

DEATH IN PRAGUE-AUTOPSIA INTERVIEW

Q. How does Autopsia view suicide and how does Autopsia view suicide in terms of ethic, philosophy, society and culture?

Autopsia: Suicide is an act aimed against oneself, a self unable to endure mortality. Autopsia believes Suicide to be Human; Death belongs to the Divine.

Q. Your work appears to embrace the concept of eternal repetition. What is Autopsia's attitude towards the idea of reincarnation and carmic law in Eastern philosophies?

Autopsia: Eastern philosophies are of no interest for the work of Autopsia. We are rooted in European traditions of thought, traditions that stretch from the middle Europe back to the classical period. Although our work includes the concept of repetition this is not related to eternal repetition. The notions of eternal and idea are remote to us and we do not elaborate on philosophical ideas although it may appear we do. If philosophical ideas can serve our methods of creation then we merely use fragments of general notions and ignore the origin of their meaning. Notions already formulated are part of the evolution of culture and these form part of our work only because they are part of that vocabulary of culture. However, within the Autopsia work, the notions take on the role of creating new relationships. By being adopted into our work, the notions achieve a new identity which forms the essence of Autopsia's work. We use established cultural patterns as codes which, in the new work, represent something new, something authentic. Do not expect Autopsia to produce formulated responses to those cultural phenomena outside of our own work. Autopsia actually encourages and maintains a distance from the process of creating culture. We relate to things as finished products, intuitively and not scientifically, attempting to understand, never to explain for we believe Autopsia's aim is not to interpret but to examine origins.

Q. What part has gnosis, gnostic tradition and heresy in general played in the history of culture? What roles will they play?

Autopsia: In a way we have already replied to that question in the previous answer. It is a matter of available traditions. Since we use syncretism in our methods, gnostic tradition has its part in the creation of the work, in its character, but not as a fundamental point of departure for the work. For us it is interesting to see how things, seemingly incongruous, really function. Gnosticism is interesting for us because of its structural incompleteness; it is suitable for creating new illusions. There is no mysticism in the work of Autopsia but there is in the method, the forming of external images. In general terms there is some understanding of the mystical body but that is only insofar as we try to control certain forms, as for example, reaching an understanding of the vocabulary of forms itself.

Q. Music composed by Autopsia contains a certain degree of ecstasy. Do you believe ecstasy has some influence on human thought?

Autopsia: If thinking is close to what is artistic, if it appears together with the work and not in the manipulation of the work, then it is essentially connected with the ecstatic. That which is ecstatic belongs, in essence, to art. Borders that we usually call areas of reality: art, philosophy, science, etc. disappear in fascination. Autopsia does not operate with the elements of ecstasy. Fascination is not achieved by the use of calculated tricks based on the content of the work. Although there are methods available, fascination in fact stands in the measure of our openness towards the work. We do not create our works to bring ecstasy to the listener, we simply create what we ourselves want to hear and that action is a way of giving and not a way of seducing. All manipulations are have their basis in the creation of the work as a methodological procedure and are not aimed to achieve controlled ends.

Q. Psychoanalysts believe death to be as strong a force as sexual instinct. In Autopsia's works death is the maximum but it does not appear that sex has the same importance, how do you explain this?

Autopsia: Death sublimates but is not the ultimate. To talk about something that is measurable, comparable, with minima and maxima, means to talk about something that is already represented. We manipulate the representation of death but this does not yet mean that is, for us, something represented, in other words, something with the power of representation. We do not relate to death as something objective nor as scientific. Scientific attitudes towards death are, for us, irrelevant areas that embrace questions of instinct, sexuality, homicide and destruction. In Autopsia's work the discourse of death has a completely different function. We do not deal with death as a phenomenon amongst phenomena; we talk of the oblivion of death - this surpasses the objects of cultural interests.

Q. What do you think about humour, "black humour" and irony?

Autopsia: Humour is an authentic feature of speech. Humour does not possess an object towards which it is directed, it is a way of 'responding' as coming-to speech. The origin of irony is in reflection, and of humour - intuition. Irony is not, by its functionality in language, a subject that interests Autopsia.

Q. Do you think that various psychedelic materials and drugs enrich our culture or endanger it?

Autopsia: There are things to which humans are exposed simply because they are there. Humans can choose whether to take advantage of the fact they are available; the same goes for drugs. Their effect is not to help within the sphere of culture, their function is as an instrument of achievement. All 'effects' start and end within the individual and that is why, in many ways, the thing we call culture deals with the effects of narcotics: production, circulation, restrictions, persecutions are all parts of the domain by which the system maintains control over the individual. The same system has itself installed such notions as 'to enrich' and 'to endanger' in order to disguise the origin of the phenomenon.

Q. How would you react if the work of Autopsia suddenly and unexpectedly met with acclaim in the mass pop culture arena? Would you start another project or completely stop your activities?

Autopsia: The work of Autopsia is exclusive and elite. This means that the very intention behind the work precludes any possibility of transforming an Autopsia work into a product of mass consumption. Even if an increase in sales of Autopsia's products takes them over the limit of mass interest it does not indicate that the work was created with that intention. Basically Autopsia is oriented towards the production of the work; it is not directed towards the exposition of the personality which does, in fact, move it away from the phenomena whose production goes through mass media. The presence of Autopsia in mass media has its limits - we are aware of these.

Q. What are Autopsia's views on mummification, fetishism, idolatry in art and culture?

Autopsia: Idolatry, fetishism etc. are phenomena of collective behaviour. The work of Autopsia is addressed to the individual and therefore not towards the masses. It is improper to define our work in relation to the standard notions of mass culture, mass media etc. These have their own rules whilst Autopsia has different principles directing its strategy.

Q. Autopsia today works in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. You feel better there than in another location. Why?

Autopsia: Prague is Geistzentrale der Welt. In Prague we feel electric and to be electric and divine is one.

Q. The theme of your new project PARADIGM was Casanova-Mozart-Kafka. Can you enlighten us on the concept of this project and explain what is most important in these personalities, their works and their destinies?

Autopsia: Our interest was in their self control, their programmed personalities. Each was absolutely aware of his place in the world and of his own capabilities. Individuality means the right to possess and dispose of one's own identity; on one side towards people and on the other side towards God. Death happens only to the individual; collectively it is not mortality; one can only speak of this metaphorically. In Casanova, Mozart and Kafka it is a matter of a sufficiently recognizable level form the vocabulary of culture. Each of them is, in his own way, close to Autopsia's attitude concerning the destiny of the individual. Since Prague offers a common ground for the fragments of the destinies of their lives it becomes possible to develop a paradigm pointing to its historical dimension, an awareness of the state of belonging. It is a matter of personal reading of cultural messages and making these concrete and actual. In one aspect the paradigm hides intrigues and temptation to disguise and change - it becomes a dance with masks.

Q. Is it not possible to think of death as a great mystification?

Autopsia: Death can become an object of mystification but first of all it must become an 'object'. In what way anything becomes an object can be discovered through examining paradigms of our civilisation from the classical period to the present. We live a precise paradigm: the oblivion of death, the age of the greatest mystification - death which it is not. Everything Autopsia does exactly opposes the individual to that oblivion. This means to be in conflict with the very paradigm. However, we are completely aware that only efforts that seems useless do, in fact, contribute to the destruction of the paradigm.

Q. What do you think about war and the deaths in the former Yugoslavia?

Autopsia: It is not the event of death that is at work here but fear and murder. Fear and murder are always led by an objective; in fact they do not occur unless that objective is established. The question 'what is the objective?' is answered through politic, not through art. Death gets its teeth from words and if that were our aim we would, by now, be in uniforms and armed with knives and bombs and be mere agitators of destruction although not of death. Death, in our view, does not require agitators and the tools of destruction because its medium is life itself. Every individual must discover this for himself and always from beginning.

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