

Career summary or background It became clear to me in 1970, when I began studying art seriously, and attempting serious work, that my interests were clarified more closely within the context of philosophy than that of expressionist art-making, and that I understood that context to be one of questioning. Since that clarification, I have been more motivated by, and interested in, the nature and quality of my questions than defining myself through an historically based art medium. Obviously, I also knew that I was not the first artist to come to that conclusion, and I knew that calling myself "Artist" instead of "Painter" was simply a fundamental assumption, and that I was by no means regarding myself as a philosopher. I became very involved with language, and structuralist activity (aligned with Barthes), and made many films and videotapes, all generally operating within the question "How can a place/object/situation/etc. be understood, or can it be, by looking at the part of which it appears to be constituted?". These activities lead me, in 1974, to the question "How can a fictitious/non-apparent(hidden)personal place/situation/etc. be infused into the viewer's perception/understanding through the presentation of possible constituent parts/words/etc?". I worked through many media, especially language/drawing combinations and, again, film and video. Through this activity, I came to realize in 1977, that my conception of art lies not within the process of making, or the actual objects, but within the viewer-participant's visual, cerebral, physical interactions with the situations and/or objects presented, and that I was not interested in making art which could be singularly described (consumed), or with simple ambiguity, or with mute-autonomous objects, but rather a kind of 'multivalency' of interaction. More recently, some of my questions, especially as concern the works represented by the enclosed slides are: "Given a space, real or virtual, containing objects, how do the qualities of and relations amongst them generate what kind of place that space is?" "If one could describe a place without without talking about the qualities of, or relations amongst, the objects in it, what would one talk about?" "Given my assumption that the art I generate lies within the perception, thought, and bodily activity of the viewer, and that I intend the work to act as place, what are the questions/criteria/assumptions for the activities which generate the formal constituent elements of the work? (What kinds of 'making' activities am I looking for/interested in?)". I have been using, since late 1977, small photos placed in large spaces to generate viewer physical movement, to look closer, to step back, to (hopefully) get to the same questions as my most important ones: "Where do I 'stand' in relation to this work, how can I take a 'stand'?" "Where are the boundaries of the work, what's included and what's not (especially re: bodies, body, my body, my shadow)...am I judge of or part of this work...do I include it or does it include me?" "How, or can, I understand this work?". I am working through and around these questions, with the intention and hope of formulating far more interesting ones as I continue.

Ken Feingold

October 1978