



Connecting Craft and Creativity, by Nicholas Hlobeczy

NH: When trying to work creatively things can begin to go downhill. All of a sudden you find yourself down in the valley, down in the doldrums. You wonder how you got there. Inattentiveness plays its part, stepping on a place where the gravel is loose and whoosh, you're launched. You could kill yourself. This can happen in the pursuit of art. I have done that. You can get so enthralled with what you're doing that you stop being attentive and you step on a bad place. You begin doing insecure things and away you go. You get identified. One can get so caught up -- in a sense we fall from grace. Q: What would be an example of that getting caught, or "falling away"? NH: I forget the sense of myself. I forget me sitting here now. One is pulled by automatic feelings, thoughts, the wish to accomplish, to do something good, and all of a sudden there is absolutely no experience of my being here, having a conversation. And that's a pity, because only when I'm here, is it possible for all of me to address this or that question, so that my feelings are involved, and my mind and my body. All these are contributors when I'm here. If I'm not here, if I'm caught -- it's difficult to talk, actually. First of all, I need to be more awake to see it. This is my experience. To answer a question, one has to be in question. [...] Now it's true you can learn to do certain strokes -- like in calligraphy. You can fill a canvas full of the right strokes and have nothing there. I think real craft is connected always with the idea that there are three parts connected: the head with the intention, the body accepting the direction of the head, and also the connecting link with feeling. Without the feeling you cannot sustain an effort. [...] I start out with ordinary feelings. But if I can stay with that, the thing that makes it possible to stay with it is really something of a higher nature, something more true. I don't really know it thoroughly. I'm still exploring. I'm still discovering. I hope it remains this way always. But I do know that craft, if you pursue craft, will return you again and again to this creative state. --Nicholas Hlobeczy, From an Interview
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