

CATECHISM

“There is a two-way connection between value and being, nothing being capable of being that is not in some respect a specification or distortion of good, as nothing good is which does not in some imperfect or distorted form exist.”

- J.N. Findlay

As I was creating the work in this show, I was animated by three orientations towards LAET which seem, yet fail, to coalesce into a whole:

1. process as such, which we see when our eternal eyes are open – the actual, ongoing (at this very moment) re-production of human civilization in its economic, physical and sexual registers
2. cognition as such, the phenomenological, perceptual and existential processing of collective reality in its spatial and social registers, which, following Hegel, cannot be separated
3. the world-historical threshold whereby the familiar (yet more contingent than we're ready to admit, though this is becoming increasingly apparent) reality we know may or may not evolve through us, perhaps into something beyond human comprehension

When the insight into LAET's reality is snuffed out, we falsely believe in the deceptive, superficial casual chain presented to ordinary perception. In reality, everything it seems to create has been created by LAET; reality is a product, not a producer. And we are capable of creating and experiencing epiphanies that can, more and more, restore our true vision - which always involves seeing, manifesting and merging with LAET in the same gesture.

Conceiving of LAET as a “process” actually sins against LAET's defiance of all classification (substance, act, concept, object, etc.); but we live in a world of sin. As a result, a variety of different traditions of thought regard the same LAET in very different ways. It can be viewed with a religious valence, as the work of the holy spirit, but just as easily with a critical Marxist valence, as the production process re-creating and expanding the conditions of human existence (this latter can be interpreted as either something inherently comprehensible, but which social ideology presents an obstacle to truly apprehending, or as something strictly incomprehensible, at least for now) or the reverse-temporal creative process which is unique to the Individual Author and

seems to diverge intrinsically from the Holy Spirit and from the Economic in that it contains a mark of evil the erasure of which would neutralize its value entirely.

These orientations falsely present themselves as incompatible, in ways and for reasons I cannot enumerate here – and this is where art comes in. What art lacks in conceptual explicitation, it gains in unicity, or at least viscous multiplicity, that is able to awaken insights of a totality which is otherwise too contradictory to describe. To this end – making contact with process in its various modes – here's a list of concerns that animated me as I created this work: materials, with an eye towards their source, whether reclaimed from my own life or those of people I do or do not know, or manufactured to play a role in the industrial production process prior to the end-user, and another eye towards their physical affordances; the interlocking between collective habits, cultural forms that sculpt and sustain those habits, the collective production and consumption process that the habits serve, and my own yearnings, relationships and traumas. My joy (agony and ecstasy both) in working with materials – distressing, melting, burning, laser-etching, 3D sculpting, printing (2D and 3D), spray painting, re-combining and so on, as well as in diverting the architectural and industrial significations of manufactured items, collapsing the phenomenology of directional orientation; apprehending the existence of this space in a building on a city block in the United States, and interacting with an ecosystem of galleries, artists, and writers within the exquisitely intricate norms of the art world with its infinitesimal insignificance in the context of the scientific-industrial world, like a tiny figure walking on a mountain path in a transcendentalist painting.

I savor the thought of your authentic encounter with my work as well as your unavowed practical or social incentives for caring about it, possibly manipulative ones, your distractions, the way it interlocks with or disrupts the multifarious and non-hierarchically distributed needs and aims you carry with you, the intersecting discontinuities between different regimes of time: existential care, apocalyptic, physical, my autobiography, the periodisations of history delineated in the canon, the distinction between the human personality, form and mind and that which, non-human, underlies or sustains it, or whatever divine mind is beyond it, or into which it could evolve; the organic and the inorganic, and most of all the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the meaning of history.

On that note, I have always felt that there is nothing more beautiful than the Christian cross, which is perhaps belied by the fact that this show contains seven crosses. For too long (though only a century or so) art's didactic and pedagogical power has been denigrated and neglected, so I felt it was appropriate to assign to each cross one of the seven views I've gestured towards in this text, as guidepost for contemplating them, as a catechism

Doorpost Cross

Laet as the acephalic process of industrial production, scientific research, and collective consumption

Lonely01010n

Light as the agony, ecstasy and uncanny alterity of the creative process

As the Blood of God Bursts the Veins of Time, Give your Avatar a Kiss; An Abyss Spits out Another Abyss.

Laet as the humanist march towards rationalist Enlightenment

Jesus Christ Crucified on the Cross

Laet as subject; the nature of the soul and the collective mind

Empty Cross

Laet as object, as super-conscious creativity

Seraph

Laet as history, the contours of a new phase for human civilization, the contingency of gender, sexuality, the family, civil society, work and the state