JOHN CAGE - FOUND ON MY PHONE LOOKING FOR ABBY'S ADRESS -HANGING IN MASSART DRAWING STUDIO
BRUCE NAUMAN - DANCE OR EXERCISE ON THE PRERIMITER OF A SQUARE
HARMONY KORINE - BLOCKBUSTER
MOLLY ZUCKERMAN-HARTUNG-95 THESES ON PAINTING
JULES MARQUIS - LIGHT BLIND - JERICHO DITCH
JAMES HYDE - SOME MORE QUESTIONS - VIA NICHOLAS PETROW - PABLUM BABBLE
SARAH SZE - UNTITLED STUDIO - 1996
DIETER ROTH - FOR FRAME RESEARCH
DANIEL BUREN - PHOTOS -SOUVENIRS AU CARRE
-DANCE ~~OR EXERCISE~~

A

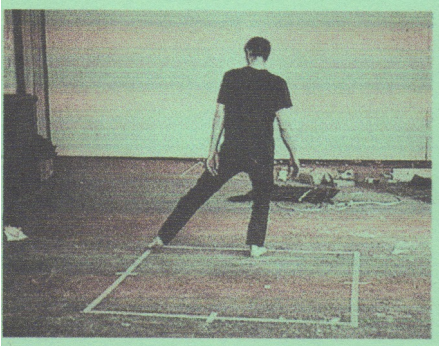
(The 95 Theses on Painting)

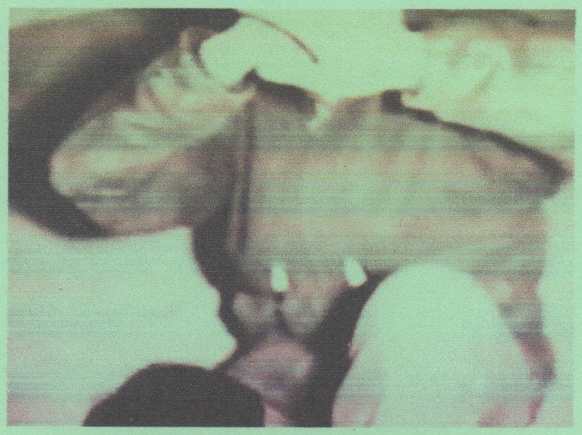
1. I am a painter
2. I decided to become a painter. No one asked me to do this.
3. Becoming a painter is my way of deciphering the codes of visual information and experiences that structure capitalism in our time.
4. Deciphering the codes also means retrieving the revised values of these codes.
5. I was never a slacker. It never drew any stupidity, without self-judgment and viscosity, to fun. Even as a small child I broke crayons from pressing too hard, and realized quickly that my artistic efforts would be judged harshly.
6. I was not and I had artistic potential.
7. I am a 37 year old woman with no children and no intention of having children. The significance of this decision is simply that my investment in the future is necessarily different, less personal. I do not have children, but I do have students. I worry for them. I wonder what kind of a world they are growing up into. What they understand of this world and what they will make of their understanding.
8. Painting is an activity that takes place within capitalism time, and has the ability to expand and transform clock time beyond the everyday, toward the eternal.
9. This movement toward the eternal has been critiqued as romantic, but as an artist and dancer as keeping one's hands in warm shelter on a wintry afternoon. The decision to waste not - to get rest in a moment is an always available decision.
10. My paintings do not have value because they end in the museum. They have value because they are in dialogue with and a continuation of other paintings.
11. This dialogue involves careful looking at and questioning of paintings in museums, in studios, in galleries, in homes, and wherever every-day work, sometimes pulsating or bleeding, fueling argument, sometimes frustration, sometimes critically dialectical and sometimes dreamily reptilian.
12. I believe in painting as a meaningful act.
13. I believe in painting as a desperate act. I am working out breathing huge, crippling ambition and secretary and near-constant failure. This too is meaningful.
14. To be I mediocrity, one must understand the stakes of one's endeavor and try to achieve something against certain odds.
15. The stakes of painting are both universal and personal.
16. The history of painting is parallel to, and provides a subtly, always-changing narrative of the history of civilization.
17. To make paintings one must take seriously the triumph and tragedy of civilization.
18. The continuation of civilization belongs to anyone who has the courage to imagine herself as implicated participant in its history.
19. To make an important painting one must place himself as a person of consequence.
20. A person of consequence has to understand the possible effects of her actions.
21. I know what I do. But I do not know what what I do does.
22. One of the tragedies of civilization is that we have believed and continue to believe that one is born into the position of being a person of consequence.
23. Understanding the unruly effects of one's actions as an individual enmeshed in a complex global situation is impossible and thus one must unstoppably become cleaved to the ruinous effects of most human endeavor.
24. I am aware that most of my actions are harmful. (Beyond Kant's definition of a moral in someone who tries to do the moral harm.)
25. Most human endeavors are entailed with the emergence of a false person of consequence who believes the trip do right.
26. A painter knows that to do no harm is impossible. (This knowledge is arrived at through the consistent experience of preparing a pure, white surface and studying it, messing it up, adding and subtracting in a process of working out the

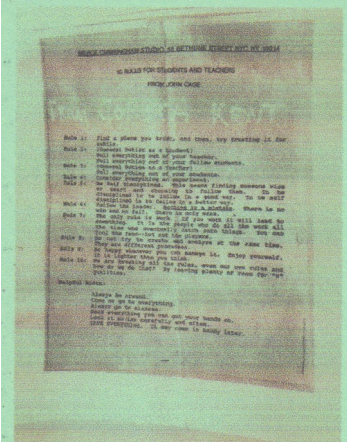
Ghosts to destroy and create, and the shame of these dives.)
27. A painter knows that civilization is valuable.
28. To stand up and assert oneself as a person of consequence is to assert a distinct set of universal human values. (In an inconsistent tower of the individual's perspective) and the simultaneous necessity of continuing to teach and perform universal values as well as the unique, in the hope of future generations finding better resolutions to impossible questions.
29. I often don't know if I am whispering but would be yelling or vice versa. This is a painting problem.
30. Painting reminds me of my actual voice.
31. For all of the above reasons, paintings can be an avant-garde art.
32. In the past the avant-garde has tried to keep up with technological "progress" in an effort to critique it.
33. Today the avant-garde has trouble locating itself in its purpose.
34. I believe the painter, contending with gravity, materiality, action and history, is best equipped to articulate the goals of this avant-garde.
35. This problem is attention as addressed by painting.
36. The problem of containment is treated within painting.
37. The problem of time is felt in painting.
38. When I stand before a painting and am able to bring my whole self to the experience, I feel the amazed time, which is not as my own death.
39. This is different from the experience of photography, which is one amazed time, but stopped by a mechanical or digital device.
40. The effort of this painter is stop time with her own hands, in the face of history, hurts more, but the pain is empowering, not debilitating.
41. Feeling one's own death is the beginning of developing a sense of the consequence of one's actions.
42. Painting at its best is utterly demanding, strict, and hopeful.
43. Appealing artworks to own critics for success or failure. The painting itself sets you free if a share to be judged.
44. Paintings ask for judgment. This is their gift. How do they do this?
45. They let everybody LEX.
46. Even when they attempt to evaporate themselves, by heavily cold or slimy surfaces, they carry the awareness of how much lived been dreams will be.
47. Janus faced, paintings look backward and forward in perpleaxed, slimy science.
48. At times, painting is passionately connected to its history and sometimes, nostalgically resigned to its passiness, but always, painting looks backward.
49. Other painting is anticipatory, excitable, and with curiosity bad, while feeling its present and happy to be here as a problem in a slumber party, but always, painting faces forward.
50. Through strongly held positions, may appear arrogant, stupid, and single minded, to adopt and substantiate a critical attitude in or take the most humble of gestures. Since such positions are suppose their two negatives.
51. Painting is a strongly held position.
52. The purpose of holding a strong position is to offer open invitation to dissenting critical thought.
53. The painter's goal with respect to the future is to stay relevant without becoming absolute.
54. This means keeping pace with critiquing oneself only the organizing forces of capitalism (social, economic) without giving into them. Is not just being a sycophant, but exercising discipline, moderation, restraint, investment, tenderness, and hesitation, sometimes, and the willfulness other times.
55. In painting, one has to conversation with oneself that is in some ways the same as the conversation with the world. The difference is similar to the distinction between speech and waking.
56. In speech, one cannot take something back.
57. In waking, one changes one's mind positively and presents a reasoned argument publicly.
58. In painting, the difference is that the accumulated evidence of changing and a mind is allowed to remain as build up, as density, or sedimentation.
59. This sedimentation is what I am calling human.
60. In relationships with others, this sedimentation is often heavy, angry, resentful. Things said and taken back reside in memory and are not easily discharged.
61. In a painting practice, this long conversation with the self (which is a conversation with all the others encountered in one's life, and entertained just now/that, present in time and space as a whole, as an alternate body. The body of work.
62. The body of work is evidence of the work of living.
63. The work of living is different from making a living, which is obligatory, and a strange euphemism for the giving up of part of one's life to the activity of paying for that life.
64. Painting is a paradoxically slow activity precisely because when fully engaged, as a critical, thinking practice, the painter gives up all her life to this practice.
65. All work, including washing dishes, sewing clothing, cleaning, attending, campaigns and building (Homes) can be meaningful, but capitalism has chosen to segregate these practices into a hierarchy of value.
66. Work typically done by women, with the hands, is not valued.
67. Work done in factories, with machines and hands, now mainly in China, is not valued.
68. Work done in the home, such as washing dishes or raising children is not valued.
69. Work done on the farm, with machines and hands, is not valued.
70. We do not value work because we do not value ourselves. And we regard the objects made and lived with as depressed, depleted mirrors of our sorry self-hatred.
71. We then make up rewards categories such as artisanal, and make cocktails, handbags and furniture custom for the wealthy as a compensatory gesture.
72. This does not compensate. Some people have lifestyle and many exist in poverty to support that lifestyle.
73. The dream of abstract painting in the 20th century was a dream of whole people, whose senses weren't fragmented, whose vision was complete, who made paintings with their hearts and minds and bodies in harmony.
74. This dream is still a dream, not yet a reality, and ever-receding.
75. This dream is foolish and necessary, and the wholeness of its vision is what makes it foolish, and the wholeness of its vision is what makes it necessary.
76. Keeping a foolish dream alive makes one a fool.
77. Society has always needed fools. The fool is both self-mocking and made from without, by the society.
78. The fool bears the shame of society's fears. The fool is a scapegoat.
79. The painter today is a fool.
80. The painter factory becomes familiar with shame. The hot flush of shame, the constriction of muscles, the desperate need to hide. The painter accepts these feelings, and holds them, and smiles warmly.
81. The painter gives a gift that is unwanted and even hated.
82. The gift the painter gives is the very human meaning of engaging in a useless and unjustifiable activity.
83. It is simply this. There is no justification for what I do.
84. I'll say it again. I do nothing useful to justify my existence, and yet I believe I deserve to exist. All life deserves this unjustified blessing.
85. Painting is an utterly useless activity.
86. And yet, painting gives my life meaning.
87. Painting is the language of form and space (but reminds me that I am made of the same stuff as the world.
88. I am hard and soft, gentle and tender and dispersed, height and sharp, contracting and undulating, acidic and toxic and soothing. As is the world.
89. I paint to step away from myself and realize that I am one with myself.
90. I paint to step away from the world and realize that I am one with the world.
91. I paint to forget everything I know.
92. I paint to remember again, everything I dismembered, and to become a member of something now, which was there all along.
93. I choose, each time as though for the first time, to think and teach and write and love as a painter.
94. The movement through the 95 theses is an agonistic, difficult process I go through again and again, mostly forgetting that there is relief and containment at the end.
95. Painters make better lovers.

more...

and more...







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10 RULES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

FROM JOHN CAGE

Rule 1: Find a place you trust, and then, try trusting it for a while.

Rule 2: (Second Rule: as a student)
Pull everything out of your teacher.
Pull everything out of your fellow students.
(Second Rule: as a teacher)
Pull everything out of your students.

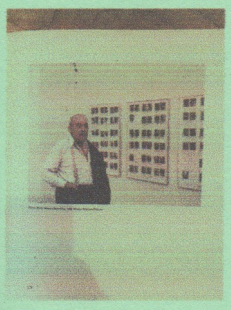
Rule 3: Consider everything an experiment.

Rule 4: Be self disciplined. This means finding someone wise to insert and choosing to follow them. Do the strongest work you can. Follow in a good way. To be disciplined is to be free. Anything else is a mess.

Rule 5: Follow the leader. Anything is a leader. There is no one not to follow. There is only what.

Rule 6: The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. People who do all the work all the time find the greatest joy. Joy makes things. You can't find the rest-but and the work. Work and rest are not opposites. They are different processes.

Rule 7: Nothing is a mistake. There can be no mistakes at the same time. It is clearer than you can manage it. Enjoy yourself. You are bringing up the future, even our own rules and how do we do that? By having plenty of room for spontaneity.

Helpful hints:

Always be present.
Time to be transitioning.
Time to be alone.
Read everything you can get your hands on.
Look at as much beautiful work as you can.
Give generously. It may come in handy later.