

## **To Have – or not to Have – the Experience of the Self**

Extract from a paper by John Schranz.

“The creative act’s pedagogical nature is being lost. It is no longer enough to say ‘every person is an artist’. This phrase, taken superficially, has set mediocrity on its track. It is necessary to clarify the deep truths which lie at its roots.

- 1) Yes, every human being is potentially creative.
- 2) One’s personal, creative potential demands a great discipline and a firm rigour.
- 3) The most important drive behind the creative act is not the selling of merchandise; it is to facilitate others to become aware of their own potentials. Then to assist them to tap potentials with all the discipline and all the rigour that their potentials require. In this way one hopes to facilitate the encounter and exchange of visions, of dreams, of hopes, beliefs, of better ways of living together.

Grotowski begs us: ‘We need to abandon our tourist mentality. We must work vertically, and no longer horizontally.’ Rodin says that academic formation, as different to an apprenticeship with a master or a pedagogue, does not generate persons who yearn to produce. What it does manage to do, instead, is to generate persons who immediately start producing. True creativity, however, says Rodin, cannot exist unless there is that intense yearning.

God forbid that creativity goes on being denatured as it is, merely translated into a miserly thirst for profit, into an inhibitory force. All too often have we seen the Artist brandish the codes of his discipline in such a way as to make others feel belittled by his dexterity, numbed and stupefied to the point of believing they could never be able to do what the Artist does, until they paralyse themselves into inactivity, which leads them to merely consume the creativity of the Artist. Of that old paradigm of the Artist, the one with a capital ‘a’, I say ‘And may he immediately die.’ And with Barthes I insist that ‘The birth of the Human Being can only take place at the cost of the death of the Artist.’

And yet – all indications are that what Landi cynically and ironically exalts, and what King denounces, and what Ten Cate warns against, is about to become the next paradigm...at least if one pays heed to what they tell us, the ‘experts’ of Cartesian Commerce-opolis these which seem poised to mushroom everywhere. And those other ‘experts’, too – those holding the reins of ‘cultural policies’. We are facing the new ‘patrons’ of the arts, the new ‘Medici’. There is a continuous hiring of disposable artists, with which they intended to bestow dignity on the soulless spaces they administrate. Contrary to the Medici, however, each of them holds his post only for a year or two...too short a time to be able to nurture a true sensibility in himself. And yet, as they come and go, together they manage to suck up a very good portion of the funds allotted for art and culture...to lap them up and, in their superficiality, to waste them. And it is this, the new paradigm – one of superficiality and waste. And it goes on being ever more nurtured.”