

Steph Balloqui

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Happiness

In Stefan Sagmeister's TED talk, he spoke about finding happiness in his everyday life and using it as inspiration. His theory was that if you found happiness in every single design you made, that you would feel more passionate about it. Sagmeister also explores the idea of happiness in his exhibit *The Happy Show* and in his film *The Happy Film*. Sagmeister uses happiness as a tool for both inspiration and as a way to connect to his audience. Sagmeister believes strongly that a designer who finds happiness in their life can have a successful and fulfilling career.

Something that is interesting however, is that happiness can be subjective. What might make someone happy could make another person uncomfortable. I also disagree a little bit with Sagmeister in that I think you can find inspiration in anything- even if you don't find happiness with it. As someone with a mental illness, I experience happiness in small, fleeting moments, and so therefore I tend to find my inspiration in darker places. That isn't to say that I'm always depressed, but I can't depend on happiness to carry me.

My biggest source of happiness in my life is art- creating art, seeing art in museums- being surrounded by art makes me incredibly happy. Art is a way I can

healthily express my emotions and feelings while also making myself feel good for creating something I can see. Discovering new ways to create and teaching myself different techniques brings happiness in the sense of discovering a new skill and feeling accomplished if it conveys what I was going for. Going to museums and seeing art in person is probably my favorite thing to do, and museums are the places where I feel the most calm. No matter how many times I've seen pieces by Francis Bacon, Andy Warhol, Mark Ryden, or others in person, I still get incredibly excited to see those pieces in person again.

Film is also an incredible source of happiness to me. Growing up, watching films was an escape from everyday life for me, and film still consumes my life completely- I estimate that I've seen over 1,000 films in my life. Not a day goes by where I don't watch at least one film, and sometimes I'll put on a film in the background throughout my day, so I'm always watching a film even when I work on something. If I'm not watching a film, I'm most likely watching a Youtube video about a film, or reading about a film and all the possible meanings it can have. Films by Stanley Kubrick, Tim Burton, David Lynch, Jorg Buttgereit, and many, many more filmmakers have even been huge stylistic inspirations for my own work.

Something that makes me happy that might not make other people happy is death, and the idea and themes surrounding death. I don't say that in a suicidal way or for shock value, I say it in the sense that death, and the ideas that there could be

something better out there fascinate me. It's calming to know that one day, this life will all be over, and that the experiences we had can only be ours. When I attended mortuary school (even though it was cut short) I became even closer to the idea of death, and found it to be promising. I see death as a promise that not everything is forever or even promised, and I believe we shouldn't fear death like Western culture tells us too.