

Sabbatical Report: Spring Term of 2011-2012 Academic Year

Andreas Salzman,

Instructor - Sculpture and Ceramics

Division of the Arts: Art and Applied Design

Guest lecturer and discussion lead “ Michealangelo to Gormly”, Arte torna arte Accademia
Gallery-Uffizi Gallery, Florence Italy. July 2012

Guest reviewer for Graduate Thesis reviews for Interactive Telecommunication Program
at Tisch School of the Arts, New York University June, 2012

“Dis armonie in Arte” (Disharmonies in Art) Lecture on personal work, FONDERIA
DELLE ARTI , Roma, Italy, July 2012

Artist residency, Minnesota Center for Book Art, Minneapolis Minnesota, summer 2012

Workshop presenter ,Minnesota Center for Book Art, Minneapolis Minnesota,2 012
“Sculpture as Book and Narrative Devise”

Guest thesis reviewer BFA and MFA University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. June 2012

Guest thesis reviewer BFA- Ceramics University of Montana Bozeman. June 2012

ABSTRACT:

During Spring term of the 2011-2012 Academic year, I was awarded a one-term sabbatical, with the intention of constructing a number of new artworks based on my findings during a proposed stint of travel, primarily to Wisconsin to uncover family history about my relatives, both those who immigrated to the United States from Europe

and those who emigrated to other regions of Wisconsin as well. In addition to Wisconsin, I also traveled to New York to take part in theses review for graduate students at NYU, including one of my former students who was completing his MFA program there. The final trip that I took during this time was to Florence and Rome in Italy, for the purposes of a follow-up on a gallery exhibition my work had been featured in during the previous year. Through these three trips, I learned a great deal about myself, but also about the idea of a personal history and personal mythology that comes from one's experiences with their environment and the people around them. These three trips gave me a wealth of new material to start a new body of work, of which the first pieces were shown in my sabbatical exhibition in Fall of 2013. This new body of work explores the development of a personal history and of a personal mythology, and how this affects the way in which one sees and interacts with the world, and is built upon both the experiences on these three trips, and also visually inspired by many of the places, buildings, and people attached to them.

I was awarded a sabbatical for Spring Term of the 2011-2012 Academic year, during which I proposed I would spend time working on a number of pieces of artwork, based on the growing body of work that I have established in the last six years as a professor at Lane Community College. I also proposed travel as main goal for this sabbatical, with the hopes of returning back to Wisconsin and uncovering parts of my family's history and coming to an understanding of where my family came from, and how they created a new life in the United States, just as I have done in Oregon.

During the course of my sabbatical, I made three separate trips to different locations, always with the intent of gaining greater understanding in the way in which someone builds a

new life, and also understanding my own place in the life that I have built since I came to Oregon. My first trip was a road trip back to Wisconsin, intending to attend a workshop at the Minnesota Book Arts Center in Minneapolis, and to join my father in Wild Rose, where he and my mother currently live. The former was intended to expand my knowledge of bookbinding, a mechanism that I have wanted to integrate into my work for some time, and was offered the opportunity to attend this workshop as a guest of the Executive Director of MCBA. After this workshop was completed, I remained as a resident artist for an additional 2 weeks. Along with spending a good deal of time working on honing my understanding and skills at bookbinding, I also took the opportunity to connect with several of my colleagues at the University of Minnesota Twin-Cities by participating in graduate and undergraduate thesis reviews as well as several studio visits.

The latter part of my trip to the Midwest was one I had discussed with my father at great length prior to the trip. My interest in seeing a number of sites outlined by my grandfather in his biography, and of visiting a number of other museums and courthouses that may have additional information.

Upon my arrival in Wisconsin, my father and I set off to visit a number of these sites, chief among them being a number of logging trails, the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay Wisconsin, and also a few unnamed sites known to my father from his childhood and early adult life. Throughout this entire trip, I kept a detailed photographic record of what we saw and found, as well as observing my father and the way he went about gathering his research and comparing it against my own methods and impressions of the information we uncovered. One of the most valuable components of this experience was being able to physically see and interact with some of the sites my grandfather had discussed in his autobiography, especially because he was a man of few words when I knew him as a child. In this, I gained a new perspective on who my

grandfather had been in his early life, and also how this differed from my impression of who he had been to me as a child growing up. My father, who had a very different relationship with my grandfather, also found a new sense of his father through finding these places that he had grown up hearing about, but that he also had read about in the autobiography. This morphing of our perspectives on the same individual also changed my perspective on my father, and the experience of seeing him uncover parts of his own father's past helped me to better understand their relationship, even after his father's passing many years ago. This family history is one of the foundational bases of the ongoing narrative in my creative work.

My second journey was to New York City. One of my former students had finished his MFA in Interactive Telecommunications at the Tisch School of Arts at New York University, and I had been presented with the opportunity of being part of his and a number of other theses reviews during my time there. New York had always been a place of almost-mythic stature in my own life and career as an artist, and to be able to spend several days as an academic and a professor in New York was an important milestone for me. As a professor, I saw the success of one of my students in achieving his goals, and also took part in a number of other students' reviews, the pinnacle of one's pursuit for higher education. It reaffirmed for me my place as a professor and academic, but also a person, it reaffirmed for me that I had made the right decisions with my career as an artist and professor.

Several weeks after my return to Oregon, I once again set out for the last leg of my journey, this time to Rome and Florence, Italy. As an artist, and specifically as a sculptor, Italy has been the home of many of the artists and works that influenced me from the very beginning of my artistic career. In the year prior to my sabbatical, I was given the opportunity to show in Rome with a number of other artists, both local and international like myself. The success of this

show led to a second show in Bracciano Italy. The work from both shows was purchased and became of a permanent public collection belonging to the city of Rome. This trip was offered me the opportunity, as the creator of the works, to ensure their safe archiving. I also had the opportunity to deliver a lecture about the work.

However, unlike the last two parts of my journey, I was not alone. This time, my eldest daughter accompanied me, taking her own academic trip to Italy, but as an art historian, rather than artist and educator. My time in Italy was structured based on the scheduled arrangements I had made to see the gallery space my work had been exhibited in, and also other arrangements to meet with the artists I had shown with the year prior. In addition, I was also able to make plans to see many of the foundational works that were housed in both Rome and Florence, and through my status as an educator abroad was able to inspect a number of sites undergoing restoration during our time in Italy. Of particular note was areas of the Roman Forum and a number of smaller churches in Rome, where the ancient structures were being reinforced through a variety of novel, ingenious means that helped to keep the historical architecture intact. To be in a country that is so deeply-steeped in history, and to see the contrast between the mythological history I knew as a far-flung traveler and the truthful, tangible truth before me was deeply humbling, and also inspiring. As I had previously, I took an exhaustive photographic record of these sites and instances, gathering still more materials for my growing body of work. As I watched the Italian workmen repair fallen Roman arches, I began to develop further my new works I intended to build once returning home.

The time I spent on my sabbatical allowed me to reflect on my life as an artist and as a teacher and the balance between the two. I had initially planned on the extensive travel to be time for me to more fully focus on my discipline and practices as a visual artist. In retrospect, it is

clear that my professional life is an ever changing combination of both teaching and studio work. This time as also allowed me to identify and reflect on who I am and what my “work” is. I also generated a huge amount of sores material that I will bring to my studio work and classroom for a long time.

Images of work presented in sabbatical show, LCC Art Gallery, Fall 2013









