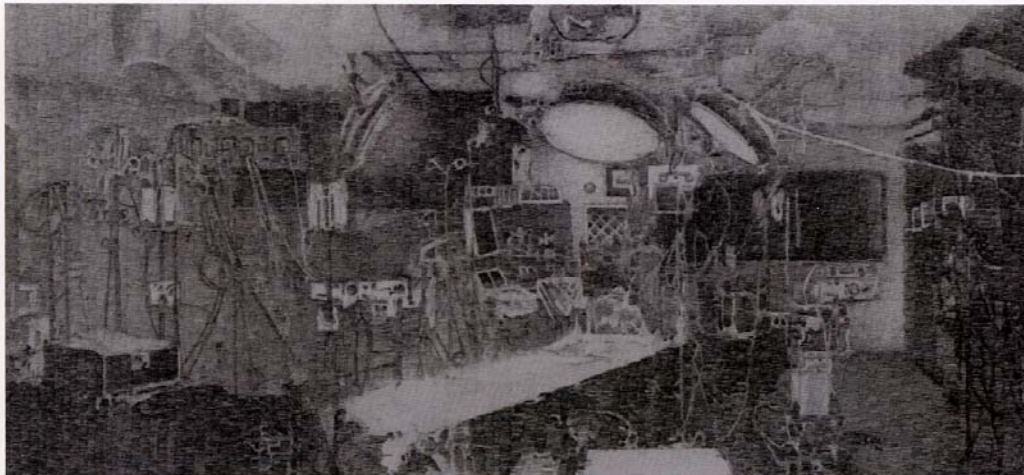


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Drowning men are troubled not by rain
23" x 23"
Graphite on paper
2010

Tedd Nash Pomaski

The act of drawing keeps artist Tedd Nash Pomaski afloat. Through incredibly detailed pieces, he continues his investigation of subjects between here and the nether world. Graphite depictions of hospital rooms, ruins and waves take on a certain clairvoyant energy, that flourish not so much in a real but immaterial place. Instead of using traditional portraiture where a study is told through a person's face, the artist has taken specific locations where he tells a story through the architecture or natural phenomena occurring in a place. Some subjects reveal themselves to be part of his life. Others turn out to be random interests or sourced from printed information. The craftsmanship involved is stunning. Repetitious lines conveying in perfect detail the breadth of a moment. Yet, an eeriness lingers and the depictions fluctuate from physical pictures of spaces to parables of faceless spirits that have inhabited these areas.

Bellevue, a series of graphite drawings he made from examination and operating rooms from the infamous New York City hospital, are the subject of a solo show

in January 2011 at The Bose Pacia Gallery. The spaces depicted are an intimate study of life in its most fragile of moments. "Every room has a very specific function," explains the artist. "I've never been in an environment where everything is so specific. It's so subdivided like if you have a nosebleed what kind of nosebleed and which nostril, is it dark red, medium red or light red? They have a room for every specific minutiae, its endless. So, I found a subject that will never end and then it's a portrait, I've never done portraits and I've always wanted to. I've never found a way to access portraiture because I've never been interested in human faces, but this is a way of looking at people as a whole or the whole of humanity by their conditions."

Accompanying the sketches, are ancient proverbs taken from Asia and the Middle East. "Drowning men are troubled not by rain" is the title of a piece showing an operating chamber filled to the brim with gadgets and lights. The claustrophobic aura infuses the viewer with a certain desperation inherent in the title. While the airy, "A spoon knows not the taste of broth" shows a calm looking recovery room. Through words, the unique nature of each person's hospital visit and randomness of every outcome playing into the fates of our own existence.

For Tedd, that story began in the mid-seventies on the big island of Hilo, Hawaii. He was raised by a Vietnamese mother and American father who met

during the Vietnam war. According to the artist, he had an idyllic childhood, and didn't realize he wanted to leave until his adolescent years. "It wasn't until I was a teenager that I started hating being on an isolated rock in the middle of nowhere. We traveled a lot and I had no desire for it until I became a teenager. I got tired of driving around the island in circles. If I drove for two hours I wanted to see something other than where I started. I just wanted to see something besides the ocean."

Knowing that his family would probably not approve of an art career, he decided to study architecture at Rhode Island School of Design. His grandfather was an architect and he knew this would be more accepted. While a student at RISD, he took as many painting classes as he could and made sure he was learning just as much about his first love than about his second. "I love the thought process of architecture, it's very demanding. I never wanted to do that as a living because it's too egotistical, it's too boring and time consuming. I like the thought process because every aspect of something is investigated and it's different than other art forms. I need a certain type of structure in my life at all times, whether it's personal or whatever. The work I do generally has a very obvious substructure or a structure that's been obscured or camouflaged but I always have some structure. I need it. I'm not emotionally expressive. Once I'm in a certain parameter a door opens up which doesn't happen unless there's a certain mat of right angles around it."

Tedd's paintings are very different from his drawings. While his drawings have a stringent set of rules, his paintings, although structured to a degree, tend to take on a more expressive nature. "Fires" shows influences of Bauhaus architecture but also a free and expressive gestural style via Vincent Van Gogh. The painting depicts the artist as a horse in a state of flux. You see the figure and then you see a ghost-like mirror image of the horse leaving its body. He created the painting after suffering a mild heart attack. "Paintings are cathartic for me. They're very immediate and nonintellectual. It's just about feeling the paint interact with my body and the canvas. It's very fast and fun it almost has nothing to do with anything else in my life."

He recounts the times he tried combining painting with his drawing practice to disastrous results, the latter, no less demanding to the routines of a zen buddhist. Even when he does not have a specific subject or idea in mind he will make pages and pages of lines to keep him in a place he needs to be. "Drawing for me is a thought process first and foremost, it's a way

of thinking about the world around me and how I see it and how I communicate it. So, it functions in the sense that it's the least creative of my activity because it's purely functional. Like everyday, when I'm on the subway or in between something all I do is make pages and pages of lines. I've got thousands of pages just lying around. The image I draw is secondary."

It is this process that allow his drawings to take on other characteristics than what you see literally on paper. Because the artist is thinking about something which has affected or influenced him and translating that onto some random subject matter, we are allowed to peek into another world on a different sensory level. He explains that he enjoys when people interpret his work because it helps give insight into his overall process. And more importantly into his life.

"Art might be a by-product of not seeing yourself clearly or not seeing the world clearly, so you have to use what we call 'art' as a venue or pathway to learn about your world via other peoples interpretations of what you're doing. It's almost like when the baby cries, the parent has to find a way to interpret what cry means, hungry or what cry means tired, or doo in the diaper. Art is the same way, it's like this cry that starts out very abstract and society finds ways to figure out what that cry means. Some artists cry out of pleasure, some cry out of pain, others cry out because they want to change the world and activate things. Or try to slow things down and try to prevent the world from changing. But it's all a cry. If you're an artist that wants to communicate, you show that to other people and wait for a response, or not, and throw it away or give it to your mom."

