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Ligatures

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There is a feeling that washes over me like restless leg syndrome that loudly commands: *combine!... add!... sequence!* It usually triumphs over another message inside me whispering: *reduce...rarify...sublimate*, though this voice never truly disappears. The tendencies to reduce or add appear to be at odds with each other, when it is likely they are two banks of the same river.

That said, the urge to combine forms trumpets methods of recursion, pluralization, and re-instantiation. The endless permutations and recasting of the die that result give promise to discovery.

The phenomena of written connections, or ligatures, came into being perhaps by the constant neighboring of letters that flowed into one another. What was actually two letters became one letter, and in certain cases the usage of the original two characters together was lost, e.g., the letter &, once the letters *et*--Latin for *and*. This conjunction generated an entirely new form.

I found this concept interesting when applied to the visual vocabularies that I have been adapting over the years. To link sculptures, something I was always interested in, I have eliminated the space between them. Other language metaphors could also be used, such as: the relationship of words to syntax, or even cursive writing itself, with its continuous joining of letters so that the pen does not have to be lifted.

Though, of course, a single sculpture is still incredibly useful, a discrete work always begs for me to tie it together with another in the same room, or if viewing it in a book relate it with the one on the next page. These new works touch one another. Individual works of mine have always touched themselves, but now they touch each other as well. In this way a ligature can also be concerned with binding or constricting a body or thing. They tie things together that are under duress.

My sculptures communicate through *tactile conformation*. I stumbled upon this idea by reading a misquote of Carolee Schneemann in Gene Youngblood's *Expanded Cinema* (1970) that I found on Tumblr. What was quoted was something she said about tactile (in)formation, but the actual quote is about tactile (con)firmation, it is a doozy, and very relevant to the reason I must make my sculptures: "What people really want is *tactile confirmation*, to be in touch with their physicality, to be able to communicate, and to grow, to touch one another and be touched. To get away from the somnambulism of contemporary life. We get all this information and there's absolutely no way to react. You're reading some horror in your newspaper while eating your doughnut. And if you were a natural animal, you'd at least scream for fifteen minutes or chop the sofa into bits—assuming that you can't go and change the thing that the media tells you is an outrage. So, we're trapped with all these fears of real impotence."

I calm myself by making sculptures.