

a portrait of
the mother of
the artist as
a young woman.

POSTMODERN ARTTHEORY A SIMULATIONTHEORY.

Compared to the 20 th century, the 19 th knew relatively little violent conflicts. Therefore we do now live, like an old chinese curse expresses it; in an interesting time.

In romantic painting since 1830 we find a genre, that takes the destruction and decay into ruins of city's like London, Berlin and Paris as a subject. This however isn't a form of engaged art. This back to nature painting evolved from an unconcious desir for desaster, exitement and motion, this contains the meaning of romanticism in a social immobil time. In these works these painters anticipated on the exitement the next century kept in reserve. Photo's of London, Berlin and Dresden in the 1940-ties give simular immages.

Through all this the course of the world at the end of the 20th century has become so fast and complex that for many people it has become impossible to understand it or follow it. We therefore at the end of this interresting century speak about a post-modern situation.

In contemporary art all kinds of styles and media are being used through, over and next to each other. In the confussion inflicted there is more mistification than ever being practiced.

Ever more often one's ability for association is appealed but above all and always one's willingness to accept the created simulations is asked.

Consequently simulation more than ever forms the essence of modern art and therefore modernart theory is a simulationtheory. The backsliding into painting after nature, in recent Dutch art, is artless and regressive. The conception that everything already has been done in art and therefore the postmodernism understood as an an unpersonal proceeding and an arbitrary attitude towards history is a misconception.

In itself the matter from which art is being made is inert. However in the proces of work, in handling the material, the deforming and changing of the matter, the imparting of connections between parts and sorts of matter; so in the process in which art devellopes, energy is beinng added. This is mental as wel as physical energy, in order to inflict meaning, to simulate. This is not only simulation in postmodern and esthetical sence, here it relates to a generally accepted principle, in which therefore ethical values are involved. (see text 'Operation Paperclip')

In materialistic sense the essence of making a work of art therefore is to submit physic and psychic energy into an inert matter. However, there is enough reason to assume that no matter in materialistic sense is completely inert and so contains meaning and will be changed meaning . The work thus generated moves our psyche, a change of energy transmission. So there is a relation between matter and psyche, matter actually is complementary to psyche.

During the last decades physisians discovered more and more unexpected properties of matter, for instance in DNA research and quantum physics. There is reason to assume that in minuscule particles of matter, also those of the human body and in the chemical and physical connections of the matter, information is being held. Forms of memory, in a human sense concious and unconscious memory. In physical sense comparable to the memory homoeopathists assume in a strongly diluted solution, for the originally resolved substance. In metaphysical sense memory for all that has happened to the matter since the Big Bang. In here matter is equal or complementary to psyche.

The relation between matter and psyche can also be understood as a mirror symmetrical one. The psychic mirrors into the matter and the matter mirrors into the psyche. This state of complementarity means that you cannot work at one without changing or influencing the other. For example: if you study a colony of bacteria through a microscope, the colony changes, because the particles of which the bacteria are built interact with the particles, fotons, the light necessary for the microscope, is built of. The way you look at something changes the subject, the observation is complementary to the interpretation. So reality is being determined by the way we observe, the observation and reflection is part of it. The natural and psychic reality interact. Another example from physics: a foton appears as a wave or as a particle depending on the way you look at it, you may determine the position of the particle or the speed of the wave, not both at the same time.

Matter therefore is a medium, the artist will not just be instrumenting the work, the material; but more be entering into a dialogue with the material, which already has energy and information, forms of intelligence. Which determines the limitation of the possibilities of the artist.

Information is not only transmitted from the cerebral area of the human mind and activated through the body and the emotions, but intelligence, information is being transmitted back through the hands in the dialogue with the material world, the matter.

Therefore the conclusion cannot be, that the artist, man, acting as a kind of ' God with matter ' forms the world after his own cerebral executing imagination. But more, creates works in addition to the independence of matter and psyche as an entity.

The fish cannot swim without the water.

So the performance of the artist is an existential one, activated from an act of faith. Acting from the knowledge that there are contents that don't belong to the I-personality and that certainty cannot exist.

The artist reshapes the existential philosophy into an individual kosmonogy, every birth is the possibility of a new world. Following the movement of the life coming into the world. In the individual however is made up the a-kosmic that makes the work as well personally unique as inert and imperfect.

The idea of the superhero is done with, God as superman is death. If psyche equals matter, God is all pervading. (not in the way the biblical sense is interpreted.)

Heaven and earth are indivisible and created from an organizing flow of energy. Man can never be God nor superman.

Psyche and matter have never been divisible. The knowledge of this and the awareness of this entity were lost with the entrance of the post-metaphysical time. The establishment of the dominating western, rational, and empirical science and philosophy was attended with the rejection and denial of alchemy. With this also the believe in magic was lost and with both a great knowledge of the conscious and unconscious psyche. Man is a vessel to the conscious and unconscious psyche and so a particle in the 'Systema Divina'.

The artist in his involvement with matter and as a part of it, creates the communicative qualities of the artwork. The work is an expression of the most intimate feelings as a result of trying to bring psyche and matter together, to at once reveal a mental proces, by the organisation of material and to reveal meaning beyond the knowledgible area.

His motives form a reality and not only a transmission of reality. In this way art can define a level of reality with a real actual sensibility.

A sensibility that cannot be expressed in traditional form associated with picturing reality. The level of reality involved probably is not beyond the technological means to perceive it but it lays beyond the direct human eye. However it is not beyond the sensibility of the human eye nor of the human being. The human psyche is certainly capable of perceiving any level of reality.

In this hide still unexploited sources of energy which move the human psyche, pervading his material environnement and the very essence of his internal being.

The artists intentions are in this the conditions to create the communicative values of the work.

The requirements that have to be met can no longer be addepted from modern-arthistory.

Art history does not have the idiom at disposal to meat the level of reality involved. For one reason because history is a determination of time but the present is a category of motion.

The required sensibility makes the idiom of art-theory insufficient and cripple.

In a situation where has become clear that aesthetics are not an independent magnitude, is representative wether or not a work of art can break through the common ignorance towards the fate of men, animals and affairs.

The issue can no longer be a perfect functioning formal system of abstract relations in itself but as a possibility for engagement.

In this way works of art can appear hermetic and also call upon an empathic reaction.

A>Simulation in a post-modern sense.

Jo Heijnen, Amsterdam february 1992.

text conceived in discussions with Sotirakis Charalambou, London december 1991.



Himalaya.