

Only a small selection of personal contributions to this publication provided here.

To see **Word Usage: the Journal (vol. 1)** in full, pilgrimage to the Haystack Mountain
School of Crafts campus library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'd. Schnuckel', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Schnuckel

WORD

USAGE

the journal

kitty **black**
jerre **davidson**
kira **keck**
kari **merkl**
myra **mimlitsch-gray**
david **schnuckel**
susan **white**

volume **o n e**

Use Your Fore (s)

Due to continued risk and uncertainty presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Haystack's typical approach to in-person, hands-on summer programming pivoted into an epic roster of synchronous online workshops, demos, artist talks, and panel discussions during the Spring and Summer seasons of 2021. An added dimension to this innovative approach to building a remote program in service to contemporary craft practice and pedagogy was the integration of writing workshops for artists, art educators, and arts enthusiasts. Classes designed - in one way or another - to have its students connect with material and making, but in a roundabout way: with words.

Word Usage was one of the online writing course options available; a community-centric workshop designed to think about personal making practices through three different approaches to writing, tethered to three different session themes, and taking place over three Zoom sessions during three spectacularly warm evenings of August 2021.

A handful of strangers met each other for the first time online on August 12 and dove right into the content. Their conversations were rich, the camaraderie was sincere and receptive, their work was illuminating. The course's pace was short, but determined. And each evening session went by very quick. Almost too quick. Regardless, **Word Usage** asked everyone involved to investigate the multi-faceted organisms that their respective craft fields and personal practices are through various writing exercises and projects. Activities that would then invite further conversation between the group on topics of shared appeal (which would often influence more writing direction).

They wore many hats in the work they did. They explored various corners of thinking about their relationship to making through several ways in which writing exists: in lists, critical assessment, field journalism, the opinion piece, short stories, poetry, and the experimental. All different lenses with which to examine this craft thing through. A variety of methods engaged to help them explore its various parts, as well as their individual relationships to it. Hopefully it planted new seeds of understanding to what they do, how they do it, and/or why. But even more importantly, the hope is that each of them developed a deeper love and admiration for the role that words and writing might have in fully comprehending who they are and what more they could potentially become as practicing artists.

The group that composed **Word Usage** included Kitty Black, Jerre Davidson, Kira Keck, Kari Merkl, Myra Mimlitsch-Gray, David Schnuckel, and Susan White. The workshop consisted of three individual sessions built around three individual themes: craft as noun, craft as verb, and craft as code. Each theme exercised a certain kind of creative thinking, fixed around a focal point within contemporary craft practice, and culminated in a certain kind of writing(s).

Thank you, Haystack, for bringing all of us together in the various ways you did in this remote approach to supporting creative engagement and community building during such an upside down time.

The following are selections of work the **Word Usage** group had created during their time together as part of the 2021 Haystack online program.

2. Session 1 Materials (Aug 12) x

drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dDRTzyPiJvt7ptFaXLwTfmaW3WVIEC5P

Aug12_Recording.mp4

Open with CloudConvert

Word Usage > 2. Session 1 Materials (Aug 12)

WR | David's Participant Appl... x 1. Course Resources - Word U... x


drive.google.com/drive/folders/TT1WxBmia9BpU4Ma5IWb1GgJtdv6HXIV

Search in Drive

Word Usage > 1. Course Resources

Name	Last modified	File size
Course PDFs	Aug 6, 2021 me	-
Course XTRAs	Aug 4, 2021 me	-
1. Sites for Tips/Tutorials	Aug 4, 2021 me	-
2. Sites for Art Journalism	Aug 4, 2021 me	-
3. Sites for Glass-based Writing	Aug 4, 2021 me	-
4. Sites for ____-based writing	Aug 15, 2021 me	-
5. C&C Resources	Aug 6, 2021 me	-
Draft no. 4_The New Yorker.pdf	Feb 1, 2015 myra mimiltsch-gray	602 KB
PatchetL_The-Getaway-Car.pdf	Jul 2, 2021 myra mimiltsch-gray	15 MB

Storage: 269.7 MB used



an incomplete
adjective list

for the material qualities unique to glass

transparent
opaque
stressful
breaks
fragile
heat absorbent
permanent
hard
soft
elastic/flexible
delicate
lacerative
incinerating
insulating
flow
expands
deflates
buckles
viscous
insulating
flows/fluid
expands
deflates
resistant of chemical corrosion
resistant of thermal shock (boro)
shiny
matte (when sandblasted)
heavy
solid
hot/molten
cold
sharp
smooth
liquid
solid
viscous
dense
concave (lensing)
convex (lensing)
squishy
droopy
broken/breaks
bends/curves
glowing/luminescent
pitted
textured

C l e a r l y O p a q u e

You are sterile, clinical, clean.
You are quiet.
You purposefully lack pizzazz.
You are a little bit kitchen
You are a little bit lab.
You are placed in a highly unknown and minimalistic place.
You are trying too hard.
You are losing my interest.

Nothing really to see. Nothing really to say. And yet this absence of thought is loaded with conversation you weren't really created to have.

You are an irony in all the worst ways.

You are an image dwelling hard in optics – a science based on sight and seeing – and yet there really isn't much to look at here. I was hoping that your minimalism would point to bigger intellectual reveals hidden in plain sight. But it turns out that the artistic notion of “not working with much” lends way to being both literally and figuratively true in your case. On both visual and conceptual fronts.

And I really did try.
...more than you thought one would.
...more than you thought one should.
...more than you certainly did.

In fact, my critical impulse is to work hard to identify value in work (and even artistic practices) that seem too easy for a viewing public to ignore or overlook or disregard. For whatever arrogant reason. I've often found myself to be an advocate for the artist or artwork on the fringes of what's popular at any given moment.

I delight in arguing for the unsung. To prove the cool in the seemingly uncool. To illuminate something useful in perceived uselessness. I delight in these things just as much as I do in pointing out the cracks in whatever seems to be the crowd favorite, too.

You, however, I gave up on.
You exhausted my impulse to drill for oil.
You are a strategically phony art image in visually high-contrasting sheep's clothing.

I didn't choose you. I was assigned to you. And I rolled my eyes immediately when I set sight on you. In fact, I see right through you in ways you've never wanted.

The visual reverberation of your overconfidence splits my head in two. The audacity lights a stick of dynamite housed inside my skull I didn't know was there. The audacity decorated my own internal thinking space with the mess of my own blood and bone and brains exploding from bewilderment.

You are an image full of your own smugness. The overwhelmingly chic atmosphere of the blackened backdrop; the slightly off-center positioning of objects-as-focal-points; the spectacle of small moments of sharp contrast between small, sparkly moments within bigger dark moments; the way you've doubled-down on these approaches to sophomoric levels of obscurity is part of my disapproval. The air of expertise to this commitment to basic eye-candy tactics what I find so despicable. You're just way too good at grabbing low-hanging fruit, giving it the shine of fool's gold, and then dangling it to the outreached hands of a world around you who wouldn't know any better.

But I do.

You're an image uninterested in doing something important.
You're an image uninterested in presenting something new.
You're an image only interested in being seen as interesting.

You are an image that positions itself conceptually a few steps past the intention of “residing in ambiguity” and, instead, stands firmly in the obscure. Not the speculative kind, but the shoulder-shruggy kind. I'm almost embarrassed at how unaware you are of your own artistic vacancy. You're an image that's calling for attention, but now that you have it, are revealing that you don't really know what to do with it. You blink your eyes at me fast and brainlessly, realizing that I now realize that you have nothing to say.

Your sense of curiosity is fraudulent.
Your technique is masterfully hack.
You are the dud art experience in what you thought were cool crowd clothes.

I was hoping you were an image that demands a patient viewer...
...that you were an image that demands time to be seen, to be understood.
...that you were an image that seeks a special kind of audience willing to work for the rewards of a deep look.
...that you were an image that is much, much more than what meets the eye if given the slightest bit of attention.

But you are none of those things. In fact, you're the worst kind of uninteresting.
...the kind of uninteresting that doesn't know it is uninteresting.
...the kind trying too hard to pass as chic, as now, as new.
...the kind overcompensating for its lack of narrative with a pseudo-contemporary art-like wardrobe of self-satisfying esotericism.

Yuck.

There are many ways in which an artwork can challenge its audience, but you aren't ticking any of those boxes. Your mission is unclear. Which is ironic seeing that your whole visual vocabulary here - reflection, refraction, dispersion - entirely rely on the clarity of your image's main subjects. A motif of transparency just too cloudy to make any use of in my obligation for an artwork to ask me to re-think what I think I already know.

You relish in phony.
You dwell in dumb.
You traded magic for glamour muck.

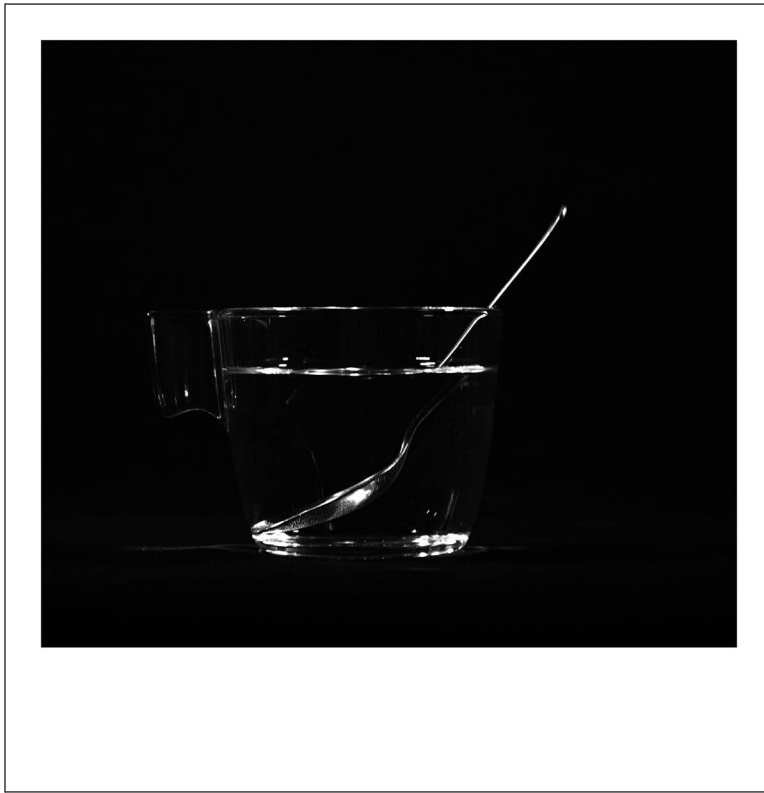
The good news is that you have my attention. The bad news is that you're making the mistake of thinking that just because something looks interesting that it might also be confused as being important. You dangled bullshit in front of me and I didn't bite.

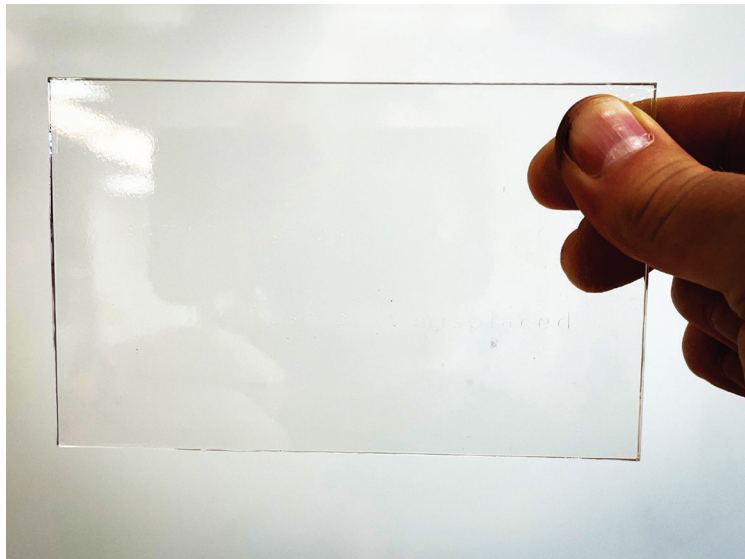
You want me to see the shine.
I'd rather know the story of the spoon that once felt useful.

You want me to hear the glimmer.
I'd rather listen to the tales of the cup half full and half empty.

You want me to taste the gloss.
I'd rather take a deep visual sip of a water that radiated invisible.

You want me to touch the sparkle.
I'd rather feel the texture of luminous sparkle left behind in black.





V I S C O U S (see key theme as...)

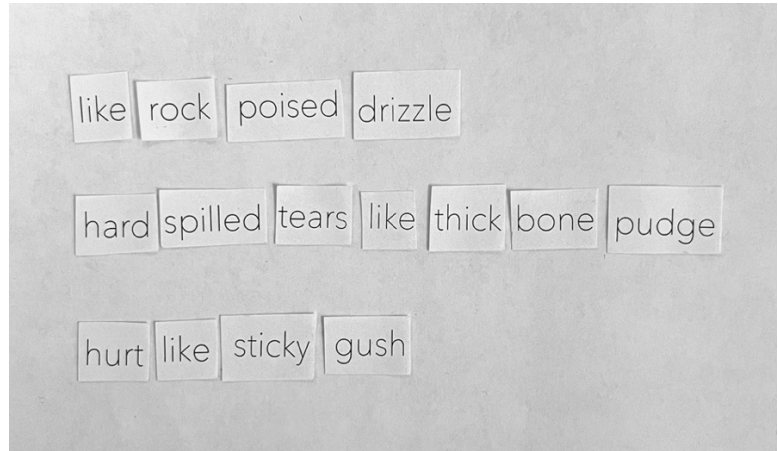
poised like rock bone hard

sticky thick like pudge drizzle

gush like tears hurt spilled

viscous 2

(revise by chance-based rearrangement)



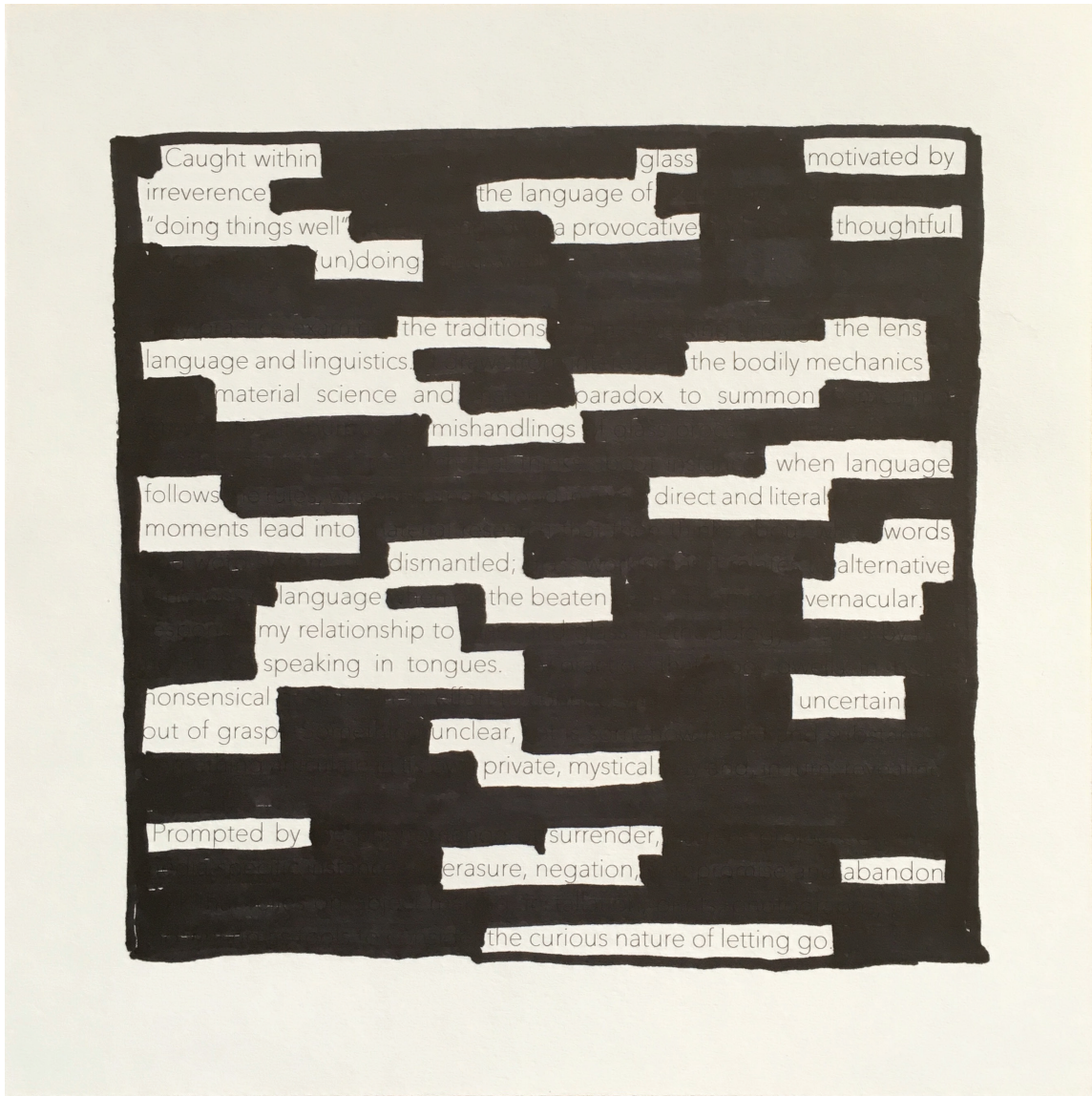
viscous 3

(collaborate with chance-based rearrangement in no more than 5 modifications)

heart like rock drizzle

hard spilled tears like thick bone pudge

hurt like sticky gush



creative assistance by writer and visual artist Krista Franklin ((@therealkristaf))