Kadoya and the ART House Project Today

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A Sense of Hope
Towards an Aesthetics Between Denialism and Apocalyptic Environmentalism
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地中美術館のジムズ・オブレウッドによる「オープン・フィールド」は、美の真価から離れた世界での、この体験は、私たちが自分たちの関わりに関するものに達するものを作りだす。「地域性」という単語は組み合わさる場所において初めて大切な、空間が光と空で一つになり、ふたつをまるでつなぐような感覚を世界の拡大の中で、自分の存在を思い知らせるものだった。これは自然からものほどの退かず、ものぞかさのない環境を生み出し、自然を人間の世界から解放するものだという。

科学は言語や宗教と同じく、ある程度まで自然現象を理解しようと力をつけている。アカデミー・オブ・サイエンスには、科学の発展を追求し、それによって物質や形を変えることが目的の一つである。科学は社会の進歩を阻まぬことなく、自然に順応しつつ、人間の生活を豊かにするものである。科学は、自然と人の関わりを理解し、自然に対する尊重を深め、科学的思考を創り出すものである。
Entering James Turrell’s Open Field installation at the Chichu Art Museum was the first straightforward shock. The experience utterly suspended my figure-ground schemata. I found myself fully engulfed by an aesthetic world connection. Finding myself, for the first time, in a kind of non-locality. As I experienced space becoming light I felt my own senses flooded by the microscopic breath of any blue matter. I was being detached. The shock therapy continued when I was taken to the 20040420 of the Moon. It took a few minutes for the sensory detox to work. Then I felt like my sense of vision had acquired an extra dimension. A deepening of vision, casting a drawing in or centering of what I will call, for lack of a better term, my perimeter senses. Here, in the vast darkness of a fairly small wooden building, I realized how culture takes place elsewhere. That culture does not operate from a fixed position. The space is a specular or trying to subvert a deeper perspective as I wandered around on the three small islands. But sitting completely on the smooth floor of the Teshima Art Museum, watching the formations of water behaving like mercury spills and listening to the architecturally amplified sounds of wild birds flying out of sight, I understood that we cannot go back to nature. There is no return to innocence. We have to move forward to nature as the Icelandic singer Björk has put it.

With all due respect to the powerful and almost endless register of artistic expressions, I do not think that this can be achieved by art alone. Neither by science nor religion. The deliberate conspiracy of art, architecture and nature that is being tested on the three islands gave me an idea that reaches beyond the question of regional development and revitalization. What about all the rest? We have reached the Age of Humankind. Studies are indicating that humans are causing the sixth mass extinction. Scientists are now speaking about the Anthropocene, an era where our accumulated activities have become the biggest single factor of global warming, threatening eventually to change the earth's geological condition. To claim that The Great City or the opposite: The Great Retreat to a beautiful island or any other remote utopian setting, is the solution to this catastrophic perspective is, in my view, a great leap in order to survive the Age of Humankind we have to find a way to decent from not only culture but humankind at large.

Initially, I was a little sceptical, if not actually critical, of the seemingly deliberate blend of an almost religious atmosphere with an artistic aura and virtually scientific manipulations of senses that is so gracefully orchestrated in the distinctive venues. To me, modern art is by definition liberated from reverence of subjugation and should therefore never pursue a religious purpose. Nor should art be committed to serving any scientific truth or reality. Art found a regular way to express what was once the exclusive domain of religion. We do not have to understand art by trying to falsify its truths. But maybe it’s time to consider how these three separate realms, all driven by great curiosity, can join forces? Since they became liberated from religious dogmas and other constraining systems, art, science and spiritual curiosity have pursued the great mystery of existence in two directions: Outwards: into endless space; and Inwards: into the infinite world of matter. But what about the middle ground? The space we occupy here and now?

I do believe that science is, to some extent, driven by an innocent inquisitiveness, just like art and religion. The insinuative urge of a free spirit. A basic human motivation to read and interpret our surrounding environment and a deep desire to understand the space around us and the very matter of which we are made. A life-affirming activity to the extent that cognition and human existence appear to coincide. Capito esse sum, to borrow the Cartesian perspective. To bite into the apple from the Tree of Knowledge might be considered the original sin, but to reach out, see and discover new things and relations is essentially a creative act. A fundamental human undertaking, which of course also involves a sense of pure necessity. We seek new knowledge in order to survive, which gives science a crucial practical purpose. I also support the altruistic idea that the creative power of science is an open source we hand on to future generations. Something that we, proudly share, notwithstanding the fact that science also plays a more sinister role, as a secret enterprise and a key instrument in the geopolitical struggle for life on earth.

Perhaps aesthetics can convey a sustainable path in between desalinisation and apocalyptic environmentalism?

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Born 1948. Denmark. Boris Broman Jensen is an independent researcher, consultant, and practicing architect. He has led over ten research and teaching experiences from architectural schools and universities around the world. He studied at the Danish Institute of Architecture and graduated with a Master’s degree in Architecture at the University of Copenhagen. Boris holds a PhD from the Polytechnic University of Milan and has been visiting professor at the University of Oslo and a guest lecturer at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok and the Swiss Institute of Architecture and Design as well as an Asia Art Institute in China. Boris is currently a professor at The Royal Danish Academy of Arts, School of Architecture, Aarhus, Denmark, where he has published and edited numerous research projects on globalization, urban development and architectural theory. He has also been involved in a number of urban design and planning projects with various collaborators. He has curated the Danish Pavilion for the 2018 Venice Biennale in 2015 together with Danish architectural critic and philosopher Kasper Lindhardt Weire.