

First of all, it is essential to remember.

There are all kinds of experiences that bear this out, maybe, but I can use only my own vocabulary.

Discussing art, contemplating the change in art, is only relevant in relation to a certain context, to a definite tradition. The twentieth century has seen the philosophy of Nietzsche carried out to its logical conclusion in Nazi Germany, a fair proportion of the world's tyrannies today claim to be Marxist.

Philosophy has become introverted. We are worried about the meaning of words in general and perceive the effect of this concern as a lack of qualification, experiencing the traditional philosophical questions in most peculiar ways. Although this time art is mingled with science, still our experience persists in reducing it to an episode, to provide us with a stable home elsewhere, and to transfer it to the place occupied by the unreal, the authority of religion. The truth in this sense is, that religion is not without some staying power, for those who did not disown all religions publically and intentionally, continue to adhere to some of its customs and institutions.

For them, the visible becomes the subject of 'moral'; where everything is apprehended accordingly, namely

linking us to each point of its form. Precisely at this changeable point we have managed to disconnect ourselves, our image from a text, a certain text, our text. Hence, it is not for nothing that we live in a blank-space, which enables us to be able to continue to nourish the fantasy of repetition.

I believe that the Western world has to reconcile itself with Judaism, and vice versa, an absence of this re-encountering will separate even more the myth from history, the image, the picture from its own text, and will weaken the already weak relation with the Muslim world. Only through this reversed state of mind can art become the source of changing of values anchored to society and social institutions. At this point, I should define 'performance' as neither an existence, nor as a non existence. It is a function of the impossible on which a certainty is based.

Life is absurd, God is dead, this cry of despair would be understood today, the acid rain is already falling, except that those who cry are rarely those who suffer.

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Joseph Semah, 1988



20 march 1985, I found myself lying on a floor in a 'place' in Amsterdam, my left foot on a book, above it a light-bulb. One heard a taperecording of my voice, reciting the content of the book (duration 30 minutes). On the first day of each new season of 1985, this action repeated itself. During the same year, I transcribed the text of the book using plaster, in various locations of Amsterdam.

(seffer yetzirah: a book of creation-a Hebrew philosophical treaty, circa 1200 a.d.)

Performance Seffer Yetzirah 1985