



somebody, something

art as power

update

#17

some personal notes

My encounters in Paris proof often to be unexpected and full of pleasant surprises. Now after six weeks I see the special connections between some of those events. Sharing some of them with you, provides an insights into how a project like 'the agony of attention' evolves.

In the second week of my stay in Paris I met Niklas Svennung, the director of Galerie Chantal Croussel. We had an interesting and enjoyable dialogue about art as power and I was really impressed by the depth of his insights in the arts. The gallery is, I think, my favourite because of the intensity of the artists they work with. The work of the artists is never straight forward and has complex layers of expression and meaning.

One of these artists is Pierre Huyghe and his quote, which I referred to in update #10 and #16, proofs to be pivotal in my collage of 24 pages with short texts that captures my thinking about the concept of attention and its agony.

'I don't want to expose something to someone anymore. I want to do the reverse: I want to expose someone to something'



I discovered that the idea of somebody and the idea of something is important to me in finding new threads of thinking what attention means and how what is crucial in answering to the agony which it brings.

When I visited Palais de Tokyo, a center for contemporary art, I was really touched by a part of the exhibition which contained work of Mimosa Echard: mysterious and colourful, carefully orchestrated in the specially designed spaces. And suddenly I thought 'I have seen work by this artist before, at Chantal Crousel' and I was right.

Unexpected connections.

One Saturday afternoon I took my bike and went to 'komunuma' in Romainville, just outside Paris where various galleries are housed. Just by accident I saw an exhibition by Raffard-Roussel called 'En flottement libre' at Galerie D. It showed ten works/installations that critically commented on the small electric vehicles that can be hired in Paris, called 'trottinettes'. One work showed the results of trying to recuperate a trottinette from the Seine by using a magnet. The results of this fishing exercise were laid out.



The location of this 'fishing' was not coincidental. It was the place where the French artist Yves Klein performed a remarkable work of art.

Klein asked the buyer of the work, called 'cession d'une zone de sensibilité picturale immatérielle' to pay him in gold leaves. In return he handed the buyer a certificate, stating the transaction. Then, with buyer present, Klein threw half of the gold in the river Seine and the buyer burned the certificate at the same moment, in order to complete the artwork.

This work of Yves Klein made me think about the words of Pierre Huyghe. The something, the physical object, is not the starting point, it is the somebody, the buyer, the viewer of the act who is confronted with something. The something is in this act of Klein deliberately destroyed.

In my thinking about the agony of attention, that felt like an interesting concept, because it somehow constituted the missing link in the idea that real attention can only exist when there is common void between people, a common openness, a common potential which can be filled with something. A something that can be even totally conceptual, an act of love for the intensity of life.



It is interesting and maybe also reassuring to see how encounters, ideas, images link. This connection emerged also a result of wanting to write an update, in this case this update. It forced me to transform the vague ideas and intuitions into a kind of narrative that makes sense.

When I started the agony of attention project, I had no specific ideas about the format of the outcomes. Now I have a collection of 24 text sheets and a strong idea, a notion of somebody and something, with various permutations.

Inspired by this idea, I am currently working on a new series of drawings in pencil and in ink. What it will bring is not yet clear, but hopefully they will add another layer to my work relating to the agony of attention.

In addition to the revealing drawings and paintings, I try to further explore the concept of artistic interventions as a possible way forward to incorporate the various outcomes. Artistic interventions set in the context of an organisation to work with people in that organisation to recalibrate attention and transform the agony in a more sound attitude, which circles around the beautifully powerful aspects of attention.





illustrations:

p. 1

Mimosa Echard

sporal, (2022)

(detail)

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Pierre Huyghe

After A Life Ahead, (2017)

at Skulptur Projekte Münster (D)

p. 5

Raffard-Roussel

En flottement libre,

Opération No 6: pêcher à l'aimant (2022)

p. 7

Yves Klein

Cession d'une Zone de sensibilité picturale immatérielle
à Claude Pascal. Série n°1, Zone n°06, 4 février 1962

photo: Giancarlo Botti

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Hein Duijnste

agony of attention (2x), (2022)

p. 10

Hein Duijnste

something, somebody, something (2022)

void (2022)

all photo's by Hein Duijnste, except page 7.