

Janis Dzirnicks – Text On Practice

This text deals with my recent studio activity. In this year I have been focusing in a use of free drawn shapes and plastic materials, which has led me to the production of several new works, in particular two series, which will be the core of this writing.

Insulation

I started to work on these series one year ago after gaining interest in how a hotwire cutter (by being placed on Y axis) can separate a rectangular polystyrene piece which is being freely moved (on X and Z axes) in several compartments by allowing it to be disassembled and re-assembled into its former shape. (I discovered it by accident approximately 3 years ago.) Each cut splits the object in parts by creating counter forms in substructures – positive and negative spaces.

By playing around with this discovery in a smaller scale I gained curiosity in seeing how it would work in a larger dimension. It brought me straight forward in many technical difficulties. I had to create my own hotwire cutter and find a right adhesive to glue sheets of polystyrene.

Objects in larger scale (125cm x 60cm x 35cm and 200cm x 100cm x 20cm) revealed me a new type of structure on contiguity of cuts which contained digital extrusion or glitch like characteristics. Also by producing these works I encountered how each arrangement of pieces – in piles, with a similar distance in between, combined together – engages with space differently. The first group critic was especially helpful to realise it [1].

Meanwhile my physical studio practice I had also theoretical research which stepped on the same rake several times. Somehow I tried to find explanatory parallels or bring my daily interests in a very direct, which I thought could be a concept for these works. For example: the process of metamorphosis by mealworms (*Tenebrio Molitor*) who can digest polystyrene, the possibility to undo tasks or countlessly rearrange things while working on the computer, the growing overpopulation in the cities and how architecture and design tries to adapt to it, and home assemblable commodities. All of them made a sense to me but also brought me deeper in abyss. It took away my attention from a real existing qualities as two dimensional drawings on flat surfaces which hides third dimension in itself and heat reflective material.

After a while the word insulation tickled my interest. In particular, binary connotation as a form of heat regulation, as a state of being insulated. I admire to think how these objects doesn't conduct heat but reflects it as a mirror. How little is our perception what is beneath the surface before we explore it with tools and techniques such as x-ray, CT scanner or cutting? A big part of our daily encounters are with interfaces without really seeing their physical locations, where they are produced, generated, stored. Especially nowadays with using cloud storage. What is the value of artwork in storage? How much Sol Lewitt and Robert Morris in their writings tries to step away from importance of visual qualities?



1

After taking a pause of production and thinking on this series and later having a studio visit with a guest tutor Daniel Dewar I reached conclusion that I had a need to make very conscious decisions. By excluding glue and jagged side I can get rid of DIY atmosphere and amplify awareness of one particular material and complexity of shapes. Language of forms should contain organic features which charges against outer factory, non-personality, brutality of flatness. If all elements come from one solid piece, then there is an existing parallel with a carved stone and marble sculptures.

I have created a set of rules for these modular systems [2], which closes possibility to step in the previous failures and allows me to focus on shapes, ways of assembly and different arrangements of elements.

Volume of each object is decided beforehand and stays unchangeable
Each object is created out of one solid piece of extruded polystyrene.

After cutting it should be possible to disassemble object in smaller elements and assemble it back into a rectangular form.

2 Each object is a closed modular structure just after I had done the cuts by creating the shapes.

Each object can be updated with a new cuts.

Everyone else who has ownership over the objects can thereby.

Objects can be transportable from a different locations only by being assembled in rectangular form.

Each piece is unique and cannot be reproduced.

I created them by studying Charlotte Poseneneske's artist statement which I found is done in diverse mindset than I am at this point. Also this set of rules is just for me as core for my production process and possibly are going to slightly change.

Recently I got curious how it would be to always keep ownership of my works but allow others to be premium members? I am at early stage of research about organic and computer architecture, where inner and outer elements have the same importance. Especially processors have triggered my interest with their exponential growth in transistor density and codenames such as Cannon Lake, Haswell, Sandy Bridge, etc.

Overall in these series I have been trying to obtain a balance between conceptual dryness and intense visual charge without hierarchizing each of them. It also reflects with my contradictory interest in artists such as Aaron Curry and Bruno Gironcoli, who I admire just on purely visual ground, especially their organic and evil shapes, and on the other side Sol Lewitt, Robert Morris – conceptually. I am not obsessing about each of them, it is just that they do not have a balance in these qualities or even tries to exclude them. Maybe my thoughts could trace some closer parallels with Sterling Ruby's *Grid Ripper*(2008), but I have to conduct a more detail research on it.

Adapters



3

The wall pieces *Adapters* [3] deals with digitally painted landscapes inside of abstract silhouettes. Imagery is produced by using vibrant colours, with soft brushes in primitive, naivety and illustrative way with keeping sceneries and objects recognisable. The stylistics resembles with mass produced synthetic commodities and advertisements. The shapes for outer contours are done in a way of automatic drawing and served as paths to laser cutter. In this way inner content got ignored and lost its rectangular margins by suggesting to be infinite.

At the beginning idea came from reconstructing a childhoods memory where I had a small lightbox with illustrated bears on it, then I remembered of very popular Ivan Shishkin's painting with a bears *The Morning in a Pine Forest* (1889) which's reproduction is on different brand chocolate packaging's all over eastern Europe and Russia. This led me to discover the history of 19th century Russian landscape artists from the same group Peredvizhniki (often called *The Wanderers* or *The Itinerants*). By looking at their works I encountered with nostalgic feeling and realisation how big importance woods have played in my life. This all has mixed together and serves as inspiration for these series.

Most of my works are lacking emotional and atmospheric charge but by developing these series I would like to change it. I want to gain dystopian atmosphere that can reflect on universal level and still hold a track on geographic regions from where I come from and where I am now. Similar as it is in Micheal E. Smith's oeuvre but with excluding ready-mades, I would like to evoke it through, shapes, materials, and additives such as dust, insects, "superfood" and LED lights. I understand that both groups of works deal with an environmental and political

issues but not in a direct way. My interest is to build an atmosphere of it through materials, size, and shapes but not by illustrating certain political or social facts. All of these three qualities are new focus points in my practice which I had never tried to develop, consciously as now.

Overall

These are not my first series where I have a set of rules to generate works, it also appears in *Facebook Paintings* and *Life Time Project*. Most of my videos are looped single shots, which can be bound with my recent decisions for extruded polystyrene series. Physical research in the studio is something new for me and I feel that I have entered my head from the other side.

Overall I know that my ideas come from different sources – daily encounters, geographic regions, materials, commodities, object shapes and by reflecting on presence. I like to migrate through different mediums. Maybe it is a lack of concentration, but I know when I block this flow, I block everything.

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Artist works and exhibitions:

Hans Arp, *Dada*, c. 1920

John Baldessari, *This Is Not To Be Looked At*, 1968

Nicolas Ceccaldi, *Red Wine*, 2014

Nicolas Ceccaldi, *Muffin*, 2011

Aaron Curry, *Phantom*, 2010

Jean Dubuffet, *Group of Four Trees*, 1972

Marcel Duchamp, *Female Fig Leaf*, 1950

James Ensor, *My Portrait In The Year 1960*, 1888

Bruno Gironcoli, *Grosse Figur*, 2004

Yngve Holen, *CAKE*, 2016

Donald Judd, *Untitled (Menziken 89-6)*, 1989

Piotr Lakomy, *Equal*, 2013

Mark Leckey, *GreenScreenRefrigeratorAction*, 2010

Isaac Levitan, *Water Lillies*, 1895

Robert Morris, *Litanies*, 1963

Robert Morris, *Statement of Aesthetic Withdrawal*, 1963

Sterling Ruby, *Grid Ripper*, 2008

Sterling Ruby, *Inscribed Plinth/ADAPS WMK*, 2008

Michael Sailstorfer, *3 Stars With a View*, 2002

Micheal E.Smith, *Disagreeable Object*, 2012

Alexei Savrasov, *The Rooks Have Returned*, 1871

Ivan Shishkin, *Morning In The Pine Forest*, 1889