

Art is a great mystery to me. I've heard many excellent explanations of art at great schools, but most were reflected and forgotten quickly. The more I learn about art, the more I feel I do not know what art is. It seems that I still have the questions I did in childhood when I was fascinated by the art books of my mother, an art teacher. My mother was very busy, so I was left alone at home most of the time after school. I was an odd child who enjoyed time alone reading books about art and drawing more than playing with friends. Back then, I felt like art was a shining light in my dull and unkind childhood world. I thought art was about beauty, a mysterious phenomenon that makes me feel alive, like god's hand. Such enthusiasm finally led me to art school.

At art schools, I learned beauty was dealt with in more complicated ways. Sometimes I felt that my notion about art and beauty was torn apart or laughed at in the contemporary art field. The irony is that many ordinary people do not agree with or sometimes mock the directions of contemporary art. Art education was very confusing to me. Most of the time, I learned the 'right' things to say, but I doubted the utility of art education. I tried to understand beauty through neuroscience or religion, but these explorations were not satisfactory either.

Now, after more than two decades of art practice and continued confusion, I have found that my sense of beauty has been extended and diversified. Now I realize I can find beauty in almost everything, not only art, but also a stone on the road, numbers in textbooks, and even slides of animal tissues because aesthetics is a living thing that can be created in many ways. I believe people love things in which they find beauty. I believe great mathematicians find beauty in mathematics, and surgeons find beauty in their surgeries, just as artists find beauty in their art.

There are many things I do not love. I am the type of person who loves only lovable things, but I hope my sense of beauty grows more. Art practice gives me chances to research, understand and contemplate other things beyond the day-to-day. More than anything else, art practice gives me time and space to look back and examine myself.

Professional art-making requires deadlines and accountability to others, unlike writing a diary for myself. This tension helps me understand myself better because some unexpected aspects of the works reveal themselves in this intensive process. I still don't think I know myself 100%. I do not understand what the universe is. I do not understand what life is. I do not know what I am exactly, so I do not think I understand my work 100%, even though I made it. I have my own intentions and opinions about my work, but those are just aspects; spectators can catch different aspects of my work and have diverse ideas. I believe there are no absolute definite conclusions in art practice, which is part of what makes it beautiful to so many people - the freedom to find what art means to you.