

Roaming through the fog of memory.

I have always been interested in putting things back together, perhaps an innate attempt of trying to hold on to something for a moment longer. Extending the life of something important to me. Or perhaps to try and see something whole once again after it has been fractured. Fractured lives are not uncommon.

Painting is not something I can figure out inside my head, for me it is something I need to make and fight with and fracture, and then try and put it back as I imagined it ironically in my head. It's a feeling and space within that feeling that I am trying to get at. It is in the moments of not knowing that I start to know and understand where I am, and at time less frequently, whom I am. Some would call this record of life, memory.

My father never threw anything away; he always tried mending it, making it functional once again. Never would it fit quite together again in a perfect way. It simply functioned for what it was and this was what important to him. I also was never interested in this notion of perfection. I was more interested in an idea that functioned for simply being what is was.

I learned long ago to trust my nature and what I need to do what I do. I have found through the years that I need to empty out in order to fill up once again, I will explain. A few years back I started to drive across America when I had some free time. In 2006-2007 I drove across America 5 times. Each time I would take a different route. My only knowledge of the trip and the path I would take would be my departure and where I would end up. The rest I left up to chance, intuition and suggestions from the strangers I would meet along the way. I would stay off of the main highways and preferred driving down the small town roads that would take me to the heart of America. This of course would make the trip longer, but that I was always happy about. I wanted to avoid the homogenous conduit of American travel along the interstate. I knew if I would follow that path I would miss everything. So I ventured off the main roads and left the rest up to circumstance and trust. I would just roam the roads, stopping wherever I wanted and for whatever reason. I would stop along the road often and write

down some random notes and take a few pictures and be on my way, collecting moments I would call on in the months and years ahead.

When I needed some food I would hunt down a local diner or coffee shop and pull off the road and seat myself with the locals and order the daily special. I would engage the locals in conversation and ask them about the area and what I might need to see and perhaps where I should go. I relied on the words of strangers at times to tell me where to go. I simply trusted them. At times where I ended up would not be so interesting but often I was delighted and thankful. I so enjoy talking to the locals, perhaps now in hindsight it was a way of connecting as I try and do in my studio with my work. A need I have to connect to something outside myself, an anchor perhaps that keeps me grounded in this world around me. A world I so want to feel a part of. So I drift, at times aimlessly to find this.

I usually would spend about 3 weeks on each trip and always when I came close to my destination I would feel so sad. I did not want this journey to end, I did not want to stop driving to stop looking around me and absorbing what was there. It is exactly the same for me in the studio when I get close to finishing a group of works, I do not want that feeling to stop, that routine, that complete absorption in where I am. As I know what it takes to get back there and to find again what I need to find. For when I go into the studio, just the same as when I head out onto the roads I do not know where it is that I am going.

Upon my return to the studio I would think about where I just was, and would ask myself what I had found and captured in my memory during my travels, what I could use, what could fuel me and move me into new ideas.

I often would not have a direct answer. So I would simply just trust and wait and knew that through my process I will find something, something that will trigger a thought of where I was and I could use this to connect to something in my work. I simply needed to trust in my process just I had learned to trust the strangers I had met along the road to tell me where to go. I understood that I did not need all the answers before traveling off into the unknown, I simply needed just to be curious and instinctively knew that I would learn later when back from the road where it was I had been and perhaps more importantly why.

In my studio I close off the world, just the opposite of when I am on the road traveling solo through the landscape of America. I need to work in private, to close out the world in order to find through my process a way to reconnect to the world that I have closed away. It is a time I spend looking inward,

waiting for something to come forward. This is something that I simply need, to feel connected to the world around me, to know that in some way I am part of this world I roam and at times feel so disconnected from.

We spend our lives collecting things; perhaps the reasons are not too far from my own. They are a way of feeling connected to the world in some way. I know for me my art is just that, a way to feel connected, a place to find a home of sorts, at least for a while a place to rest. I way to record a life, a path I have chosen and a way to move forward in the search to understand more. In looking back I can then see things more clearly and this allows the freedom to move forward into the fog of not knowing and to trust that when the fog clears there is a sense of knowing where I was.

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