

Where are original thoughts?

"In the spatial sense, the grid states the autonomy of the realm of art. Flattened, geometricized, ordered, it is antinatural, antimimetic, antireal. It is what art looks like when it turns its back to nature. In the flatness that results from its coordinates, the grid is the means of crowding out the dimensions of the real and replacing them with the lateral result not of imitation, but of aesthetic decree. Insofar as its order is that of pure relationship, the grid is a way of abrogating the claims of natural objects to have an order particular to themselves; the relationships in the aesthetic field are shown by the grid to be in a world apart and, with respect to natural objects, to be both prior and final." Rosalind Krauss, *Grids*

The 3rd century BC engineers of Stonehenge and the Great Pyramids of Giza implemented the simple plumb bob we use today to plot monolithic foundations that have survived for centuries. Around the same time, the concept of latitude and longitude was proposed by the Greek mathematician, geographer and music theorist Eratosthenes as a way to plot the earth's surface. Was this an early example of colonization? As this new invisible grid interacts with inevitable planetary rotation, human understanding of local time cognized. Did people think "time" was a conspiracy theory or magic spell? Instead of looking up at the planetary alignment as had been done for centuries prior in order to understand when and where you are in relation to the rest of the known world, you now look down into your little black mirror for an exact geolocation. The space in which you are currently standing is located at Latitude 42.019363 and Longitude -87.667804, by the way. The information fueling that fact has gone to space and back, from my head to yours.

Will anyone ever teach me to dive?

"You have the power to strip away many superfluous troubles located wholly in your judgment, and to possess a large room for yourself embracing in thought the whole cosmos, to consider everlasting time, to think of the rapid change in the parts of each thing, of how short it is from birth until dissolution, and how the void before birth and that after dissolution are equally infinite". - *Marcus Aurelius, Meditations*

As I pass a site of new construction in my Chicago neighborhood of Pilsen, I slow my jogging pace hoping to glimpse that satisfying void of raw earth and inspect the craftsmanship of the foundational blocks. I stop to think about holes. The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius wrote *Meditations* while staying at Aquincum, its ruins lie within Budapest city limits which makes it cheap and easy to access via public transportation. When I visit, no one is there but a small group of American, male tourists in their early 20's making jokes about the ancient fertility amulets on display in the museum. They are unabashedly dicks. According to ancient sources, these phallic "Crepundia Chains," were carved out of amber, bone or glass and personalized for children after birth with an engraving of their parents names. These sacred objects were widely believed in ancient Roman culture to ward off evil spirits for the remainder of the child's life and have only been found in the graves of children and women of all ages. This reminds me of when my mother called me in tears during the 2017 Grammys to say that Beyonce's performance while pregnant with twins "is the meaning of life" and my heart is full.

Is there possibly more?

About every 2,000 years our earth realm and those inhabiting it undergo a shift from one age to another, each being ruled by one of the twelve astrological zodiac signs and each age corresponding to the traits of the sign which rules it...at the present time we are in transition from the age of Pisces to the age of Aquarius. The age of Pisces began around the time when Jesus Christ was said to have been incarnated and what many label 'The Common Era.' Positively, Pisces has to do with the arts, humanities, intuition, religion and mysticism but negatively it has to do with deception, illusion, secrets, mysteries, addiction and hidden schemes. This is why the age of Pisces could have very well been called the age of deception or illusion...deceptions were established and nurtured. The extraction matrix... where humanity is preoccupied with unnatural, and hierarchical systems of control and regulation. The media, banks, academia, government, medicine, toxic food, celebrities, war. These are all things which rely on deception in order to be validated and considered acceptable.

The sign of Pisces is the two fish with their tails tied together swimming in opposite directions. This symbolizes the struggle and the gap between spirit and matter... On the other hand, the water bearer, the Aquarian symbol mixes a bucket of water with the waters below. This is a merging. A blending of the material and spiritual which were previously at odds with one another but are now coming together in perfect union. This is what this awakening, this shift in awareness we are experiencing is....Now more than ever we have the ability to bring messages from the divine into the material world, again pouring the waters from above and merging them below. - *Flat Earth Paradise YouTube Channel*

I'm told by a YouTube professional that it can be difficult to pinpoint the exact moment of transition because it's lengthy, macrocosmic and to some degree reliant on the scientific or pseudoscientific belief systems to which one chooses to subscribe. If one chooses to believe that the study of movements and relative positions of celestial objects is a means for divining information about human affairs and terrestrial events, they may also choose to believe our current position of transition from the Age of Pisces into that of Aquarius. If one chooses to exclusively believe in the natural science of astronomy which studies celestial objects and phenomena through mathematics, physics and chemistry, then one may prefer skipping over the next section of this essay.

What do you choose to care about today?

"TRY TO FORGET WHAT YOU MIGHT NEVER"
Ouija session on July 3, 2017 in Budapest

I'm looking into the hole of an active archeological dig site, aware that it's illegal to take photographs of Hungarians but I casually steal a visual momento of this charged moment that no one around me appears at all interested in. Joseph Beuys once said that anything can be art as long as it conserves energy. The city foundation was built brick by hand poured brick using portable, on-site, kilns, layered with intricate clay tile mosaics and carefully arranged stone walls by someone, by many. The Roman brick weighs 4.7 lbs., measures 3 3/4" x 1 3/4" x 11 3/4" and continues to be a standard in modern building. A Midwesterner may easily recognize it from many of the Frank Lloyd Wright buildings in the Chicago area including his home and studio in Oak Park.

Who were they? Were your skills exploited? I imagine a classical male body with a slight build and reservoir of latent physical prowess that can be used for light or darkness, depending on your mood. I conceive of your image so that I have someone to ask: what did it feel like to displace my ancient Magyar ancestors from this land? How did you decide to mix sea water and volcanic ash to make columns that will never fall? I fall in love with you simply for your building ingenuity and the most exquisite, curly, brown hair I have ever seen (in my imagination). As I look into this ancient hole, I wonder who looked at this strata of earth last and I smell limestone and sand. What is that Lebanese wine we use to drink? I found the vineyard on the internet tonight and learned that Kefraya's vines are grown on an artificial hill built by the ancient Romans 2,000 years ago, that was used to observe troop movements. A scenic war prop with aromatic notes of past lives. How appropriate.

cairn (*noun*): a mound of rough stones built as a memorial or landmark, typically on a hilltop or skyline.
(But we are both still alive)

Have you ever studied your hands?

The room that had been the laboratory of Dr. Felix Hoenikker was on the sixth floor, the top floor of the building. A purple cord had been stretched across the doorway, and a brass plate on the wall explained why the room was sacred: IN THIS ROOM, DR. FELIX HOENIKKER, NOBEL LAUREATE IN PHYSICS, SPENT THE LAST TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS OF HIS LIFE. 'WHERE HE WAS, THERE WAS A FRONTIER OF KNOWLEDGE.' THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ONE MAN IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND IS INCALCULABLE."

Miss Faust offered to unshackle the purple cord for me so that I might go inside and traffic more intimately with whatever ghosts there were. I accepted. "It's just as he left it," she said, "except that there were rubber bands all over one counter. "Rubber bands?" "Don't ask me what for. Don't ask me what any of this is for," The old man had left the laboratory a mess. What engaged my attention at once was the quality of cheap toys laying around. There was a paper kite with a broken spine. There was a toy gyroscope, wound with string, ready to whirr and balance itself. There was a top. There was a bubble pipe. There was a fish bowl with a castle and two turtles in it.

"He loved ten-cent stores," said Miss Faust.

"I can see he did."

"Some of his most famous experiments were performed with equipment that cost less than a dollar." *Kurt Vonnegut, Cat's Cradle*

I was reminded of this passage on a visit to the Frank Lloyd Wright home and studio last year but all I seem to remember from the tour was the children's playroom. His custom designed and exquisitely crafted wooden blocks appeared to be phenomenological wonders in the concept of chaos and order, an imperative early life lesson if one plans to climb the ladder and promptly fall off of it. I lingered to remember this adolescent moment of tumbling the tower that I had spent so much care building and projected this gesture of Wright's to be the most satisfying accomplishment of his creative life. When Anne Yafi visited my studio to talk about my work, we were surprised to find so much overlap in life experience. When I visited her studio, we found an equal amount of overlap in our approaches to a studio practice. We seek joy, momentum, form, pleasure and process to a degree that warrants the outcome secondary. One can only aspire to a success of the supernova nature, deeply felt in the simultaneous exploding and imploding of an object between two hands.

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