

## *What Should One Do*

What real feeling of freedom. Now finally I seem to be allowed officially to write real stupid, as I always wanted to and as I was sometimes even told to do. No big expectations now. Like being an artist. Isn't it one of the earliest learnings while slowly learning about the difficulties to become a real professional artist, that your work needs at least a little injection of stupid in order to make it a good work, in order that it can achieve a certain amount of communication value. Like just look at the wall first and then describe its lines of broken color for instance. Which wall is it and write where it is. Be stupid. Isn't it good for the text and for the reader if it is stupid? Yesterday I went down to the city. It is Florence, Italy by the way, and I went to the bookshop. What else? I felt everything turned wrong with me and my works. The young Italians were populating the river cafe in the late spring sunny day. Sensual, good looking and relaxed. I just came from Germany and even the dogs look human here. Even the older ones smiled into my pale face and I said, I just came from the apple store and they told me my computer e morte. She said, morte? And smiled. But at the bookstore later I took the Kerouac book out and opening in the middle, watching out for help by the mysteries of coincidence I found my I Ching of the day, and the text said: never rewrite anything, write as quick as you can. I was typing and typing, Kerouac said, and my friend came in and said, hurry up lets go, the girls don't wait. And I wrote quicker then ever before and did not lose a minute and got to the bus with him for the party and he looked at the written papers and said this is the best you ever have written. But I, me in Florence, Italy, I turned the book back and left for the bus. I was living in an artist house in Florence and searching for a cigarette, I entered one of the empty studios, which was still empty yesterday. Lots of pencils were scattered around everywhere, on the table on the floor, a few pieces of destroyed pieces of paper in between. I searched all parts for the cigarette, but was astonished by the hidden language of all these half done objects, so much, that they felt like almost speaking to me as good art I guess should do, as I moved around in the deserted production sphere of another artist. There was one instrument like a complicated saw or metal cutter, looking like a precision instrument, but then there was one piece particularly, an old red brick on the floor, but it was bound by some black thick ribbon, leather like and the ribbon, was scattered in a weird direction on the floor as if it was a dog's leash. It was not just meaningful in a sexy way, it was like really meaningful in an existential way, like saying everything has to be bound to something to make any sense. The day before I was at a fashion shop and when I left the changing room all three people in the shop, the owner, the daughter of the owner and the artist stood there and looked at me, as if their tools fell off their hands. They stood like specially positioned chess figures and the feeling touched me as if I was a chess figure too and so I made one more step out into the room, and I felt like a chess figure moving the first time out into the open field and being suddenly trapped in the gaze of three much stronger figures. It was a gothic fashion shop and while waiting and looking around without touching first I had decided to choose myself, not just waiting, and I chose two things. One was a long skirt. It was made of strong heavy pinstripe velvet and had two sweet little buckles, one on each side and a long zipper on the back. And now wearing it, I just felt really strange in the middle of the shop so much squeezed and exposed in between everybody.

Even trying to describe the situation I am in on that day of quick writing it does not help to solve the mystery to recover a text, the text just written a few days ago and which is in fact still in the human memory almost word by word. So let me go ahead, with what I would write instead. What happened after the fashion shop visit and its embarrassing moment between the shelves in front of the gothic changing room. I decided to leave as quickly as possible and my expression of denial to buy the sweet long skirt was leading me quickly into a discussion with the owner and her lazy daughter, whose order to take it with me I absolutely could not refuse. It was not that expensive and so I went with the most beautiful content of a bag to the bus and again as in the situation of presenting myself wearing the skirt I felt interestingly strange. Though definitely not bad at all. At the bus station I hoped the bus would not arrive for awhile, as I feared the closeness of other people, kind of feared being exposed to them, although the huge powerful dark skirt was hidden in my bag next to the dead computer. I should add that Florence is one of these cities where taking a public transport vehicle is always a very pleasant experience even when it is really crowded, as these good looking people behave so smooth and gentle around each other with the greatest politeness but still look at each other deep and sensual. I almost was at the point of not finishing the strange skirt dressing moment story here and keep the embarrassment for myself alone. But as the non-productive attitude text is, as many other texts, just a declaration of embarrassment as well, and as I am not able to really recover its story from my memory, I should rather finish with the changing room affair. The moment when I turned back into the soft negligent atmosphere of the gothic changing room, a man, another third person working in the shop quickly rushed towards me while I actually wanted to let the violet velvet curtain fall between me and the shop space and to finally undress from the comfortable but embarrassing pin striped skirt experience. He was looking very soft Italian but still working class in his whole attitude and asked me if it does not fit well or if there would be any problem with it and he asked it in the most common way as if I just tried on my usual Levi's trousers. The shock of this encounter with him did not finish my weird strange new feelings about wearing a gothic skirt with buckles and strange belts and very charming looking metal D-rings. In fact, the opposite. It was like another further step of embarrassment pleasure as he started touching me on the hip and around as if trying to find out if everything fits well just technically and that way for sure he must have discovered my embarrassment. But instead of showing disgust and as well instead of showing any fun in the situation he just turned round saying, it is alright, really no problem, an expression which I later in the bus thought, healed me from all inhibitions and restrictions, or actually revealed them finally to me. It was like thinking, what a forgiving sweet and warm universe do I live in since the moment I left the store. Excuse me to mix this maybe most profane sensual experience with any spiritual narrative, but I was, while pondering the experience of a classic personal liberation situation, obsessively remembering the story of Jacob, the father of Josef and the very strange paragraph, which is called Jacob is wrestling with the angel. Jacob often escaping something, once is escaping his enemy and his most oppositional figure, his brother Esau. Once, when it becomes night and he is fleeing away in order to hide again, he meets an angel and the angel wants to fight with him. Therefore in order that Jacob cannot run away, the angel touches his hip, and Jacob's certain nerve of the hip for moving his leg is somehow lame and he cannot run away and has to fight with him, and then Jacob fights with him the whole night and when it becomes slowly

day again the angel leaves him, but says, from now on you are not Jacob any more, from now on you will be called Israel.

Anyways, while writing "the non-productive attitude" I felt quite productive in fact and it seemed to be such a long time away when I was doing what I understood as non-productive experiments. Experiments, because instead of doing so, I had on the contrary an almost theological belief in the redeeming qualities of productivity. But as someone, maybe someone like a nature scientist, who is trying to prove the existence of some hidden quality, I believed that in order to prove its central quality, I would first have to exclude this quality of productivity from its context and see what happens without it. It is stupid to ask what is an artist and even more so, what is art, I thought kind of naïvely, but it could be interesting to ask, if one or I would be an artist even without making any work or any object. Could one still call this existence an artist? Or, as I learned later, isn't the artist who does not provide any productivity not slowly becoming the disparate person who is left by all his virtues, slowly falling apart and corrupting slowly all of his self soon as well? And isn't the one artist, even not so talented, but never leaving the ways of productivity the one who will stay strong and alive until his last days? It is no pleasure to meet these artists who aren't able any more to talk about their interests or about their production, fall instead into the traps of gossiping, the traps of obsessive control behavior or even into deadly envy? Still I questioned the old mechanism, that the only way to prove or even to detect the existence of an artist is his evidence of productivity. So the question was how to detect an artist in the millions of other people even if he or she is not showing the evidence of productivity. I was interested in this experiment too seriously, probably because of being a bit too young too late, particularly in the idea of being the scientist who uses himself for his experiment, as I thought that was what art is about, proving something by putting your one self into danger and exposing yourself badly with it. If you focus a few years on this situation of course you stop worrying about productivity, but you sacrifice your credibility for the rest of your life. For sure in Germany. But you might develop great qualities like fear and certainty of onrushing doom at any moment. And you can never see yourself anymore on any upwardly mobile trajectory. Even in case you actually are. The only way or step out would become the productivity of confessional self-exposure.

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