

FrameWork 4/22

Sabrina Tarasoff on Zin Taylor

Zin Outtakes

“To think a thought:” to run in circles around it. Someone asks me, how do we think about an object that we can’t think about? (That’s not what he said, but what I retained.) The answer was (like the good Carrollian that I am): round-about. Upside-Down. Enter the realm of the Merry-Go-Round, the Caucus Race, the Unsolvable Puzzle. Circularity, reception, and the gradual revelation of meaning. Meaning that appears through mnemonic games, resemblances, charades, insinuations, dips into the psyche’s penchant for parallelism. Like Proust’s narrator whose euphoric, sloppy drunkenness reveals a whole cosmos within a dining room: the restaurant spins into a Milky Way through the strange thing of likeness, projection. Stoner logic, though I believe narrator Marcel has hit the sauce in that particular passage. But, here I go, drifting, already—I actually wanted to write about Nabokov’s obsession with butterflies; I digress.

Not the metaphorical at stake here, but a kind of likeness nonetheless.

A List:

Groovy things

Brain fry

Snowballs

Stress balls

Simple Simon sentences

The Alberta Void

Magical Thought

Big Dicked Hippy

Exclamation Marks

Mobiles

“Wands”

Drone

The chant

Repetition

Flutter

Non-linear thought

Meandering

Ambling

Wind(-ing?)

Also: Fragments, philatories, sculptural debris. Thought thought about obsessively. Foreign limbs. Mobiles, perpetual motion. Units that can be endlessly refigured. Mechanized structures. Syllables, phrases, forms. Approximate, rather than literal. Language is unstable. “Sketchy.” Action verbs. Momentum, subtle motion. Fecundity. Simplified histories: the short-form. Dropping-out... for just a second. Psychic loops. A unit, a dot, a stroke drawing, the silhouette: the palliative gesture. Texture.

The texture of thought.

Courted in Taylor’s works are the contours of ideas seeking to self-define (with the help of others, other forms.)

Thinking into family resemblance, Wittgenstein asks, “Why do we call something a ‘number?’” His answer is a fried brain wave: ‘Because.’ (“Perhaps,” he adds.) Because: a number has a direct relationship to other things called numbers. Because: this relationship between a thing called a number to other things called numbers allows for indirect relationships to other things also ‘perhaps’ called numbers. Because: “I can give the concept ‘number’ rigid limits... but I can also use it so that the extension of the concept is not closed by a frontier.” The final frontier is an anxious expanse. It asks: what still counts as a number, and what does not? Where does a cohort of numbers become, for example, a game? How, and where, is that threshold crossed?

Zin responds: [?]

Maybe: Zin (*might*) ask: what still counts as a language, and where does it turn to form? How does form form a language? How does language look?

Exclamation marks are just surprised full-stops. The line leaps out of the dot, and becomes many different ideas.

I suppose one central concern is the question of how to ‘read’ an object. This, not so much a question of the kind of artworks that require mediation from vernacular scripts and institutionally validated histories. Rather, it’s as if Zin’s objects are articulating their embedded cultural histories through elliptical means. Sideways glances. Knowing smiles. Shrugs. Or? They’re stabs at grandiloquent concepts, enticed into form in a way that paves a way for empathy and understanding through different channels. Humour? Resonance? Resilience, like a surprising species of creature? How do we focus on each individual thing, when its adaptive mechanism is camouflage?

(Triangulation versus the butterfly?)

There are wands and stripes and dots and caves and flutters, but these could all be other things as well, like snowballs or stress balls or lines of sight or chimes, reeds.

I think about the scale thing again, not too big, not too small. Not a Goldilocks complex he’s working with, either, really—not the “just right” at stake, but a human scale. It is easier to manipulate audience reception with the miniature or the megalomaniac. Zin’s sculptures do something else. Again, I harp back to texture, touch, intimacy. How to court that in the works? In their characteristics?

Being “stoned” is to be in motion, but on a different frequency. Inside. (A) Rock with headphones, that’s funny. Slowing down is not on par with stopping. It’s about making motion last longer. Like chopped and screwed stuff. Slow-motion.

Being stoned could be likened to seeing things slowly, and therefore more starkly.

The animatronic quality of the butterfly. I keep thinking to how little information we need to produce an effect. One circuit, one bit of script, a shriek, maybe a couple words. A limb suddenly animated and fallen dead. In part, this relates to how little information is required in order to produce a word, a sentence, an idea, its expression. The economy of means: how much reduction can an object take and still convey? When does one thing become another?

Wittgenstein argues for the impossibility of formulating a definition of games.

“The demonstration aims to show, that there is no reason to search for real definitions, which describe essential attributes of things, but rather nominal definitions, which describe the use of the term in a community.”

Somewhere in the Tractatus, Wittgenstein asks, “Why do we call something a ‘number?’” His answer is a fried brain wave: ‘Because.’ (“Perhaps,” he adds.) Because: a number has a direct relationship to other things called numbers. Because: this relationship between a thing called a number to other things called numbers allows for indirect relationships to other things also ‘perhaps’ called numbers. Because: “I can give the concept ‘number’ rigid limits ... but I can also use it so that the extension of the concept is not closed by a frontier.” The final frontier is an expanse. It asks: what still counts as a number, and what does not? Where does a cohort of numbers become a game? How, and where, is that threshold crossed?

A unit, a dot, a stroke drawing, silhouette: courted in Taylor’s works are the contours of ideas struggling with self-definition. Wittgenstein might call these consequences of definitory failure. He might ask: what still counts as a language, and where does it turn to form? How does form form a language? How does it sound?

A unit, a dot, a zero sum. How about this? Courted in Taylor’s works are the consequences of definitory failure. That’s where his thoughts dwell, in the space, the frontier, or grey zone, between one thing and another; his ideas are caught in the act of a cross-over. Like a number, or unit, turning into a game, but not quite there yet: a non-arrival. Ideas caught mid-metamorphosis, as momentary abstractions. Stoner logic, dwelling on the sudden peculiarity of the shape of an idea.

Let me try that again. Lingual expressions combined with actions: that is, games: as an adequate-enough alternative to explain the function of language. See, it doesn’t help to think what Zin’s work is ‘about,’ because by scratching at such terms, which is to say by searching for key concepts, or essences, you’ve already failed—cue sad trombone: wa wa waa. But, in that very process, you then stumble upon what you’ve been searching for all along: a commons found in insufficiency, limit cases, or the minimal economies of what it means to ‘mean.’ Family resemblances, or causal connections, between units (of thought, form) so as to produce new meaning in shared mention. In traits, stretched across...

In Zin Taylor's work, we are reminded of the similarities that criss-cross and overlap,...

He wanted to demonstrate a mechanism of language, but brought us, instead, so close to...

Resemblances in a family happen by way of build, features, color of eyes, gait, temperament, etc., etc., overlapping and criss-crossing. Family resemblance pushes *texture*.

Maybe I should have started here.

Wittgenstein asks, "Why do we call something a 'number'?" Because it has a direct relationship to other things called numbers, that spins in on itself. What still counts as a number, and what does not? What counts as a game and what does not? In Zin's case: what still counts as a language, and where does it turn to form?

Essences, mental entities, and forms of idealism are dispensed for family resemblances found in form and its categorical imperatives. Mobiles, made of dots that could, from another angle, be lines, or lines, that seen from beneath, may appear as dots. It's about perspective, position, and access points.

How pieces touch.

Abstraction is the procedure that acknowledges the necessity of categorical imperative, says Wittgenstein, I think. It's a procedure that acknowledges the necessity to classify and obtain essences, but in absence of a single common feature, nothing works: the system fails.

That's where these thoughts dwell, in the space, the frontier, or gray zone, between one thing and another; his ideas are caught in the act of a cross-over. Like a number, or unit, turning into a game, but not quite there yet. Things caught mid-metamorphosis, as momentary abstractions. A butterfly sat for a moment, but also forever, on a loop. That space between thought, to be thought about. I wonder, in my own stoner logic, on the peculiarity of the 'idea.' What does it feel like?

Am I saying the same thing over and over again?