

EDITOR'S NOTE

EVERY TOOL CARRIES WITH IT
THE SPIRIT BY WHICH IT HAS
BEEN CREATED

- WERNER KARL HEISENBERG

The spectre of a physical being haunts the artist in the materials they use. But who chooses whom? Are artists really able to choose the medium? Or are they like the supplicant at a fortune teller's table, tapping for vital recognition, wishing their shopworn actions to be significations, ouija alms from beyond?

Then again, perhaps it's not so much 'Where do ideas come from?' as 'What allows ideas to blossom?' Part of that process might be about developing an intimacy with the material at hand. In this second take on materials, we continue to pursue how certain materials and artists transform each other from within their limitations to a wilder and more authentic beyond.

Authenticity. The hard word of art. In art, we abhor what we judge to be ephemeral or contrived because transience suggests the fading of shallow value. However, an equally noisome quality is the ready-made signifier of value known as the cliché. The hard yards of material is about understanding the part of the artistic process that summons a concept from the determinate clay of *medium*. Often, what is separated from any base material is history. Something has to be unpacked or deconstructed in order for it to be rebuilt from the signifier up; before the artist can answer, 'What do I want this to be?', they have to ask 'What am I actually working with?'

The key inspirational moment comes when the artist realises they have perceived the material as no one has before them. At which point the true work commences.

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