

ART PUBERTY
Or ‚Lovestory‘
Or ‚A Translation for the Screenheads‘

A text by Leena Lübbe

ART PUBERTY

In an institutionally organized ,professionalizing' workshop I had a portfolio meeting with the new head curator of an internationally renowned German art institution. Passing over my artist statement and then briefly scanning the photos of my paintings he then mainly focused on my CV. The advice he gave to me was to find someone credible in the field of contemporary art to write about my painting practice so that my work could be read as more credible. It didn't have to be a *Helmut Draxler* but rather someone in my own league.

I understood.

If professionalization means that the names I was going to bind to my work would define its value I took up the challenge and decided to approach someone totally out of my league.

*Imagine a text about my work
written by a person of significance in the field of contemporary art*

Helmut Draxler

Leena Lübbe

HeIIIIIIII....

Hell

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The following words were written as an homage to a text by Gertrude Stein called ,lovestory'. My text is also called: LOVESTORY



Professional, 2021

LOVESTORY (PART I)

Lovestory

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Lovestory

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Lovehatestory

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LIFESTORY

This is a story about fear and courage

Lifestory

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This is a story about fear and courage

Lifestory

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This is a story about fear and courage

Lifestory

is a story between fear and courage

LOVESTORY

BETWEEN FEAR AND COURAGE

LIFESTORY LIFESTORY

HELMUT

HHELMUT

Hell

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And Mut

Hell

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And Mut

Hell as a concept but in German it means bright

It means light

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Hell as a concept but in German it means bright

It means light

Hell means darkness and light

ALL AT ONCE

ALL AT ONCE

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT FEAR AND COURAGE

LIFESTORY

Mut Mut Mut MuT
HELL MUT

Mut Mut Mut MuT
HELL MUT

MUT
Means Courage

Fear
Fear
Fear
FEARS
Courage

Fear
Fear
Fear
FEARS
Courage

Between fear
And courage

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BETWEEN FEAR
AND COURAGE
LIFESTORY

A thought that needed to be shared is causing a feeling of cringe a second later.
I knew exactly it would be risky yet I had to do what I believed needed to be done.
Professional suicide. Things need to be felt through in order to move on. To. The. Next.

Does the world need another painter?

This is a question a lover of mine got asked by his friend when telling her about me for the first time:

,Oh god a painter?‘
was apparently said.

SO

Does the world need another painter?

I'm not willing to answer this question.
Very much not so. But what I will do instead is to ask a question back:

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I'm sorry I'm afraid I have forgotten the question.

It popped up the other day while I was painting and I thought it was pretty damn great to ask this question back instead of falling into pieces about my own existence but as a matter of fact I simply can't remember it anymore.

I constantly forget things.

In this case forgetting seems like a suppressed aggression against an ex-lovers friend but I constantly forget things.

I constantly forget ideas that seem too good to be true in the moment they come up which is usually when you do something completely different and irrelevant to solving a rational problem of life. Something like walking down the street for example or reading a book. Eating an ice cream or listening to someone else speak. Maybe it happens to you right the second while you are listening to me reading out this text to you?

These are the moments I feel like I can let go completely. If it's just for a minute or many hours and — plop — there it is.
An idea out of nowhere.

That's when most ideas pop up. When you don't hold on to them the moment they come up — like when I didn't write this ingenious question down the other day — usually it gets lost from one second to another and disappears just as fast as it had appeared previously.

I have lost many ideas in my life because of simply not writing them down right away. I started telling myself that these forms that won't be excreted right away and seem to have been lost forever will stay somewhere deep inside and continue boiling under the surface.

And let's be sincere most of the ideas like that are useless anyway. There are only a few of them that don't cause yourself to curl up in embarrassment after a day. Or that simply don't cause a pure disbelief in your own mental capacity. Usually the big ideas out of the blue aren't even the valuable ones. The ones that create the most change are the small impulses that come out of a genuine act of doing. So it goes hand in hand. Thinking, doing, thinking, pausing, doing
....moving.

It is a craft of its own.

Do you also constantly feel like however much you do you are not ever doing enough to even just scratch the surface?

By the end of Leonardos life he was said to be regretting the decisions he made about where to put the focus in life. It might just be an anecdote far from the truth but it doesn't really matter. He knowingly dedicated his time to widening his field of expertise away from one area towards being a general scholar.

Mastering everything at once. ‚Dancing on every wedding‘ they say in German. The perfect exploitation of how we understand research and not ‚just‘ getting lost in the blackhole of mixing and moving around oil paint on a piece of cloth for years and years.

Piero Della Francesca was working differently. He wrote a treatise on the mathematics behind central perspective that was for many years to come the leading theory of geometry. But his findings were falling in service to his art. It was the ‚Abfallprodukt‘ of his artistic research so to say. TRASH. He was a painter.

Not to be at all times ready to hold on to suddenly appearing ideas. Like back in the old days when these field biologists were catching rare butterflies with their nets to then line them all up pierced with a fine needle. Archived neatly for an afterlife representing their own species. A guy I met in art school had the idea to create a platform with all of his ideas that would then be accessible for other artists like an open source. Brilliant mind. I understood this guy never really executed any of his great ideas and was caught in masking himself behind his own genius. Be ready to follow an impulse at some point without thinking all too much about where it will lead. One living butterfly is worth more than 100 dead ones lined up in your private chambers.

What I noticed is when I keep ignoring those impulses with time it gets harder to bring them into the physical world. I also just start to become more blind to them. Like a muscle that needs to be regularly trained it needs a reoccurring manifestation of an immaterial matter. Pauses are essential for growth but they have a length I don't really have control over. Once they want to pop up again they need to be looked at no matter they fit into my schedule or not.

I am in service to an entity that holds me in a position where the priority setting is clear: it's all about her - painting - but not in a way that I can get too comfortable in the soft arms of an Other but rather I am challenged to be at all times in charge. Up and running. On the edge. In charge - YES - but at the same time willing to let go the control.

Does the world need another painter? Or artist? Or writer?
Or anything?

Still can't remember the genius backfire question.

Breathe in.
Soft chest.

A Translation for the Screenheads

The place where I can let go the most is when I paint:

I am creating holes
I am creating space in which I can paint
In which I can
Be

Who the fuck am I?
Who the FUCK am I?
Hello, it's ..
I?

(Note by the editor/me: it shouldn't get more teenage than this)

When I don't know anymore usually I begin to run
Running doesn't bring an answer to the problem, it brings the same piece of problem again just
with a manifold bigger impact than before
Why didn't I?
OK let's not bother with that question but I do have perfect answers for most of the things that
Lie in the past: The PAST IS OVER

So here we are, again and again
With the same old question that has morphed into a multidimensional riddle
sinking each time deeper
Every time harder to reach
Disappearing in the distance
Or at least that's how it feels

Painting is... when I don't run. Not always when I paint I don't not run. When I run while I paint I
don't actually paint but illustrate what I do when I actually do paint.
Not to say this is complete nonsense to run and paint at the same time
because it can also be an entrance into painting.
But rarely.

Painting PAIN-ting (as has been noticed many times by many people before)
Yes. It hurts.
But that's NOT just one side of the famous coin but rather a continuous ambivalence that is
present.
Finding the balance where the pain and the pleasure can exist at the same time you have to go
through the ups and downs.
No matter if you paint or if you
Just Look

LOVESTORY (PART II)

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BETWEEN FEAR AND COURAGE
BETWEEN FEAR AND COURAGE
BETWEEN FEAR AND COURAGE
BETWEEN FEAR AND COURAGE

OOO -vercoming fear
OOO -vercoming fear
OOO -vercoming fear
Fear
With courage

OOO -vercoming fear
OOO -vercoming fear
OOO -vercoming fear
Fear
With courage

OOO vercom,ing fear
In fear
With courage

Overcoming fear
WithOUT FEAR
BUT courage

Overcoming fear
With courage
In courage

OVER. CCOMING COURGAE
OOOVERCOMING COURAGE
OOOVERCOMING COURAGE

COURAGE
COURAGE

RAGE
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RAGE

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An I An I

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An I
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An I
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An I — ein Ei

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Ein ei
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Ein ei, Zwei Ei

OOO VER COMING
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COMING COMING

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OVERCOMING FEAR OF COMING
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means courage .

Ei

I am up until where the non-I begins. There is a grey zone. It can never be penetrated.
Un-less you die.

But I don't want to die. Not yet.

I am up until where the non-I begins. There is a grey zone. It can never be penetrated.
Un-less you speak.
Un-less you paint.
Un-less you create something that can exist outside of yourself.

Lay an egg

Boundaries. Being stretched as long as they stand the pressure. Until they explode. Testing the grey zone where I am and the non-I begins.
Puberty is a mess. But only by going through the mess those lines can be pushed to one day not just rationally understand but truly experience that all is anyway just one BIG FAT EGG.

CONTROL
CONTROL
CONTROL

Let go off it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Surrender

And maybe - something will hatch from the egg.

When I start a period of intense painting I get plagued with obsessive thoughts that keep me from working. Self doubt. To go through those feelings I have a mantra of motivational self talk to not fall for easy ways to feel safe in my practice:

BE AWARE
There is no easy recipe
Fight the forces
Destruct them, tease them, bend them, USE them
Make something that doesn't make sense
As if you are living in a continuous group show of all the selves that are inside of you
It will start to make sense later on anyway
,All is one' as they say, whatever you'll do, do it from a place of sincerity

It has to feel like I let go of the outcome. Then I know I got a point to move forward in.

I am planning on staying
I'm planning on staying for a long loong time
I'll keep showing up.

Stop making art that closes a leash around its own neck
Whenever I feel like I do the things because that's how I'm used to doing the things I have to let go of, to destruct what felt like a security, something to hold on to. Kill your darlings they say, kill the HABIT I say, let go, it's painful but try to find an unknown way to live through the matter.

It's ok.
It's ok to feel ready for retirement and live the remaining time in peace, please.
Thanks!

Things need to be said

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Things need to be said in order to move on.

Sometimes painting feels like it's merely the residue of a process. Something that falls off like a layer of a plant that allows it to bloom underneath but once it has done its job it has to be shed off. Peeling off layer after layer - painting after painting - something is allowed to grow. Something that cannot really be described in one word or metaphor but it is some living thing that needs time to grow, attention, care and rest. Like a Non-snake.

I'm only just experiencing the true meaning of puberty. Painting is living a life.

It doesn't allow blinding myself with feeling safe in only being aware of the things.

Know-it-all, do-it-right, illustrating art doesn't work.

Painting only happens when you live through the things and get into a flow between doing and following decisions that are made in a split second.

Some things work. Some things don't.

It's a constant fight to not obey passiveness.

Painting is what happens when you stop the masquerade.

All forces seem to fight against that space.

It's easier not to.

Does the world need yet another painter?

Attention

My attention goes to you when it actually should be on me. But that only means that I use you. I use you to not deal with me.

It's hard to focus on oneself and easier to distract, disperse into many little particles with a direction outside of oneself. If you have a center in the middle and all the vectors are moving away from it — Hey! hey? — how self-centered is that? Then you believe to be the center. Not just for yourself but for all. How self-centered can it get?

If I am the sun.

How self-centered is it to concentrate on a You rather than on Me in order to not deal with MYSELF?

I would say very...at the least.

SO

I take care about me to be less self-centered.

I put me to the center to be less in the center.

I center me to BE and so you are, too. I center me to not need you to center me.

Not to be just because you are.

I am because I am

Seems like an 80's disco song

I don't want praise I don't want pity

I bang my own drum

Some think it's noise I think it's pretty

I am what I am

And it is what it is.

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