

Blog from Majio at Studio Anavami, Marking into the Paradigm, an approach in the visual arts creative process that alters our habitual perceptions of reality. This episode, Invisible Marks explores the interfaces of marks that we can see and that we cannot see.

“The work of art is a mental suspension not a mental diversion,” Mark Levy Void/ in Art



Synchronicities, with no relationship to cause and effect, astoundingly show up as warnings, confirmations, and prophecy. Just so, many of the marks that guide and direct our lives coming out of the blue or are not even visible. Recognizing synchronicities, invisible marks and the places without marks have as much information and nuances as marks. They have a more complete correlation to *the relational-field*. The relational-field refers to the network of connections and interactions that shape our experiences, influencing our behavior. As mentioned in the podcast referencing **awe**, enlarging the container of the mystery means perceiving more possibility in the relational-field even if we may not understand it. The Void and void is related to invisible marks, in art and in life--- metaphorically and literally. But because the void is difficult to predict and control it is often viewed as negative, empty or eerie.

An historical view of void through art asks us to pay as much attention to what is not marked as to what is marked. From this awareness, the void and even the Void as a fertile space emerges. Mark Levy' in the Void/In Art supports our rational mind to enlarge the context of the Void in terms of the many cultures and eras that depict and honor this space. There are ways to engage the void through the visual arts. The difference from how it has been treated throughout history is that it is not strictly a design element but as a collaborative engagement. This redefines our place as art-practioners, not at the center but part of a team or the whole.



Applying modeling paste on paper over rubbing template creating relief texture.

In fact, the act of marking in partnership with the greater whole is to enter a learning curve that effects one's relationship to not only the creative process but how one sees art. Because the practice in the studio cultivates embodiment of process, our perceptions begin to change consciousness, questioning habits and beliefs.

The revealing of marks that are not immediately visible forces us to release planned strategies to be present in the moment.

Working with Invisible marks lessens our illusion of control. It can be treatment to the paper and/or the substrate surface that are not immediately visible but show up later when pigment is added.

Here are some of the techniques to create invisible marks in markings as a way to engage a broader relational-field. One way is to use clear modeling paste or matte medium for impressions with textured or patterned surfaces that are difficult to see when dry. This surface forces a new engagement as pigment reveals the marks. Other surface treatments are sanding through stencils, as well as scoring etc. with various implements to alter the paper surface. No marks are when space is left untouched. Marks can also be covered with paper to look like no marks. This is a kind of editing. Reclaiming the empty space with subtraction is a way to break the pattern of constant addition that we are inclined to do.

In the deeper Japanese concept of *notan* there is no division between subject and object. On the picture plane, object and background cannot be separated for they define each other. Just as the *contrast* of Yin and Yang is not two separate qualities but exist to inform each other. This is directly related to the concept of duality, which gives rise to polarization when instead of informing and complementing they are in opposition. We have become more alienated from each other and our environment or the climate crisis would not be threatening us now. The marking practice seeks to redefine our relationship to materials and to the relational-field with rapport rather than separation.



Paper substrates with various invisible and a pigment wash.

An example of visual perceptions is to look at a tree or bush in nature in the daylight. Note the values, or the range of tone from dark to light, not considering color. Most people can immediately distinguish the very light value, the darkest and the mid-value. When pressed you can perceive some values in between. A plein air painter can distinguish and depict as many as nine values on the spectrum from dark to light. It takes practice and is important in creating the



Void in Marking

illusion of space in realistic as well as abstract paintings. Much of the range of our senses is habitual. We miss the nuances and textures of a bigger picture seeing only what is in contrast. In the marking practice we begin to open to perceiving not just the values but new integral relationship experientially.

Albert Einstein said that we all must ask the question if we believe that we are living in a friendly universe, or not. How we perceive the interface of object and subject can be fundamental to how we perceive our safety. In polarization there is always a looming other that is frightening and unknown. Through the art-practice as we get to know more about the world and each other our fundamental relationship to the universe is modified.

Please join us at Studio Anavami in this endeavor.