

Limited Information/Information As Limitation

If this painting 'contains' the concepts that led to its creation, does saying so create an (artificial) hierarchy between the concepts and the visual stimuli? There is no place for art to operate outside of the spectacle: in this painting the shadow is a metaphor for the sublime while the light is its sublimation into the spectacular realm, which already occupied the shadow anyway. This shadow is an evaporating gas, a dark thought, a man and his objects. Does this hierarchy, privileging idea over form, only occur because of the intrusion of the text? Representation is representing itself as innate, as a given, but reality is always at a distance. Is text a more expedient way of providing specific descriptions of an idea and its intended effect, and if so is it more important than the representation it in turn represents? In such a case is there anything left to be seen, or, in accepting this text as the truth content of the painting is one's own agency as a visually receptive being denied? There is an experience available on one side of the picture plane only, yet the interface between realms remains a state of perpetual possibility. But if the intention is to provide an affect, can it be reduced to a text at all? (Think what it might have been like to consider these ideas in Alberti's day and there you have it. Nothing much has changed.) Can you, the reader, accept the notion of the image-object as container? You are catching this man on the brink of something; a painter in a pre-modern stupor discovering the limits of his own field. If this painting is not able to articulate these questions on its own, should viewers switch their attention?

Now you're in possession of arcane knowledge, and with it comes responsibility. One foot over a boundary between the aesthetic and the real, a text and its image. *Do you understand this as palimpsest, a site of ongoing struggle, or as a description of pictorial facts?* The individual might be the source of the political order. If so, there is nowhere to hide. This man takes shelter in public (an exhibition opening) because at least there he can choose to speak, if not his own words. Privacy is too silent for someone who is wanting. He is trapped by a necessary paradox; the sickness in purity. *If we can circumvent modernism entirely now, is it only because of the historical tools that it unwittingly developed for doing so?* By the way, this text is nothing more than an elaborate justification. If it distracts you throw it away.

| ————— |

Is the Real his and the Imaginary mine? The Symbolic is yours because you are using language to read an image. If you were in his place you wouldn't see much. But here, you're on a threshold; the picture plane is a liminal pane. Boundaries are arbitrary though carefully agreed upon. He laughs as we brush with the evacuation of meaning. *The light is warm, can anyone enter this room now the aura is perforated?* The 'knowledge' is not special in spite of your privilege. Perhaps someone will ask what you're reading, it is a test of generosity.

This text is generative of its own redundancy, though possibly at your expense. *Is there such a thing as purity?* Lack of choice is the same shape as the painting; a rigid and controlling square. You could abandon the description here, leaving me to intrude upon my own narrative. *What other field is there left for me to operate upon?* The didacticism is self-referential. *Is a work of art an underdetermined illustration, or an overdetermined one?* A shifting boundary between the representative and the aesthetic regimes perhaps. I overwrite the meaning of the image, but only for those who thought there was one. *Painting as a process of endless becoming?* So it is a romantic practice after all, *but is that because we put faith in art?*

Though separated from his product, man is more and more, and ever more powerfully, the producer of every detail of his world. The closer his life comes to being his own creation, the more drastically is he cut off from that life. Guy Debord *The disclosure of the commodity's "secret" was the key that revealed capital's enchanted realm to our thought - a secret that capital always tried to hide by exposing it in full view.* Georgio Agamben

