

Hesitating Arrows

Year: 2004
Level: First Year, Spring Semester 2
Unit: 100518 Creative Strategies 3
Duration: 2 days
Dates: September 1, 8

Origin

'Hesitating arrows' was the final step (step 6) of the First Project and as such the concluding 'landing' stage. The trajectory of a wavering arrow navigating toward an uncertain target was chosen as an appropriate metaphor to conclude with.

Premise

In introducing this final step I arranged a screening of the opening scene (the first 10 minutes) of Kubrick's film 'Lolita'. This showed the character Humbert Humbert (James Mason) visiting his adversary Quilty (Peter Sellers) in his mansion, intent on shooting him. Once Quilty realises this he attempts an elaborate sequence of 'evasive actions': prevarications: equivocations that variously try to dissuade Humbert from his unequivocal intent Quilty becomes a moving target stalked menacingly by Humbert and inevitably is shot dead. Quilty's 'playfulness' throughout, as a diversionary tactic, whilst delaying the inevitable in leading Humbert into a variety of distractions, once 'played out' clears the way for the trigger to be pulled. (As an interesting side note I pointed out the apparent relocation of the Gainsborough painting as the scene unfolds – an oversight in continuity).

The story that each student wrote at the commencement of the project (that was then removed from them so they could not refer directly to it, other than via recollection), as a consequence of the various 'steps' it had been subsequently subjected to, became variously diverted from its initial 'reason for telling'. These deviations deliberately altered the sense of the terrain covered and in so doing may well have significantly altered the course of the understanding of the story. The steps operated as a moving target, creating hesitancy in the surety of the aim (now this way, now that). The students were now asked to rewrite their story in the light of this hesitancy (wayward words crash landing in unforeseen circumstances). The place where the story now landed left a fresh 'impression' and was witnessed compressed from its impact on 'foreign ground'. A work was to be created that could situate itself (imprint itself) in this new 'place' (as they understood it).

HESITATING ARROWS

From hesitant errors to the point (of the story)

Prevarication and letting things fly

Having fingerprinted the river horse, observed the goings on, left messages and attended to the needs of pigs, chickens and the machinery of ghosts.....the 'play' has been held up, (in its *throwing* the arrow has hesitated), now its time to let fly.....

Directive 1 **Crashing Words**

As you now remember it, rewrite your story, increasing its margins for error. Adjust its trajectory, deviate its course, let its *flying path* become wayward and erratic.

Directive 2 **Crossing Swords**

Create an entity that compresses (compacts) the story as an embedded impression (impact): imprint the *place* where the point crash lands.

- Make visible your printed, rewritten text, alongside its compressed embodiment.
- Submit your project folio for assessment, recording all stages of the current project.