

COMPANY OF IDEAS

The purpose of Rubinoff's work is to extend the ancient narrative of art and consequently rekindle the historical spirit of modernism. In addition to viewing the work, which includes the Sculpture Park itself, the goal is to revive the interdisciplinary creative impetus of early modernism and to attain the understanding of art as a serious and credible source of special insight for the evolution of ideas. The ongoing forum for dialogue that starts with the insight evolved with and from Jeffrey Rubinoff's work is intended for both artists and non-artists. It is for those seriously interested in the ongoing progressive contentions of modernity. The Sculpture Park maintains that modernism was a necessary outcome of modernity; that post-modernism has run its course, and that artists must regain their role at the center of this new reality.

The Company of Ideas seeks to contribute a counterweight to the trend toward opinions, cultural biases, and market demands as having primary agency in defining our understanding of reality. The danger of this trend is that it devalues rigorous contemplation and dialogue as a means to explore reality progressively. Without this methodological standard, reality is understood in a relativistic, shallow, and cynical way, to be the result of whatever truth claim is most popular or most forcefully presented. This situation leaves us morally unarmed to respond to the critical global exigencies of modernity.



PURPOSE OF THE 2009 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

The 50 hectare Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park is home to over 95 of Jeffrey Rubinoff's sculptures, representing four decades of artistic effort. A purpose of the Park is to communicate the inherent value of art through the example of Jeffrey Rubinoff's work, and to realize the potential of this value for the evolution of human conscience.

The work of Jeffrey Rubinoff is ambitious in that it claims art to be a vehicle for the evolution of mind, and as such it must deliver penetrating insights that form the basis for ideas. These ideas are realized in the evolution of the sculpture, and to the artist are complete within the work itself. However, the insights alone (see overleaf) are based on linkages within a large and diverse knowledge base, and as such are not easily contemplated or widely utilized by other thoughtful and interested minds.

Communication of the inherent value of art through the sculpture of Jeffrey Rubinoff is the essential mandate of the Park.

It has been perceived that the insights evolved with and from the work can increase that communication and enrich the knowledge of the public. It has also been perceived that the explication and extension of the insights may contribute to the diverse knowledge base itself.

The strength of Jeffrey Rubinoff's work is that it addresses a historical context. An important purpose of the insights and the work of the Company of Ideas Forums is to increase the awareness of this important context for its own sake, as well as enhance the appreciation of the value of Jeffrey Rubinoff's work as situated within it.

Conventional pathways to the development of ideas are seldom collaborative, and must often contend with career, institutional or commercial agendas. The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park Company of Ideas Forums offer scholars, artists and other professionals the opportunity to work in an environment that lies beyond the influence of those forces.

WHO ARE THE PRESENTERS

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park has invited advanced doctoral students, practicing scholars and other professionals to lend their minds to the explication of the insights that form the basis of the artistic work displayed at the Park. Presenters will draw from their own areas of expertise to specifically address and extend any one of, or collection of, Rubinoff's insights. The goal of the event is to generate and disseminate new ideas from the consequences and questions the insights inspire. It is hoped that an interdisciplinary collegial group can be developed to contribute to and disseminate these ideas to a wider public.

PROCEDURES DURING THE FORUM

Attendees of the forum will play three separate roles: Speakers, participants, and observers.

Speakers

Speakers are expected to prepare a publishable paper, a 25 minute presentation and answer questions in a 25 minute dialogue. Speakers should read all the papers submitted before the forum and be prepared to engage in a lively discussion.

Participants

Forum participants will be expected to read two papers each, and prepare at least one question for each. One question will link the paper to the insights evolved with and from Rubinoff's work. The participant is free to prepare one or more other questions of their choosing. These questions will lead off a 25 minute dialogue session after each presentation.

Observers

A limited number of observers will be invited to ask questions and view the sculpture at specified times. They need not prepare anything prior to the Forum.

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

2009 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM



The Company of Ideas Forums seek conceptions that integrate the diverse historical forces of modernity with the essential identity of abstract modernist art: the identity of the imaginative intelligence with the historical forces of existence. This essential identity thrives in the authentic moment of artistic realization. By its nature, this artistic cognition is an existential moral act that deepens the understanding of truth.

"Art is an act of will in accord with a mature conscience" – Jeffrey Rubinoff

INSIGHTS

The following are the insights that evolved with, and from, Jeffrey Rubinoff's work itself. These are insights that are reflective not only of his own individual view of the condition of the modern world and the way in which that condition has come to pass. They are reflective as well of the implications of Modernism in art, as it has been pursued by one of its primary contemporary practitioners. They are being offered here to serve as the starting points for the further development of ideas.

Tribalism

Tribal behavior is an ancient evolutionary trait. By definition, a human tribe recognizes descent from a common ancestor. From this recognition, rules of membership are created. As populations grow and genetic distance evolves, the tribe becomes wholly metaphorical.

At the metaphorical level, tribalism is realized in religion, nationalism, and racism.

Tribal myths of origins are distributive memories of existence that substantiate the rules that separate tribes.

The End Of The Age Of Agriculture

The domestication of animals is believed to have begun 13,000 years ago. However, with crop cultivation 9,000-10,000 years ago, a large majority of the population was required to be bound to the land. Cultivation leads to the first continuously settled villages and to civilization itself.

Security and continuity, rationalized by predictable food production, originated specialized political, civil, religious, and military institutions. Institutionalizing a warrior class was the most dangerous necessity of this social sea change. If the military were not directed outward, it would threaten the stability of the non-military institutions. Thus, a constant state of war became inevitable, and indeed the history of city-states and empires appears to confirm perpetual states of war.

The feasibility of escalating war has become absurd with the advent of strategic bombing and nuclear weapons. No military institutions can claim to guarantee security of territory.

Moreover, at the end of the age of agriculture only a minute fraction of the population is required to produce the current surpluses of food and thus the fundamental assumptions of the age of agriculture, security of territory as the means to secure food production, must be revised to the era of global vulnerability.

Resurgent Tribalism

Agriculture not only failed to supplant tribalism, it extended tribalism through periods of technological development. As agricultural and civil practices advanced, continuously larger populations could be supported and larger armies with more sophisticated weapons deployed.

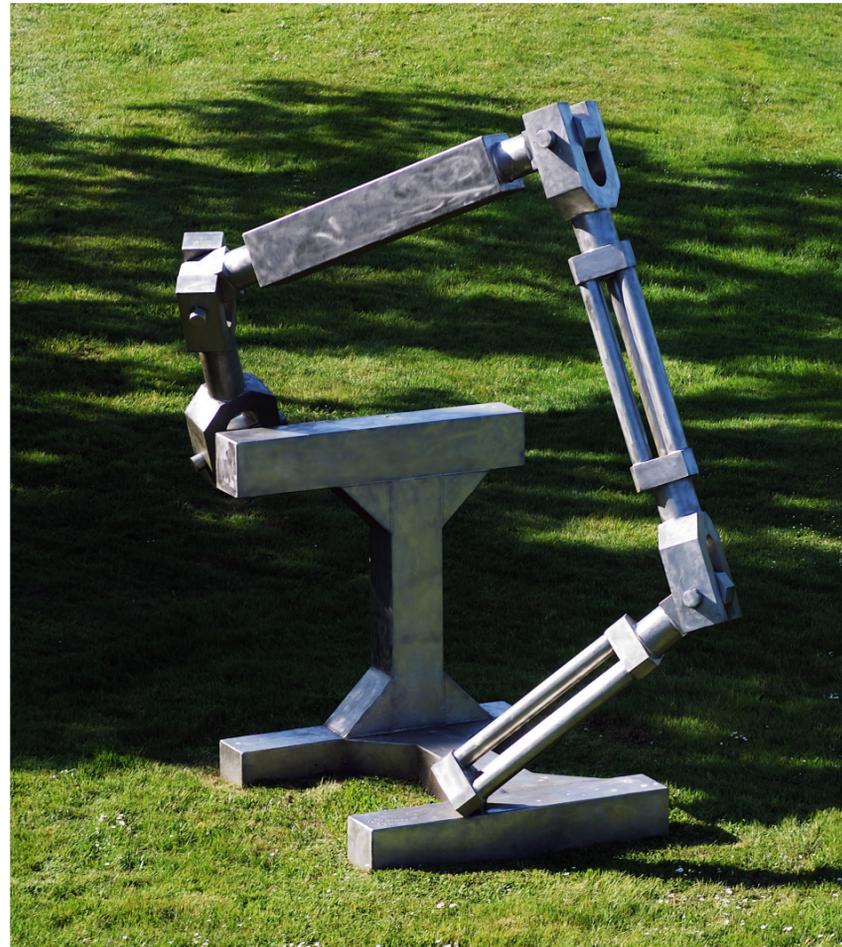
From the Renaissance through the mid-twentieth century, Europe led the world to modernity, scientifically and technologically, warring endlessly in ancient and re-invented tribal rivalries. Finally, much of Europe lay in smoldering ruins bearing the moral degradation of the Holocaust: mass theft and murder precisely organized and recorded by collaborating modern states.

The culmination of World War II was the profoundly ironic gift of nuclear weapons, given to us by science. With the reality of mutually assured destruction (MAD) becoming the ongoing policy of the nuclear-armed nations, modernity would have to adapt to a balance of terror if the human experiment were to survive.

As nation-states recognize the potential suicide of all-out war, the danger is that extant tribalism can continue to trigger genocide and continue the attempt to draw modernist nations into apocalyptic confrontation.

The Importance Of The History Of Science

The history of the universe is the collective memory of the universe. The science of cosmology probes the limits of what we can know of the collective memory. At the root of science is the simple idea that there can be a methodology by which intelligent people can agree on what they observe and, as a corollary, agree to disagree without murdering each other. Science itself evolved in the West as a necessity for stopping the ongoing murderous tribal wars lodged in



separate arguments about divine truth and divine favor. Science is a process that creates conventions of truth. It is the process that itself must be either accepted or denied. Necessarily, to accept science is to accept the process that has led to the scientific concept of evolution. The evolution of life is the collective memory of life on our planet, and it determines what, at any point in history, we are capable of knowing of the collective memory of the universe.

Evolution

Evolution is directional and progresses to ever more complex and adapted orders of organization.

Quite elegantly, the concept is constantly evolving rigorously validated evidence of itself. As rigorously validated evidence expands the idea of evolution, the human mind itself can evolve, thereby contributing to the collective memory of life itself. Arguably, the theory of evolution supports the concept of the potential value of all humanity, as opposed to theistic or other rationalizations for the ascendancy of specific tribes.

Importance Of The History Of Art

Art is the map of the human soul; each original piece is proof of the journey. As the artist navigates the unknown, the art adds to the collective memory.

The artist's journey on the path of art history takes him to the farthest reaches of his predecessor as his point of departure. The artist who follows that history then possesses the chart for evolution, which he in his turn is obliged to extend to his successors.

In its turn, art history is one strand wrapped around the historic cable of modernism.

Modernism And The New Synthesis

There are important carryovers from modernism to the new synthesis.

Modernism addressed the entire social spectrum implied by the evolving history of science.

Modernism was by its nature progressive.

A key concept in the new synthesis is the carryover that life opportunities are not divinely ordained but can be distributed equitably based on merit. And that the corresponding changes in social organization can be implemented. This is the means by which civilization itself can evolve.

Humanism And Integration

In a post-agricultural age, political territories can no longer promise security. Globalization demands a common basis of understanding and action over both geographic and ideational space. Humanism is the conceptual thread with which to weave this common understanding.

Cultivated Ignorance

The easy view that truth is only subjective leads to cultural lethargy. This view of reality does not represent ideas but opinions. These opinions are merely a means to intellectual and moral conformity and to the avoidance of the effort required by independent thought. For some, there is just a cessation of growth, for others a deliberate security of stasis.

Leadership

The highly successful in any field are the masters of convention. In marketing, they are also the masters of the conventional. Learning from original art, true leadership is the quality to navigate beyond the boundaries of convention and to return with the charts of the newly explored. Leaders as navigators continually return to a vision beyond the horizon of convention. Like original art, the highest purpose of leadership is to serve the evolution of human consciousness.

Evolution Of Mind

Evolution of mind results from the dynamic engagement of truth with both analogy and metaphor.

Science has created conventions for truth by using analogies to model material reality. For much of their history, artists have been bound by their innate analogical ability to portray external reality. By science externalizing models of underlying structures of material reality and photography replacing the demand for illustration, art has been liberated to address the internal, intuitive reality of the collective human memory.

Analogies are tools, and as such they are accepted conventions; they are by their nature repeatable, measurable, and predictable. Metaphors exist beyond logic in the realm of intuition; they are the basis for truly original thought and are by their nature unique. Metaphors are self-contained truth, and they cannot be used as analogies.

Science is truth by analogy. Art is truth by metaphor. Resonating together, they are the New Synthesis.

