

THE UNEXPLAINED IN ART

Subjective interpretation of the Absurd as an effective function in
art-making in a practice-based research

“All perceptual experiences are never without meaning and also their meanings are never definitive. Man would always move between chaos and the absolute.”

- Maurice Merleau-Ponty
Sense and Non Sense

My research is mostly directed to the inquiry, implementation, and analysis of the absurd within my art practice while attempting to interpret ‘absurdity’ functional in the art-making processes and perceptions of a few other pioneer and contemporary artists. Here, I address ‘absurd’ as a subjective quality and precondition, pivoted on a state or subject, which allows for incongruity and contradiction of logic giving encouragement to the inception of paradoxes. Meaning and meaninglessness are two terms that revolve around this ‘absurd’ defining the complexity that it offers. This term ‘absurd’ was initially identified by the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, in association and response to the objective philosophies of Hegel, Kant, Nietzsche, and others, giving rise to this branch of philosophy called ‘Existentialism’. His and the other theories and principles have been later studied upon, expanded, and explained in detail by writers and philosophers like Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett, and many others, and if we go into this branch or concept of philosophy there is a deep never-ending well waiting to be dug. But my intention would not be in analyzing the vast literature existing on this subject. Rather, I would explore, inspect, evaluate, and reduce the presence and influence of the absurd, specifically these beyond words and meanings phenomena and their inherent characteristics stimulating and embodying creative practices. While explaining about ‘experience’ and ‘embodiment’ working as catalysts in practice-based research, alienation from ‘absolutism’ and acceptance and influence of the ‘irrational’, ‘abstract’ or the ‘unexplained’ facilitating other artists’ and also my creative practice will be investigated and discussed in my thesis. Scrutiny and evaluation of how ‘absurd’ intrinsically functions as the formative element and effective function of my art practice producing new knowledge in practice-based research; also, demonstrating the internalization of its concept, i.e. remoteness from explanation, understanding, meaning, and logic; and assigning new purposes, definitions, visuality and attributes to the unspoken, unseen, unrecognized and the unexplained, in my undertaken practical projects during my practice-based Ph.D (DLA)., will primely be considered as the results and answers of my research interest, questions, and intent.

- Pallavi Majumder