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## Multi-directional Ideas in the Duality of a Living Work

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MULTI-DIRECTIONAL IDEAS IN THE  
DUALITY OF A LIVING WORK

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Art

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by  
Orlando Jimenez  
October, 1971

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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MULTI-DIRECTIONAL IDEAS IN THE  
DUALITY OF A LIVING WORK

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Orlando Jimenez

October, 1971

This paper presents a series of ideas underlying the philosophy behind the creation of the author's works.

The paper deals with the creator-viewer relationship, and the distinction that is commonly accepted as existing between the perception of the two, ascribing more value on the perception of one over that of the other.

The conclusions were reached after acute observation of occurrences of everyday as a source of esthetic experience and after lengthy discussions with people involved in the creative process.

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## introduction

this paper is a collection of the thoughts underlying my works, interacting with them, influencing each other. they are meant to be guides, but not to comprise a set philosophy for life in the future. if inconsistencies are found, they can be thought of as the doors ready to open to give way to new developments, changes, a most appreciated freedom in my life.

in writing on my works and beliefs at this moment, i try not to make excuses for any one and not to raise anyone to a pedestal. i only hope that the reader will approach it with the following quotations in mind.

works are of an infinite loneliness and with nothing to be so little reached as with criticism. only love can grasp and hold and fairly judge them.

429-96-9121

living and ceasing to live are imaginary solutions. existence is elsewhere.

2000,000,000

it is easy to oversee the ulterior motives by which a true artist troubles himself.

historical background

for history's sake

## the great indoctrination

36-25-36's concept of the despair of the esthetic: "the world is full of beautiful things: if there were no further grounds on which to judge, this knowledge would foster total despair, esthetic despair. to avoid the trials of esthetic despair, the creator forces himself to choose. whom we call great is always he who chooses. the great looked everything, decided on the importance of certain things and then did them."

for nineteen years of school work... nineteen years of life in general... this concept has been the ruler. to force oneself to choose, black and white; good and bad, to see the great inaccurate pictures of better known average people, many times made big by inaccurate perspectives of inaccurate creatures in power. and so it goes that by indoctrination in school, through courses of all endeavors and by what can be called the collective consciousness of people in one's field... photography for example... an image has been created of the great ones. and so it goes that one is taught how to see and what to see as they did. one is taught what is important and what is not. by accepting a formula, a predictable solution to a given problem, one is taught the rules and means of expressing oneself. soon the expression of one person is nothing but one of the messengers for a given school. one is

taught what is good and what is bad, who the masters are and why, with no discretion left open. one is so indoctrinated by the sole fact of the ones who get published or whose work is available and by those who don't get published. one is taught to study the masters and to ignore the others. i was told the great themes and who photographed them best and why. then one day i ran into that old album of a great grandfather of who knows whom and found that little photograph of this lady...photographer unknown.

a misconception is clear when one asks about the importance of things. it is a fact that what is held important by the majority of people are themes which the great ones have taken and solved. it is forgotten that "importance" is an extremely personal thing. and furthermore it is forgotten that what we sometimes hold important has been shaped by the acceptance of other people as to the importance itself. i personally fail to see as to the importance of things. declaring the importance of something is excluding something else of that importance. importance is the accepting of a means to achieve an end. there are no goals which i have been told that i consider worth pursuing and hence the importance of things as others see them is irrelevant to my truest feelings for life. i am content with accepting everything with an equal degree of importance, not seeing a rationale in evaluating events and things in a mad scale of meaningful nothingness.

one can see how the concept of choosing and forcing oneself to choose is an outgrowth of western thought on work in general where the

application of energy is done with a blind faith as the end in itself. 1893 said, "i myself believe that at some future time all matter absorbed by man shall be transmitted by him and his brain into a sole energy - a physical one. this energy shall discover harmony in itself and shall sink into self contemplation...in a meditation over all the infinitely varied creative possibilities buried in it." like the harmoniums.

i believe that the time has arrived for some to sink into self contemplation. the vortiginous spending of energy in the past is of no necessity in the present, and rather undesirable. what small amount of energy i may transform shall be used in the building of a concrete theory on the practice of normal life...and in going through life as undistrubing as possible.

works and their relation to myself

works and the u. w. t. b.

works as presented today can be a gross insult to the intelligence of a human being. to depict a hamburger in order to make people understand its implications, its essence, its relations, the essence of humanity, is but a crude way of talking or communicating to a human fellow. creating monuments to the dead as works talks more of the insensitivity of a society than of the frustrations and cynicisms of the creator. it talks of how little all works dealing with peace and love and brotherhood have changed the heart of man. all the energy and good intentions have been a waste, or worse, a way for a few to profit. i see works as being the release of the pain or happiness or amazement of one's encounter with oneself and not meant to communicate necessarily. i can only look at them and keep silent. what most works that we see mean to the viewer has nothing to do with what they meant to the creator. in the amount of communication that people claim works do, they fail. it is only superficially that they reach most viewers and when they do communicate i do not feel they are any more important than the movement of the arm of anyone on the street. neither do i feel that they are less wasteful and less pollutant than any old bridge, submarine, tank, or cities or the big

waste of our lands in our age. if nothing else, works can be seen as the visual record of the great waste of human kind. i don't want to produce works for any one. all that is beautiful is already in nature. we seem to destroy more of that beauty in the crazy race to create beauty. we cut down trees in order to print photographs in them, photographs of trees. shall i then print photographs in trees and make them into works? and all that is ugly is also there, in the political comedy, in the miss america pageant and the race for food and the hungry and.... the miseries and wrong doings of human kind has always been the same and it is worthless to discuss them. and works are far from helping one single one of them.

## works' inadequacy

1917 in his ideal for the soviet state's workshops institute of art culture envisioned a multi-collaboration of humans, a kind of works to be received by many rather than by the few. 1941, of the same purist school sums up in the theory of the bajaus (1923): "the old dualist word concept which envisages the ego in opposition to the universe is rapidly losing ground. in its place is rising the idea of a universal unity in which all opposing forces exist in a state of absolute balance. this dawning recognition of essential oneness of all things and their appearances endows creative effort with a fundamental inner meaning. no longer can anything exist in isolation."

$\sqrt{-1}$ , on relating an esthetic sensibility common to all mankind says of it that it is characterized by certainty, it does not question, it offers solutions.

while all their philosophy behind their works points in one direct... a universal oneness... their work in itself to the average person talks of none of those values, but of pretty pictures maybe, or of a famous man and "i don't know why." it is because of this failure in works to communicate that i feel that is of little relevance what the work is meant to be or what they represent, for in most cases, to viewers they only mean as much as they have read about the

creator. so the history of object making in most cases is an incomplete picture of human philosophy. too many pictures wasted in adorning a living room. all its messages locked. a perfect mirror of the scanty glances thrown at it, no one question asked, no one thought given.

works as a commodity

a social history of works

mesopotamia: work for the ruler's death

egypt: work for the pharaoh's glory

rome: work for the emperor's feast

renaissance: work for the king's and court's delights

new spain: work for god's slavers' sake

middle ages: work for the rites of god

modern age: work for the museum's sake

america: work to fill a coffee cup

object making  
a history of western works

He made

\*

\*

\*

\*

you made

they made

she made

they make

i make

time

the time that it takes to turn to the next page

what time do you have?

space...

...and works

the workings of space

mathematical space = a solid entity containing objects

each one in its own space

my thoughts contain a space

infinitely smaller than can be measured

space defined by color and depth perception

the space of a sound

space that fights inside a frame, frozen space

the abstract space

the space of my father's shoes

sorry, there is no space

i am space

i want to feel space as one entity

fluid and plastic, ever changing, present

within me and out of me

clear

diaphanous

uncluttered

a space good to look at

the space of a fulfilled man

## photography and myself

photographs have been an intermediary between what reality or existence seems to be and what i am, they represent to me that i have been and that i am. that i have been living. photographs, however, are not a substitute for reality. they are a reality in themselves. they have a hidden meaning beyond the portrayal of the subject matter that was in front of the lens. to me they talk of suspended time. if life is like a movie, photographs are like frames that reappear once in a while, they are the only ones with some consistency in that movie. they change with the occasion but much less than anything else, including myself.

photographs record not just the physical reality, but also the dark hidden corners of myself where only feelings and not words dwell. there they exist freely, there they are accepted without asking, without judgment. there they talk of life out of life, the included and the excluded, an ever present source of contemplation. if i show photographs may they mean a million things to a million people and most likely to most of them they will mean nothing when shown in museums and galleries or whatever for they are not there, they exist somewhere else, deeply rooted in the soul where their meaning makes sense and is unspoken, where most of us avoid looking.

photographs and others

to other people my photographs mean that i am trying to communicate to them this experience of living. yet i see people walking in galleries and museums and i observe and try to evaluate or understand what is it that they gain from it. i talk to them and get more clues as to how it is that i can make my things mean more to them. i find that talking is it. it is as if the majority of people come to see works as something to do, something to look at, not into. something that if not understood can be done without. so i feel that i have to produce some things or works that while giving me some satisfaction i still can somewhat communicate to others, for that is the only excuse that they will accept for me to exist.

cynically i'll produce to show who i am and gain some peace to really be who i really am.

eggs, private property and works at 10: a.m.

if nothing exists in isolation, and if creations are products of a collective knowledge, the signing of a work is irrelevant. and if all nothing will have to learn to think in universal terms, signing a work with one's name will be the sign of ego theory... of the individuality of ayn ryan.

proposed names for the photographer of the future:

unknown photographer

found object

gracious...thanks to all... gta

the character of works devoid of objects is one which has been practiced by human kind in many places. african masks were not thought by the tribesmen to be works, but one element for a larger entity, the dances, a more likely work in its completeness.

buddhists practice works called living, at all times.

pure aesthetics may be the answer to the object making tradition and at that nature has the upper hand, at all times.

in the whole it may be that pure observation may be the key to the complete understanding of the picture making process and its value if any, at 10:00 a.m.

why i work

i like eggs

i like people

i believe in man's capacity to perceive

layers of existence other than

those we call normal

i want to experience

the drive of the universal will to become (uwtb)

## the works

the sophistication of works today is such that a sophisticated . . .experienced. . .refined. . .aware audience can make the transition between being an observer and becoming the creator by the power of their observation and awareness. on this basis relies the success of happenings and conceptual works of 19-in-1965, to mention one of its exponents. it is the viewer who accounts for the meaning of works and in the happenings and conceptual works it is the viewer who, to some extent, creates the piece. it is then a collaboration of creator and audience that makes the work. audience as creator and creator as audience. creator as a nucleus of stimulus, a source of ideas and provider of initial energy. this form that works are taking goes well with an era when people want to be active in the events which interest them rather than to just be observers. the other ingredient to account for this willingness to take part is probably what made 81611 say in his manifesto of concrete works in 1930, "only thought, or intellect, creates, and at a speed unquestionably greater than that of light," the imagination being the creator, it makes it possible for people to conceive of a creative situation or a creation where at the end there is not an end product and still feel that something worthwhile was created.

this kind of work, where there exists a fair amount of audience participation in order for the work to exist, is what i have been concerned with in the past year. a culminating situation where no one arts and no one views, but where all experience.

concerns of the works

audience participation

elements of surprise...elements of shock

exploration of peoples reactions to unlikable

and unexpected

changes in their normal environment

broadening viewers minds to accept a

larger range of possibilities

in their known and accepted environment

environment and the works

environment as an element of the work

environment as the force in the work

environment as it

life as it

<sup>i</sup>  
k n<sup>e</sup>t<sub>i</sub>c development of works

object as visual stimulus dominates its environment

object reduced to equal with the environment

environment as visual stimulus dominates the object

environment as visual stimulus

environment as work

history of my work

the photograph as a work

seeing the objects framed in the camera as a work

seeing the objects as a work

seeing as a work

seeing

conclusion

my interest is to live in a creative frame of mind

using life as my medium

my concern is primarily with myself

my existence

and its reasons if any

my photographs be not means of communication

they are imperfect for that

and talk completely to no one but me

they are personal documents

of seemingly unvotivated

thoughts

feelings

and

desires

thoughts, feelings and desires

incomprehensible many times

as the equally incomprehensible larger desires

and undoings of nature

of which they are expressions

photography

a playful toy for my personal enjoyment

my works

a means to attaining any freedom from others