

Modular Structures... finding new directions

Progress! Finally, after what seems like a very long time my muse has come to visit, and I am excited about some new work in process. New work inspired by my forays into Pinterest¹ which I wrote about in my last newsletter. Always eclectic in my thought and motivation, I again find myself applying some old techniques to materials I have been anxious to recycle for years. Finding coherence with previous artwork, I recognize that new ideas actually are continuations of an aesthetic that has sprung up from time to time over the course of my life.

I'd estimate that assemblage of materials on two dimensional panels (collage relief) has characterized at least a third of my artistic output starting as far back as 1960. From early art built up with raised surfaces using matboard, and paint or collage images, abstract compositions from shaped wood coated with sand, wax, peat moss, or paint, to three-dimensional compositions in higher relief combining other disparate materials. More recently polystyrene sheets were assembled in large-scale works based on ice patterns observed in nature.

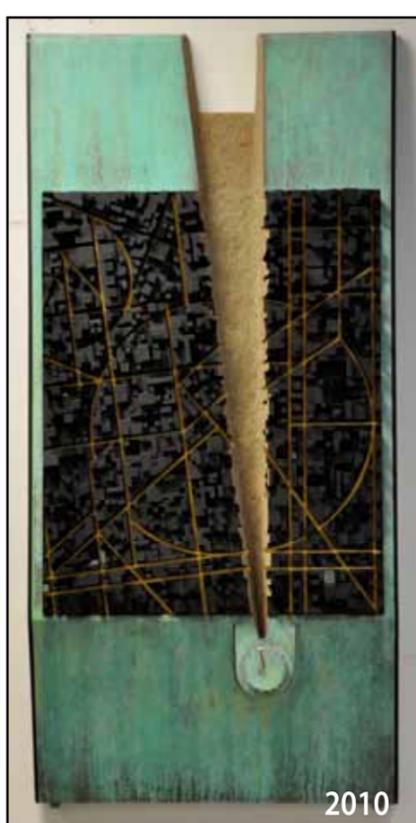
Now I once again am exploring. This time I hope to incorporate hundreds (or thousands) of modular pieces of coated masonite that I am cutting and sanding, to use in another variation of my past experiences. The challenge is to create sculptural art that breaks from the square or rectangular frame (as does traditional painting)... AND outward from the wall to find its own shape from smaller shaped modules or (cells). This is much like a growing organic structure in nature.

The pictures below are as yet incomplete rudimentary attempts that demonstrate some trial arrangements using modules I am creating in my workshop. Starting with 24" X 36" masonite whiteboard calendars that, unfortunately, were misprinted during my days running Gemini Graphics, Inc., I am cutting them into small modular pieces, and tediously sanding them one by one. So far, there are seven different modules. I may devise others.

My process has always convened around discovery which flows from an idea that is unspecific. Taking time to experiment is the most necessary factor in finding new and interesting ideas because at this point I am simply "playing around" with my materials... the work comes later!² Although many artists need to have a structured plan to move forward in their artwork, many do not. "Play" has a role in art making, and I find this intuitive method of manipulating materials central to my *modus operandi*.



1970



2010



1984



2010



2012

Above: Looking back, connections from the past...

Below: New Beginnings... where new concepts take root.



Hand sanding each modular piece... (not the most exciting part of Art making!) After two days, I realized that besides my dust mask I should have worn goggles too... even with my dust collection system running ... I had a couple of days of eye discomfort which fortunately was not serious...

Normally I'm very careful about dangerous materials in the studio, but this time I didn't notice the very fine dust particles getting behind my glasses until too late!!

Everything on the tables are merely explorations. These are starting points. Through the process of manipulation, some trial and error, and maybe unexpected insights, will evolve concepts worth taking further.



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¹ Finding samples of works by Louise Nevelson, Eva Hesse, George Sugarman, Abe Ajay, Rosalie Gascoigne, Marianne Vitale, Robert Rauschenberg.

² The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct. / Carl Jung
Creative people are curious, flexible, persistent, and independent with a tremendous spirit of adventure and a love of play. / Henri Matisse
People tend to forget that play is serious. / David Hockney