

## **An Ecosystemic Movement Inhabiting the Hearts and Minds of People**

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Considering “my art activities from the 1980’s to the 2020’s,” I think of them as something like “an ecosystemic movement inhabiting the hearts and minds of people” that transforms and continues to live in the midst of a constantly changing society.

Now, imagine a time when something you found incomprehensible just continued to remain completely incomprehensible.

Maybe you were taken over by this feeling like “What can I even say?” or “Well, I just really don’t get it....”

Here I’m using language to put my feelings down as words, but these words and the letters that form them can’t help but falter under the constraints of language. No matter my eloquence, as soon as these feelings come out as words, they’re pulled back by the gravity of language. Painting is no different. As soon as feelings are transformed into a painting, they’re pulled off course by the gravitational force of painting, leaving you unable to pinpoint the center of that swirling eddy that you’re aiming for.

But it’s this very place that’s the fertile seedbed for generating art.

People are endowed with these things we call heart, feeling, emotion. These aren’t things you buy at a store or get from studying at the library. They’re not things that someone else can teach you. No, they’re things that are cultivated through interactions with those who we call “others” – people who aren’t me. Better yet, they’re what becomes necessary during these interactions.

Heart, feeling. These are strange and mysterious things that never really seem to go the way you anticipate. Where will my heart take me? Just what am I supposed to do with this feeling? Often you find yourself unable to get a grasp on these questions and you even begin to lose sense of where your own self is located. Overwhelmed by anxiety or sadness, you keep telling yourself to persevere, maybe try to forget.... It’s in the spaces of those feelings where art is born.

What we call “society” is necessarily comprised of multiple individuals. In other words, we humans have created a mode of existence that has taken to acting in the plural rather than as singular individuals, and this is what we call society. No matter the numbers of people who are brought together to make a society, I still have to acknowledge that I am only one single person and everyone else is “other.” And as an individual, I honestly have to admit that I find my own thoughts and feelings to be quite strange, so what chance do I have of comprehending the thoughts and feelings of others that I find all the more mysterious? No matter how clearly organized and systematized we construct a society, how roles are allocated, how responsibilities are apportioned, it’s all composed of a collection of “others,” so there’s no preventing the kind of strange fog of uncertainty that inevitably rises. This condition of being brought together in a place brimming with incomprehensibility is also what leads to the birth of art.

I wonder if one secret to leading a happy and successful life with others in society could be having the intentional willingness to not need to make sense of everything? And then, because that relentless incomprehensibility is itself fertile breeding ground for art, the careful tilling, watering, and cultivating of that seedbed is what will nurture our own strength to live within that very society. If you ask me what Art is, we can think of it as something like “an ecosystemic movement inhabiting the hearts and minds of people” that transforms and carries on living under the fluctuating conditions of society, and which was conceived by those beings we call “humans” in order to empower us with the strength to live. Or at least, that’s the sense I have of it.