

'Cutting Room' at the Royal Academy ~ Colin Eveleigh



Cutting Room started life as an empty case from an old wooden wall clock about 2 feet tall. Nothing special, no clock, no pendulum. But it did have a beautiful curved glass face and three rectangular glass panels towards the base. I found it in an antique shop, had no idea what I might use it for but had to have it. Similarly, in a different place and time I found an old 16mm film editing device. Same thing. I didn't go looking for it and had no idea why I bought it. I collect stuff and ~ *when they're ready* ~ they mysteriously come together and transcend their original intended purpose. Rather than figurative or abstract sculpture, most of my work is conceptual and might make you think.

I had been watching a lot of film and musing over the editing process in movie making. This reminded me about the way we as individuals edit things in our own mind and memory from the life experiences we have over time. How we shape, retell and reconstruct our stories by selecting and choosing the scenes to use and how inevitably bits end up on the cutting room floor.

Naturally, the clock case and the editing device are symbolic of time and the mind and I could see that somehow both these objects belonged together.

To cut a long story short, the clock case ended up as an artwork with the editing device and some added 16mm film representing the recording medium of the mind. I obtained the film cheekily from the **British Film Institute** in London because I had the bright idea of writing and telling them about the project asking if they might have some spare film. Surprisingly, they actually replied. The Chairman was very encouraging and kindly sent me some unexposed film. *Amazing!*

Remarkably, the lower half of the case with the three glass panels also matched the evolving concept. You see, the Self can be thought of as being in three parts too:- *I, Me, Mine*. We have a natural tendency to filter and edit all our direct experiences through the Self and I often represent this in my work through mirrors. So, I fixed a large mirror inside at the back of the case behind the three panels and of course, you can see yourself reflected there.

Slight hiccup with the curved glass face when I accidentally seriously cracked it and had to spend ages searching for a replacement but finally.... Finally, it looked just right. The face with the editor for the mind inside, a mobius loop and strips of film for the workings of the mind, the triptych of mirrored panels for the Self. No longer an empty clock case, it was now an actual work of art. Eventually satisfied, I closed the doorway and secured the whole piece with a satisfying twist of brass wire. *Cutting Room was born!*

Something was missing. Should I write a verse to go with it? It didn't need one but still I wrote something anyway, typed and printed it on a small piece of brown paper and signed, rolled and slid it into a metal tube mounted out of sight, on the back of what was now in art terms an assemblage. You wouldn't know it was there.

These are the words:-

Cutting Room

Fleeting tangled time is caught here
Edited and changed
Pieces fragments frames
Exposed viewed and thrown away

Seeing each moment as it is
Perfect even when un-retouched
Each film remains intact

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So, there it is, Cutting Room ~ *the director's cut.*



It's a moot point, but unlike a movie, you can never really erase or edit from memory the real-life events you've actually lived through. You can try and I so wish we could but unfortunately, I don't think it's possible. Some of you will know only too well what I mean. It can't be changed. No matter what we do ~ *by chance* ~ the worst (and the best) really can happen and if it does, inevitably it stays with us.

*And....* at any time, there's always another chance of a sequel isn't there, something better maybe? May not be an equal chance but a chance anyway in this epic film production of Life. The blank film reminds us of this endless potential.

Cutting Room is also in itself a chance. A chance to see and reflect on these important issues.

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**The Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition is open from:-
June 18th to August 18th Tues – Sun 10am – 6pm Fri 10am – 9pm**

Colin Eveleigh's website is www.sharingeverydaymindfulness.com