

This is just to keep you up to date with the project. Attached are two photographs. One is of the suitcase containing an exhibition and beside it a suitcase folded, and empty. Unless you are told you can only guess what is inside. It is interesting that Aine who is also part of your project found a similar case at her mother's house. Serendipity! The piece is called '*Unidentified Objects*'. The subject being the suitcase; The objects being the contents., but it could also be called potential.



Potential – Jennifer Wright

The other photograph is of a piece that I have just made in response to my communication with Nomas and the result of some research.



Searching the divine

(Please correct any false information that I might have misinterpreted concerning the Boboko and Sundanese culture).

Sundanese Boboko rice containers are part of the macrocosm of Sundanese culture. They symbolise perfection of conduct and are constructed using three basic shapes, the cube, the sphere and the cone or the square the circle and the triangle. They are used exclusively to serve steamed rice.

Rice in itself is important enough to have its own goddess Nyai Pohaci Sanghyang Asri who represents wealth, fertility and prosperity. This focus on the everyday and the bringing the sacred into everyday life through the ritual of eating and serving food is interesting. Not only is the rice served in a significant vessel, the whole process of cultivation, storage and steaming the rice can be understood to contain symbols and ritual that are religious. The appreciation for the food that sustains is woven into the everyday. For ritually cleansing a container of water with lime in it is placed beside the rice as it is eaten using hands.

This using of hands for eating interests me, as it is a very direct contact with the food. I have thought about the utensils that we use and how they might be symbolic. The piece *'six knives and six hands'* is a result of this.

The knife is an inversion of the sword-symbolism. It is associated with vengeance and death, but also with sacrifice. The short blade of the knife represents, by analogy, the primacy of the instinctive forces in the man wielding it, whereas the long blade of the sword illustrates the spiritual height of the swordsman. (Cirlot.1971:169). Taking this definition the knife becomes passive but at the same time suggests death and sacrifice. It becomes a microcosm of the process of transforming life into a meal that in turn sustains our physical life; the cutting up of food. The ceremony of using the knife has largely become extinct in Western culture. It has become a utilitarian object. Though it is interesting that the process of cooking has begun to take on more importance in our culture. Traditionally a knife and fork are used to eat with and there is a 'correct' way to hold both these tools. Cutlery is often brought in sets of six or more. The fork did not come into use until the eighteenth century and largely came to Britain from Italy. It was at first considered ungodly, as God had provided us with natural forks; our fingers and it was thought by the Catholic Church to be an insult to God to substitute them with a metal tool.



Six knives and six hands – Jennifer Wright

I don't know if it is relevant to send this to Nomas as it is just to let you know what I have been doing.

Kind regards,

Jennie