

"Critical Corpus"

Art - because it is Art - is and must be critical, it's imperative. Therefore, there is no need to discuss the 'critical potential of art', and there never was. In being critical, art must turn against itself, if it doesn't it has nothing to do with art, it's just not art. Art is committed to itself and - at the same time - is engaged against itself. In order to be critical, art must stand at the edge of its own limit, therefore putting itself - already - in a 'critical state'. Art is made at the borders, at the margins. One is never insistent enough about this and I think one should be more insistent on this. Art builds on what will come and is never totally completed. There always remains an unaccomplished part, because art - as something 'becoming' - is a promise. Reducing art to mere criticism is just a consumerist, powerless and narrow outlook not worthy of art; an outlook without ambition. And, the artist's ambition is to establish a 'Critical Corpus'. This means working to constitute a corpus – through Form – which is critical, which is a criticism, which is something to be criticized, and in a critical state. This is something difficult, risky and complex to achieve, as it requires the courage of questioning one's own model, one's own outlook, and one's own 'body'. But it must be done - the artist must do it. In 'Critical Corpus' there is the term 'corpus', and the term 'critical'. Criticism without a body cannot be effective or taken seriously. Too many 'critical' things are enunciated in written, proclaimed, or spoken words, with the will of preserving the 'body'. An artist can never avoid the risk of giving form and establishing a body and consequently, of paying for it; because a form or body must necessarily turn against itself. This is how I define my competence, my artistic skills. Notions of 'form', 'body' and 'critic' must be one. They should overlap and mingle. A 'form' is critical as 'form', as itself, for itself, within and against itself; this gives it 'critical' power. Because it is new, a form can criticize all others. Creating and asserting form is what gives art power, a 'critical' power. I want to give form, I want to make work that is critical and cannot be reduced to criticism 'about', or 'against' something. One assumes a bit too quickly that one is 'critical' by being on the 'right side' or doing 'what's right', but it is purely self-neutralizing, self-depoliticizing, and self-harmless.

Art institutions are neither strengthening nor weakening the critical dimension of art. I never understood nor agreed with the common meaning of 'institutional critique', simply because to me, the art institution - the museum - was important and decisive: I encountered art - for the first time - thanks to the museum and the friends who took me there. I never had a direct contact with art before, not in my family where art plays no part, nor in my youth activities. Therefore, the art institution - and thanks to it - is the place where I realized that art was addressing me, one to one. I felt implied and understood the huge impact and importance art could have. I never forget this personal, and universal, experience and, out of loyalty and faithfulness to its decisive dimension, I always refused 'institutional critique', too unfair, easy, simple, disembodied, conventional, theoretical and above all, far from reality. Art institutions are what they are; art should not rely or expect anything from them, nor waste its time, insight and energy in opposing them. The question is - and remains - the work itself, the artwork, the form, the body. A critical corpus can only be established by art itself, to the margin, in 'precariousness', non-guaranteed, in a movement. A critical corpus doesn't need to have 'good' conditions offered by the art institution, a critical corpus is self-assertive. Neither against, nor 'for' the institution. 'Being critical' means to be free with what comes from oneself. 'Being critical' means asking: Why do I think what I think? Why do I do what I do? Why do I use the instrument, tool or weapon I use? And why do I give the form I give? 'Being critical' means giving form. 'Being critical' means producing something, something resisting the aesthetically, culturally, politically approved. Proclaiming oneself 'resistant' is a useless declaration; the work itself

must be a resistance, the work is what needs to 'resist'. And this is possible because art is resistance. Art - because it is art - resists the factual. Art resists established habits. Art - as a resistance- is 'Movement', is 'Positive', is 'Intensity', 'Insight', and 'Belief'. Art is a resistance against itself. Art is resistance as such. One cannot reduce art to an act of resistance against something. Art is made at its own expense, for something that will happen and become a 'body' - way beyond institutions.

A 'Critical Corpus' must be a tool, an instrument, a weapon. One can't accept to be neutralized by the 'critical' dimension, which might be a request, a reaction, or simply an opportunistic act - 'being critical can even be 'chic'. 'Being critical' means to criticize simplification, politicization, and to 'criticize' with the affirmation of reality in its complexity. The real and unique question for the artist is: How take a position? How give form to this position? How - beyond political, aesthetical and cultural habits - can this form create a truth? And how create a truth which is universal?

I have, as an artist, another crucial problem to resolve and confront: How can I make art - that in any case - resists historical facts? How can I make work reaching beyond my time? How can I make - today, in my historical field – an a-historical work? As an answer my mission - as an artist - is to create a 'Critical Corpus'.

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