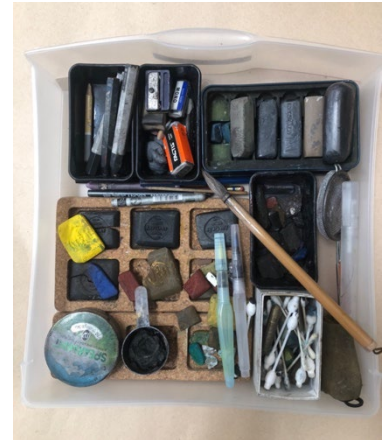


Podcast- Marking into the Paradigm, Asemic Writing

“Art is not to express personality, but to overcome it.” T.S. Elliot

Marking into the Paradigm Podcast, this episode is to highlight the marking approach of Asemic Writing--- is a wordless open semantic writing having no specific content, without the smallest unit of meaning. It leaves the reader to fill in and interpret. It short circuits the rational inviting in visual poetics stating more than the obvious. In which this episode highlights the marking approach of Asemic Writing--- a way to explore how we mark the world and perceive how we are marked by the world. In this somatic art-practice we begin to change our relationship to perceptions of reality ---the perception of a reality that we have inherited. This art-practice uses various marking approaches to revise our relationship to things, to the world and to ourselves as it changes our habits of perception. Given time it even changes our sense of belonging



Imagine you are in Studio Anavami, an old industrial building, with high ceilings and lots of light. It is spacious and the corrugated sheeting rattles in the ocean wind. The large black paper we will use as substrates is tacked to the wall. This industrial paper invites experimentation. For materials there is an array of water-soluble marking implements, both hard edge and soft, mostly earth colors.

To shift out of the old paradigm we begin by altering our relationship to our materials. We want to enter into a collaboration with them rather than seeing them as inert objects for our use. They have their distinctness, their history, their quirks and even their intelligence.

Pause for a moment and see if you can imagine the Universe as animate, not in the 19 century meaning of having a soul. Imagine that all things have a beingness---animals, plants, rocks, rivers, weather systems, human handiwork and even words. They have their own spirit---in an animistic world. Looking across time and culture we are an anomaly to feel most of what is around us is dead matter. See if you can stretch to embrace a position of oneself within and as part of an animate world.



Today we are creating a not-yet-discernible narrative. We will be doing this using asemic writing. A writing that has no content. Each mark is alive with a sense of being and an allowance to transfer meaning outside of the words and letters we find all too familiar. We will mark on various thin papers---tissue, deli paper and glassine to create layers of marks. Pick up a thick stick of water-soluble graphite. Smell it,

feel the weight. Can you sense a particular essence or beingness? Hold it in various ways---comfortably, awkwardly...does it prefer a particular hold?

Drag it across the tissue paper. Feel how it leaves a trace with different pressure or movement. Change your speed and tempo. Try the non-dominant hand. How are the marks quality of marks different? Experience how life, conversation, even thinking is a kind of marking. As you become a part of the implement do you feel the otherness of the implement and the same time how you are connected? We are building context rather than content.



Move on from these initial experiments and now mark in a continuous line, like writing script---up, down, in rows, over each other upside down, on the back....the more experimental you are the more the collaboration or mutual learning is possible. As in a stroke of brush calligraphy it is the awareness and focus of being that gives the mark it's presence.

Try shapes and stokes in different sizes, big, small, boxy, loopy, backwards, stream of consciousness.... Asemic writing short circuits the rational inviting in the poetic. The poetic says more than the obvious. Is there a feeling of a hidden language, an interrelatedness with the experience of the marks? Can you feel that you are being written? We are an intimate part of a greater whole, separateness is an illusion. When it becomes boring find ways to stay engaged. This is where innovation kicks in and the real marking begins. At the studio we do this for hours.....

With a stack of marked papers we turn to the large substrate tacked to the wall. Here the asemic marking becomes vocabulary for a larger piece as we tear and add layers with clear matte medium. At first, in this practice there is no aesthetic evaluation, no judgment...no idea, no plan. We allow the markings, whether in collage or directly on the substrate, an opportunity for a life of their own. There is only the engagement of marking and being marked. It is the set-up for unfolding---to reveal itself with a surprise, perhaps the emerging Implicate Order, ground of being.

The art-practice for all participants---creator and recipients is fundamentally a practice in being. The doing and products of the doing are secondary, providing an opportunity to expand what we think we know, to bring the edge of the unknown closer, for a transcendent leap beyond simple physical cognition and mental rationale. This kind of participation creates an unfolding that builds for a leap in insight