

THIS IS WHY PEOPLE O.D. ON PILLS /AND JUMP FROM THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE



This piece is performed by 1-10 performers performing on any instruments (including voice). Each performer prepares and practices their own individual "path" according to the directions given below. The piece consists of the performance of this/these "path(s)."

If the piece is performed by a soloist, it should be a minimum duration of 5 minutes long, and is called "THIS IS WHY PEOPLE O.D. ON PILLS."

If the piece is performed by a group, the group should agree on a performance duration (minimum 10 minutes). Each member of the group's path should be a minimum duration of 5 minutes long, and a performer can begin/end their path anywhere within the chosen performance duration. A performance by a group is called "/AND JUMP FROM THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE."

Directions:

1. Learn to skateboard, however primitively. Re-learn your body's weight, muscles, bones, geometry, abilities, flash-points afresh. Meditate on pressure, torque, weight, movement, air, light, space, lines. Focus minutely on surface, micro-surface, bumps, cracks, debris, concrete, asphalt, granite, marble, plastic, wood; gradients, slopes, verticals, the architectural qualities of what you skate on, the "wallness of wall." See, smell, hear, feel, how your body relates to the board and through it to space. Try to learn or at least attempt a few tricks.

Even if you cannot do the tricks, analyse and understand them in your head and body, the basic concepts, movements, weightings, shifts and throw involved in ollies, grinds, kickflips, aerials, backslides, boardslides, rock'n'rolls, variats (or other tricks, and combinations of any of them). Feel time compress and expand as you move in and out of these tricks, launch, rise, catch stillness, fall; spin, slide, pivot, leap.

2. Augment this experience by watching skaters, visiting skateparks, viewing skateboard photos, videos, looking at skating magazines, books, films, websites. Try to understand and absorb what you see with your body, internalizing these ways of achieving speed, height, weightlessness, skating the paths virtually with full attention.

3. Examine and meditate on optimum skating environments, either real or imagined, taking in the macro- and micro-structure of these environments. Go for a walk and imagine being able to skate everything you see – streets, roads, walls, trees, curbs, planters, slopes, gardens, bins, lamp-posts, footpaths, bushes, cars, signs, window-sills, ramps, shopping trolleys, pools, slides, bollards, roofs, benches, cows, hand-rails, fences, edges, lips, steps, drains, ditches, rims, gutters. Contemplate the ability of skate-boarding to articulate space, find new paths through architecture, fresh uses for it, notice and exploit visible/invisible relationships.

4. Compose an imaginary path you would like to skate. This path should push and force you to limits, be rich, beautiful, complicated and stylish, and incorporate some tricks. The path is limited only by your imagination. Internalise this path, skate and inhabit it in terms of body, space and time. Feel space moving around you as you articulate your lines, intersecting, crossing, glancing, spinning away, grabbing at movements and air, smells and sounds.

5. Choose a pitch on your instrument. Skate your imagined path on this pitch. (You may choose to skate the path in slow-motion.) Every micro-detail of the pitch (tuning, timbre, dynamic, envelope, consistency, colour, texture, weight, feel, pressure, clarity, strength) should correspond absolutely to the experience of skating the path in your head. Pay attention to every minute detail, the micro-cartography of the path you are skating, the tiny shifts in muscle, weight, speed, direction. Carve through air in long, sweeping paths with the sound you produce. Reveal and inhabit new spaces, smooth new lines.

MILKER
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Pictures from upper left, clockwise: No-hands, ollie aerial performed by its creator Allen Gelfand, picture taken by James Cassimus; plans of Concrete Wave, Anaheim, dev. C&K Skateparks; unknown skater, picture taken by Captain Wager/Martin Wager; Mark Gonzales grinds a handrail, photographer unknown. Title taken from "Weightless Again" on *Through the Trees* (1998) by The Handsome Family

