

Mono-Form: (or “how I learned to enjoy puzzles”)

Ric Spencer

Mono-Form is a term coined by Britt Salt to describe her art and gives us an insight into the relationship she has with her work. *Mono-Form* is an elusive term - Google the word and you may find blogs trying to get a grasp on it – some in Spanish which really didn't help me. After meandering around the net for some time it occurred to me that each page I was opening was like a *mono-form* and the game of trying to find a definition was like building a puzzle from these mono-forms. This realisation probably gives us as good a definition as any so lets try: *mono-form* – a basic unit like a line or square or cube which, like a jigsaw, put together gives us an even bigger puzzle to work out.

Britt Salt's enjoyment of floating objects in space might be based on mathematics, or physics, or industrial processes, whatever it is her folding, refolding, cutting and rolling is puzzle building at its best. And like working on a puzzle, her work simultaneously encourages play and enquiry, the type of play and enquiry that comes from an obsession with construction rather than the finality of coming to any desired form.

Britt's "floating world" pieces are built in such a way as to promote possibility, not the possibility of any finality, not the possibility of completion but the open possibility that comes from beginning. Britt is no rubics cube fanatic hell bent on getting all the side's colours together in record time. I think if she were to pick up the cube it would be to extenuate new understandings of its mechanics, the gauge of the cracks or how light refracts off it.

This new *mono-form* might concentrate on how the cracks between the colours help to rotate individual cubes whilst holding the whole form together. Flexibility and strength – strength through flexibility- parts that are effacing yet indispensable in the key to the form as a whole – I think these are all key phrases for consideration in Britt's working methodology.

In a recent artist statement Britt writes of her material process being somewhere in between building and weaving or more specifically of 'building as akin to textile construction'. Again later in the statement she uses the phrase 'the origins and relationship between architectural and textile processes as akin.' In using these phrases subconsciously or not Britt gives us an idea of family or perhaps rather the social chemistry between individual units as they define a collective.

Her work for me builds a sense of unity or strength by modulating a number of single units – or mono-forms – together in order to build incongruous strength out of fragility. Her ideas are based on spatial architecture and engineering yes but more importantly they create inclusive narratives. As for any individual within a social group, inclusiveness or the desire to belong is a basic social need. Watching a group of people manifest group dynamics can be enthralling. Spatial interactions allow for endless viewing, who is included, who doesn't fit? Britt, as any artist is, is in the position of power in her making - in work that is a combination of textile making, spatial architecture and installation it is the inclusion of the viewer as an integral

performative element that juggles all these ingredients together. But if an artist is adept at creating these inclusive tensions, then they are also capable of denying them - an artist capable of orchestrating inclusiveness is also capable of orchestrating isolation, the pivotal fulcrum in deciding this tension in Britt's work is always the viewer and it's a mature artist who understands and then acts on this.

Beyond her understanding of spatial aesthetics is Britt's comprehension of materials. Hers' is an art of materialism and within this exchange, within her modules of folded material, is the simultaneous story of an unfolding individual – the artist. In being hands on with off the roll industrial material I see a person engaging in the responsibility of creating their own world out of the materials that most influence their life. This type of engaged knowing only comes through taking time to understand the make up of a material and its relationship to space, in other words its phenomenological basis. In some way Britt has managed to transcend the immediate phenomenon of the material she works with and take it to another level - this is the job of an artist, to transcend planes of immanence, and Britt does it well. Her work is a beautiful and poetic clash of the world with the artist and it goes some way toward explaining that most difficult of puzzles, the identity of the individual encapsulated in a world of lines, cubes and squares and all the other structures that go toward making up this crazy world we move through.

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