

NOSE OF A FIGURE

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I am speaking of realism. Or to be more precise—of realist art that does not find its voice in representations, but follows sequences of events and thinks of them as its composition. Art, which is as complex (simplicity is also complex) as the “big picture.” Its autonomy can mean an ongoing process—a work can be blind, but never alone (an item in the atmosphere; changing, being shared and translated). Objects can be aware of other machines that support and compromise their existence and reception. This kind of art is thinking art and in this sense it stands opposite to abstract art (whatever the term might mean). It is realist art (as abstract expressionism is, for instance) although only if we look and think about it, for the idea of “non-figurative” is an expression borrowed from a retinal vocabulary.

A figure can take on many different states of being. It is a group of lines, pictures, bolts and coins. It is a moment in-between two results. A stone leaving its parts to initiate or contribute to new events. This figure is what happens and less about what it is. It is a translation of thoughts into evolving and changing forms. Hence an image of the figure, would not be, for example, photographic, but photography itself. Photography’s life-likeness and flatness, beauty and physics or beauty of chemistry. All what it entails becomes a nose of the figure. Any given discipline or perspective alone, though, does not allow us to comprehend a figure. It can be seen through combining, borrowing, inventing or forgetting. Disciplines hide figures.

An ethnobotanist, for instance, sees hand-made objects as transformed plants and animals. A woven bag, fishnet, pottery—

everything is made from what is at hand. Considering a similar perspective, the figure appears to be made out of ceramics as well as out of a credit card, a zoo and public transport. The figure itself, if one stands back and looks through it, suggests places and fauna that look like a translation of a text or money transfer. In folk tales and myths, we find many improbable occurrences: a boy is born from grandpa's thumb, an animal transforms into a human, etc. These occurrences may seem strange and unbelievable, but usually they have a simple function. They are natural illustrations (not "natural forms") of word-pots, thought-weavings that are, in a way, not unlike the figure. That is the moment where we all meet—a place of intellect of an organism. What is shared is simultaneity and fluctuation of values.

There is no arbitrariness if one is making a *working figure**. On the other hand, a figure cannot be made by rational reflection alone, as information is just one part of it (although a necessary one), the other part can be made of an old belief or energy. Instances when a figure appears to be more concrete than its composition is always a moment which can be shared by giving a *real example*. There is something to be said about chance in this context – a line drawn on paper is as unexpected as a line of thread that falls on a surface. Learning to draw life-like is to want to become a drawing machine, but what also gets reproduced even more accurately is the tradition itself. The whole assembly line of imperfect examples.

Simple observation that everything is interconnected makes a condition of invention – the latter is always possible and most likely it can be born with the help of creativity. In the case of a working figure, to invent does not mean to produce an original, but to confront parts that were waiting to be activated again. A known fact is a script according to which we follow the logic of a historian—to recreate sequences. An unknown fact leaves us wondering—how come its philosophy was embedded in us?

The figure is not a text or a camera or a painting. It is a construction that can't be seen all at once ("*open only in total darkness*," says a film canister), it can only be thought and felt. Just like a friend's face, which

* A working figure might work not only in terms of production of meaning. It can also be working without being useful. In this case usefulness itself is redefined, just as arbitrariness is redefined.

in most cases is an image. For it to become the figure I am describing, we need to be able to think it, therefore, we need to know it quite well. Thinking allows making modifications without making representations. And thus a thought model is not equal to a visual script—whereas analytic geometry is based on points and space, thought geometry is a composition of stars, joy and a flute’s sound too.

For a long time now certain ideas were externalized from others. They were understood as moments that can be revisited only as something lost or on the verge of being lost. But what if ideas migrate, forming new machines, new figures and new articulations? Most likely, then, we are able to say that “abstract animal,” “abstract face” or “abstract referent” could now mean a realist entity without one single image, but rather a life of millions.

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