

ENNE BOI

SOPHIE: Hey!!! I saw you yesterday... what the fuck were you doing???

HENRI: I was painting...

SOPHIE: Yes, I saw that. I mean... why?

HENRI: ...I remember myself when I was five years old. The year I first began to speak. Mother and I are going to the church. We are there. For a while she left me standing before a painting. It was a painting of infernal regions. There were angels on the painting. White angels and black angels. All the black angels were going to Hades. I looked at myself. I am black, too, it means that there is no Heaven for me. A child's heart could not accept it. And I decided there and then to prove the world that a black angel can be good, too, must be good and wants to give his inner goodness to the whole world, black and white world.¹

SOPHIE: Sounds as much poetic as pathetic... c'mon son, we're in 2014. These days artists are expected to have an explicit strategy, an aesthetic which functions more or less like a building!²

HENRI: They are all ten times more intelligent than me, but their intelligence prevents them from making good art. They deliver shit... they invent thousand of excuses a day to decorate walls, but one can't feel intensity any longer.³

I have no strategy for giving an answer, for formulating, preparing or introducing anything. Nothing like that.⁴

SOPHIE: No explicit strategies, no intelligence... so you are one of those painters who think they just got a gift, a talent...

HENRI: A painter doesn't need any of that. In fact, it's better not to have it.⁵

SOPHIE: Are you saying it's better to not be talented?⁶

HENRI: Yes, much better.⁷

SOPHIE: Why?⁸

HENRI: Talent seduces us into interpretation.⁹

SOPHIE: Everyone knows that art requires to be interpreted!

HENRI: Art contains no information... the only way of using it is to look at it.¹⁰

SOPHIE: Jesus, you're full of old-fashioned dumb beliefs. What you said about talent is incredibly false... just think about Rauch!

HENRI: He paints pictures, and really perfectly, and really well-painted, but well-painted means, you don't find a really bad one. There is such evenness – a homogeneousness – that's in there. High quality, but not too exciting. So I'd rather hang two bad paintings in an exhibition, and they build up the other works. And you can recognize something. You can find something by yourself.¹¹

SOPHIE: ...!? I can't see the point... you're trying to look sure about painting, but actually you're very confused. Don't you feel that there is a pictorial crisis nowadays?¹²

HENRI: My argument is that there is a pictorial crisis in a way, but it's in photography and film. That's the twist. It's not about painting. Painting will always be there...¹³

SOPHIE: What do you mean?

HENRI: Only pictures show our actual condition. They have no truth. They consist in, or are impelled by, a subjective experience. The object expresses nothing at all. Painting is not a means to an end. On the contrary, painting is autonomous.¹⁴

SOPHIE: Mmm... so, neglecting that pathetic story about your childhood, I suppose you're trying to say that you do not paint thanks to intelligence nor talent, but you paint for a will of autonomy...

HENRI: Will is the wrong word, because in the end you could call it despair. Because it really comes out of an absolute feeling of it's impossible to do these things, so I might as well just do anything. And out of this anything, one sees what happens.¹⁵

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Text by Enne Boi

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Full text: http://issuu.com/enneboi/docs/the_secret_weapon_b-side

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