

Notes about working in the snow

By Naya Magaliou

Most synonyms to the word movement indicate a *movement towards something* rather than just movement. And there is some truth to this. Even the movement, which is unnecessary to survival, which is not at the base of Maslow's pyramid, has a trajectory of moving towards something. It dawns on me that all movement has a direction, whether it is based in survival or not, it is propelling bodies towards a direction at all times, and it may be for this reason that I feel perfectly comfortable with movement, however futile and repetitive it may be, whereas stillness makes me uncomfortable. The snowscape seemed unnaturally quiet to me and in it, movement was a necessity for staying warm and alert; although it didn't seem vital at the time.



I sat in the snow and I felt my toes freeze and my hands lose sensation, and I tried to place sheets of gold leaf on the snow perfectly and it just wasn't perfect and every time I tried again I would once again fail. It felt both like performing unsuccessful work, and "true work".

The most honest work, or the hardest work, seems to occur within the performance of failure. Even though I don't find failure to be toward-movement and toward positive development, the more I think about it, the more exciting of a strategy it seems to be.

After spending all day arranging found materials and gold pigments in the landscape, a melancholic layer of snow covered my efforts and by the time I returned to inspect the work I had performed, it had disappeared. The sad result of performing work alone is that no one is there to report about it to others, so no one will be seeing my work again until the snow melts, if it's still there.

Now, I think about those moments of trying to grasp the flimsy materials with my bare hands in the snow. They were odd moments in time when I was doing an odd thing and I cannot quite find an adjective to describe why or how it was odd and although I try to think of other things, my mind keeps drifting back to those moments of failure so to speak. I picture dreamy images of gold and silver squares on white backgrounds and I can hear a muffled white noise in my head.



Constant, slow, solitary work. A long straight line.

Trying to arrange found objects in the snow and paint them in gold and trying to place small sheets of gold leaf in a tidy row, it is unnecessary.

It seems very unnecessary.