

What's in an Opportunity?

First, it would be helpful to define what an opportunity is for us. Perhaps it is a chance to share the results of one's fervent laboring in order to disentangle one from their thoughts. Depending on content and context, an opportunity might be a chance to speak to, or enlighten the masses, even if it may only be to the cultured mass. It might just be a call for the mingling of ideas by way of collaboration. Then again, maybe it really is just a chance to further a career through resume building and exposure. I may be nostalgic here, or perhaps outright naïve, but I still believe in what I do, more so than just the outcome.

The studio is a place of solace, refuge, and reflection, on myself, and the world in which I exist. Time spent in the studio is therapeutic. It offers me a chance to work out, rationalize and expel that, which occupies the space between my ears. Somehow the act of moving a thought, from the mental to the physical allows it to vacate, leaving room for new thought, experience, and memories. However helpful this process may be, it is not a complete act until the results of my labor can be shared and experienced by others. Nor are the thoughts totally purged from my mind until the physical manifestation can be passed on to another, leaving but a mere trace memory of their former self. An opportunity for me is a chance to complete my process as an artist by way of interaction between viewer and art.

This interaction between art and viewer is also seen as an opportunity for those that use their artistic endeavors to make commentary, in hopes of making an impact on the world around them. Artist as activist is not a new role. With an acute eye and adept mind for criticism, the artist is well suited to bring attention and insight to subjects sensitive to social and political awareness

or interpretation, or even to the plight of man and/or nature. While changing the world, or even the minds of those around you, may seem like a tall order, it is perhaps possible with a collaboration of like-minded people. My previous encounters with collaboration have led me to test the waters of the artist commune, to experience their possibilities for myself.

Ok, so maybe the utopian togetherness envisioned in the 60's and 70's has died, along with most of the communes, but there is still power in numbers. A single voice will always be lost in the crowd, becoming a small part of the whole, which has grown to be mere white noise. The more one surrounds themselves with like-minded people saying a similar thing, the more likely they will be heard above the noise. For some, opportunity is the chance to work with others towards a common goal. With this in mind, the collaboration has the possibility of unlocking minds and/or a dialogue for a greater goal that outweighs the individual idea.

After considering all the possibilities for opportunity, why has the motto 'I got mine' been adopted into the mantra of the artist? As I look around me, the culture of the art world is beginning to resemble that of the business world, not one that is fueled by a free flow of ideas. The individual artist's attention has become focused on the next big show, or how to get gallery representation, rather than creating work from inspiration and ideas, all this in the name of getting a piece of the art market. When the artist begins to value a career based on fame and monetary gain, over one founded on content, ideas and beliefs, an entire society suffers.

- John Henry Blatter