



Notes for an enhanced vitality; May 2022

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I avoid making personal work.

I fear once open, the book of me will never shut. For example, few friends would know that watercolor was once my favored language – one day, I received comments from a teacher that, often depicting a vanishing escape, my landscapes would be read as the longing of a frustrated subject yet to be born in the world.

Today I balance at that horizon of emergence; trying to grasp at a practice that roots me in the world as the brushstrokes insulated me from it. A practice, as a necessary brand of work and clear motivated application – the stuff of professionals.

I chose to become an artist in a daze; an educational path had to be chosen and that was the least “job-like”; never mind that drawing all day had a pleasurable ring to it. Without noticing, I fell in love with nineteenth century romantics, modern romantics, the avant-garde, la bohème; though reading assignments were critical of these mythical creatures from the old continent (I would later ask myself, what is Denmark?), I could feel their thirst.



Kurt Schwitters, *Merzbau (reconstruction)*, 1923-37

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Looking back at the documentation of a performance, or the documentation of a rough sketch of a performance, or the sharing of a practice, enacted last august at the invitation of a dear friend and his friends, I realize *something* happened. I do not know what. But there was palpable excitement in their smiles after the event and in the words of appreciation I heard from others in the audience – who otherwise bored in the early hours of a small independent art fair, were slowly magnetized by the growing agitation in our booth.



pictures by Adam Varab / Salon 75

I hold that exchange of energy. How often is it experienced in life? That vibration testifies something was ruptured, and something else was allowed to move; the device of performative action supported it. That interval produced an intense shared affect. More important is, to know I can learn to distinguish and create conditions for that density of attention and connection. I do this not in the name of an aesthetic experience or of a more just society, but seeking a life worth living.

As it touches humanity, the most widespread practices in life produce an impoverished substitute for this; I often gulp down the largest chocolate bar on the supermarket and quickly fill my senses with soft grease and cocoa, or lay for hours eyes bright with news of people, communities and fictional characters I have never heard of and will never pay any mind again. I am completely taken, however, committed and invested. The next day I can say with certainty that nothing happened.

Here energy is never exchanged, interrupted, made dense or directed; dissected, re-organized; it pools and evaporates with a trace of fatigue.





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I know intimately what the work with blue tape “is about”. My own relation to it is not troubled (my watercolors, like my ideas, come as instinctive translations to a much analyzed but scarcely sensed positioning in context).

Stretches of blue fill the room, taking over the space, and my own body, to obliteration, which carries on, spills, as I carry the on, the blue. I still don't know if something was there, if at all. I want to say that it is happening, still at work; a hurricane at the speed of the camera's shutter, all of its meditations charged in the surface of the images yet to be publicized. Impatience and a penchant for social engineering had me recruit artist friends to execute its task (with a helping of black rice mango salad). I ask to no one in particular: did the couple of choreographed hours in and out of the camera's eye lent porousness to our stretch of shared life?

Luckily, artists are some of the best provocateurs of fissures, breaches, breaths – expiration and inspiration.

Meditations:

The work with blue tape “is about” suffocation. The work with blues tape “is about” contamination. The work with blue tape “is about” making visible a relation. The work with blue tape “is about” mapping a territory. The work with blue tape “is about” virtualization and annulation. The work with blue tape “is about” confinement and isolation. The work with blue tape “is about” error, glitching and deviance. The work with blue tape “is about” surrender. The work with blue tape “is about” limitation and possibility. The work with blue tape “is about” occupying and breaching. The work with blue tape “is about” a discomfort with my current home and the ambiguous gifts of being part.

The work with blue tape “is about” my melancholic state away from institutional preserve, certain that what the world needs is not artists nor professionals of any kind, but people mad with desire who are able to cut through form to corroborate with life's emergency.

And that happens when something happens.



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Something happened when I decided to sew through the soles of my feet, the edges of my fingers.

Heirs to the romantics and disruptive, perhaps more cynical, conceptual artists are my chosen lineage; the old-school, whose works can be described in a single sentence: “she sewed a trademark on her foot”, for example (Leticia Parente takes the credit for that one).

I am still puzzling over how this becomes “a practice”; trying to sell the idea to some benevolent open call or chasing the presence of spirit to move self-management demands aside and give way to breath and connection.

When I sewed my skin, floating roots falling from my fingers, nothing had more importance. I keep my wishes simple: can I instill commitment to open experimentation, sharpen the instincts of following through with desire? Find vitality?

Then again, the mad and in love were not selling performances, right?



Graciela Carnevale, El Encierro, 1968

When I finally descend from idea into action, the flame extinguishes with the sizzle of a match. Though I am not sure what *did* happen, my training has given me words to attempt communication:

I learnt a path into my boundaries, affirmed a way to extend and make this self available, made mundane what seemed profane; re-calibrated my perception of discomfort and sense of touch. What I struggle it is how to tend to the embers, feed the fire, sustain the warmth.



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To my bemused offense, my mentor suggested my newly-healed tattoos could be exhibited side by side with my works, gesturing to a larger investigation. *Oh no no*, the book should keep shut. But he is right to point that the impulses come of the same emergency.

This paragraph is what I would like to state: art enhances life by creating complex language able to match and trouble the forms of senseless self-reproduction it typically moves through; however short-lived these moments of aroused focus.

One of the more touched viewers of the sharing last August remarked: *It was as if you were dancing with your mirror*. My mirror, my despair. But his excitement is earnest. He looks energized. I was.

I came to Copenhagen in a dazed flight, escaping my home in São Paulo so that I could remain in my home of artistic ideal. As long as I am here, my life will be about creating the conditions, personal, professional and social, to flare up and tend to the affective fissures provoked when something happens, undefined and resistant.

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If there is one thing I can say I practice without a doubt, it is swimming. I have a teacher, a membership fee, a place to train, colleagues and a schedule. Classes take 45 minutes, and we try to improve our technique. No matter how well I absorb the rhythm and draw the strokes, though, my swimming suffers when I lose something: touch with my breath. How can you possibly change the world when you can't breathe?

At the Venice Biennale, the Serbian Pavilion presents a video of a lone crawler crossing an olympic pool. His movement makes the world tremble.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FyTkq3jZTCI>

Vladimir Nikolic, 800m, 2019

Now imagine if he would dive.

