

A line that was not

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THE PHYSICS ROOM CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE

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Before anything else, I need to clarify my interest in meaning and form which, in my case, comes from a visual necessity for communication. Communication not through the fragility of language but, instead, through the nature of movement, creating line that cuts across interior and exterior planes. This work was the definitive step toward the search for meaning and a reappraisal of this meaning, as if to say translating everyday movement into line gives it more meaning. Moreover, it was the beginning of a definitive social experience; I am still unaware of the direction this will take.

This verge is a silent space that allows for meditation upon the inadequacy of communication. Like gesture, it exists in its immediate context and can reappear only in another's voice, another's body, even if that other is the same speaker transformed. What it reveals is that drawing, a practice of attraction, extraction, protraction, is born from an outward gesture.

With line as the primary element, drawing could be both a representation of movement and a poetically inspired presentation conceived in the imagination. With a commitment to the experience of time, I reimagine movements as processes before translating them into line. The mark functions as a sign, a line of delineation, that speaks of this combination of events. In such a way, the mind perceives in a single stroke the registration of gesture affirming the existence of another.

Life proceeds along lines of one kind or another. Lines are everywhere and are being generated wherever we go. Line subsumes all aspects of human activity and brings them together into a single field of inquiry. Line provides no entrance into form but through bare yet certain sharpness; what is given is the mark of the moving hand tracing the movement of an act previously carried out. Line allows forces operating in, and out, to be seen, and through it I can orchestrate energies in such a way as to create shelter in the mark.

I try to set up a network of ideas and emotions with only the tip showing. The major portion of the piece continues to whirl and ferment underneath, just as things do in the world at large. It operates on the basis of missing parts. The formal structure, a minimalist strategy of viewer completion and involvement, is one of acting out, in form. A line that was not attempts to draw on the vast reservoir of normally unnoticed, trivial, and repetitive action comprising the common ground of daily life. This turn to the ordinary can lead to recognition of ordinary behaviour, or the act of simply saying 'here is value'. I have not created something, rather I have been present to show what already exists, to put it into form and to reformulate it. This process opposes transmission, reproduction, and representation of meaning because it is not the communicability of movement, via line, but the tension of difference that constitutes the active realm of translation.

Freely, I take line for a walk. As barely perceptible line gently trembles, body gently trembles, dissolving and vanishing as the viewer looks. There is no depth in this simplicity and nothing is truly linear; it negates precisely what is important. What are important

are the precise characteristics of each line and its participator that insists on the infinitesimal difference between things. For me, all of this is a means of communication and the lack of any myth exterior to human.

Every movement that we make carries meaning; whether we intend it to or not. The movement of turning this way and that is the perpetual alibi of an ambiguous existence, which uses contradictions to escape problems, remaining undecided in a restless quietude. Silence sits here on the threshold of invisibility.

There is an idea, with a long and illustrious history, that there is an association between the spatial and the fixation of meaning. It's an old association. Over and over, we tame or try to contain the spatial into the textual and the conceptual, into representation. A line of movement, a dotted line. *A line that was not* documents a succession of instances of freeing line from its supposedly inanimate condition; it becomes a meditation on the meaning of certainty and evidences the materialization of an act of consciousness. An exploration of the point where a gestural act embodies an act of thought and, if anything, it reveals that its very ends are mediation on the way to something else.

Trajectory fits a flattening out as the suggestion of movement also involves a plane projection. A line that can be reversed (read in both directions) does duty for an irreversible, temporal series, a tracing of acts. However useful this flattening out may be, it transforms the temporal articulations of movements into a spatial sequence of points.

The repetition of the mark has signification that goes beyond the realm of 'finding form'. With an obsessive proliferation, it has insistent presence. It is more than a stylistic device; it is the engendering structure of our awareness of the immediate, showing unnoticed sediments of meaning and confronting the endless flux of the phenomenology of meaning. It aspires to the condition of an invisible membrane that encloses its original, without impending access to it in any way or interfering with its nature. This closely self-effacing servitude displaces the authority of the original but nothing changes. Meanwhile an imperceptible difference emerges.

The issue of being deflowered by the spectator is the most dramatic thing. Although, in fact, everyone is, because beyond the action there is a moment-consciousness of each action, even if this consciousness is modified later on, or incorporates lived experiences. This business of participation is really terrible since it is actually the inconceivable that manifests itself in each person, at each moment, as if taking possession. Like you, I also felt this necessity of ridding the spectator, or participator, which is a good thing since it creates an interior dynamic within regard to relation.

Through point-to-point connection, line has become, on the basis of its visual, outside.

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Brief notes on *A line that was not*

A line that was not continues Mikaela Marshall's open-ended exploration of movement, meaning, and form. Pared-down to an essence, her drawings have previously taken familiar, interior spaces as their setting, including university and the artist's home. These earlier works use a formal process of reduction to communicate a succession of everyday conversations and movements which took place on the "stage of the day to day".

In *A line that was not* Marshall's process is adapted to a site-specific reflection on the inner city environment surrounding the intersection of High Street and Tuam Street. *A line that was not* meditates on the everyday interactions occurring on the sidewalks, roads, and in the vacant spaces just beyond The Physics Room. By a process of translation - where movement becomes line - her drawings become the record of anonymous movements. Marshall has taken her practice outside and moved from working with people who she knows to anonymous participants; through these shifts, her process is subtly reshaped to present a flattened transliteration of how we, the unnamed participants, navigate the inner city.

Inherent to these works is their position as part of a larger project. Marshall's practice continues to probe her interest in meaning, form, and communication and the work presented in *A line that was not* is only the latest iteration of these explorations. These works present the results of a careful process of translation but they are not the end result. Presently, the project's broader appraisal of the ways we find meaning within everyday movement takes the form of a social experience rather than a means to an end.

Her drawings function in a space between and beyond documentation, thereby freeing the line from its representational responsibility. As such, her work is a personal meditation on the point at which a gestural act, like drawing or walking, embodies a conscious act.