

Horton Hears Schopenhauer

the subjective alignment

matter

compassion

theoretical aesthetics

thoughts as part of matter

fog

An alignment of translucent representations.

When something is real it, in reality, does not necessary explain the current state of something. Instead it offers up the opportunity for the individual to reflect upon the degree of pragmatism with which something is or can be concluded.

However if one is to examine such a subject in a more multi-dimensional way and not just in the first or second degree. We, as a collective, must establish a fragrance of tolerance as well as an idealistic set of rules. Without rules there is no play. Though wishing to keep everything at a minimal set of values so to embody every side of a subject, we must so forth consider alignment preferred over agreement.

An inflexible matter becomes an oscillating, stable representation of reality.

I will postulate that within this statement above, are incorporated ideas of what can and will be considered an alignment of reality.

The inflexible matter transcends through the different meanings, associations and/ or connotations and gives room for the alignment of those, so that they doesn't contradict one another, but instead considers an "oscillating-representation".

The matter of matter

Vibrations play the key role in the concept of movement of particles¹. These, the building blocks of the world, are small enough that we know they exist yet still somewhat abstract to most people. Skilled scientists in Switzerland has been able to record measurements of a manipulated behaviour. But, can We ever measure on something untouched, not looked at, something that may leave the smallest trace and effect?

There exists a concept within chemistry that can reflect back into almost every socio philosophical idea since forever anyone can remember. The Heisenberg equation, or, The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, is the idea that measuring (observing) a certain phenomenon changes its very state of existence. In other words; once you look at something, that thing changes thereafter.

Say you are looking at a piece of art, you experience it through your sensory apparatus, you analyse with you cognitive abilities and you feel it through the uncertainty principle. Has that piece of art then changed? or have you as the subject of the experience?.

Referencing back to the paragraph on alignment, I find it considerably peculiar to consider that a painting changes not only to me, but everyone else as well as itself the moment no-one is looking at it, only to rapidly change the moment the lights come back on again.

Imagine, please, that an object consisting of a matter with a viscosity greater than water, yet with one much lower than concrete or glass. This piece will change due to its materiality. Slowly, but surely it will become something that affects itself as well as aligns itself to the walls around it. Please consider that this object is a painting. It is placed on a wall in an empty room and there it stays. no one will ever see it again. It of cause has very little impact on that room except the fact that the it is no longer is empty, though the idea of it being there can shine some light on how fluctuating concepts can be looked at.

It is no longer just the painting being observed, it is the phenomenon of that painting, alone in that room.

It is now as a sphere within a cube. A conceptual way of three dimensionally squaring a circle, though still kept within theoretical hypothesis.

Going further with this thought device, We can now observe it, while it changes through the stages of oscillation and let it resonate back unto our perception, circumventing linear communication and now considering the aesthetics of something that exists in alignment with the reality of the viewer yet with its own authority to exist.

¹ particles vibrate (as proven through 3rd law of thermodynamics) thus making them behave like waves.

Horton Hears A Who

Horton Hears a Who is a children's story by the American author Dr. Seuss. The main premise of the story is about an elephant stumbling upon a speck of dust floating in the Jungle of Nool. Upon investigation of the speck, Horton discovers the tiny city of Who-ville and its residents, the Whos, whom he can hear but cannot see. The Who's has an entire minuscule society, complete with culture, history and communal concepts. Besides being one of my personal favourite pieces of literature, it is a story of unconditional compassion. The beast cannot see the Who's but he chooses to trust a voice only he can hear. He sets out to protect this speck of dust with the fiery determination of an elephant.

This complex yet very simple premise speaks of numerous subjects worth exploring. The obvious fascination is the idea that something as complete as an entire intelligible living world can exist outside our visual parameter. It is most unlikely that an entire city of living individuals can structure itself like this, but by proxy of humour; behaviour signifies intelligence, even if very basic, intelligence can be traced to consciousness as well as behaviour can. A society or city, can be understood as a complex symbiosis of individuals unconsciously working together for the benefit of the collective. This is how one could explain how an ordinary speck of dust or even something as small as a particle, can in fact be regarded as conscious and to be treated with compassion.

This leads me to the next great idea within the story of Horton, the unconditional compassion the beast possesses. Besides questioning his own sanity he is overwhelmed with protecting the Whos. This juxtaposition of sacrificing rationality and critical thinking to be able to be compassionate. It is somewhat uncanny that to sympathise with something, with what you have no evidence of even exists beside that tiny (inner) voice, one must ideally give up parts of one's sense of self.

"It is compassion, or mitleid (fellow-feeling), which Schopenhauer argued is the real basis of morality, rather than rational rules (...) Moral behavior consists of an intuitive recognition that we are all manifestations of the will to live. All the great religions (...) were attempts to express this metaphysical reality (...). What unites us all is the realization that life itself consists of endless suffering through the pursuit of goals which can never be satisfied. This pursuit ultimately results in a meaningless death."²

This statement by Schopenhauer is to some degree relevant today and within the story of Horton the elephant, but I find trouble in the last sentence. Whether or not death is meaningless is to consider one's own existence higher, and not recognising that when one dies and starts to decompose or even gets cremated, it is in fact only a scattering of the consciousness. It is tremendously difficult to actually destroy matter. To make something cease to exist and not just change form. I haven't found any physical examples of such. Ideas and concepts can be destroyed, media can go out of date, but there will always exist a trace of it or it will have developed and transformed.

Nietzsche wrote in his own journal about reading Schopenhauer's book *"the world as will and representation"* that it was a truly moral and aesthetic way of thinking.

Aesth Ethics

Broken into pieces aesthetics can be understood as deriving from the Greek *esthesia*, meaning; feeling, perception, sensation. Ethics I won't go into here, but overall it can roughly be defined as the concept of good, beautiful, right vs. terrible, ugly, wrong.

This leaves us in a situation of having to consider everything within a frame of artistic practice, with aesthetics as, the study of what is good and bad, through feeling, sensation and perception. or in other more rational words; the redistribution or renegotiation of matter giving rise to a multitude of understandings as well as questions to reason and formulae to classical concepts of beauty.

It is with this construct I would like to return to the question of the aestheticism of the lonely painting. Whilst considering the vague definition of aesthetics, as well as my previous reflections on the uncertainty principle, can I infuse some form of projection to the idea that this thought device is thoroughly aesthetic, and is meeting requirements for both artistic practice as well as contemporary sense of something equally uncertain and vague as art.

² https://philosophynow.org/issues/29/Nietzsche_and_Schopenhauer_On_Compassion

All this is to me somewhat incomprehensible at this moment, even though these are thoughts and questions that have been puzzling me for a while, and then left me, only to resurface and bother me tremendously.

So to bother everyone even more there is a third idea of aesthetics that is relevant to this bulk hypotheses. This comes to effect by this definition of aesthetics³;

“aesthetics may be measured and valued by expediency, disguise, sacrifice, correctness, preparation, paradox, unity and originality.”

concluding this somewhat strange quotation I again postulate that to make something that is considered of aesthetic value, these conditions must align with one another and be played as a set of goals to the rules. That is how anarchy is irrelevant in art. In relation to painting that leaves me at a very desolate place. In fact it leaves me at the place I began this thought. There is painting in an else empty room and no one will ever see it, yet the painting changes over time, due to its materiality. Therefore giving me the opportunity to ask can this thought device be aesthetic? In my judgement it embodies all of the conditions of understanding aesthetics from within the loose definitions of art today.

Is this a viable format of artistic practise? Am I still a painter even if all I do is feel, perceive & sense, and I project these unto others in a suggestive manner of what could be right or wrong. Inspiring internal conflict in as many people with or with no ties to the artistic field as possible? A thought can undoubtedly be aesthetic.

Retroactive precognition

In 2011, Daryl J. Bem published the article "Feeling the Future: Experimental Evidence for Anomalous Retroactive Influences on Cognition and Affect" in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

For this study dr. D.J. Bem tested 1000 students by having them categorise random words that they would later commit to memory. The results showed that the students were more likely to recall words in the present if they later memorised them. This serves as evidence that our minds stretch through time.

In recent years the scientific field of Noetices. This study area started as a philosophical discourse with Aristotle, but in our time many of the doctrines can be measured more accurately instead of the previous speculative. And this way of thinking is giving not only winning ground among intellectuals, but is producing results. One of the more populistic experiments done within this field, is the shaping of ice crystals. Scientists had buddhist monks meditate on water slowly being cooled to a frozen state. The minuscule ice crystals would form depending on the topic of the meditation.

With these two latest examples I've argued that the mind can move through time and space, influence matter as well as shape certain areas of ones own existents.

To summarise a bit, the topics of discussion has been; The subjective reality, matter, compassion towards sentient⁴, theoretical aesthetics and thoughts as part of matter.

The interesting part of all this is that, since studying fine arts I've been taught very few things. Most of my knowledge and skills I've acquired myself with the interference of my professors.

Whose purpose it seems is to manipulate my conscious and sub conscious parts so to seek out different directions as great puppeteers. My question then is, all that I know now, as in this very moment, is that all information I will be meant to relive and memorise so to get that fat art-career or is this bulk of knowledge and skills something I came prepared with and the academy has tried to shape me into a person worth spending time on?

I'll consider it a proposition of sorts, for how an educated artist must rely on his or hers ability to be independent as an individual with little to no ties to an institution, a market or other artists. Instead involving oneself with as few art related topics as possible so to see them clear through an artistic scope and create relevant intuitive works.

By stating this I hope to offer an opportunity for art to become, yet again, something else than the self-referential system it has become. Only by seeking knowledge outside of art, bringing it into art, can art influence ideas within other fields, thus giving back the artist the role as the sub-conscious catalyst for a changing society without an elephant watching our back. politicians, philosophers, scientists and dentists

³ (...) in chess

⁴ As described as everything with an intelligible behaviour

also look at art. Why not try to influence these people. Those who will let seeds be sown in their consciousness.

As in a fog

The fog of war is the uncertainty in situational awareness, experienced by participants of strategic actions. The term seeks to capture the uncertainty regarding one's own capability, one's opponent's capability as well as the opponent's intent during an engagement.

Above I mention briefly that art has become nothing than a closed loop system, with little to no outside feed. It feeds itself and it seems the highest aspiration for many art students is to get that "art-career" within this system. In mild terms, the academy has become a sale-representative as much as it teaches, how to make a great pitch, in this case in the form of the much institutionalised studio visit.

As with any confrontational situation the studio visit contains this fog of war. The concept, that to improve your own position one must acknowledge this fog, turn on the head lights and become a sheep to someone in a position to improve one's own condition within this system. Fact is, there can be no compassion in art as long as monetary value is dictating its foundation.

Up until now I have been almost solely concerned with what occupies Horton, the elephant. But who hears Horton. No-one seems to be bothered with anything that isn't within the frame of the collective psyche. Yet his example of sacrificing the rational and give in to some potential fiction or delusion. It could be much worth looking into how the "jungle-society" disregard the positive delusion of someone who's purpose shifts from being a somewhat respected unit within a whole to a shunned elephant being filled with a sense of compassion and protectiveness of his own reality.