

A STATEMENT ABOUT NOSTALGIA 7/1/02

Nostalgia has been given a bad name.

For some of us nostalgia does not mean a desire to return to those past days, to relive those experiences, to dwell upon what was and then be maudlin or regretful, and longing to be dragged back.

Remembering and refeeling provides the opportunity to use that important material, those experiences and feelings, for building something new. The past is part of the palimpsests and middens upon which we add layers as our lives progress, enlarge and improve.

We cannot deny the past. If we attempt to bury the old memories and sensations it does not mean that they are removed from our memory and psyche. They are waiting for the chance to return to consciousness. All it may take is an image, a sound, a scent, and the memories can come flooding back. Use them as opportunities...to learn, to grow, to build upon.

Even my memories of observing the Abstract Expressionists of the 40's and 50's are blended into nostalgic senses. Seeing the work of DeKooning and Klien, Rauschnberg and Gorky, was part of my development...mingled with my life experiences. Am I to ignore my attraction to these people, and those Moderns who went before, because there are nostalgic memories blended as a result of my building early knowledge?

What is buried in me, those experiences, whether pleasant or unpleasant, are part of the construction of my life. These are the underpinnings, the footings that support me today. I cannot deny my memories or feelings. There is not a need in me to dwell upon them beyond what is useful in creating and understanding the new day.