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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Abstract Art through Prism of Nesslessness

Sweet Samson, MFA

Master of Art graduate of OTIS College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, holder of BDes of MSU of Design and Technology in Moscow. Continuing extensive researches on application of various technologies, mixed media and innovative materials incl. patented Dynamic Carbon technique, Samson writes about art, art making, as well as, various underlying social and philosophical aspects.

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#### Abstract

The artist's work starts from something that can be real or abstract, although anything abstract, for the mind still has, at least, some qualities of real. A true pursue of abstraction in art is unquestionably explorative and speculative to extent that consciously excludes systematic or logical concretizations. This paper covers a period of exploration that resulted in a series of art pieces reflecting some of the period's symbolic aspects with the goal to approach author's own abstract ideas with a degree of logic.

*Nesslessness* is the term author associates with explorations that help articulating practice of the abstract art and its creative foundations. The definition of *nesslessness* is 'a meta-process of grasping desire for material factuality rather than abstraction'. Through *nesslessness*, the aspects previously considered to be detached from a particular instance begin to compound concurrently. It is a flow initiating from a state of conception to a material one. One of the aims of research has been to ponder into the mind of a creative artist, where comprehensive processing of an idea occurs before it takes shape in a material form.

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## Introduction

Before we look into abstract art creation fundamentals, there is a question of abstract vision, abstract thinking and ultimately the abstract mind, as functional component of the intellect. To demarcate distinctiveness between rational intellect and abstract imagination, let look upon rational intellect as almost mathematical, linear function of the brain, the consequence of evolution and selective processes that put together logical patterns, theories and general body of knowledge, as long as, such is compatible with scientifically recognized truths. On the individual level, accumulated knowledge and individual experience make base for practical conclusions and regular functioning in daily life. It is our closest ally, whom we know well and rely upon. Also, it is opposite force of the random chaos that surrounds us.

Looking behind the curtains of certainty sometimes produce different degrees of losing comfort, but, also, rewards with fresh insights. The world of abstract ideas is true home and inevitable starting point for creative individuals, scientists, writers or inventors. Without doubt, that numerous historical breakthroughs in the arts or sciences required certain serial efforts of multiple intellects' processing, but it is of no less doubt that a spark of true ingenuity is puzzling, scarce virtue beyond perfect logical explanation.

It is one of the purposes of art to chase the boundaries of pure ideas and convert them into existentiality, even though, without attached functional qualities. Nevertheless, only the artist knows own intentions and sources of inspiration when creating the piece of art. A common denominator could be that the superlative achievement requires blending of mastery and divine force that shall undertook the lead over the process properly initiated by the artist.

For sure, the artist's work starts from something that can be real or abstract, although anything abstract, for the mind still has, at least, some qualities of real. A true pursue of abstraction in art is unquestionably explorative and speculative to extent that consciously excludes systematic or logical concretizations.

Strong visual abstractions can intensify all sorts of perceptive sensations. This paper covers a two years of explorations that resulted in a series of art pieces reflecting some of the period's symbolic aspects. Taking into account distinctive individual experiences and interpretations, the goal of research was to approach my own abstract ideas within art creation process with a degree of logic.

The conceptual part of this approach helps in exploring both verbal and visual structures of the initial ideas and eventually moving towards artistic concept that would fit the overall artistic impetus.

Pronounced attributes of some objective occurrences in my life have swayed my perception and created their own imaginary reality more than once. TV, Internet, gossips, and conversations are capable of creating opinions that may easily be mere illusions of virtually non-existent or substantially distorted situations or qualities.

Subsequently, based on pure intuition that some of the representations usually believed to be true or real are fully or partially illusory, I have started my research in an attempt to explore and learn more about underlying principles at work in artistic expression development, a building block of cultural communication sphere. This task has turned almost into an endless endeavour, which has in turn led to layers of new questions that can be answered only with time.

In addition to sporadic or spontaneous abstract visions that reside in individual imaginary world, our minds contain perceptive illusions that are part of psychological patterns or accumulated experiences capable to leave far-reaching consequences that determine the lives of individuals, families, societies, and humanity.

## Components and Sequencing in Originating Ideas

Looking back to the past, as a child, natural curiosity pushed me to look behind the *raison d'être* and gradually led me to conclude that the majority of my schoolmates or kids from my neighbourhood had rather different interests and naturally focused on the usual worldly problems. Inner explorative forces created a query that has lived with me through my days of childhood, elementary school, university, right up to the present.

Realizing that a huge variety of emanated realities has identifiable or defined starting points with indiscriminate succeeding variables, where the strings of choices influence the trajectories of their development, the intriguing nature of this continuous process has never ceased to stimulate philosophical and artistic searches since the beginning of time.

The discussed sequence of modifications occurring along the path, whether strong or weak, are instrumental to the final outcome of any ongoing process. When we look at processes that all have certain logic consisting of start, evolution and the end, the abstract portion is related to unknown or unpredictable part of it. To some degree a linear process becomes non-linear, what may look as lack or reason on the first sight. Uncertainty enters into domain of abstraction or non-linear quality where options remain open. If we dare to look further, we recognize that such non-linear consequentality is nucleus of creation and its forces of progression.

At their core, starting points are rather similar; they are akin to virginal seeds with a dormant set of ingenious characteristics, capable of evolving until an ultimate final form is achieved. The final form is a kind of threshold of saturation, a stopping point beyond which no evolutionary continuation of active process is possible or practical. Subsequent stages may be either degenerative (ceasing or termination) or revolutionary (total reset or re-birth). Such re-creation, where an inherited core quality is replaced by radically different new quality, is the point, which I call for the purpose of artistic research and for lack of other words, the *nesslessness*.

As an example, the mechanics of the human body are almost equally present in most newborns, including the ability to learn to talk, write, calculate, play, and behave socially. The desire to excel and to achieve admiration, perfection, or harmony is not alien to anyone with a normal mind.

Observing surrounding processes, we may notice that the principle of linear growth within limitations imposed by surrounding forces dictates an evolutionary path of the intellect's logic. In simplified schematics, cognitive processing base is a comparative analysis of observed patterns, where attributes are attached to situations and the mind routinely places them in context to other situations or attributes in order to acquire a sense of order. The human mind or better said its intellectual part functions in a very simple fashion; at its current stage of development, it exclusively applies hierarchical linearity and dualistic attribution (+ or -). The so-called 'healthy mind' does not operate outside of these two key principles, except eventually, but not by definition in its abstract part.

There is nothing wrong with this, as long as human beings or human societies do not reach the point of *nesslessness* or request for imminent reorganization of linear matrix.

Sportspersons strive to better their classmates, then the best in college, eventually aiming for national championships; finally, they grow towards worldwide achievements, winning medals and multiple victories. In their honest intentions to go further, they take the help of whole teams of experts to include all sorts of scientific trickery to make the last few percentages of improvements possible. Ultimately, it barely remains a sport in the original definition of the word.

Entrepreneurs make plans that inevitably involve growing and pushing towards bigger projects, corporations, cartels, and even monopolies if possible. Ultimately, cartelization destroys national and global economies.

Politicians develop their own electorate to gain linear mass of popularity as an indispensable part of their development, though in reality, laws and constitutions put limits on growth. Overcoming limitations require lot of sophistication that go beyond the imaginable standards of bringing order to society.

Societies developed their organizational matrices in order to enable individual progress to retain sustainability. During the numerous phases of evolution, societies become exceedingly complex structures of human interactions, and eventually begin to contradict their own purpose.

Vivid natural development has clearly evolved beyond mere logical sequences where elements of errors are as important as continuity of genetic starting points. The same natural laws that affect material things create the base of complex human and social existentiality, with the added force of the intellectual mind.

For purpose of attempt to achieve artistic representations behind sequencing of linear and non-linear processes, on the art piece creation level, I was exploring interactions of various materials and substances that alter into something different through spontaneous destructive and creative courses. Consecutive abstractions blended into rational logic reflected in art pieces served as reminder of recurring processes during the study of *nesslessness*.

*Nesslessness* is the term I associate with explorations that help me articulating practice of abstract art and its creative foundations. The definition of *Nesslessness* is '*a meta-process of grasping desire for material factuality rather than abstraction*'.

Abstractions are logically or intellectually disconnected or unrelated. No linearity or logical attributions are involved in the creation of elements. In other words, describing the artistic side of *Nesslessness* includes '*striving for seemingly detached concepts to obtain a tangible, physical state epitomized by a holistic material wholeness*'.

Through *nesslessness*, the aspects previously considered to be detached from a particular instance begin to compound concurrently. It is a flow initiating from a state of conception to a material one.

One of the aims of my research has been to ponder into the mind of a creative artist, where comprehensive processing of an idea occurs before it takes shape in a material form. This process is more significant to the artist than the last stage of implementation.

Always doomed to be complete in its incompleteness, whether in poetry, song, painting, sculpture, or any other form of expression, true creativity is merely a result of a stream of conscious and unconscious thoughts, which are often random, illogical, confusing, and subjective.

The closest path to intellectual comprehension is through conceptual works of art, which may represent a manifestation of non-linear processes disguised in a form that stimulates the mind's abstraction from logical or linear material evidencing.

Being in touch with stimulating source of abstractions the artist typically works on a piece gradually and often without exact plan. To maintain the focus on particular ideas and concepts during art creation, the habit of making records (writing) stimulates logical clarity in such processes. While the artist may intentionally stay in abstract or non-linear state of mind, it is inevitable consequence that linear intellect will attempt to add logical components to abstractions. The *nesslessness* phase is opposite occurrence, when non-linearity influences linear logic, what may become apparent when an initial idea evolves inconsistently.

### **Abstract Dissemination in the Art Creation Process or Artistic Sampling**

Even though the structure of this chapter resembles a diary, its phrases and ideas do not follow a timeline. Aspects of abstract ideas that constitute consecutive art piece creation process are not scientific or logical in its true nature. Abstractions and reflections, which create functional base of *nesslessness* are revealed through a storyline or narrative in favour of the contradictory phrases and thoughts, whether random or consequential.

In the translation from visual into verbal, the simultaneousness of *nesslessness* is partially lost. Verbal language structure predominantly contains interconnected, consecutive logical blocks, while *nesslessness* presumes multiple simultaneous lines of cognition, as opposed to noetic methodology, which relies upon straightforward assumptions, analysis, conclusions, and perceptions.

The proper way to read this would be to avoid looking at phrases linearly, but rather in totality. Instead of identifying phrases by numbers, they are split by the '#' sign, accentuating impartiality of their sequence.

#

Whatever has physical material presence is not abstract, but still originates from an abstract realm.

#

Abstraction definition or artistic credo in one word, what would that be? *Ness*- the suffix creating abstract nouns. *Less* – a quality of being without. *Nesslessness* – a state of not creating entire abstractions out of initial abstract idea.

#

What is that hidden space beyond conscious control where all ideas exist?

It appears that the mind plays games with us. When the mind is focused on something, the hands begin to shape matter in unknown ways. I like the unknown, but my mind does not; nobody's mind does, in fact. The mind needs safety, knowledge, and guarantees.

#

Carbon is very often mistaken to be poisonous due to its association with carbon monoxide and dioxide (CO/CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere of our planet. People relate excessive emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> with carbon itself, resulting in an error in knowledge.

#

A manifestation of the natural element carbon ('C') into a variety of physical appearances is one practical aspect to display the *nesslessness*. The appeal of 'C' is in the diversity of its physical, chemical, mechanical, and other characteristics. It forms the base of modern industries; without it, petrochemicals, petrol, plastics, pharmaceuticals, and other synthetic substances would not exist in their known forms and functions. It is fact that life creation depends on 'C' as much as on oxygen, hydrogen or nitrogen.

#

What is the visual form that can speak simultaneously about ideas of strength and hidden vulnerability, the balance between masculine and feminine origins, the relationship between painting, sculpture, and objecthood, the culture of manufactured products, designs and artistry?

#

What is perfection? Is perfection related to machine-produced precision, or is it a sense of human lifelikeness? Does perfection mean proximity to reality or a particular ideal?

#

Time constraints signify effective traps for perfectionism. An action is either good enough or it is never done. The benefit of faster pace is that failure, if it must happen, takes place sooner. Less time is given to a wrong method, and more of it to the right direction.

#

From emptiness to wholeness, the idea or concept evolves and is refined through numerous sequences of additive or reductive qualities, forms. For example, the widespread element 'C', depending on slight differences in the mentioned process, may seem like black coal or supremely transparent diamond. Such striking differences that we come across in mother nature are genuinely impressive.

The carbon manifests itself in one form as the hardest mineral known with almost ideal transparency, while in another, softer form, transparency is replaced by its opposite, dark opacity. In both cases, carbon transforms itself from one opposite to another through the point of transformation that remains to high degree somehow abstract, although logical.

#

Looking into carbon's divergence of visual emanations leads us to the ultimate qualities of transparency and opacity.

#

If looked at the process from another perspective, *nessless* is a quality that does not create abstractions. *Ness*, on the other hand, creates abstraction. Therefore, *nesslessness* is a state of creating abstractions out of a state that resists abstractions.

#

*Nesslessness* suggests equilibrium between abstraction and reality of concrete. The manifestation of an idea to material from a conceptual thought is one of requisites or bridges from the abstract.

#

In the art nothing is for sure until an attempt is accomplished. Although, nothing is for sure thereafter, as well. Is it abstraction in logic?

#

Looking at marketplace of manufactured and handmade items, as functional objects, necessity of life. Is there a line between necessity and excessiveness or the need to comprehend the correlation between these aspects? Do

manufactured and handmade objects actually compete with each other? Handmade objects are generally preferred over manufactured, although it has no real correlation with quality. Is that abstract notion?

#

It seems important to clarify what 'made by hand' actually means. Logically, something that is made entirely by hand without any help from machines could be called handmade. There are various types of tools and mechanisms, ranging from the simple ones like the wheel and axle, to complex ones like computers. If during the production process an artist uses a photo camera, a scanner, or even a drill, should a piece of art not qualify as handmade?

#

As a child is the result of an interaction between two entities, a work of art is the result of an interaction of an artist with the source of his inspiration, whether real or abstract. The final outcome depends on the concept through which the artist is connected.

#

Relationships between colour and form are complex. Thoughts behind a visual concept manifest for viewers only through the alliance of colour and form, a necessary core of all visual works of art. Colour and form may coincide or contravene with personal perception, but they cannot be liberated from it. When materialized colour and form are inseparable, they create a union that can be cooperating or antagonistic. Whether rational or not is less important.

#

Formal aspects are crucial, but not the only ones needed. If an artwork were to take any form and be of any colour, how much it would differ, let's say, from a dropped blanket in one's bedroom, a pile of paper on someone's desk, and many other randomly occurring forms? The colour and form that an artwork takes must be considered and developed. Only then an objective could be achieved. In Joseph Albers' words, '*the measure of art is the ratio of effort to effect*'.

#

Flatness is probably attractive because it does not exist. We say that something is flat only in comparison to something that is not. The idea of flatness excludes volume. To be exact, some surfaces are closer to flatness than others are. They could be more flat or less flat, they could even carry feeling of flatness, but they can never be entirely flat.

#

Decorative functions that exist in both art and design serve different purposes - decorative design is functionally attached to concrete objects while art's decorative qualities exist for the sake of itself. Design that is not attached to applied purposefulness either remains an idea on a sketch-board or eventually becomes art.

#

Would a cactus painted purple be considered to have a contradiction between its colour and form? What is required for a union of colour and form to have contradictory functions? What is that intangible space where the contradiction happens? Well, if we were talking about an actual cactus, then it would probably be seen as somewhat unusual and contradictory. If a purple cactus is art, identifying the contradiction between its form and colour becomes more problematic.

#

Cutting is an act of splitting - a separation for either better or worse. It might appear as an effect of segregation, parting, and disconnection - a painful experience according to the senses. On the other hand, it might be a move towards liberation, freedom, and relief from unnecessary boundaries. It is about permitting the appearance of a new state that is completely unknown and uncertain. It seems easier to remain within the sphere of the known unless a joy of tapping into the unknown is experienced. Cutting is all about such experiences. At the moment, a cut takes place, there is potential for both trials in the direction of desolation and fulfilment. Designation is not defined by the act of cutting itself. Rather, the definition is created by the space originating between the occurrence of a cut and one's present perspective in relation to it.

#

Naturally, living beings tend towards the good and avoiding the bad. It is quite apparent that so-called good qualities can become less good under particular circumstances and vice versa. The key problem is in the logical loop driven by the substitution of core 'good' qualities with bogus interpretations of what 'good' really is. In competitive society, adding mass or volume (quantification) to fake goodness leads to the opposite quality, as well as, to certain consequences that might generally be appreciated as 'success' while actually leading towards the internal destruction of the bearer of such success.

#

Is a language truly capable of translating a comprehension of a work of art? How much of the meaning and essential details will alter through literary translation from one language to another? Can you imagine the consequent number of gaps in transmitting a work of art from visual to spoken language?

#

Identification with a particular culture does not exclude genuine inclination and preferences toward global varieties. When one is born in a country that does not exist any longer, where change from absolute closeness toward freedom of expression took place in short period of time, multicultural living helps to widen and refine experiential perceptiveness.

#

The art and the reality have interrelated attributes. The connection between the two works in both directions. In particular, growing saturation with artificiality of reality and reality of artificiality furnish the art with purpose of *deartification*.

#

Material is predetermined. From the moment of its emanation, it is subject to entropy and in a constant process of disintegration. Despite this fact, humanity seems to have a need for faith in something that has no end. This urge is inherited through our DNA. Evolution is doing its job by sucking us even deeper into a belief of never-ending progress. In his desire for comfort and fast solutions, civilized man has undertaken many impossible tasks. We have travelled to space and invented the Internet. We continue breaking world records. We rarely accept the idea of a limit, particularly death. We strive for the infinite and constantly try to conquer time. We have learned how to look younger or how to keep food fresh for longer, often without knowing why we strive for such things in the first place.

#

Humans need a purpose - a meaning. Not just existence without a reason. We easily substitute a true reason with a bogus one, often to the extent that it simply enters a chronic stage and becomes an integral part of our nature.

#

Let us focus on the hypothesis that each good quality is good only to the extent that it is somehow balanced by conscious supervision that prevents it from going into uncontrolled linear growth. In practice, many consequences that are generally perceived as 'beneficial' actually represent the opposite.

#

*If I'd listened to customers, instead of cars I'd have given them faster horses.* ~Henry Ford

#

Art is a bridge between conscious and unconscious, abstract and real, material and ephemeral. Genuine art in pure term belongs predominantly to abstract domain, as representational visual art belongs to logic and ultimately is artistry.

#

Creativity cannot be born out of ideal logical equation. Creativity goes beyond logic, otherwise, in lucky case, it becomes major scientific breakthrough.

#

Some Eastern teachings and systems tried to bring a concept of non-linearity into thinking (some kinds of yoga, Taoism, Zen etc.), but with very limited success, better say no success in broader sense. We can only talk hypothetically from this point. There is no science currently beyond, some Sci-Fi writers play or played around that, but philosophy, the Queen of all sciences, doesn't bring the answer.

#

Diverse historical, religious, cultural, and educational heritages, distinctively reflected in entrenched customary patterns in various ethnicities, do not influence the fundamental predetermination of individual intellects to follow a particular development route.

#

We are capable of imagining that continuity of growth in linear duality logic may reach an ultimate limit sooner or later, and that occasional 'jumps beyond' maintain universal development in one way or another, even up to the self-destruction of civilization. Can we go intuitively and willingly beyond linear duality intellect?

## Conclusive Aspects

Some of experiments and experiences into abstractions and tackling linear logic in art creation process exposed in this material evolved gradually and they became crucial part of work in progress.

Abstract mind and abstract arts are strongly rooted in human nature and without exaggeration represent the highest potential of both. The aspect of non-linear logic makes human mind superior to forms of limited or purely

computational (artificial) intelligence and it is crucial role of culture and education to show significance of abstraction for continued progress of mankind.

In reality, it is absolute predominance of linear duality logic in all aspects of intellectual activities and almost forced marginalization of cultivated non-linear abstraction, except to certain degree in the arts.

Expressing abstract through creative processes is partial to concurrent balancing of impediments occurring from linear logic limitations. Ultimately it is indispensable evolutionary path.

As a kind of philosophic conclusion is that unconstrained expression of creative freedom is an instance and foretaste of the ultimate, universal freedom that humanity is entitled to achieve on its unrelenting path of progress.

Unwillingly, only a true creativity pushes us forward and actually never stopping, as in its totality, an intelligent life advancement is continuous motion toward balancing abstractions and linearity.