

Translation of an interview by Bruno D. Catatani

Creation is: Now

Approaching C.P.Seibt:

If you should ask C.P.Seibt to say something about himself the conversation may well be over before it properly begins as he states "I cannot contribute to your expectations." Full Stop.

Often he tells you stories aimed to make contact with your inner feelings – or at least your hopes for them – especially your sentimentality. Stories which may take your breath away or ask questions of you which beg to be answered. Such as the story about the laughter of two travelers on an ice floe going south . . .

" When did you begin painting"

" I don't remember exactly, but as far as I'm aware I always painted as a child until I was 7 years old."

"?"

"I started again when I was 21. At seven I was stopped by a bad teacher and at 21 fortunately I found a teacher who inspired me by continuously showing me pictures, pictures, pictures using an old smoking projector. The very next day I acquired colors and began to paint. I am now 65 years old and have never stopped. "

"Did you have role models? "

"Everyone – every painter's work I saw. "

" How did you develop your painting? "

" Through learning; practicing long and hard; again and again and again.

Suddenly I came to the imperative point when their influences had to be respectfully and for ever left behind before concentrating on my own new horizons. Then there is no choice you must use not only your eyes but also your own particular attitudes to life. "

During Seibt's extensive travels whenever he was confronted with something that interested him he would sketch it in the finest detail until he reached as he says "what my cipher is, my sign, my inner attitude of awareness".

He sought to be the master of many technologies such as stone-lithographer in the Odenwald Forest, calligrapher in Kyoto, even a falsifier in Belgium where he learned the painting secrets of Rembrandt and others. He developed his own technologies by working with the elements – fire, earth, water, and wind.

When asked during a TV interview in California "Mr.Seibt why do you paint?" his answer was

"Because the color exists."

Those sentences one hears otherwise only of mountainclimbers. Seibt's answers are always very short when the question is uninteresting to him – however, if the question interests him e.g.. "Why do you believe art is finished?" his answer will be as long as an essay published in a large European newspaper which has cost its editor his job. ("It is not the art which is finished but the reality.").

Seibt was born in 1935 in Breslau.

"And than?"

He says that when he was nine and half his childhood ended with when the front of the war came.

" What happened then?"

" I learned to survive."

"?"

Whistle. Go on.

Seibt tells the story of a woman driving in the snow who almost collapsed under the weight of her three fur coats. She whistled as she tossed two of them into the snow, followed by her heavy suitcase.

The moral of his story could be said to be true of Seibt. He accepts and carries no titles.

"Approval is naturally desirable for an artist but it can be more dangerous than any rejection as he may easily confuse the applause for his work with the idea that he himself has arrived. He may then never develop further and repeat the same thing in the hope that the applause will be repeated. Adaptation is soft suicide for an artist."

Almost unnoticed by the public about 300 pieces of his work have been sold into the U.S. through a friend and "fuzzy Polaroids" at very good prices. All the works disappeared into living rooms, offices and secured cellars, which Seibt considered "unsuitable". He let the fur coats fall. The diskette containing addresses was no longer readable. Full stop. Whistle.

According to American strategies he sought directly the three most "suitable" galleries in Europe.

" What happened then?"

" I got three answers. Firstly, if you were important for us, we would come to you. Secondly, we have all the artists we need and, thirdly, you must go to America with your work."

Painter. Manager. Mentor.

Instead of galleries and museums he took his work to the places where people work. Instead of using pictures as decorations he installed his work into conference rooms, elevators, and entrance halls, on roofs and even on the parking lot.

The media: "With 'Art & Commerce' the artist, manager, mentor, philosopher and painter from Switzerland C.P.Seibt changed this huge company with his magician's stick. This man had more than a pretty art to offer it is more an individual contact with ones own life. ."

"Artist, manager, mentor, philosopher and painter?"

" These are just labels, cliches. Somehow we must incorporate others."

But Seibt does not allow this to happen.

Artist he is – a view of his studio confirms this – as you enter through the door it is like setting foot on an autonomous continent.

When a European business magazine interviewed him they entitled the article "Prospero". Often he is asked by the small circle of really powerful personalities in the business to come when a problem needs "a genius to solve it" as one such personality who owes his largest success to the advice of Seibt said. To this Seibt replies with a Machiavellian quote saying that the wisdom of advice would never be the wisdom of the counselor but rather the sovereign.

Manager he is, as for some years he has run a virtual company. Mentor he is to 'topshots'. They travel also far ways for one, two days with him. He is also a mentor on the internet, "#1" as the URL is laconically named. Philosopher he is, if one can be described as seeking to love wisdom and to find connections. Researcher and scientist he is - one that shakes the tree so that an apple falls or sometimes evens the tree itself. Seibt established the "Nomadic Academy". It is found everywhere. Instead of teaching and learning as an intensive process there is a new way invented by him: TeachLearning.

Change

" And how does all this work together?"

" Well, actually I am always making change."

(Again an story in a nutshell.)

"And what drives you?"

He looked directly into my eyes as he said,

"I do not agree with how the world is. Creation is now. I am not driven. I form."

A video by Jurg Schonenberger which has a sequence observing him on the island of Paros, installing filigree installations on the coast in the middle of a violent wind. There they stand for days, perhaps weeks forever changing. Tourists and island people pass by or move through them like in Prospero's park or destroy what disturbs them. Seibt watches. Intently. And whistles.

"What kind of offer is 'One property in one summer'?"

" I go and stay a week with the people living there. After that I am alone for two or three months and I work. Then I leave."

He means exactly what he says. He leaves behind all that he has created. No photos, no documentation, no work index. Seibt does not stylize his trace on the outside – only his works. (Which he never signs unless he is asked to do so.)

"Within all of these names – expressionism, minimalism, neos and so on – what do you call what you do?"

"Trans-Real."

To this we find an eloquent description

"And again it begins: TransReal art, inviting other realities of created presences"

TransReal is the heir of all yesterdays transformed into the realities of today and sketching possible presences in the tomorrow. TransReal means to take the entire power of this time, through people, artifacts, archetypes, rituals and symbols, ciphers, hopes and anxieties. Be aware of it in the conditions of this moment – this very short and at the same time endless reality – creating the now! Realities are created which invite other presence, and then, perhaps, someone accepts one of these invitations and makes it fit his or her individual presence. TransReal: a powerful invitation to the direct sensual experience, making new thinking possible. Inexorable living designs, not country cards, but rather parts of other landscapes that change the first desiring moment you see them - the smallest, largest and reversed - a magic cipher in the morphing dance of mutating spaces, times and networks. Changing reality endlessly as a humble gesture of the excessive, creating in the smock indigo, passion and Gnostic fury. Not a global village, rather a globe of 'fluent, unstable, balanced relations' woven out of the consciousness of the wanderers in their homes of

the moment, surrounded by humming icons in their magic evening tents, cybernetic cottages, electronic honeycombs and mutating flight castles. There is no cultural garbage, but rather humus. There is no style tied to market forces, but rather the nomadic attitude in change. There is no swooning, but rather beauty. There is no absolute judgment, but rather a floating one. There is no magic of security, but rather the security of magic. There is no end, but rather the trusted Uroboros that is different because we start to see it differently by way of endless and manifold beginnings. Suddenly, there is nothing at the end and the art begins again. No window opens itself to the well-known world, but rather gates to realities. No country card named theory must explain a new exciting landscape, because it vibrates with vital energy. Old, trusted, risky ciphers that create oceans of possibilities out of strange times, filling all presence's rooms with pulsating rhythms of scarcely tolerable beauty and drumming the dance in the cave of Lascaux – the festival begins: art. Art is underway, always."

Underway. Always.

Over the years, this 'underway' appears many times and in many guises during the development of his work. He says he sees himself like a "bow in a spiral", or "bearing that which I find again – as the same and yet another".

´A message from the customs officer's house´:

Picture-objects move through spaces, times and light. Apparently almost empty pictures permanently change with the daylight - multi-levels; multi-empty; multi-dimensional; spaces open by themselves and win meaning in the perceiving person.

"Underway" also describes Seibt's cheerful and at the same time ´precise telling travel pictures and sketches from cities, distant landscapes, tropical islands, from the Aegean Sea. Whilst always in between continents of the ´collective unconscious´.

An analyst asked him, "Do you ever worry that you may not be able to return from this? He marveled at the question and sketched her a model. "Imagine that the unconscious is a water planet – only sea. While you are immersed you find something that takes your attention and actual reality emerges. You leave naturally again with what you have captured. Nothing binds you together but part of the sea becomes you and you part of the sea."

The therapist acquired a picture that she was just yet able to bear.

For years he worked consistently on two large projects. The first "28 Horizons" became an installation with the dimensions of two tennis courts, with portrait-icons, interviews and multimedia-biographies of 28 people. The second "The new nomads" became an invitation as a process through strange eyes, just in order to go as a different person.

" How can I imagine that?"

The Story of Humanity: an Hour

"Mankind has existed for approximately five million years. If you take this five million years in the measure of an hour we would be 59 minutes and 52 seconds underway. Always. In the last 8 seconds we have tried a settled way of life. Now we are again underway, even if we live in houses.

Emotionally we are underway, socially, rationally, in science our fashion, cultivation, information, the global network and economically. We are not the old nomads of the past but almost all of our experience comes from the 59 minutes and 52 seconds – our survival-strategies, wishes, hopes, dreams,

power and great stories. We are still nomadic beings and increasingly we are returning to this way of life. However, at the same time we still need security, stability and identity. The methods and guarantees of the short settled existence function no longer but we actually know and can master the nomadic way, if we remember how."

Seibt remembers and he developed simple tools for that, effective methods that can be multiply used.

For sure, if you should ask him "Did you create social sculptures as art or what?" He would look you straight in the eyes.

Invitation

" What can art, your art, contribute to art?"

"Invitation. Invite those present to perceive like it is, perceive that we no longer look though the screen of self-patterned windows in the walls of our routines of everyday life, but rather the many realities of today.

The many realities.

Seibt's pictures experienced objects and installation to be sure. This reality is non-binding, not confirming but rather inviting – cool apollonic fields, old trustable sensual ciphers, sudden rhythms of dionysic dances, unsentimental mourning and just as cheerful understanding, answers to questions you scarcely like to ask, humorous plots that let you laugh differently or later on.

With C.P.Seibt you can have a good conversation. With his work you end up talking to yourself – this man has more than a pretty art to offer, more an individual contact with your own life. . .

more: <http://www.transrealart.com>