

JUDITH BRAUN

“Bicameral Symmetries”

Galerie Conrads, Dusseldorf, De, 2009

Drawing by Four Rules:

Graphite....Square Paper....Abstraction....Symmetry

In *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, Julian Jaynes posits that language developed before consciousness. In other words, there was a time when humans were motivated and inspired to act by forces, directives, and voices beyond their cognitive control. Perhaps quite complex vocabularies that expressed communal functions and purposes, and yet seemed to emanate from authority outside the self. That authority, Jaynes postulates, was actually situated within, in the early “bicameral” mind.

Finding evidence in ancient writing he theorizes that during the slow evolution of the bicameral mind toward self awareness, there were individuals who retained bicameral proclivities, such as oracles and prophets, and who spoke predominantly with what he calls “poetic” mannerisms. And henceforth throughout history, rhythmical, patterned sounds and utterances have been associated with metaphysical knowledge, powers, and even spontaneous possession...

...the first artists.

With that in mind, my ongoing drawing project, begun in 2004 before I read this book, is my attempt to tap into any lingering primal realms of my psyche, maybe a communal psyche, or maybe my bicameral mind. I established the “four rules” to diminish my own authority, and to serve as magnets to catch free floating elements out of the infinite possibilities. Whatever wild and crazy mark I make on one side, must then be ritualistically rendered in reverse symmetry on the other. The battle between my desire to be free and my impulse to find order, is manifest on the page, as the breakdown of the bicameral mind continues.