une boîte*(this is not a box)).
Acrylic on paper. 2011.

The world of Forms. Both of them. The world of forms. See a Form is an ideal, and a form is something that we think of as concrete, correctly or not. The difference is the capital letter. These relate to things such as Eidos.²⁷ The world of phorms. Phorm rearranged is morph; now lets extend that a little bit more into morphology. Now examine the meaning of a thing through how its label has evolved, changed over time and redefine it as that. A constant processing. That's why all the "unfinished" feelings.

They are proofs. They are proofs of something so un-understandable. Something only tangible through the way they are. That's why they are the way that they are. They are replicas of reality if you would call them that. Reality replicants. Except as the theory of Form goes they are.

These are not forms. They are formless. These are not ideas. They are nothing. And the only thing holding it together is me. The only way it makes sense is me. And you. have to understand that. I do not control this anymore. As a matter of fact I never did. And if you tell me YOU did then, you, sir, madam, or other, are a liar. I have

²⁷ It's a Greek word that means, "to see," "that which is seen," shape," "figure," "the look or appearance of a thing as opposed to its reality." *Plato's Forms: A Variety of Interpretation.*

surrendered my illusion of control, the illusion of self. I have entered the abyss and what I have found there.

What I have found there.

Replica. A perfect replica of reality. Of which I am a casualty.

A perfect mirror of the fragmented self²⁸. Oh you claim to know what content is. Form (in the “Phaedo”²⁹ sense not in the English sense) vs. content.

One thing in general is many things in particular.

²⁸ Lacan again. Same thing. Mirror Stage.

²⁹ Plato. *Phaedo*.

Letter to Basquiat:

Dear JMB-

I followed your instructions, sir. I built a fort. I set it on fire.³⁰

What do I do next?

Signed

Anb.



Figure 52: *Dextrose*. Jean-Michel Basquiat. Acrylic on canvas. 1982.

³⁰ Famous aphorism from artist Jean Michel Basquiat. I encourage you to look him up and *really* look. Look past what some of them assumed of him, and study the work. Consider that he was in his late teens when he was “discovered”, and consider that he’d died at 27. Consider his work through that lens.

Square, Cube, Block, Box.



Figure 53: *the (w)hole part- Installation view-Cube*. Mixed Media. 2011.

The Square has its history. I don't have to delve into that. *Everything* has its history. I would just assure you that the Square is *not an* arbitrary point of departure. It is a product of careful delineation. It does have a certain weight. If I were to give you a hint, to give you a *clue* about this thing's significance I would say go look. I would say research the Pythagoras cult. Assyro-Babylonian Mathematics. Vitruvius (Vitruv for short). Da Vinci. And Plato. The great philosophers that the ancients produced. And that would eventually lead to the cube. And architecture. And its contemporary associations. And the Kaa'ba which is Arabic for 'Cube'. I am not name-dropping. I am not *posturing*. I am only pointing. I am only nodding my head in a particular direction. The Square. The Cube.

Box. Block. It is rigid. Fixed. Defined. Anonymous. Pronounced. Ubiquitous. The representation of the Square becomes the representation of the Cube. To give another hint, when some people begin to explore the possibilities of conveying representations of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface, many began that journey with the Cube. The quintessential.



Figure 54: *the (w)hole part fragment*. Detail of a cube. Cardboard, wood. 2011.

The paradox is *transforming* something universal into something *particular*. At the same time allowing the particular to *reference* the universal. Like Aristotle talked about.

The challenge is to claim these in a way that is unique, and yet *not*, in that they acknowledge a particular history, a particular tradition. The paradox is to use a stable form to also convey instability. The challenge is to use a simple shape, a simple form, to convey something infinitely complex and layered. Parts of a whole.



Figure 55: (w)hole part fragment. Mixed Media. 2011.



Figure 56: the (w)hole part fragment. Detail of a cube. Mixed Media. 2011.



Figure 57: *the (w)hole part fragment* Installation view (“and if you gaze into the abyss...”) Mixed Media on paper on wall. 2011.



Figure 58: *the (w)hole part fragment*. Detail. Mixed Media on paper. 2011.

They are not fixed. They don't stay in one place. Sometimes I cannot recall whether I move them or if they do it of their own accord. They don't mean one thing. I gave up on chasing their meaning and let them stay consistently just out of a full grasp. And I enjoy them that way. Don't misunderstand me. Do not let that fool you into believing they have no meaning. That is just "trompe l'oeil" as the French say. "A trick of the eye." There is even meaning in meaninglessness should you conclude such a thing. **Devoid** of meaninglessness



Figure 59: *the (w)hole part fragment*. Detail. Mixed Media on Paper. 2011.

What's contained in these boxes is at times as mysterious to me as it I imagine it is to you. At times. At other times it is quite clear. But then it disintegrates in my fingers. I don't mind. It's as if there is this continuous movement of the Box, forward or back or behind or just on top of, just out of reach, just to keep its contents out of grasp. This helps it to maintain itself. It eludes. A Pandora's Box that is begging to be pried open but who will dare? What would one find if one did dare? Boxes inside of cubes inside of blocks inside of squares side of boxes inside of cubes and so on?

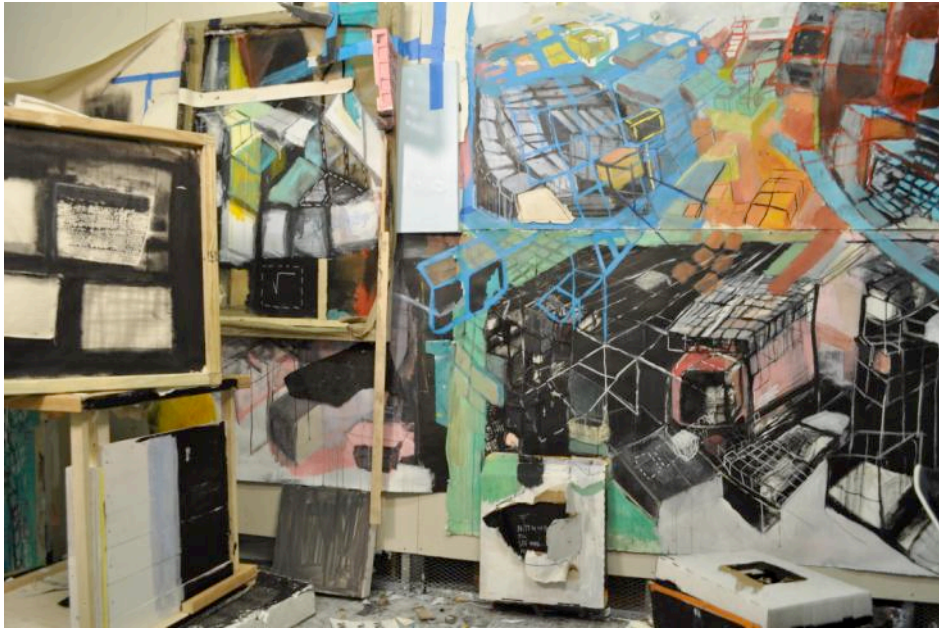


Figure 60: the (w)hole part-studio installation. Mixed Media. 2011. Get Dimensions.



Figure 61: the (w)hole part fragment. Detail Mixed Media on paper. 2011.

They move too fast.

They are expanding and contracting, disintegrating and coming into formation all at once, they are dividing and solidifying in one motion. They are fragmented but they are wholes.



Figure 62: the (w)hole part fragment. Acrylic, tar paper on paper. Detail. 2011.

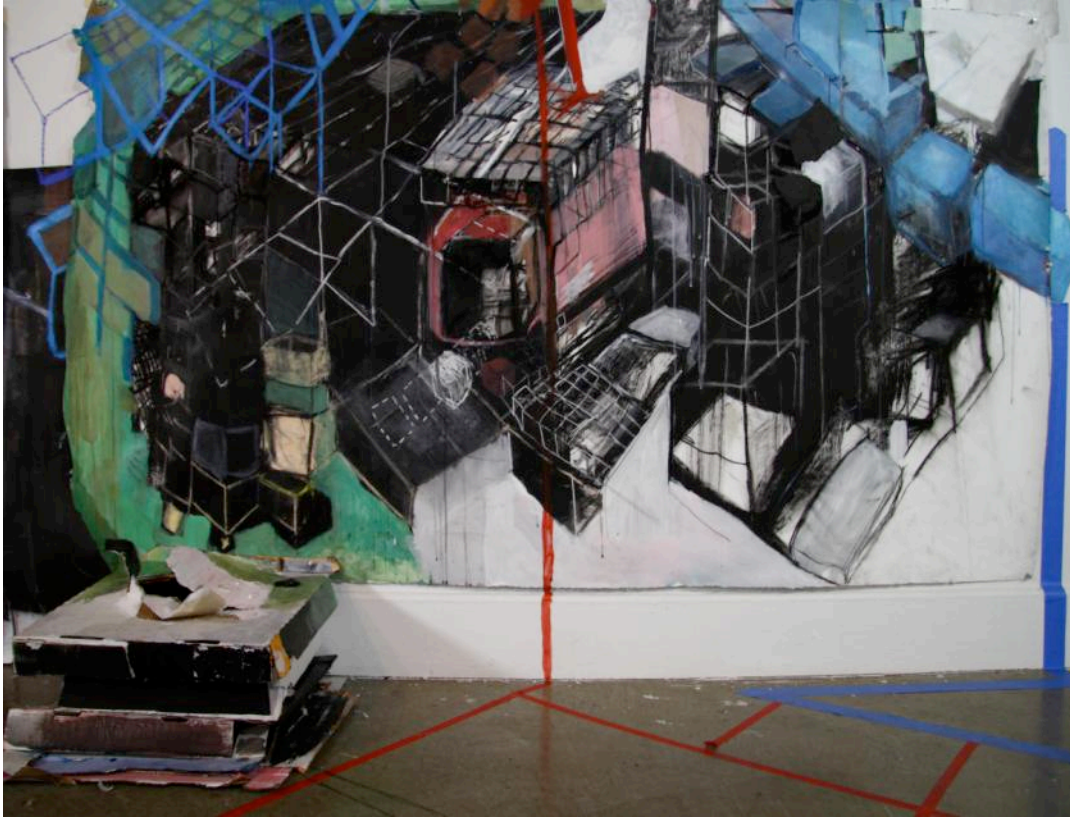


Figure 63&64 the (w)hole part- installation views. Mixed Media. 2011.



Line becomes shape becomes form becomes shape becomes line becomes Form, representations, at once their own reality and mimics of an alternative reality that is not accessible through the sensory world.

As a great Arab poet once noted, “you must free yourself from sensoria.”

Free yourself from sensoria.

Bibliography

Adams, Laurie. "Upper Paleolithic Painting." *Art Across Time Volume One*. Boston: McGraw Hill College, 1999.

Brenson, Michael. "Malevich's Search for a New Reality." *New York Times*, September, 1990.

Critchlow, Keith. "The Platonic Tradition on the Nature of Proportion." *Geometry and Architecture*. Massachusetts: The Lindisfarne Association, 1980.

DeSalvo, Donna. *Lee Bontecou: A Retrospective*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 2008.

etymonline.com

Khalidi, Tarif. *The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and Stories in Islamic Literature*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Aristotle. *On Interpretation. The Categories, On Interpretation*, translated by Cooke, Harold; *Prior Analytics*, trans. Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938.

Lacan, Jacques, *Écrits: a selection*. Trans. by Alan Sheridan. New York: Norton, 1977.

Liddell, Henry George; Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Eighth edition.
Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1901

Lord, James. *Giacometti: A Biography*. London: Faber and Faber, 1986.

Mattern, Karen. *Canticle of Creatures*.

http://knitandcontemplation.typepad.com/canticle_of_creatures/

oxforddictionaries.com

Plato. "Allegory of the Cave." *The Republic*.

Scofield, Martin. T.S. Elliot The Poems. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1988.

Wehr, Hans. *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, Fourth Ed.* Edited J Milton Cowan. Urbana:
Spoken Languages Services, 1994.)

Welton, William. *Plato's Forms: Varieties of Interpretation*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002.