

Contents

Introduction	9
About this Book	15
101 Excuses	21
Traditional Phase	23
Positive Phase	33
Wicked Phase	55
Anti-Performative Phase	73
Privileged Phase	89
Operational Phase	99
Media Phase	109
Post-Modern Phase	123
Art Self-Reflective Phase	133

Introduction

101 Excuses

It is important to begin by stating the premises:

Every art work deserves to be realised and the only objective limits that can be put on an art work's multiplication are the ones that climate change or active legislation defines.

If every football match deserves being played, and even more, broadcast, why should we be so picky with art works? Otherwise we might say that no art work deserves to be made and no football match played. These are things that come in a bundle.

Art works deserve to be made if they can be legitimised as art and every single one is legitimate at least at the artist's own level of exigency. This might sometimes be a very low level and it often (always) happens that art works that are legitimate for some people are not for others (and some legitimate today are not longer tomorrow).

What makes art art is what the arbiters of art judge to be art (and what changes they make over time). A “thing” can be art or not depending on whether it is considered as so by

- Its author
- Other artists (The abstraction of an universal that should be called “The Art”)
- The general public
- The art market
- Customs Officers

In the above classification (of those that judge art) the importance of psychological factors in the perception of what is or is not art decreases from the first category, where it is taken as the most definitive, to the last, where it is almost irrelevant.

Psychology is the main subject of this book. It focuses primarily on the author as a judge, somebody who, consciously or unconsciously, considers for his/her verdict about what is art, some kind of (non-criminal) evidence that we are going to call “excuses”.

What is an excuse?

Excuses are conceptual devices to make art works worthy both in the minds of those who create them and in those who contemplate them. Excuses are intended to define art works that are meaningful for the artist and the society.

Art works are not made with excuses: the explanation of why a work is worthwhile, and why it is important for the people to know it, comes retrospectively. The artist feels in each work the emotion of creating something relevant and excellent by a pure impulse. It is this impulse that crystallises in a later stage into “an excuse”. The excuse can be seen as the explanation as to why the artist felt what is an already past emotion.

In the artist's flow of thoughts the excuse appears following one of these linguistic structures that formulate and validate excuses:

- it is art if...
- everything that.....is art.
- it is art because...

If the space after the syntactic formula can be filled by a concept that is consistent, then that's the reason why the work was made, perhaps shown and hopefully sold.

Why do artists need excuses?

Actually they do not need them. Excuses are a backup plan after the emotion has been burnt out. What artists need is to create art works and this is for them an irresistible drive. Being the proprietor of this desire (or to be cursed by it, the carrier, the subject of it) is what defines somebody as an artist. The urge to make art works does not appear ex machina. It might come from the need for money, social recognition, egotism, wishes to be good, the search for sublimation or consolation, or any combination of the above.

• • •



Social Irony

Every injustice committed against a social group could be represented as if this group itself would commit them against other social groups.

For instance black people performing actions that only white people used to do.

Gender Inversion

Everything that has been done by men can be done by women.

A great part of feminists works are supported by *Oppressed Social Groups* (22). *Gender Inversion* only applies to role shifts between men and women, even if it does not involve gender claims.

Evil Corporation

Painting, sculpture or photographic prints that denounce the dodges of corporations.

Especially used with new electronic means in fake websites or mock marketing.

U.S. President Related

Every painting, sculpture or picture that ridicules or denounces the President of the United States of America.

It appeals to a revelry against norms and power, and power is well represented by the President.

Amnesty International

Works that relate to human rights matters with a very active militancy component.

Risky

That put the life of the artist in risk.

Risky appears in the Positive Phase appealing to the artist as a hero. But it has its apotheosis in the Wicked Phase, when used to show the vertigo of life.

Wicked Phase

Art is a bad thing. It is bad because life is bad and art only reflects what life is. It shows all that is horrible in the world, the perverted side of every human being, and of every society; the odd, the artificial, and the weird. Art is against the rules.

• • •

...

Operational Phase

Artists are kinds of engineers and scientists. But they are perverted. So they take science “too” seriously, or they make fun of it. The world is to be discovered, and the chaos to be put in order. Artists are people of action, people who transform the world. The main goal is to act, execute, or operate on both nature and society.

Mechanical

It is really amazing what you can do with objects from everyday life.

Works made with plastic spoons, straws, toothbrushes, 'pound shop' stuff, metallic cutlery and crockery, arranged in unusual dispositions, often geometrical. These unanimated objects seem to have a personality.

Absurd Science

Works implementing absurd scientific processes.

Focusing on the method instead of the meaning or uses of the results. The method deserves to be exposed. The method is always absurd, or fascinating, and by applying it to an absurd subject it is made even more absurd or fascinating.

Systematic

Following the method to the last bit.

Applying the method rigorously to subjects that resist methodology, with either disappointing or successful results. It could be the enumeration, numbering and cataloguing of beauty spots on an arm or establishing classifications like the one in this book.

Absolute Order

The accumulation and ordering of things that are similar but disorganised in daily life.

Marching towards a tidier world. An important aspect of *Absolute Order* is the repetition, not an excuse in itself, but a constitutive element of many excuses in the Operational Phase.

Baroque World

Reproduction of objects from daily life in plaster.

Homogenization is a way of order by constituting everything in the same material to look the same. Plaster can be substituted by bronze, aluminium, silicon, resins... depending on selling expectations.

Mantra

Repeat one sentence or one word until it loses its meaning.

It is close to anti-performative, but what is important in this case is the use of a method to destroy meaning. It tests the limits of the artist's credibility and his or her ability to communicate when becoming ridiculous through the extreme application of such a simple method.

Antarctica A

A work that has been made in Antarctica but is not scientific stuff.

Based on adventure and uniqueness.
Performed by a man/woman of action.
Featuring unknown territories of both
land and spirit.

-76-

Antarctica B

Scientific works made in Antarctica

Portraying purity and humankind's destiny.

• • •

...

Meta Nature

Those that show the skills of the artist in expressing the beauty and diversity of nature.

Nature is complicated, so you need complicated skills to depict it. The value of the work can be put on *Natural Beauty* (1) but actually it focuses the attention on the skills of the artist.

Art Self-Reflective Phase

When a system is getting to an end and just thinks
about itself.

Artist Clown

If it makes the artist look ridiculous.

Self-humiliation. It shares many elements with *Self-Punishment* (36), but the artist does not mean it personally but more like “the artists is a person who makes the king laugh”.

-100-

Kill your Idols

Parodies of serious artists.

Like works originally made in stone and steel now copied in polystyrene. Very art school specific. It appears sometimes in concurrence with *Video Art Reenactment* (87). Many times it is indistinguishable from *Gratitude* (7) with the same subject but perhaps working in an opposite sense.

- 101 -

A Confederacy of Untamed

Making fun of famous curators and critics.

Sometimes very local ones. Curators can be portrayed as ridiculous or arrogant. The curator, subject of the homage, can be local or remote in both time and space.

decreated books welcome manuscripts to be considered for publication in this collection.

There is a space for comments on and interaction with this book at www.decreated.com/101

