

Artist's statement.

I have always admired calligraphy, sketches, drawings, etchings for these works show so clearly not only the artist's hand but also the eye, the mind guiding it. I have always loved drawings and loved to draw. Also for twenty years, I have been in a personal endeavor to *create a new kind of drawings*: mental drawings where new levels of imagination, patience, surprise and desire would become possible; drawings as concepts (1) (2) that would result essentially from the activities of my mind, and would abstract their execution without interference from my body; drawings as and from another kind of language. (3)

To conceive and produce these drawings I have studied the gestures my drawings would be made of and I have created and tamed tracing devices to handle these gestures for me. (4)

Gesture analysis, geometry, simple mathematics and logic are the foundations upon which I construct each of my drawings as a conceptual project, associated with the device that can proof it. The expression of the design is either a text (in the form of computer scripts or code defining my drawing language) or the schematics of a drawing machine (either involving technology or preferably, organic). (5)

As Victor Vasarely instructs the industrialist or Sol Lewitt the draftsman that help produce their works, I pair the creative idea behind each piece with the necessary *instructions* for the helpers I employ to produce the piece as a record or as a trace of the concept that created it.

My *helpers* are jigs & devices, not people. My helping devices are balls, magnets, pendulums, plotters, smart motors, spinners, syringes, teflon tubes, tops, water, wires combined and driven by natural forces or by software. Drawings being the combination of gesture and line, my helpers are in charge of the gestures, and the traditional marking tools they handle are in charge of the line, which I prefer traditional. (6)

My material is the line, the thread, the filament my tools can trace. My favorite medium is pen and ink or graphite on paper. But more often now I may trace these lines into sand, or wood, or etching plates; or align blobs, drips, drops, or use a brush. Often I may add hand marks of some sort. I like the idea of drawing on sand for the ephemerality and frailty of the trace. I like the idea of drawing from devices as it visually incorporates the flow of time and makes drawing a potential performance of which even I can be the spectator.

When computer is involved, it is only as an inessential device driving tool, never as an essential interactive image creation tool. I never use commercial software packages, or graphical user interfaces; I work only from text editors and programming languages or shell scripts. I compose my software using many of the paradigms found in nature for the creation of shapes, giving my abstractions their organic character. What is essential is the code I write. Running the code, driving a device, only produce a visible instance of the defined, invisible project, making the computer only a secondary concern.

I like the works and poetics of Max Bill, William Blake, Fan K'uan, Helaman Ferguson, Paul Klee, Sol Lewitt, Agnes Martin, Henri Michaux, Mi-Fu, Piet Mondrian, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, Yves Tanguy, Mark Tobey, Wols, and many others. I am interested in the plays of concept, time and ephemerality in art. I read Jorge Luis Borges and Umberto Eco and they both influence my thinking and my work.

Notes & Quotes

1. Several known statements by Sol Lewitt offer interesting points of view to which I can easily relate and references from which I can explain how my own work process is at the same time related and original. *Work positioning from comments on Sol Lewitt's "Conceptual Art" statements, Jean-Pierre Hébert February 2003* (<http://www.solo.com/gallery/position-sl1.html>)
2. *More work positioning from comments on Sol Lewitt's "Doing Wall Drawing" statements, Jean-Pierre Hébert February 2003* (<http://www.solo.com/gallery/position-sl2.html>)
3. *Yves Klein used his body. Pollock his shoulder. Agnes Martin the elbow. Morandi and Michaux the wrist. Bruce Marden his five fingers, Tom Marioni one finger, Jacob El Hanani his fingertips -- I basically use my brain to draw. (adapted from the latter)*
4. *"The idea becomes a machine that makes the art" (Sol Lewitt)*
5. *"The process is mechanical and should not be tampered with. It should run its course." (Sol Lewitt)*
6. *"Once the idea of the piece is established in the artist's mind and the final form is decided, the process is carried out blindly. There are many side-effects that the artist cannot imagine." (Sol Lewitt)*

Jean-Pierre Hébert, Santa Barbara, February 2003.

<http://www.solo.com/>

<http://dam.org/hebert/>