

April 10, 1969

The subject is the artist, the object is to make art/
free/.

The art world stinks; it is made of people who collectively dig the shit; now seems to be the time to get the collective shit out of the system.

Where does the cycle begin? Let's begin with the individual painter or sculptor ensconces 'high' in his loft world, making his pile of shit (perhaps is he really shitting, in his mind's eye, on the world) having engested art information and raw material from the shared world, pissing his time away, the labor of his love perhaps to be redeemed, to be realized at some other time

The stuff is transformed when it is transposed into imposed 'higher' values. First, a gallery, then, perhaps a museum, and further extended by translation into the data of art information when reproduced in an art magazine; at which point the artist, seeing the transposition, is pissed off. As time is transposed money is transposed into private worth for the artist and a 'high'/quality/for the collector and art critic in this business society. The art world is a collection of people who dig the dirt, or pay the artist to dig it for him, to get a 'piece' of the action - the games people play - for personal fun and profit ("a profitable experience"). Everybody has their private part (parts) to contribute - for the media it's just another slice of life/ entertainment.

It's time it seems to leave all this shit behind; the art world is poisoned; get out to the country or take a radical stance. (According to the dictionary, "root", the root of radical and the root of root are the same - does dirt or evil really have roots?).

Should art be a lever against the Establishment? Make art dangerous? but art is only one item among the dangerous commodities being circulated in this society and, unattractive as it may be, one of the less lethal. Withhold? - a closed system dies of suffocation.

The writer in the past has been presented with an analogous problem. All magazines in order to survive are forced to present a well-known point of view to identify readers with advertisements just as in the past the structure of the book as object functioned to re-press the author's private, interior perspective or vision of life to the private reader who has bought the unique illusion as he reads through the narrative - linear, progressive, continuous from beginning to vanishing end point - his perspective as supposed to be altered by a novel insight into the world; he is changed; in Marx, Zola and Brecht's time he hopefully motivated to change affect into effecting changes back in the outside world. Magazines - art magazines - continue this fiction of assuming private points - of - view whose sum they must assume to be the collective view of its readership and advertisers. They depend exclusively for their economic existence on selling ads to galleries for the most part. For what it's worth to the readers who will buy it, the critic who must sell it, quality in art is all that counts (time is money which counts/ man is the measure of

all things). For the writer and recently, some so-called conceptual artists, there is a simple solution: buy the ads himself - the cycle thus feeds back on itself; invest in oneself - it's a free society.

Actually, it's not the artists, the galleries, the collectors, the critics or the art magazines who support the structure at all - but the United States Government = you and me - geared to corporate needs - which, through the tax structure make it profitable to run a non-profitable art "business" to by and donate "works" to museums (in the process serving the soul purpose of feeding artists and Madison Avenue types in the over-all process of making a lot of money for yourself), etc., etc..

The conceptual artist conceives of a pure art without material base, conceived simply by giving birth to new ideas - an art that ideally mean and not be of baseball or Monopoly in the den bath without ball, bat, gravity, dice or money. But it's free and like sex, with a minimum of two people (subject/object; inside/outside; ying/yang; receiver/sender; people who take pictures of each other just to prove that they really existed) anyone can play, making their rules as they go along.

The artist laboured under the myth of trying to define himself (and his time) in terms of his work - his unique contribution - his raison d'etre; rather than be defined by society in their image.

But art is inevitable part of the larger order of society, its language and world shared and interdependent with the language, "vision" and stuff of its specific Time, Life, place and function.

All human brains perceive and think partially in symbols which have a relationship to external signs available to all which reduce to various interrelated language systems which relate to the larger social order at a given moment.

What does the artist have in common with his friends, his public, his society? Information about himself, themselves and all ourselves - which is not reduced to ideas or material but shares in both categories as it has a past, present and future time/spce. It is neither subjective or objective "truth"; it simply is - it is both a residue "object" and neutral "etherial" media transcribed - transcribed upon/ translation - translating the content of single and collective man's internal and external position, work, ideas, activities.

The artist is not a machine; the artist shares in mankind's various media of expression having no better 'secrets' or necessarily seeing more inside or outside of things than any other person; ~~often he is more calculating; he~~ wants things to be as interesting as possible; to give and have return pleasure; to contribute to the life-enhancing social covenant. Perhaps young artists, with their new naivete have replaced the old naivete of their fathers.

My opinion (more later); we must go back to the old notion of ~~socially: "good works" as against the private, aesthetic~~ notion of "good work" - i.e.: art to go public.