

Long Artist Statement

In give meaning to my work through the use of gesture. For me gesture is an expressive action. This action is done for a specific purpose to gain a specific result and for my art I use gesture to great expressions of balance and movement. This action is done by the body through the use of our own balance and movements. An example of this is a dancer or choreographer. In dancing the expression is done directly with the body and here I do the same thing through the the elements of steel and paint.

The abstraction of gesture results in visual elements that express balance and movement. These elements include but are not limited to geometric forms and color. The geometric forms make mass and volume quickly without the use of an abundant amount of material. They also help to eliminate the reference to the real world and are generally the result of the found object shapes. These found object forms are then arranged in a response the my movements and gestures. This helps to make the meaning derived from the formal elements of art. The use of flat solid color further brings to attention the forms, lines, and composition of the work without distraction. The brightness and boldness of the colors helps to bring the piece away from it's setting. Thus allowing it to be free and derived from its own in the world. The viewer can then interact personally with out being obstructed with things like background or setting. Subject matter is another property of my work that is rooted in gesture. The influence for this subject matter are abstractions of balance and movements. I look for inspiration from mechanical balance in objects like cranes, levers, and wheels. These give me the gestures which are the composition that make up my work. This is an idea that I feel Brancusi and I have in common.

He would not sculpt the object but the essence of the object. The way, it feels, moves, and interacts with its surrounding was more of what he did. In his fish piece he did not sculpt to make a piece that looked like a fish but sculpted to express the swimming, the speed, and the movement of a fish. This is the essence of the object manifested into shape and form. When I sculpt a crane, I do not look at the image of a crane but rather draw from the movements, balance, and actions that a crane does; the essence of balance and motion showed through the formal qualities of art. The composition, lines, and angles speak to this core idea of balance and motion. I think we both work on representing an object but not in literal sense but in the essence of it. I look at how it moves, what it does, and how it is, to create these expressions of movement and or balance I often find myself synthesizing the forms to the bare essential parts. Like what is needed to move, a wheel. Or like what gives it balance, the weight. These are often the only elements that remain in my minimalistic pieces. My work also is non referential to real world objects. The composition is made purely by gesture and is only latter given a subject matter if I find it relevant. This is based on how it looks or how it behaves.

The process of my work I consider to be more like the painters. A quote from David Smith, whom I researched over the winter break, is something that has stuck with me for the remainder of my work. He says "I belong with the painters". His works are considered to be drawings in space and this is the process I use in creating my own work. When drawing in space I create gestural sculptures that use balance and movement. I consider the process of my work and the act of gesture are one in the same. In my process I consider it like drawing and there for about making marks. Making a mark in my work is the act of adding a piece. This can be drawing a line in which I may use steel rod or the defined edge of a larger form. The mark can be

a solid form that has to have visual mass and here I may use something like an I-beam or a car brake drum. I also work interchangeably with 2D and 3D process. The 2D work frees me from gravity which makes the expression even less inhibited by the natural world. Some work such as the pieces from the first half of spring have a plainer or frontal quality. From Smith I learned about the use of framing in sculpture. This framing can find its roots in edges of a paper used in a 2D drawing. The framing is done by with the use of connected lines and masses that enclose most of the outer edges of the work as well as a layout in the work that feels complete.

The connected boarder acts a frame that contains almost all the information of the work inside it. This makes the work easily read in the same way one would a drawing or painting further enforcing frame. The layout of the work is how the pieces are arranged and more specifically how they do or don't fit inside of a given rectangle or frame. Some piece that I desire to be more of a pictorial will use the frame as a way of unifying the work as well as presenting it to the viewer to be read in the same way as a 2D drawing. Other works like the large steel pieces I have eliminated the frame to allow the piece to have the potential for movement and unhinder that feeling of balance. Here the frame would restrict and inclose the movement. The rigidity of the frame also make the potential for balance or unbalance less likely. Another example of this is how a lot of my work will go back and forth from 2D and 3D. Some of the small landscape pieces did this a lot. I find in making these pieces that the process is interchangeable and that the drawing is just as much of the work as the sculpture. Also some of the pieces were constructed on the floor or tables like a 2D work and then brought to stand up like a sculpture. This was a another process I learned from Smith. The scale of my work is another aspect that help me fully incorporate gesture into my process. A lot of work is on a human scale, that is it stands on the

floor and is built to a level that matches me when I stand and walk around it. The size of the sculptures are the size of the marks that I would make when using the whole body to draw. This also allows the viewer to interact with the work on a physical level and feel the pushing and pulling of the gestures created. Viewers must walk around the piece. This is something that Sir Anthony Caro said was very important to sculpture and I agree with him. Unlike other works of art that do not require movement on the viewers part, for sculpture it is something that should be required. I have done this through my use of scale, making it impossible to see the whole work from one point. When the viewer moves they make gestures that are relatable to the gestures in my work. The movements in my pieces come alive and the balances seem literal as well as visual. Found objects are a very large part of my work. The idea is not new, and when I started to learn about all the different ways they are used and how the results can change the meaning of the work, it seemed to fit my work really well. The found objects also allow me to work quickly and to build up a piece without hesitation. Caro also would use them in a way that allowed him to rapidly and swiftly build up a form. I find this to be very helpful in my work. Having a form that is already there, say a rectangle or circle allows me to take the object, mock it up quickly, and then step back and decide if it fits. This has been my process for second half of this year. The composition and overall completeness can be assembled in a efficient manner. Found objects already have an effortless mass and volume that may be needed for a piece and can be added without hesitation They can also be easily swapped out for one that may be smaller or larger. They also in the case of wire, rods, and strips are a impetuous way to draw line. This mass and line then will quickly lead to form and composition that create a drawing. A way I sketch out composition spontaneously like playing with building blocks or arranging a puzzle to match up

pieces. The found objects are usually wood or steel that is pulled from the trash, woods, or other scraps I find around. This allows me to not spend time finding materials and deciding on shaped but rather to find the sculptures that already existed in the way they pieces interact with each other. I gained a lot of influences from Anthony Caro and David Smith, They both used found objects in their work. For both artists, the found objects were something that was readily available to them and this is true for me as well. I use found objects because they are cheaper to acquire and are easy to come buy. A lot of my process involves dumpster diving and walking through the wood for old junk yards for scrap steel. The found objects can add a narrative aspect of the piece that comes from the material, the surface treatment, and the forms they possess when found. I use this kind of history and narrative in my work by leaving the pieces raw and bringing to attention the kind of bends and brokenness they have. This is seen in some of the midterm work that showed the rawness and life of the material. Some of them were even left with the dirt and moss still on them, to not take them to far from the home they were once lived before they became sculpture. A lot of the edges are not cut clean nor have a good finish; this shows the use of the torch as a tool for cutting and my gesture to draw that line. The amount of metal that is bent and distorted references the violence of its past and the power of the material itself. The large black work in the final show has a lot of weight and strength that was compromised by the large bend and twist it had at the bottom. This is similar to the work of Smith. He would constantly testify to the strength and violence of a material past, especially steel. The finish of the work is something I use to bring the viewer closer to the material personally as well as the process of the art. Some surfaces are left raw and others are painted bold solid color. The ones left raw bring attention to the materials past. The ones that are left clear also do this but also add

a lightness and polished quality that says they were in one place but now have moved on to become fine art sculpture. The use of bold colors allows me to bring to focus the forms and composition of the elements destroying the history of these materials. They create solid objects that do not speak of the weight, strength, or materiality of the piece. Smith would use found objects to convey a narrative aspect that relied on the form of the piece as well as it's history. He was famous for using tools. That would reference the use of the tool, the artist himself, and the how the tool for making the art, now became the art. This was almost an allusion to process art and self portraiture. The use of steel puts less limitations on my work. Things like strength, form, and exhibition of my become a lot more practical. It is a material that quickly references modern and constructivist ideas of sculpture. Because these are the kinds of vocabulary I am drawing from; the history of constructed metal sculpture makes it a fitting material. Also it is a material that is strong and will hold up well outside, it is a logical choice for the storage and survival of my work. It can be stored outside just fine and can be easily painted if the paint fades or needs touching up. If available, the exhibition space can be outside allowing me to present my work more freely and on a broader level. The form is something that in my work I find very important. To create the kind of shapes and lines I do in my art it would not be practical in any other medium than steel. The strength is something that helps with this. The lines can be so thin yet still hold up a form with no problem. This allows me to not be limited but the structure or mechanics of the material but rather to work freely and uninhabited. Caro did this was well. His use of steel was crucial in making some of his works that seem to float in space. Finally I use gesture to create composition. Gesture for me is ultimately derived from my own balance and movement. This gesture is then translated into compositional decisions through the use use of

found objects. When I create art I have to be moving around, picking up pieces, and mocking them up in space. This moving around and lifting of the objects shows me things that I may have never known otherwise. It tells me how much a piece weighs or the texture of the surface and these things dictate the composition of the work. The balance is not only translated from my own balance when working but also is the result of the physical balance of gravity on some of the individual parts of a piece. This is the bases for some of the arrangements and shows up in the composition of the work. The composition is thus about gesture. Just like how gesture can be the interaction and connections of our bodies with the world around us. The composition has gesture in the ways the pieces are connected and interact with each other.