

THOUGHTS ON CAITLIN FRANZMANN'S DIVINATION CARDS // SLOPES GALLERY // BLOOD  
SUGAR SEX MAGIC CHILDBIRTH SHOW MARCH 2014  
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Divination is the art or practice of determining the hidden significance, or cause, of events, sometimes seeking to foretell the future.

The origin of divination is universal, both ancient and modern. It can be a systematic method to organise random facets of existence to provide insight into a problem or question at hand.

Within this work, the focus of divination is an attempt to lift the veil on the subconscious to bring light to unbalanced elements of the self.

Creating intimate spaces, for private and shared reflection, and exerting focus on the experiential in her work, Caitlin Franzmann continues to do so through her concerted effort to reflect and construct her own definition of magical thinking for the recipients' reflection, and experience, in the vein of reader and seeker.

While this work was created in response to an invitation from curators, Joel Stern and Helen Hughes, magic, as a theme, had been circling Franzmann's periphery: she had been thinking of the power of positive thinking, metaphysics, and the laws of attraction - identified as the New Thought Movement - and simultaneously, had begun drawing positive self-effecting conclusions from astrology, tarot and oracles.

For Franzmann, the artist, the pertinent timing of the invitation to the material of magic, illuminated itself as a Jungian in-coincidence - the phenomenon of synchronicity - and this in itself opened her mind to the study of the subjective experience of consciousness itself, phenomenology.

Crossing terrain of serious thinkers past, and of new age wizardry present, Caitlin has intended to create this work without specific esoteric references. Be that as it may, she intuitively drew on multitude of disciplines including Wiccan tradition, synonymous with divination, which, according to religious writer Helen Ellerbe, is to hold the masculine and feminine in great reverence.

Probing Mystic Medusa, a Sydney based astrologist with a considerable following, Franzmann posed the question: is, as various lexicons align, magical thinking the attributing of causal relationships between two ends where scientific evidence suggests there are none? Mystic Medusa quipped in response in the alt, that magical thinking is manipulating reality by raising one's own awareness to the omni dimensional.

From this point of departure, Caitlin set out to create her own divination cards to be presented by her with direct engagement with participants, in a first-person point of view, in the gallery space. Separate from the usual structure or ritual of the tradition of tarot, she had her own ideas in regard to form and practice that might elevate self reflection. In the work, Franzmann explores thought, emotion and memory associated with symbols, where the magic would rest in utilising compositional principles to pluck out abstract analogies, and symbolism, to allow the participant to express or illuminate a desired state, like metonymy or metaphor.

Appropriating collage, working from both instinct, and existent knowledge as to symbols and metaphor, and there after, post factum research as to

universal interpretation of the images which had attracted her, Franzmann assembled twenty-four cards for interpretation and analyses.

While operating from the belief that collage itself equated to chance, the work also calls upon the artistic architecture of magical realism found in the New Objectivity movement of last century: a genre depicting images and scenes of surreal and fantasy in a representational manner. That is, the existence of fantasy elements in the real world to reveal a magical world within this world.

The supernatural realm integrated with the natural realm, reaching an omni dimensional projection.

The intent with magical realism and likewise that of Caitlin's approach with the divination cards, is to invoke a dream state that connects realities, to extract personal meaning by reference to the symbols drawing on memory, experience and emotion, where the act of doing so alone, or in collaboration with Caitlin herself as the agent of the experience, might solicit the magic of witnessing multiple planes of reality. A kind of magical thinking to elevate one's awareness sympathetic to a question or situation existent, prevalent or relevant to the participant.

Taking this symbolic approach to magic, Franzmann has followed the expression of Stanley J Tambiah, a social anthropologist and Harvard Professor, who stated his belief that magic is expressive rather than instrumental per se.

Turning back to her alignment with the New Thought Movement, and referencing Jung, Franzmann has acknowledged the concept that one might balance aspects in ones' life by altering their thoughts in that regard, the law of attraction. Where like attracts like... energy attracts like energy. And perhaps as alleged by Thomas Troward, a influencing precursor to the New Thought Movements, thoughts precede physical form.

Franzmann witnesses to the possibility that our mental states are carried forward into manifestation and may become our experience of daily living, or the experience of the self where innate in this concept, she simultaneously identifies that our experiences are often held in symbols, which can bring forth a deeper meaning to awaken our subconscious or illuminate our focus to our subjective experience of the world..

The work is not intended to follow a path of the monolithic or doctrinaire. Rather an individual experience to stimulate thought and insight, to go beyond language and provide an alternate pathway to underscore the possibility that divinity dwells in each person. That symbols can draw attention to elements of our lives that may be without balance. To calibrate the yin and yang. To adopt magical thinking to elevate our consciousness to the omni dimensional.