

AbstractIONISM

Episode 1

Imagine this: You sleep poorly for a couple of nights, and as you wake up again at 4 o'clock, in the wee hours, standing upright in bed, you decide to get rid of your bed. At least saw off a part of it. You get a woodsaw the next day and cut off the tailend from your bed. Because you consider yourself an arty person, you hire a truck and put the sawn-off bedstead on there, then cart it off to the next best gallery. You offer it to the owner as your personal dedication to Abstract Art. The gallery owner admits: „Wow, there is something in this piece, I just don't know what it is!“ Maybe he should have stayed ignorant because he also sits on the committee of the annual Abstract Art prize, and he wants to introduce your sawn-off bed as late entry to this year's contest!

Then he finds one equally minded colleague on the committee, sweating out judgment over a lack of entries. The judges squabble so much with each other that a majority of 2 is enough to decide this year's award. Alas, out comes the truth: It's the < sawn-off bedstead>! Your early morn burst of creative anger wins the competition

The hunch that drove the gallery owner to include your expression of Abstract sleeplessness in the contest then pays up nicely and the <sawn-off bedstead> sells for 100 000 US Dollars at the next Strauss + Co auction. And receives a nonsensical review from Institute of Gordon's Academic Art. Jolting, compelling the bad Abstraction to overnight fame and fortune.

Suddenly, auctioneers and agents are quick to fix your value as Abstract Artist at more or less 100 000 Dollars! And that for a piece of sawn-off bedstead! That would have earned others, dropping the JUNK off at the local rubbish dump, or revealing their inner amorality to a psychiatrist, a kick in the behind. Or a bed in a closed nutcase ward.

Not any ole 5 year old could have come up with such a highly rated piece of masterly Abstraction, but any damn owner of a wooden bed, a saw and a restless Arty-Farty mind....

Yet, only 2 or 3 out of 5000 torn-up and twisted creatives make it and live from their income. An Abstraction of their privileged exposure, so to speak, yet statistically speaking a drop in the ocean. Add here for all to appreciate YOU with the sawn-off bedstead, on auction at starting price of Euro 3 million at Sotheby's of London now....on auction as part of a breathtaking selection of 20th century Abstractionism, includes reclining nudes by Henry Moore, as well as highly abrasive Giacommotto and playful Dubuffet sculptures.

Hard to imagine but this itype of Art cake pesters galleries, fairs, museums and state collections these days. And all in the name of a concept everybody recognizes but nobody understands: ABSTRACTIONISM.

Abstractionism...2**Episode 2**

Dealer: Hi, how are you?

Artist: Ok...

Dealer: Did you bring them?

Artist: Bring what?

Dealer: No it`s not that...

Artist What is it?

Dealer (conciliatory): Oh no, it got nothing to do with your work rate, neither with your drug dependency. Although, coming to think of it, I would support that, get you more of that stuff...

Artist: More paint and empty canvases?

Dealer: Exactly....So did you bring `em?

Artist: Here they are.

Dealer: Wow, you kept your word, despite all that drug-taking and hardcore drinking, aehem sorry you show wide awakening, aehem show you not, don`t you?

Artist: Sorry?

Dealer: You know what I mean...Let`s see....Wow, so you painted these pictures?

Artist: No they are photos.

Dealer (unbelieving): Of your paintings?

Artist: They are photographs of my making.

Dealer: My ass...

Artist: Sorry?

Dealer: Ok, how often must I tell you the same story? I want Abstract stuff, paintings, canvases full of wild, indeterminate colour blotches and geometrical patterns, leaving everything to the imagination, know what I mean....? I don`t do photographs here.

Artist: You said you wanted Abstractionism.

Dealer. Sorry?

Artist: Did you know that a photo is a perfect Abstraction, especially a black and white one? Because in photography colour chemicals come first and black and white images appear after reduction or extraction of the colour layer, now frozen in 18 half-tones of grey! Voila, a black and white photo already makes the perfect Abstraction. No more editing or formatting or composition or expansion needed...

Dealer (perplexed): I don`t do photographs. And I don`t follow your reasoning. Get away, you put funny ideas into my clientel, but before you disappear, let`s talk about Abstractionism and the CIA.

Abstractionism...3

Artist: Abstractionism and the CIA?

Dealer: Yes, and about your heavy drug-taking, let`s not forget about that. The thing is this: They want to finance you, they think you are the perfect symbol of capitalist debauchery, sorry a man of reduction and endless Abstract thoughts. With a drug-cocktail and an alc level of epic proportions, swirling around in that arty-farty brain of yours. Get it? (Aside) Not that you take better photos than any artist could paint, could possibly imagine!

Artist: It`s my way of converting inspiration onto canvases, pin it on screens and splash out the images, that`s why I work Photography as an Art, so why get fuzzy about it?

Dealer (Aside): I hate figures of speech.

Artist: I heard you. Aehem...why hate another form of Abstractionism, this time of language and grammar?

Dealer: Gee man, if you would focus as much on your fake photos, which look like handpainted Artworks, than pretend to be a dimwit, we would be rich by now.

Artist: We?

Dealer: I would be rich on account of Abstracting value from your endless creative output. No matter if painted on canvas or developed in a dark-room. In fact, I am a rich gallery owner because of you, thank you, much appreciated, and I will never let you hear what Picasso said about his dealer.

Artist: Picasso?

Dealer: Damn well Picasso, the scourge of all photographers, a man of great imagination and of craftily bending people`s minds and metals. In fact, the father of Cubism and modern Abstractionism.

Artist: What did he say?

Dealer: Haven`t you read that fancy, funny 5-pointer RGW plan?

Artist: Not yet.

Dealer: Where Picasso said the dealer, that`s the enemy!

Artist: As in enemy of love and Abstraction?

Dealer: No, enemy of hard working men, needing an income. Like you. Good, plain, twisted but little bit stupid creative folks, making hay and a couple of cents out of a career in the wrong field. Losing out on the big cash thanx to their dealers and agents and publishers, but scrambling along on the breadline while incessantly churning out one masterpiece after the other.....One fake photo after the other....

Artist: Thanx to my drug abuse, now sponsored by the CIA? Did I hear you right? The CIA sponsors Abstractionism? Ok, let`s see, I actually know all about it. That`s right, I know how they pit this attitude they call

Abstractionism...4

westernised living, falsely attributing freedom of thought and movement to it, how they set that up against Soviet Realism. As happened in the post-World War 2 epoch....It`s a curious bit of history.

As found in the movement of Abstract Expressionism, originating in the US of A, where drunkies, addicts and outsiders, fashionable college communists and Jewish princesses, devoured millions of agency spook Dollars for staging momentous and world-travelled shows. Which they infected with propaganda and called shows of „Modern American Painting“. But containing no intrinsic value whatsoever, these travelling and spook-infested fake shows. Yet oddly working out to popular Art events, especially in 1950ies – 70ies France, influencing a whole generation of blind followers, especially those with left-wing leanings. That`s facts. And all that „Abstract Art“ sponsored and organized under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation and New York`s own Museum of Mindbending Art, an Abstraction if you so will, of Abstract Expressionism. A branch, if you so will, of the CIA. Know what I mean?

3 shady characters with shades and in pitchblack suits enter the gallery.

Artist: Are you the guys from the CIA?

Coming to sponsor my work around 4 corners and behind 2 wallpapers?

You aren´t such a bad enemy after all, dear Art dealer, or are you?

Hey guys, can I order 2 kg of cocaine, 3 kg of opium and numerous

containers of whiskey, all delivered around 4 corners and behind 2

wallpapers to my studio? And I must also order the ensuing car crash,

you add, where I die at age of 44 while drunk out of my skull, order it at a rebate now?

To become a martyr of American Art in the modern age?

Like Jackson Pollock, Philipp Guston and Willem de Kooning?

Won´t come at a cheaper premium than today, you say?

(At dealer): That`s what these 3 shady characters with shades and in black suits will do for me and my plastic photographs that leave nothing to the imagination? Nothing but heartaches and false judgment. They will pay for all my excesses? The source and curse of all Abstraction, all spookings, and of ghosts in the darkroom...I must say...You aren´t such a bad enemy after all...dear spooks...But hey, what`s this...don´t touch me...Hey don´t bundle me into this waiting, unmarked car....Where`s my whiskey, my drugs you promised me once I churn out that world-travelled nonsense called Abstract Expressionism? That makes Soviet Realism look like a pussy in the park?...Hey...don´t touch me...

Abstractionism...5**End of Abstractionism:**

In aid of my new THEORY OF ART, I painted two situations in more detailed colours. I also highlighted something Abstract, indeterminate, fuzzy, peeled off as an essential angle of creativity. Some grandmasters of Abstraction have become classix of Art. Here is a recap of above Abstract incidents:

1), the <sawn-off bedstead> that wins an Abstract prize as much as a preposterous price tag, and

2), a discussion between artist and dealer, starting off with a mistaken Abstraction viceversa reduction of colour chemicals from black and white film, the dialogue ends up in the Abstract Art collection of the CIA, America`s spook agency. This strange collection embellishes the reception area of their HQ in Langley, Virginia. Is this for true or is this a fake spook event? And furthermore you ask yourself is this the stuff a 5 year old child could have painted? Invented? Stuff that now decorates the entrance to one of the most secretive and suspicious agencies in the capitalist world?

Unbelievable but true? And that stuff influenced a whole generation of left-leaning Art students in Europe in the 1950ies – 70ies? Who all saw the USA as prime target of hate and ridicule?

Unbelievable but true!

You suddenly realize the CIA clandestinely sponsors Art that inspired a whole new generation of spooks, crooks and fashionable college communists. Right at the beginning of it all. And you can surely say that will make the end of it, too!

You realize why blindfolded and dumbfounded Art students, albeit sporting the right receptors to convert reality into intriguing Art, cheer wildly when alcis like de Kooning or Pollock present speechless Abstractions of their weird brain wirings. Present them as some of the most prizy Art works in modern era! Even French critics, who should know better, hail this nonsense as the rightful legacy of Impressionism, of true masters like Renoir, Herve. Cezanne or Puel.

And only now you realize why Abstract Art indeed makes for incisive cover-up propaganda, makes perfect sense as distribution tool for a so-called westernised, free-flowing, drug-taking lifestyle.

Abstractionism...6

In truth its hidden fangs gripe about in lower, not deeper, levels, and dive head-on into the slime and the mud of primordial survival. Trace our stone-age origins. Excite the fantasy world of a 5 year old child, drive it to exuberant expression.

Does that mean all those immensely popular travelling Art shows in the 1950ies and 60ies, hitting the European mainland from across the Atlantic, spread CIA cooked propaganda?

Made the delirious I-can-do-that-stuff-myself lifestyle an export boomer! With a clear jibe at Social Realism as worthless and without deeper meaning.

Meanwhile the 5 year old child could have had a hand in Episode 1, too, weren't it for his lack of woodcutting deftness and his blessed ignorance of the real conditions of Abstraction.

Would that child make for the perfectly shrewd modern Art dealer as well?

So, for Abstractionism in Art, similar to reduction of chemicals, setting out a clearcut path to meaning, we as viewers, consumers, Art lovers need to know:

- 1) Where did it come from, that controversial piece, showing something that isn't really anything and that can't be grasped or appreciated weren't it for a highly ambiguous title tag?**
- 2) Where does it lead us to?**

Furthermore the New Theory of Art loox at these issues:

Was it the end of something or did it show the beginning of something else, this sliced and peeled off and manipulative display?

Can these points help us to lay bare yet hidden and highly symbolic terms, metaphors and figures of speech, even social mechanisms? They will form basis of our curiosity and scientific inquiry so we will be better informed about how the puzzling brush strokes of a tormented artist can be unravelled, opened and reviewed. Configured to our own creative expectations. Even if only by veiled hints and curved lines, leading to nowhere-land, bent, twisted, erased, but creating a great new vision.

Abstractionism...7

Yet what about the clear and mathematical and clinical mind?

That likewise suggests new ways around old corners and over stale obstacles which keep cropping up? Is that seemingly anonymous and more scientifically inclined mind, that engages us with enthusiasm and inspires us at same time, is it an Arty mind, too, on account of its rather Abstract, fizzy, slippery, indeterminate, sliced, peeled view of reality?

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La CIA cultive le secret jusque dans sa collection d’œuvres d’art. Face au refus de l’agence fédérale de donner des informations sur les tableaux qui ornent son siège, une artiste les a reconstitués. rac

This article, entitled „AbstractIONISM“, is a chapter from my NEW THEORY OF ART, a follow-up study to my interview series „ROLE OF ARTIST IN SOCIETY, 24 TALKS FROM SOUTH AFRICA,“ published in 1988 viceversa 2011 by Swift Photo Agency, Cape Town, South Africa. All Rites Reserved By RGW, 2020.
