

Artist name(s): Elisheba and Aaron Mrozik
Title of Work: Blood at the Root
Media: Physical Installation Experience Captured in Video
Year: 2020
Work Statement:

Our worldviews; our paradigms are built slowly, over time, in direct and passive actions. One of the most influential areas this happens is within our homes.

Elisheba and Aaron are an interracial married couple, Elisheba being Black and Aaron being white. They have two children, a daughter Elisheba had from a previous relationship and a son they had together. Their home is comprised of two Black women, one white man, and one bi-racial boy. Their home has created a platform for exploration of the complexities behind the worldviews created in the home.

Elisheba, a Black woman born to a Black Hebrew Isrealite father whom she did not know, raised by a Black single mother in Memphis, TN to a leading Black family, where her grandmother was a prominent business owner and the first Black homeowner in their white community. Elisheba's experience of heritage does not extend much beyond her grandmother, as much of her family history is lost to the diaspora of Black Americans, through slavery. Her worldview in youth was very much formed by her mother and grandmother and is exemplified in entrepreneurial successes, her scrutiny and distrust of societal norms, and a desire to reach new heights in what is acceptable in American culture.

Aaron, a white man born to a white Anglo-American father of Scottish, Irish and British descent, raised by a white Anglo-American single mother of Irish descent in the Chicagoland area. Aaron's experience of heritage was influenced greatly by his maternal grandparents. Of Irish descent, they were a successful and prominent sphere of influence in their jobs, community, and church. Also, his paternal grandparents, a grandmother of Irish and British descent who can trace her lineage to some of the first colonial Americans including the Lee family. And a Polish grandfather, who adopted Aaron's father at a young age bestowing the name, Mrozik, upon him.

Dr. Kenneth Funk II, retired faculty fellow of Oregon State University and research psychologist for the U.S. Navy, begins his work "What is a Worldview?" with this:

"The meaning of the term worldview (and German Weltanschauung) seems self-evident: an intellectual perspective on the world or universe.

"Indeed, the 1989 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary defines world-view as a "... contemplation of the world, a view of life ..."

The OED defines Weltanschauung (literally, a perception of the world) as "... a particular philosophy of life; a concept of the world held by an individual or a group ..."

Dr. Funk continues, using several definitions created by top scholars on the topic of worldview to outline the basis of his research and thesis.

"In his article on the philosopher Wilhelm Dilthy in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, H.P. Rickman writes:

There is in mankind a persistent tendency to achieve a comprehensive interpretation, a Weltanschauung, or philosophy, in which a picture of reality is combined with a sense of its meaning and value and with principles of action ...

In "The Question of a Weltanschauung" from his New Introductory Lectures in Psycho-Analysis, Sigmund Freud describes Weltanschauung as:

... an intellectual construction which solves all the problems of our existence uniformly on the basis of one overriding hypothesis, which, accordingly, leaves no question unanswered and in which everything that interests us finds its fixed place."

In response to the inconsistent teaching of Aboriginal history and culture in Canada, the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) created "The Treaty Resource Kit" as a tool for educators.

The OTC defines worldview as:

"A worldview is a philosophy or way of life. A worldview can pertain to an individual, group, or society. Overall, a worldview is a set of beliefs and values that are honoured and withheld by a number of people. A worldview includes how the person or group interacts with the world around them, including land, animals, and people."

In their grade 7-12 materials "Teaching Treaties in the Classroom", they continue this thought process:

"Recognize that each student has his/her (their) own personal worldview that is based on values, beliefs, traditions, and customs..."

"Every person and society has a worldview. Worldviews differ today from person to person. Many societies pass on their worldview to their children to ensure worldview continuity. As people interact and learn from one another, it is not uncommon for them to acquire the beliefs of other worldviews. Worldviews evolve as people and societies evolve"

Elisheba and Aaron explore this idea of worldview further in an artistic experience; a full sensory immersion into the transfer of energy, thought, and identity that happens in the safety and comfort of family and friends.

"Blood at the Root" is an exploration of worldview as experienced by the great Anglo-American white family home, the foundation in which the American identity is rooted and framed.

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