

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Winter, 1982

The artist can convey his intentions through his work alone, or he can use objects in his works which have meanings already understood by the audience (realistic or symbolic representations).

When an artist conveys his meanings without the use of realistic "subject matter" he is in effect creating a new language. A language one would hope to have bestowed intelligibly upon the audience. If he has done his job, they should have no great difficulty in picking up this new language in understanding the "meanings" of that particular work.

The philosopher constructs with forms and relationships in his mind, and the artist constructs them physically. These two very different ways of working have the former as the fleeting sensations of his thesis, thoughts, the latter as a fixed object of which he can consult at any time. Music and literature two more examples of temporal arts like philosophy have as well the quality of time which makes them more complex - problematic. Art must be a more direct way of working. Not knocking literature.

Art is always, has always been both literal, and metaphorical at the same time.

Anatomy is a very different study than others. Many say it's worth is in learning of the way to draw the human body, this isn't so. Do we take classes in the anatomy of apples? or the anatomy of mountains or trees? Did the masters ever do this? The answer is no. But there must be some reason that we study human anatomy and no other kind. If we can draw everything else without the aid of anatomy then why its prevalence? I believe that it is not so much in learning how to draw the human body but in the example that this drawing teaches us. This is what I feel anatomy does, it gives us experience in relating forms to us in the easiest way imaginable that being through the forms of our own kind. Metaphores function by imagination, Simile.

The artist should carry out his work from the general to the particular, and then move back to the general.

## Cut the Chord

There is no way to see the waste when you're on the chord. It all passes out, just the same way it came in - hidden. The fancy nourishment which Mamma is going bankrupt over comes shooting in that thin and hardly visible chord. Just like magic - you take it for granted but you don't realize that you're an addict, you need it so you can perform just like the user. The shit leaves the same way - cut the chord - remember" Babies don't shit when they're still on the cord. How can we expect them to really know, or understand what waste is, how can we expect them to know where the nourishment comes from - embryos don't ask questions. Either we must cut the chord for them or wait until it gries up and falls off by itself.

All the poor babies will have to learn how to swim without mom, what fun that will be to watch. Believe me, if you cut the chord, you will see the waste.

To know the feeling of something so well that you can draw it to fit the demands of structure and space without forfeiting it's character and being. This is what the artist should seek.

To learn the essence of the form so well that you could create that feeling in a hundred ways. When you can do this you have opened the door to being able to make something. Feeling and being, are much similar but completely different. They call on different powers from the same power. The same and yet different, diligent yet different. The same person for instance, looks or does many different things.

Space is close by but it is never the main thing, time is more interesting.

Never disregard smudges or scribbles or erasures for they may be the

keys to the drawing. They may be holding it together, and there is nothing wrong with that. For what is a drawing but many scribbles, smudges and erasures. How else can it be made?

Who is Matisse, is he more than mortal? Is it possible for a student to do some of the things that he did? No, according to the teachers, Think. I'm sure that when the artists like Picasso and Brancusi were in school their teachers also said to them that they couldn't do the things they were doing, because they weren't Cezzane, or Rodin. The teachers were wrong, they were, and it should be recognized that these things happen.

The line is the most essential form in visual art. It is the form of the most efficiency. With the thinnest and simplest of forms - the line - we may create everything possible in art. It is worth some consideration.

In a sense it is not the "looks" of a person that attracts us to them. It is something within us before it is something that they are made of. Within us we have a partiality to forms, we react to certain trees differently than others, enjoy slightly different sunsets and appreciate different forms of women for example.

But a persons personality is their material, it is what they are made up, like feathers to a pillow or earth to world, It is substance, (make up) we react to. The material and the form, what the material is in the shape of.

I love bothe form and substance, we we all should love them. They are two distinct but relating features of all things. Substance is like anatomy, related to structure and form is like design or pattern (relates to feeling? ).

There is a point when substance becomes form but form usually has a hard time becomming substance. With both, we can love and understand the world. Search them both out. Substance gives us confidence and understanding, without it we cannot move forward or appreciate to the fullest but don't ass off form as superficial and meaningless because without it we wouldn't know who we were. Form is our taste, our make

up, part of *our* substance for example.

In our culture we try to make things fit everywhere. We generalize things to pretend that they apply to many situations. With no individuality and no uniqueness. If we learn from art we may see that each work is individual, and no general rules may be formed. When something works it is only in *that* context and usually in no other. Each is unique, we must learn from that. No more assembly line interchangeable parts bullshit, please...

What is the difference between visual art and philosophical writings? It seems as though an artist creates a complete statement, of course this is only understandable through the context of our culture, but yet it is still an entity of its own right, it has its own set of rules. In effect it's own *language* which you will understand if successful. But the writings of a philosopher also being a statement of their own, have a quite different relation to their context. The philosophical entity is a separation of a greater whole, it is not *self* sufficient like the work of art. It defies the laws of interrelation therefore it is a dead form, art of course is not this.

Philosophy seems like the result of a culture with nothing better to do than try to define the laws of nature. You may say that the artist does the same thing - yes he does try to figure out nature but at the same time he has respect for the magic of it unlike the philosopher who is so bound up in his literary pure definitions that he leaves real life, (or reality) out of the picture completely.

When creating a work the imagination or subconscious does all the creating. The mind of logic goes along for the ride. If this isn't the case you are one of three things: a bad artist, a student, or an artist who is working in a very controlled medium.

The imagination is the embodiment of metaphors. Without these lies we would cease to exist.

In representational work the assumption is always made incorrectly that the emotional qualities of the work lie in the figures.



There are artists that generally portray the same feeling in their art and there are others who portray different feelings from work to work. The first type searches out this feeling to find interesting places where it exists and then paints them, or he just creates it for himself. The second type listens to himself as he stumbles across it, for maybe the first time, then he paints it; he doesn't create his subject matter to his feeling, he feels from his discovery of subject matter, Hopper is of the first type, and Matisse is of the second type. The exterior world creates Hopper but is created through Matisse.

If you are successful at something and you wish to explain to someone else how to arrive at this success, would you assume that it could be arrived at through a quite different process than what you used and not tell them your process as if it is the only one?

When something works you note what steps were involved even if some of the steps weren't necessary.

Many teachers, students, and artists have the wrong conception of what Nature is. They believe it is out there... But they are wrong, it is what goes on inside us in response to what is out there which is what Nature is. When it has been said "study nature" one might consider that we very likely are getting further from it.

There was a great snowstorm in progress when I awoke this morning. It made me realize what I love about snow. The fact that it greatly unifies a chaotic world, the world of man. Snow in the middle of the forest is certainly more beautiful, but it belongs there, snow in the city makes a great contrast between sense and nonsense.

You shouldn't be too concerned with the fact that your painting is working or finished in its own right as a work of art, rather you should be concerned with the fact of its working with you and your own right. The

painting is an expression of your thoughts and feelings, make sure that is what it is, or it will mean nothing to you. It will no longer be an extension, for it will become something quite different to you, like the work of another artist.

The artist shouldn't worry about how he does things but should be worried about the ways things are done.

The difference between the good artist and the great artist is in how much better the great artist can see. Seeing is what it is all about.

I am bothered greatly by the fact that art schools tend only to teach how to create works of art and not teach why we create works of art. The emphasis in schools is on the means and not on the motives or reasons. I can't see of what use it is to know how to do something if you don't even know why you are doing it. We must start from within and then work to the outside instead of just working from the outside and hoping someday that we will know why we are doing it. The schools must have faith in what will happen to the student on his own.

There is no technique for expression; rules have no existence outside of individuals.

There are no a priori means to acquire the need for expression; it can't be planned it is something which just happens. If you have means or are "taught" means then something is wrong, you are being taught incorrectly and probably the teacher isn't really an artist.

When we create we put a fix on our creation.

Artists must be individual.

Don't expect to be treated like an artist by a teacher who isn't an artist. One paints not with the hands, but with the brains.

Expression is a matter of making clear the exact nature of one's emotions to oneself. One cannot say in advance what one's expressive process will yield, for if one completely could, there would be no reason for creating it initially.

The schools trying to teach the unteachable, not the unlearnable.

Externalization can be taught, not expression.

Schools teach means; teach manipulation of subject matter and formal design. Because of this, most of the students are led further and further away from what art is really about. When we learn to control the stimulus for expression we no longer express our self. We become skilled labor.

Matisse said: one may exaggerate in the direction of a greater truth;

If you can't paint, then how can you be expected to draw. If you can't draw, how can you be expected to be able to paint or make much else; Catch - 22.

We must learn to accept failure, learning from it, even welcome it, to the same degree as we accept fortune.

To do nothing must be as important as to do something.

There may be many completed drawings under the one you believe to have finished, If only you could stop at each finished one and start anew. But if we did this we would never finish anything.

We should never discuss the similarities of paintings, for if we do we start to assume that there are differences.

Color is something to be known, not understood, it can't be.

The reason I prefer objective art to nonobjective art is due to the fact that when you see objective art it is like seeing your world through the eyes of another person, whereas in non-objective art it is like seeing their world in the eyes of them.

If it wasn't for earth tones we wouldn't have color.

If we were teachers we should not teach, we should help the students to learn and to experience what's really happening to them, what more could we ask for as teachers. If one hasn't experienced or known something then what good is teaching to that student. Teaching should promote this.

We can tell a student the secrets of art but this will do him no good unless he knows them. The knowledge of all mankind is available to all and it does us no good unless we can make it ours, in our way.

It seems that if Matisse left his paintings more complicated, they would in no way have the same intensity of feeling.

People still talk much of the "content" of art these days. They say that much of the art which isn't dealing with the problems of today is bad art or much less useful. I would like to see if this is true.

What exactly do they really *mean* by content?

They mean coping with the social problems, which are? reliance on non renewable resources, lack of independence, lack of local hands on technology, and lack of one's self and its worth, I say that all great art has all of these things wrapped up in it and more, without the necessary use of social and cultural "subject matter." All great art rings clear with the use of renewable resources, (recycling) it promotes them and is made up of them, great art is made up from within with independence and it is this which makes it possible, good and great art is most definitely the most local and hands on thing which can be done, it never relies on complex systems



of production and development, and finally art is the embodiment of self worth, so how could it be described as being alienating. These things that I have said are true and the only way in which they will be understood will be through the education of the people who need to see!. Art which is subject matter or mood for content, with the hopes of "teaching" is merely subject matter and mood and will surely upstage the absolute qualities which are much more convincing and are right there in the work of art itself. So why play games with illustration or pictures when we have a medium in which the make up inherent in it deals directly with the problems of life here, and what to do about the problems.

The teaching of those who need to see this is all that is necessary - to change the audience and not the artist who already deals with these problems is what is necessary.

It's there, use it, don't try to confuse the issue with your so called more direct methods - we must teach them to see it!

When the artist dictates his art through the use of a subject matter throughout his work, *in every piece*, he is playing another game besides that of the artist, maybe he is beter off using the written word for his medium than sculpture, painting, or drawing.

There must be many reasons that through the history of art it has almost always been abjective instead of non- objective. It is because objective art relates to us more and what could be more important than relating to us.

It seems as though the reason that people don't recognize their feelings as much as they should, is because there are no words for their feelings. I think that it is hard for most people to do things which have no description for they are scared that these things don't exist.

In most schools, all the teachers teach are recipes for the making of what they call art. When somebody uses a recipe to create a work of art they have an impossible task before them, for each work of art requires a dif-

ferent recipe from the next and if they do this each work of art made will have a similar predestined outcome. There isn't any recipe for art and there never will be, but tell that to these people.

It seems as though the predicament arises when they start using the teaching of techniques and means and extending this into the creative process. So in effect they are teaching processes where none belong for the simple fact that, that is what they do most of the time anyway.

What we need is teachers who can teach skills for the creation, but at the same time teach the independence, the expression of our feelings, and our ideas, to teach what art is all about. These are the fields of learning and they must be combined.

I think I have figured out why photography, assemblage, sculpture, and maybe even non-objective art all bother me. I've done these things but I am never convinced after I do them that I really created the whole thing. For I believe that this feeling and process of creating the whole work is one of the most important components in art. But I just don't get it when I do these things, why?

Works of Art are *autonomous*; ok? so how are we supposed to know in advance how to create something of this sort?

People have said many times, that recently we have expended all of the possibilities of art. That artists have done it all, finished, that the rest will be a rehashing of these things. I say bullshit I say that we have finished nothing, that every single thing thought to be finished has been done before anyway, that nothing new has ever been done, so how could one we stop? It was always "just finished" and we have always created different things despite this fact.

But even then when we say that art's only function is its own right this is not the case. We are told that the ancients always had a purpose for their art and that because of this, art was never art, that it was never

independant due to the guilds and commisions. I would say that it still has a purpose other than itself that it isn't independent even today. People always assume that they have done something new when infact they have rarely.

The word mechanical was derived from the Latin word moechor which means to commit adultery.

There could be two types of social artists: the type that tries to change society, and the type that is *made* by society. The one inbetween makes himself and could be the most socially effective.

Detail obscures the path to accuracy, empericism even.

Believe it or not, seeing is more important than even drawing.

Hunger feeds, and it is the efforts we take to avoid and uphold what pleases us or feeds us that are a measure of their impact.

Perspective is a convergance of form and change of size. These things have nothing to do with space or it's reality. Although they most definatly will create the illusion which most peple are trained to read as space.

Perspective is a convention, that is *all*. Conventions when outside of ones self,excepting the part of us shared by all (the architypal imagination), are meaningless and detrimental to art.

Forms have feelings/meanings only in human terms, that is why it is often the case that we work from the human figure, For when we do so we are putting thewse feelings in their context although even when we paint or draw the human form we bestow these human feelings upon things other than the human. We find ourselves making little people out of fingers and toes, and find distinct characters in arms who resemble lost drunks or ears who feel like a prissy girl sun bathing. These things make it all enjoyable to us for sometimes we are able to meet long since seen

friends, or meet new acquaintances who have striking personalities, It is like a whole social gathering which is the only type other than family which interests me.

When you talk of craftsmanship in art as a quality of the best artists you talk of technique - the use of the tools, i.e. Cezanne's craftsmanship or the professionalism of Matisse? These things do exist in their art but not where you choose to find them. The craftsmanship and professionalism in a Cezanne comes from his construction, not from the way he swings his hammer. The way in which he chooses to build a painting is a cause of craftsmanship and is that which separates him from the others. There isn't any craftsmanship in technique or style, it is a matter of incidence, technique and style are the slaves of construction, where the real craftsmanship lies. I would never want to say that a beautiful building or piece of furniture was less by looking at the way the builder sawed or hammered - I admit it is a part of the work but it is a part which is among most meaningless. I would say rather that the best and most professional way of hammering or sawing would be the manner which most easily and directly attains a goal.

The variety in Matisse's paint is due to corrections or alterations but most importantly are due to form. If he put down a perfect color without variation it begins to look like the forms have been painted *that* color instead of actually *being* that color. Color must be *embodied* in the forms. And if wondering about the paper cut outs, I must say that they are form and color at once, physically together, in actuality like sculpture. \* I have often wondered whether Donald Judd has written on the invention of Matisse's cut outs, in light of his involvement in a form apart from both sculpture and painting.

Matisse probably didn't polychrome his sculpture because it too literally was color on form instead of color as in the forms or internally made up of the form.

An artist can only be sure of his art. When it comes to other people's art



there will always be some doubt. If it wasn't for this sureness we would be without much great art, but we musn't forget that with this sureness comes mega bias.

To create something so essential in form and yet have it convey all feeling via structure and dimensionality.

No artist has ever been better than his predasessor in a sense, He must use new symbols to express his equally valid notions which cannot fail to be unique. The old symbols soon die and must be replaced, not improved but replaced by that artist for himself so as to communicate it to others through newly found efectiveness.

We all love Matisse because he was a great man and also a great painter, but there is always good chance that we love his paintings as others for reasons other than his intentions.

Matisse was most definatly involved in the portrayal of feeling in color and in drawing, and was also concerned in the essential nature and lines of things. These things he diligently put into his work but I believe we love his work whether or not these things appear. Actually we love the paintings and studies which were done rather quickly where he couldn't have considered every little aspect as he loves to do. These little paintings are wonderful things because they are done by structural intuition and not by fussyness or composure which are so diligently taught in schools these days formally or conceptually.

Saugatuck, Michigan, June - July, 1982:

An artist over the years becomes addicted to his working and his thinking. In this, he may become convinced of himself. And with this absorbtion hopefully follows unpretentious but ambitious works of art; the mistique of the artist may mainly be in this.

Oxbow is a paradise for those who live here with its fulfilled pleasures, It's natural setting, its close social group, its esthetic surroundings and its easy life with no responsibilities for living and housing, its whole climate of freedom.

The eating me alive syndrome.

The person should be flexible. I should be flexible, and learn to give more of myself to others I'm involved with. I am too intense not ready to be with those who demand so many of the things I should be able to share.

The artist can have an easy time in convincing himself of his art and his vision. This convincingness is impressive to others and to one self. but if it is based on something of shallow means then it is useless. The artist must form his vision on honest means before this convincingness and impressiveness occurs and then what follows will be honest, and real, and of worth to us...

I will be sad when I leave this place. It is a shame that it isn't the real world. The cities are a sham though. I hope some conclusion can be brought to this summer, but then again it is like work in art, in which the idea exists outside the work and the physical object and the processes, it existing out there somewhere, we are just working from it, and with it, and it working us.

Doing great things isn't everything.

There is a double standard in the world. The judge of a person's worth or value lies in their persona and their so called social persona, whereas what a person does or his or her actions and deeper train of thought is given very little value. The latter isn't seen, and then is considered non-important. A person is judged by surface value alone and given the stamp of whatever this value dictates. Then the person is tacitly shaped into that role, it is reinforced by others.

How far should this go? THE VALUE OF UNDERLYING STRUCTURE

It was superficial views which functioned in pre- industrial societies, but in this one, it doesn't fit the context.

Frivolous affairs, much to much frivolous affairs. I need to get my work done, and that is the main thing. Is this growing up and getting serious?

It isn't really possible to be convinced in one- self when you are around too many others. They pull on you, dilute, and make you compromise what conversation you are having with yourself, what it is that you are doing. By this, they cause doubts in you. But I suppose this is a kind of character building.

The masters didn't seem corny. The masters seemed meaningful, explosive, exploring, This happens so rarely these days. I wonder. I wonder if what I like about the masters is going to show up in my work as impulsive and intriguing. Show up despite the lack of ambition to do certain things in my work. I guess this holds true with some artists I know. There are many things they avoid and yet the works hold true. We'll see if this is so with me.

I never want to talk like these old professors talk of their work. "It's developing, it's improving etc. They are like old hoots perpetually defining themselves. As artists we want so much for our art to be compulsive and meaningful. It is hard when this doesn't happen or when we have doubts.

One should never be afraid of doing what's corny or to make what's not understood for a period of time. Time delivers the message.

As an artist we try different things until we are both intrigued and know that what we are doing is unique and substantial, then, there's something

relevant to it.

Why do artists go into “nature” when they can’t even see it, feel it, empathise with it.

The kind of integrity we need to arrive at as an artist does not come from guessing or explaining about one's work or telling oneself what to do. Rather it comes from being unanxious, and unpretentious, it comes from working and being sincere. If you deserve to be supported then those who will, will support you, there is no need for pretentious advertising.

There is drawing, pure drawing and then there is drawing which is color imposed drawing. They are both good and dynamic.

There is a scale from pure drawing to pure color imposed drawing and a given work can be pursued in any point of this scale. Most of Matisse's paintings were pure color imposed drawing. He didn't like water color simply because its value was too thin, and that it couldn't be manipulated enough for color imposed drawing.

Colorists are better draftsmen, because they are better seers and to see better is to draw better. Sculptors are better draftsmen because they see through their hands more, their bodies.

Is my imagery good enough? What is imagery anyway? A better question is, is my imagery suited to my way of thinking and seeing, because imagery is only important in that it is adapted to your way of thought, or that it is an important enough goal to pursue. The most important thing to consider is the formation of your way of thought and seeing and manipulation. Is it good? How do you work? These are important.

Cezanne' seems much too stiff to me now. His still lifes and his figures. The best things he did were at the end of his life. Matisse in many of his later works was also overly stiff and structurally and universally over consid-



ering them, of course the quickly painted and cut out pieces are spontaneous enough.

ALL ART IS, IS THE SEEING, AND IF YOU WANT TO GET ANYTHING ELSE FROM ART IT WILL COME FROM THE SEEING, FOLLOW THE SEEING.

The artist must first learn to draw, learn through our drawing and then paint as we draw for drawing is as we think, and thinking is seeing.

With me all is structure, all drawingt and all color, meaning and mood etc., come after these things. And with these things - they also should not be *overly* considered.

However so called unsubstantial somethin is, to think like it is enough, and the only reason to "create it," and "explore it".

To make as we think is as substantial as it will ever get, dwell on this, and accept it.

And yes, there are standards, and values to art, but they are so simple and so easy.

That feeling comes back again, Being alone but around so many people.

Ok, so I think I'm an artist, and then I work, and explore as I think, and as I am intrigued with this thinking, and finding... And that is the way to work,

From the bottom up.

It is hard. Art, making it, etc., and so much of it has nothing to do with the part of it that is Art. It's strange that this is important to me for I shun many of these things. Many of the works seem frivolous. Even when others tell me it's very good. but it seems I have no choice, it seems that it is

the only way for me to have free reign. I guess the price payed for freedom is lack of certainty.

Art is the ideal medium for me creatively and yet it can seem unimportant. I suppose I need a guise, to give me the feeling of import, something like social content, etc.

I need privacy. To think, to work and to feel myself. Freedom from others and their situations. Freedom to organize.

Many artists become teachers as a crutch. They need the environment and support of what the teaching gives them, they need to be around the others teacher artists. We tend to forget what we have decided to be when we are in a context of people daily, who are not what we are. This is why most artists are in the cities, they need other artists to help them feel that they aren't janitors or something.

I know that I will eventually solve this problem, but I must maintain my dissapproval and understanding of the city and how it limits me and my personality.

We all get caught up in value judgements, like about ones work. It's not the point at all, the work is for its own purpose.

Assholes think art is fun. Art isn't fun at all, it isn't aesthetic, it's just a way some people have of dealing with the world, a way of dealing with ourselves and who we are. People think art is fun and aesthetic, they're not ready.

Making things is a kind of way to be in control of reality.

The best pieces are the ones which are from some other learning and are attempts at doing the same thing elsewhere and in a means which isn't really suited to it. i.e. taking the learning from somewhere and trying to

employ it in another medium - these are the best things, for they carry with them that which isn't suited to the medium and it is a kind of hybrid fusing of two things.

I must at least approximate the act of development and maybe then I will actually develop. It is this approximating, like "play" doing something that gives us the means that it is possible and finally real.