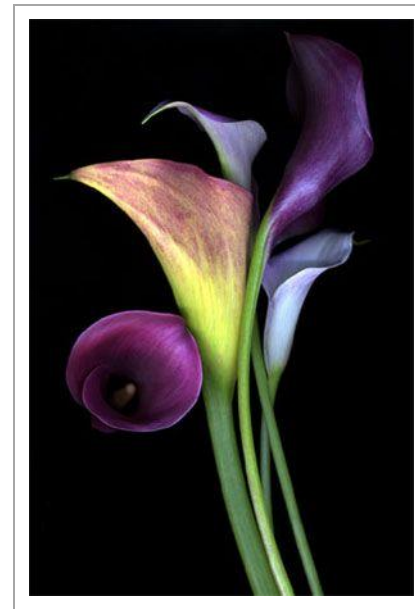


Gratitude

Thank you all for your support this semester.

Kendall Reiss
Darin Murphy
Caitrin Lynch
David Baird
Metalwerx Studio
Friends & Family.

Exploration I



EXPLORATION I:

—Annie Zeng. 2015.



Exploration I:
a three-part exhibit
Annie Zeng. 2015.

Part I— Metal Forming

Part II—Visualizations

Part III—A Question...



With this new perspective, maybe as a culture, we can think about navigating through life with greater awareness and agility. The next time that we're stuck in a hefty situation, seemingly static and obstructed by our inertia and emotional burden, maybe we can take in the situation from another perspective and simply step lightly about it—not running away from reality, but strategically meandering and converting. Maybe we can all become more skilled at weaving through life—more nimble. Then, as Calvino suggested—maybe as a culture, we will step with a certain kind of lightness throughout the new millennium. Our ghost prints will then become a masterpiece.

Lastly, I ask: what does/will the ghost print of your life look like? What is the pattern which you weave? Please share it with me by participating in this exhibit. Carving tools are available to shape channels within the sheet of clay. Be thoughtful on the path you take and its resulting form. Where do your paths/boundaries intersect with those in your environment? Is there such a thing as an isolated individual? The piece generated by tonight's collaboration will result in a light display that will also serve as a flow visualization.

Thank you.

Part III: A Question...

“Were I to choose an auspicious image for the new millennium, I would choose...the sudden agile leap of the poet-philosopher who raises himself above the weight of the world, showing that with all his gravity he has the secret of lightness...”

—Italo Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium: Lightness*.

As I grow and go through life’s many experiences, I weave from one situation to another. In youth, the world first appears to be either black or white—possessing two poles of existence. Travelling from one discrete region of truth to another, my movements are jerky and direct. As I mature, I begin to see and comprehend life for its gray areas. I come to believe that nothing is truly stagnant; bad times will bring down the good, but contrary to my belief, indeed, I can overcome their heft to rediscover joy.

I begin to see and comprehend the cyclic nature of life. As I navigate from one mental space to another, my awareness of the emotional weight of my life exchanges itself for lightness and vice versa. It all becomes a conversion—the pattern of flow whose imprints are the silhouette of my emotional and intellectual journey. This conversion is like that of momentum and energy, taking me from heft to lightness and back again as inertia is overcome or begot. My manner of travel becomes more liquid—a form of flow sustained not by physical structure, but by “unseen”, emergent, forces guided by my intuition and wisdom. Tracing this path taken, reveals the ghost print of a life.

Part I: Metal Forming

I am attracted to working in metal because it is a medium of many contradictions. The heft of the metal grounds it to the earth, yet it still manages to dance in curves and valleys. Through its malleability and ductility, metal is able to be moved atom by atom, and shaped by a hand which gifts it the qualities of movement. From this movement, the piece can come to an equilibrium and arrive at the final form.

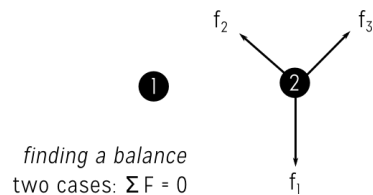
This final form is a suspension—a balance of forces compressive and in tension. It’s seemingly static—but in reality, very much alive:

“in Newton’s theories, what most strikes the literary imagination is not the conditioning of everything and everyone by the inevitability of its own weight, but rather the balance of forces that enables heavenly bodies to float in space.”

—Italo Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millennium: Lightness*.

Forces & Balance

Sometimes I feel that internal and external forces of various extremes pull at me as I travel through life. These forces cause me to fumble, to leap, and to grow.



However, in the synthesis of my experiences, I realize that I often find satisfaction & a feeling of fulfillment in my life when I obtain a balance—a steady state, if you will. A personal space is arrived at: one where the truly unique can emerge amidst the unknown.

*“Something mysteriously formed,
Born before heaven and earth.
In the silence and the void,
Standing alone and unchanging,
Ever present and in motion.
Perhaps it is the mother of ten thousand things.
I do not know its name.
Call it Tao.
For lack of a better word, I call it great.*

*Being great, it flows.
It flows far away.
Having gone far, it returns.*

*Therefore, “Tao is great;
Heaven is great;
Earth is great;
The human being is also great.”
These are the four great powers of the universe,
And the human being is one of them.*

*The human being follows the earth.
Earth follows heaven.
Heaven follows the Tao.
Tao follows what is natural.”*

—Lao Tsu. Tao Te Ching.

Part II: Flows

I have always admired the qualities of fluids. It's the element which is the least afraid to show its weaknesses (something that most humans cannot bring themselves to do). A fluid will not force its way—it will conform to the channel carved for it. However, given enough time or momentum, a fluid will shape the stone that lies in its path.

It is an element that possesses numerous contradictions. It shapes and is shaped. It's flexible, conforming even, yet powerful upon display of its majesty.

“Hit water hard enough and it can fracture. Wait long enough and a mountain can flow...Sometimes the difference between a fluid and solid is just a matter of time scale.”

—Brian Storey. Fluid dynamics and heat transfer.

There are many instances of analogies to fluid behaviors and characteristics within the human culture. The visualizations in this exhibit serve to juxtapose some of those creations along with the observation and study of our natural world. This exploration, presented on dual screens,ⁱ is the springboard for the larger conceptualization of various connections and contradictions seen in the natural, physical, and human worlds.

Dimensions

However, in the synthesis of my experiences, I realize that I often find satisfaction & a feeling of fulfillment in my life when I obtain a balance—a steady state, if you will. A personal space is arrived at: one where the truly unique can emerge amidst the unknown.

*That interlacing
Of thoughts, dreams,
Sights, visions,
Memories, aspirations,*

*Occupying your leisure
And often a burden to you,*

*That interlacing,
The poem sets aside,
Sees it off
In favour of a centre*

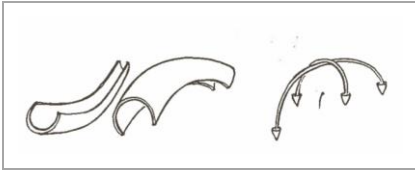
*Where you find the space
For your dimensions.*

—Guillevic, Art Poétique.

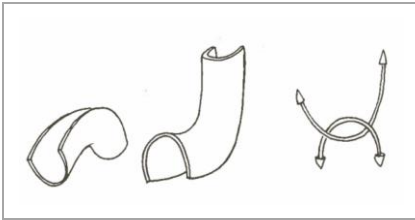
In these past few months, I've begun to carve and define the dimensions of my personal universe. It has led me to look at and analyze the world in a way that I've never formally done before. This is work that, at once, terrifies & excites me. However, because of my fear, I know that I am on to something worth exploring. Let me share this space—this center—that I've arrived at with you.

Metal Forming Techniques

The synclast and anticlast are cold metal forming techniques which involve the use of special hammers, stakes, punches, and dies to stretch and compress metal to the desired shape.



The Synclast: generates a form with two distinct curvatures at right angles to one another whose convexities are in the same direction.



The Anticlast: generates a form with two distinct curvatures at right angles to one another whose convexities are in opposite directions.



(L) Synclast rectangle. (2) Anticlast hyperbolic paraboloid extension.



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