

### Project Proposal #3

Title of Project: *Love, Death and the Desire Between*

Name of Student: Jamie Hamilton

Description of Proposed Project, Practical Element:

I plan on creating large scale aerial sculptures which will be performed upon by myself and others. This requires a twin development of both a sculptural system of great structural and aesthetic integrity and the intense physical training of my body and mind necessary for such types of performance. I will create structures of compressive and tensile members of steel, wire rope, fabrics, and plastics which can be erected in fields, cantilever from cliffs, occupy large spaces within and between architectural edifices. These structures will present me with the opportunity to perform upon wires and have other performers and dancers interact with the forms and structures. I will build the components by grinding, cutting, and welding steels and then test their integrity by pulling them up to load with winches and dynamometer. When I am attaching to existing architectural structures, engineers will need to be enlisted.

I also will train my body for the rigors of aerial performance. I will spend time everyday practicing traditional Hatha Yoga and Kalari, walking on my high wire, and strengthening my body through other forms of physical training. I will be mentored in Yoga by Matt Huish, a student of classical forms of yoga for over 30 years. I also wish to study with ballet dancers to help me find grace from the core to the limbs. I also will seek out training from a master wire walker if possible, although wire walking is a closely protected art form and it is hard to find mentors willing to share their art. This disciplined work and study will provide the strength, courage, and grace which I wish to bring to my performances upon my sculptures.

Reference Bibliography:

Ashley, Clifford W, *The Ashley Book of Knots*, New York, Doubleday & co., 1944.

(The definitive treatise and reference on the knotting and rigging of fiber ropes.)

Burgess, Hov y, *Circus Techniques*, New York, Brian Dub , Inc., 1983.

(Gives exercises in the training of balance and posture for live circus performance.)

Dickie, D. E., *Rigging Manual*, Toronto, Ontario, Construction Safety Association of Ontario, 1975-2000.

(A reference book on safely using materials and techniques in industrial/heavy lift rigging of wire and fiber ropes, chain and slings.)

Graurmont, Raoul, Hensel, John, *Splicing Wire and Fiber Rope*, Cambridge, Maryland, Cornell Maritime Press, 1955.

(A helpful manual explaining step by step the complex actions in splicing ropes, be it steel or fiber.)

Rossnagel, W. E. *The Handbook of Rigging*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1964.

(A reference for the rigger in designs and use of derricks, cranes, hoists, and jacks. To be used as a reference for safe techniques and design.)

### Description of Proposed Project, Written Element:

I will investigate the study of reduction in structural engineering to the essentials of tension and compression found in the work of Frei Otto. I will compare this structure and the philosophies which created them to that of the martial artist Bruce Lee in his reduction of movements to only those which are essential for combat. I will compare and contrast these two practices looking at the ground they share and the ways they are different. Architectural and corporal movement which at its core seeks totally economy also tends to be sublime. How does the undoing of everything which is nonessential, become a doing of a higher forms of beauty which is often found in nature. Bruce Lee tells us "The aim of art is to project an inner vision into the world, to state in aesthetic creation the deepest psychic and personal experiences of a human being.... Behind every motion, the music of his soul becomes visible."

### Project Result:

The result will consist of a series of installations and performances in various locations around my home in New Mexico. I will install them in parks, urban settings, on rock cliffs and spanning gorges in nature. I will document the works with photographs and video works.

### Research Method

I will study practices in the engineering and building of large tensile structures. The works and writings of Frei Otto and Robert Le Ricolais will be studied carefully. I will study the exercises of martial and performance artist such as Bruce Lee and Philippe Petit. In this research I will focus my attention to the interests of simplicity and reduction. How did these "artist" discern the essential from the adjective, and in doing so their practices and philosophies become about and undoing of everything not essential to their creations.

### Initial Research Bibliography

Artaud, Antonin, *The Theater and Its Double*, New York, Grove Press Inc., 1958.

(An investigation into the essential nature of theater and its power in communication of human desire. It attacks the conventions and banality of the mainstream stage productions and instead offers a view of theater and performance as "the notion of a kind of unique language half-way between gesture and thought." Have begun to read.)

Bonner, John Tyler, *Morphogenesis, an essay on development*, Forge Village, Mass., The Murray Printing Company, 1952.

(A text dealing with examining a the question of is there a unifying theory to the developmental evolution of living organism. I think this text may be useful in to my research as it looks into organism strategies for survival certainly and essential issue of design of life. Have yet to read.)

Boys, C. V., *Soap-Bubbles Their Colours and the Forces Which Mold Them*, New York, N.Y., Dover Publications, Inc., 1959.

(Soap bubble are minimum volume surface structures, so they themselves are example of perfect economy. Have not yet read.)

Chardin, Teilhard De, *The Phenomenon of Man*, New York, NY, Harper & Row Publisher, Inc., 1961

(Have not yet read but am fascinated by the premise Chardin presents in which he describes evolution as a process of continuous increasing complexity which will lead to the unification of all consciousness in a continuous sphere which he coins the “noosphere” or mind sphere. A very exciting concept to the sculptor and performer I wish to become.)

Cook, Andrea Theodore, *The Curves Of Life*, New York, N.Y., Dover Publications Inc., 1979

(I think this text could be related to my project, because it deals with the forms of nature. The structure of curves which are both elegant but serve very practical purposes like the nautilus.)

Da Vinci, Leonardo, *On the Human Body*, New York, Dover Publications, 1983.

(A definitive treatise on the forms and structures of the human body.)

Dayananda, Swami, *The Teachings of the Bhagavad Gita*, Delhi, India, Vision Book Pvt. Ltd, 1989.

(Describes the philosophies and core teaching of the Bhagavad Gita in terms of understanding the practices and ideologies of gaining wisdom and perspective through the process of eliminating unnecessary mental processes.)

Drew, Philip, Otto, Frei, *Form and Structure*, Westview Press, Boulder Colorado, 1976.

(This text chronologies the study and creation of light weight structures by Frei Otto and his colleagues. Have skimmed but not read in entirety.)

Gordon, G.E., *The New Science of Strong Material or Why You Don't Fall through the Floor*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1968.

(Is a layman's introduction to issues of material engineering and study of structure through issues of stress, strain and economy.)

Koestler, Arthur, *The Act of Creation, A study of the Conscious and Unconscious in Science and Art*, New York, NY, Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1964.

(The book describes the creative act and gives scientific explanation certain areas. Have not yet read. “There are two ways of escaping our more or less automatized routines of thinking and behaving. The first, of course, is the plunge into dreaming or dream-like states, when the codes of rational thinking are suspended. The other way is also to escape—from boredom, stagnation, intellectual predicaments, and emotional frustration—but an escape in the opposite direction; it is signaled by the spontaneous flash of insight which shows a familiar situation or event in a new light....” Koestler pg 45 I have yet to read this book.)

Lee, Bruce, *The Tao of Jeet Kune Do*, Burbank California, Ohara Publications Inc. 1975.

(Contains Lee's meditations on art and life as well as close inspections of movements in martial arts and describing ways of reducing these actions to states of total efficiency)

Le Ricolias, Robert, *Things Themselves Are Lying And So Are Their Image*, Graduate School of Fine Arts University of Pennsylvania, 1973.

(Have not yet read, but it is my understanding that this article deals with Le Ricolias's meditations on the limitations of notions of meaning. Beyond our need to find meaning is the true agency of an object or animal itself)

Otto, Frei, et. al., IL8 Nets in Nature and Technics, Stuttgart, Germany, Institut for Lightweight Structure (IL), University of Stuttgart, 1975.

(Frei Otto's and his colleagues text with many photos and drawing on their study on forms of nature and the integration of these lessons into the building of large scale tensile buildings. Have skimmed but not read in entirety.)

Otto, Frei, et. al., IL5 Convertible Roofs, Stuttgart, Germany, Institut for Lightweight Structure (IL), University of Stuttgart, 1972.

(Frei Ottos and his colleagues study of systems of convertible tensile structures in nature and history and the buildings that are then built by this team of engineers and architects. Have skimmed but not read in entirety.)

Petit, Philippe, On The High Wire, Random House, New York, 1985.

(The only treatise which is written on high wire arts. Philippe offers his insight and techniques in the art of rigging and performing upon high wires.)

Singh, Jaideva, Vijnanabhairava or Devine Consciousness, Dehli, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1979.

(A translation of an ancient text describing physical practices for the distilling and focusing of the mind and spirit. Have begun reading.)

Thompson D'arcy, On Growth and Form, New York, N.Y., Cambridge University Press, 1961.

(One of the definitive texts on the forms of nature and the similitude of shapes and patterns of growth in nature. Have read sections, but it has been a while)

Whyte, Lancelot Law, Aspects of Form, London, UK, Percy Lund Humphries & Co., Ltd., London, 1951.

(Another text which seems like it may have some relation to my research project. But thus far have been unable to find an abstract on the text, although I have it at home, and will look at it when I return)

## Research Question.

How does total economy in the structures of Frei Otto and in the movements of Bruce Lee yield a organic grace? By using these two artists as a starting point what can I learn about the nature of economy in movement and structure to help me further my own growth as a performer and sculptor?

## Intended Audience

Those who dare to dream.

## Current Artistic Practice

I study forms of the world whether they be natural or man made moving or static. Both tiny or huge, ancient or modern, resonances in structure and form are seen. The spiral galaxy yields much the same structure as a draining sink or the patterns of paints on a Pollock canvas, all forms dictated by the organizing forces of gravity and inertia. The paths of smashed atoms

inside the particle accelerator follows the same graceful arcs and curves as the iron in a Paris metro stop. My sculpture and the process involved in its creation is a way of exploring my connection to matter, energy, and consciousness.

Formulate Entire Project in 2-3 Sentences:

The realization of aerial sculptures incorporating performance whose grace is born from an economy of human movement and material construction of an intrinsic beauty which denies reduction to a single issue. It is my aspiration that through research, creation, and artistic growth the audience will generate questions towards love, death, dream and desire. In essence this project is an exploration in how to touch my fellow man? Can I through experimentation in performance and building learn as a sculptor and performer to be as generous as possible?