

The point which has pivoted my life's defining character into greater depths, takes form as a small, green stuffed animal frog. No bigger than five inches in height, with dark plastic pearl eyes glistening the light of the room, and a relatively large, green, fuzzy head; this cute plushy frog—or rather a photo of it—is the cover of the lyrically misanthropic and sonically warm piece of music by Jim O'Rourke which found its way into my life in the spring of 2021. In that period of my life, my eyes were incapable seeing anything other than a cold and dry reality yielding nothing but headache and/or exhaustion. A fixed amount of sand in an air tight box, no matter it's form or arrangement, the amount of sand could never change—the before and after of every action was the same, regardless of what happened, everything was the same, a kind of unbearable stagnation towards nothing. All things in my life were subject to that same calculus, I did not know, or at least did not remember, any other way about it.

In that spring of 2021, the frog had forced me into its own calculus, its own logic, a logic that all powerful pieces of art share. It gave me no other option but to endure the music it fronted and embodied. It required a reducing it to it's parts—melody, rhythm, etc.—, and a thorough inspection in open air to discover each respective part's function and meaning in isolation. Each part, in relation to one another, constituted a whole defying my sandbox logic—that some forms were more than just that “fixed amount of sand”. The frog had seared its own calculus into the back of my eyes, a cold and dry logic was proven false. What was symbolically projected onto this frog was this surplus meaning, what remains when the sum of all individual parts' meaning is subtracted from the meaning of the whole, that intangible essence that comes to define what we love. For me the frog became a physical representation of what made life so ineffably beautiful.

The frog taught me a schema for love, one that defines who I am and who I will be. It revealed that everything in life has potential meaning, but requires a curiosity and will to see it. Now, whenever I see the frog, I'm reminded that I had to learn to find that feeling of love; I will have to continue learning and experiencing new things if I want a life imbued with meaning.