

annotated bibliography

Aranya, S. H. (1981). *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali*. Translated from the Hindi by P. N. Mukerji, State University Of New York Press.: Albany, NY.

A formidable volume on the seminal sutras of Pantanjali. Each sutra has in-depth interpretation from scholars of yogic philosophy. Although at this point I have only skimmed the text, in the next months I hope to read part of the book to explore how the techniques of concentration in mind and breath control can be applied to funambulism.

Ashley, C. W. (1944) *Ashley Book of Knot*. Doubleday and Company, Inc.: Garden City, NY

The treatise on knots and rope work, this book has been an invaluable reference to me in my studio practice. Not only does the book contain most of the known knots, it also gives detailed instructions on tying the knots and describes their uses and often their histories.

Birdmen: The Original Dream of Human Flight (2012) Directed by Matt Sheridan [Film]. UK: Journeyman Pictures.

An interesting documentary about the sport of wing suiting. It takes the viewer on a brief journey through the history of unpowered human flight. It looks at the underlying human desire to fly, and to do so with the least apparatus possible. The men and women who pioneered wing suiting continue this evolution, by sewing their own suits, becoming both inventor and practitioner. I feel that this approach of both inventing building and using an apparatus in the quest for the realization of a personal desire through an activity is at the heart of my practice.

Canada, G, (1995). *fist stick knife gun*. Beacon Press.: Boston.

This one is sort of out of left field for my project, but none-the-less I include it for the following reason. Canada describes his personal experience as an inner city youth, and uses this experience to explain the violence which poor American youths face. The part of the book which I find relates to my project is Canada's understanding of fear and how one must take control of their fear in confrontational situations if they wish to navigate it with intelligence. Although the high wire is worlds away from the streets of inner city America, the need to navigate and work with fear when facing potential death with poise has its similarities.

Cervantes, M, (2004). *Don Quixote*. Translated from Spanish by Tobias Smollett. Barnes and Noble Classics.: New York.

The adventures of Don Quixote are a reminder of how the madman offers comedy, tragedy and sagacity in unexpected combinations. Don Quixote's mind transforms the ordinary into the

extraordinary. His visions arise in him such intense impulses toward action that he lurches forth without hesitation or restraint. But it seems his quest of glory leads him to continual injury and defeat. His ambition toward the emulation of the heroes in his beloved novels leads him down a precarious path because his guiding sense is one based in fantasy. I think this dilemma is analogous to the work of an artist as they try to balance inner dreams or desires for glory with the realities of life and work. As an aerialist, I dream of walking out on a high wire untethered and performing an transcendent dance, but I must temper this desire with a feelings that I am not ready for such an act, nor have I found a situation where it would be appropriate.

Collard, B. (1948). *A Text-Book of Netting and Net Making*. Blackfriars Press Ltd.: Leicester, Great Britain.

A reference manual on the creation of nets. It describes the weaving of knotted nets of many different fashions and presents knots which are particularly well suited to being used in net construction. It was in this book that I discovered the knot which I use to join my net to its edge ropes.

The Crosby General Catalog, Available at: <http://www.thecrosbygroup.com/htm\default.htm#/en-US/home> (Accessed: 28th January 2014)

The complete catalog of rigging products produced by The Crosby Group. Most of the rigging hardware which I use is manufactured by Crosby, so frequently during the design and fabrication of my structures? I need to reference this catalog. It provides engineering drawings, dimensions, and specifications for use of each and every piece of hardware. This is information is critical because as I build I must determine clearance dimensions to make sure components can actually work together. I am reminded of the fable of the man who built a boat in his basement, but is unable to get the boat to sea as it does not fit out the basement door.

Dickie, D. E. (2000). *Rigging Manual*. Construction Safety Association of Ontario.: Etobicoke, Ontario Canada.

A extremely in depth manual of rigging. It has been of much use as it show proper ways of using wire rope, such as termination clamps and lists of working loads of most common rigging parts. It describes the proper use of almost every available component, from shackle to crane. Equally important, it includes a section of how not to use equipment and the danger of such improper methods. This book has been of great use to me as I have schooled myself. It also includes sections on the reeving of pulleys which I have used in tensioning systems. Now I use it as a reference for the strength of various ropes and components when designing rigging.

Duchamp, M. (2009, Revised Edition) *Manual of Instructions: Étant Donnés*. Philadelphia Musuem of Art.: Philadelphia, PA

An import example of a how an artist has documented and described the reinstallation of a complex piece of installation art. Duchamp uses a blend of photographs, drawing, and words to piece together the method for the disassembly and reassembly of *Étant Donnés*.

Eliade, M. (1962). *The Two And The One*. Harper & Row, Published, Inc.: New York, NY.

Included in this book is a section called *Ropes and Puppets*. This chapter describes shamanistic and fakir traditions using rope. The rope is often used to allow the shaman or magician the ability to travel between worlds, for instance between heaven and earth. There are stories of the fakir rope trick which involves the ascension of a line magically anchored in the sky and then a ritual dismemberment and reconstruction of the individual. This is a theme common in shamanistic initiation. I find the metaphor of ropes linking worlds to be one of the most beautiful metaphors available to the funambulist.

Eliade, M. (1964). *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton University Press.: Princeton, New Jersey.

The shaman is a fascinating figure to me. I am reading this book to explore the typologies of shamanism in order to be able to detect shamanic “symptoms” in some of the inventors and artists whom I have studied in the course of my practice.

Graumont, R, Nesel, J. (1973). *Splicing Wire and Fiber Rope*. Cornell Maritime Press.: Centreville, Maryland.

A reference which I have used to teach myself the art of splicing fiber and wire ropes. It also has a detailed section of pulley reeving and various ways of achieving mechanical advantages. I use this often in designing and understanding various methods for applying tension and equalizing loads.

Graumont, R. Wenstrom, E. (1948). *Fisherman's Knots and Nets*. Cornell Maritime Press.: Cambridge, Maryland.

One can never have enough knot and rope books when the basic elemental ingredient to the body of work is itself rope and methods with which to make connections.

Herzog, W. (2004). *Conquest of the Useless, Reflections from the Making of Fitzcarraldo*. Translated from the German by Krishna Winston, Harper-Collins Publishers.: New York, NY.

Werner Herzog is one of the artists whom I examined in my study of epic and quixotic endeavors. This book is essentially Herzog’s journal which he kept as he filmed *Fitzcarraldo*. It describes the madness inherent not only in the desire to create such a film, the dragging of a steam ship over a mountain, but also the difficulty of production. However, Herzog pushed

onward against increasing odds and ended up completing a cinematic work which is as compelling as it is iconic.

I Build the Tower, (2006), Directed by Edward Landler and Brad Byer [DVD] Self Released.

Simon Rodia, the subject of this documentary is another artist whom I have studied in the course of my studio project. Rodia to me represents the soul of the artist and inventor. He acts upon an inner initiative independent of any formal artistic structure. Because Rodia worked in this way, his creations, The Watts Towers in Los Angeles, are unique testament to man's ability to interpret the beauty of nature and make it visible through his own vision and creations.

Kafka, F. (1971) *Franz Kafka The Complete Stories*. Edited and Translated by Nahum N. Glatzer. Schocken Books Inc.: New York.

Two stories of particular interest to my project are *The Metamorphosis* and *First Sorrow*. *First Sorrow*, is the story of a devoted trapeze artist who comes to grapple with the singularity and solitude of his art. *The Metamorphosis* is the story of poor Gregor who suddenly awakes to find himself the inhabitant of the body of a large insect. I want to tie this experience somehow to the first steps on the high wire and how the world suddenly feels stripped bare, unfamiliar, and menacing with violent intent. One must entirely relearn how to move, like Gregor facing his new life as an insect.

Kiew Kit, W. (2002). *The Art Of Shaolin Kung Fu*. Tuttle Publishing.: Boston, Mass.

This is a manual on the basic principals and forms of Kung Fu. It presents many description of progressive training, and also includes diagrams and written statements of the movements involved in various forms and practices of Kung Fu. I have read this book and find that it offers an example of how one can approach the problem of presenting a movement based art in the form of a written book. This is one of the same challenges which the creation of my wire walking manual presents.

Laws, K, (1984). *The Physics of Dance*. Schirmer Books.: New York.

An interesting book that I came across while working with a dance teacher. It describes what is happening as the dancer executes various movements through a lens of Newtonian Mechanics. By looking at movements in such elemental terms one can understand principals involved in actions such as balancing on pointe or rotating in pirouettes. From this, a practitioner can improve his performance by understanding the physical laws forming the foundation of movement.

Low, S. (2011), *Overcoming Gravity, A Systematic Approach to Gymnastic and Bodyweight*

Strength. Published by Steven Low.: Maryland, USA.

This book contains detailed instruction on how to develop gymnastic strength skills. It has been greatly educational for me in evolving my understanding of how the body responds to stress by adapting. Stress is a necessary part of any training, but must be carefully applied as too much stress will injure the body. This book describes systematic approaches to increasing the difficulty of exercises in order to continue improving and avoid injuries. I have used Low's methods in designing much of my strength training for the wire.

MacDonald, J. A. Rossnagel, W. E. Higgins, L. R. (2009). *Handbook of Rigging*. McGraw, McGraw Hill.: New York, NY.

Another rigging treatise which I regularly use as reference when trying to determine appropriate designs for high wire rigging.

Orlick, E. M. (2009). *Hand Balancing Made Easy*. Published by Logan Christopher.: Santa Cruz, California.

This is an instruction manual which describes the art of developing hand balancing skills. It lays out progressive exercises for building the strength and body awareness necessary to perform various basic hand balancing stunts. Interestingly inverted balancing is a great way to increase one's overall proprioception which translates to greater equilibristic abilities in other positions.

Petit, P. (2013). *Why Knot*. Abrams.: New York, NY.

A book of sixty knots, knots which Petit believes to be the most useful among the thousands of documented knots. It contains Petit own hand drawings and step by step instructions on how to tie these knots. It also includes stories of his high wire walks and how the various knots became characters in these aerial dramas. I find it an interesting model of a instructional book, as it contains an equal amount of instruction and narrative from the artist's life.

Petit, P. (2008). *MAN ON WIRE*. Sky Horse Publishing.: New York, NY.

This is a autobiography about Petit's famous wire walk between the twin towers of The World Trade Center. It describes how his dream evolved from first seeing a picture of the towers to a fully consuming "artistic crime of the century." To me it represent another example, like Rodia and Herzog, of the power of the inner initiative to create performances and objects which are unfathomably strange, original, and transporting.

Petit, P. (1985). *On The High Wire*. Random House.: New York, NY.

This, to my knowledge, is the only treatise written on the art of high wire walking. It, however, hardly reads like an instructional book. "It goes without saying that you must have won the

friendship of an old high-wire walker who will share his rigging secrets with you. If not you will go about it according to your own ideas and sooner or later pay for it with your life.” pg. 60 But it does give a clear portrayal of Petit’s philosophy toward funambulism. In addition, he relates stories of many of the famous moments in modern funambulism and describes some of the exercises achieved upon a wire or rope.

Rinpoche, G. according to Karma Lingpa. (2000). *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Translated by Francesca Fremantle and Chogyam Trungpa, Shambhala.: Boston & London.

I am interested in the description and concept in states of Bardo. Bardo in Tibetan literally means the transitional state between two places. I am interested in how being on the wire becomes a metaphor of a state of Bardo. Balance is also by nature a Bardo state as it is the point in between falling one way or the other.

Singh, J. (1979). *Vijnanabhairava, or Divine Consciousness*. Montilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited.: Delhi.

This translation of an ancient yogic text describes 108 different techniques of meditation for the attainment of divine consciousness. Some of the meditations describe techniques which are similar to wire walking. One of the exercises is to sit upon a single point so that all of one’s body except a single sit bone is unsupported. If one spends time in this precarious and difficult position of balance it is said that divine consciousness will arise.

Pullout Capacity of Tents Stakes, Available at: <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DCE/Permits/Tents/Documents/ifai%20staking%20guide%20anchorweb.pdf> (Accessed: 28th January 2014)

A manual on the use of stakes for anchoring loads generated by tent structures. It describes the basic concept and variables which affect the behavior of stakes. It also gives detailed methods for testing and determining a safe load for a given stake size in a particular soil with a specific load angle. This information was essential when I was designing the anchoring system for my high wire and safety net structures.

Tsunetomo, Y. (2010). *HAGAKURE, BOOK OF THE SAMARI*. Madison Park, Pacific Publishing Studio.: USA.

A book written by a Samurai endeavoring to understand his duty in transitional times. He comes to understand how his now living in more peaceful times is influenced by his warrior sensibility. In a sense it is a manual for just and noble conduct. It describes how one should approach endeavors and overcome difficulties. It is through the total acceptance of one’s mortality, the understanding that one is already defeated and already dead, that one’s ability to do great things is born.

Trungpa, C. (1992). *Transcending Madness The Experience of the Six Bardos*. Shambhala.: Boston & London.

Terray, L. (1963). *Conquistadors of the Useless*. Translated from the French by Geoffrey Sutton, Baton Wicks,: London.

Another text which I have yet to read. I am interested in it because it is the account of a famous adventurer, going on great conquest not for wealth or power, but in pursuit of an experience powerful enough to make Terray face death upon great mountains. George Mallory, when asked why he wanted to climb Everest famously quipped, “because it is there.” But perhaps he was not talking about the mountain, but something inside his heart. By reading this book I hope to come closer to understanding the desire of extreme artists.

Tesela, N. (1919). *My Inventions*. Electrical Experimenter.: New York.

An autobiography in which Tesela recounts his path and his techniques in invention. He speaks of his methods of visualization, which are remarkable, an ability to completely see in his mind the behavior of complex machines. To me, this represents something like shamanic ability. He also lays out his philosophy on the responsibility of the inventor to serve humanity in order to increase not only our quality in living, but also to help catalyze our collective human potential towards spiritual development.

Watts, A. (1989). *The Book On the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are*. Vintage Books, Random House, Inc.: New York.

A book which I have just begun to read. I think it will be useful to my project because from what I know it explores the struggle that we face to understand ourselves and our relationship to the universe. Watts restates ancient Vedanta philosophy in a modern context. If we take to be true what Watts says, the notion of the individual is a hallucination and rather we are one consciousness experiencing itself subjectively through the individual, then the adventurer, wire walker, or aerialist is not someone to be admired or envied as if separate from us, but is in fact part of us.