

Expressive art – 13th December 1987

“... and since you’re going to issue this book on your own and you don’t want to ask anybody for anything, at least say it clearly”.

So I say: I hate Western culture à la Molier, Renoir or Charles Trenet.

Oh!

Because I hate decorative and formal art, which are both void of soul, the power of emotions and truth. And the Western art is just like that: charming films à la René Clair, colourful repulsive paintings à la Chagall and a play of flat, cold forms à la Pompidou Centre. That decorative and formal art would deserve only a passing attention and would gain a fraction of influence it has if it wasn’t supported by the economic and military power of the West, the ideological advantage of liberal democracies and their dominance over the rest of the world in all other fields.

The art of winners is always great art.

But I’m saying it chiefly because I love expressive art, that is, the art which is still cultivated only by Eastern European and Third World countries. I love the art of human soul, its fathomless chasms and its corners, where you find the lurking fear and the craving for death, compassion for human suffering and dismay at the vileness of life: Great Art. I like Kantor and Szajna, Brecht and Kubin, I like Bacon and great Soviet movies, German, Bondarczuk or Łapuszyński. I like art which once seen cannot be forgotten two minutes later.

Especially that in near future it’s going to disappear from the museums, galleries, exhibition rooms, theatres and cinemas of Central and Eastern Europe, as the latter becomes similar to the West. And eventually, just like here, it will end up in a poorhouse.

Western Europe isn’t short of great artists, because nothing in the world is distributed as evenly as talent and common sense. But expressive art lives here a peripheral life, hidden and paid with daily sacrifices of its creators. It spreads through underground channels and only sometimes gets onto surface somewhere in the suburbs. Thousands of decision-makers, culture branch clerks, art critics, owners of galleries, cinema and theatre rooms, auction houses and book editors pass over or even discredit it. Oh, fortunately there are exceptions and sometimes somebody manages to hide from the levelling steamroller of the Western culture. Luckily, there are expressive artists who’ve succeeded in making their way in this cultural Sahara of Western Europe. There’s Beckett, Ionesco and Bergmann. There’s Appelt, Pina Bausch, Velickovic and Cioran. But how many people like that do we have? A handful. A small handful of expressive artists, surrounded by an ocean of decorative art as well as cold and neutral formal art.

When I left Poland, where I’d spent my young years, surrounded by great expressive works of art, and set my foot on this lunar cultural desert, at the beginning I thought it was some kind of misunderstanding and “competent authorities” should be informed. In a word, as I’ve already told a hundred times, I started walking along the halls of different offices, galleries, ministries and centres to convince them it was necessary to show, exhibit, invite great artists that had never been heard of here. Everywhere I came across silence, unconcern, and in the end irritation. I needed time to understand why it was like that, but eventually it dawned on me. I understood, because the truth was obvious and it was enough to open the eyes.

Art in the West is poor, because under the cover of pluralism, dozens of museums, hundreds of cultural magazines, thousands of cinemas and theatres, except for schools, movements and styles which are practiced here, it is reduced to merely two kinds: decorative and formal art. The third one – expressive art – is almost completely absent.

I'm not going to define these three notions, but their meaning will clearly result from what I'll say in a moment.

There are many reasons why the local culture comes down to a simple, only one alternative between decorative and formal art. A wider range, including expressive art, is chiefly opposed by the pursuit of profit by the local mercantile society (1). But also the Western man's withdrawal into himself doesn't let him see human suffering (2). He doesn't care much even about his own suffering from the last war (3). The galloping secularization of the West, where there's less and less space for God, pushes any interest in the soul, feeling, mysticism and suffering into the background (4). There's plenty of pietism, though. Loads of worship of idols and golden calves (5). But there's also optimism and belief in the future thanks to the progress of science and technology. Why should we then talk about tears and suffering, poverty and death? Why refer to expressive art? (6). Also the power and structure of the local cultural establishment block the way to aesthetic expression (7).

1. So the first of the reasons why the local culture is reduced to the choice between decorative and formal art is the pursuit of profit. Culture in the West is the subject of trade. The bourgeoisie buys it for itself, and the intelligentsia buys it for the state and local government centres. They both have dominated this culture, both in an indirect way let the artists live. Well, despite an ostensible differentiation, the bourgeoisie on the one hand (a), and the intelligentsia on the other hand (b) are almost monolithic and buy only two types of art.

a. What the bourgeoisie seems to be interested in is how to decorate their flats with pleasant to the eye works of art or how to get some amusement watching a nice show. In a word (although not to the same extent in all areas of art), the bourgeoisie looks for nice, cheerful and optimistic, that is to say, decorative works.

Not to the same extent in all areas of art – I say – because, luckily, different artistic forms do not share the same fate.

Film, ballet or theatrical shows are still the most susceptible to Great Art. Even in the West one may find very expressive and great quality performances. These include films by Kurosawa, plays by Beckett or ballet by Pina Bausch. That's because a viewer's encounter with the gloomy world of human horror is short-lived and not very expensive. It lasts only an hour or two and costs merely the price of an entrance ticket. It can then be accepted by the bourgeoisie, whose patience and sense of economy is not excessively jeopardized. Therefore, artists have a material incentive to create such spectacles and distributors – to show them, as there's hope the rooms will not be completely empty. It's much worse in the case of fine arts (with the exception of photography and graphics, the cost of which is not high and which are within the reach of youth and real art lovers). A painting or sculpture are hung or put permanently in a flat, and their price is frequently high. "I couldn't live with such paintings on the walls on a daily basis!"; "Pay thousands of francs only to live with this horror?!"; "You must agree with the painting for which you've paid so much and with which you must

live from morning to evening”; “I couldn’t stand the sight of death or suffering in my living room” – say potential buyers, looking at expressive works of art.

That’s why an artist isn’t materially motivated to propose them this kind of art. A distributor feels even less engaged in it. He won’t exhibit, issue or produce it, as he stands little chances of recovering the incurred costs, let alone profits, which are none.

Essentially, if we assume that the main movements in art are an expression of classes which promote them, especially by purchasing works of art, the dominance of the bourgeoisie is expressed in this decorative, empty, easy art, which has flooded us in the West; in this nice, optimistic and cheerful art you can see in the galleries of Western capitals, in Western cinemas and theatres; in these cute landscapes, which are here, there and everywhere; in these films and plays with a happy end; in these concerts filled with warm feelings.

b. Apart from the bourgeoisie having its own money, today’s world is dominated by the working intelligentsia. It’s thanks to this group that technology, science and economics are moving forward in the West. It’s the most powerful promoter of the Western society progress. Not very rich, the intelligentsia can’t influence culture through its own purchases, because it only buys small and cheap works. However, it plays a major role buying art on behalf of the state and local government centres (communes, departments, regions, museums, centres, foundations etc.). It is like that especially in France, where the state itself as well as various FRACs, FNACs and other public culture centres are the biggest purchasers of art. Given the strategic position held in this circulation by the intelligentsia and a huge number of works bought by public centres, it can direct the dominant movements in art even more effectively than the bourgeoisie. The intelligentsia shows contempt for decorative art, so, given its education, it could become an ally of expressive art.

It’s not like that, though.

Firstly, because its preferences turn towards art that doesn’t express any emotions, neither optimistic and cheerful, which are typical of decorative art, nor emotions conveyed by expressive art – pessimistic and tragic. The art that the intelligentsia adheres to is purely formal, void of any anecdote, any literature, which should be understood as art: deprived of any feelings, whether positive, optimistic or negative, tragic. Its symbol is Malewicz’s black tie (kwadrat, nie krawat) against a white background or Klein’s blue monochromes. Its ideal is not beauty, but an idea, discovery and endless explanations, verifications and generalizations. The engagement of the intelligentsia in formal art results from the fact that this art reflects the modern world, in which this intelligentsia moves around: the world of science, technology, urban planning, digits, books, microscopes and chemical formulas, the world which, contrary to religion and ideology, is void of any emotions. It’s a world based on an idea, on a discovery, on an association of something that hasn’t been yet associated, on proposing a concept nobody has developed so far, on originality, on surprising the viewer with a new invention or a new method.

Formal art, let me repeat, is a reflection of the environment in which the intelligentsia lives and works. The intelligentsia discovers the laws and structures of reality and takes its mechanism to pieces. Hence its interest in formal art.

To see that it’s true it’s enough to take any book on information technology, molecular biology or urban planning and open it during a visit in a modern art

museum or in a concert hall during a concert of contemporary music. You can immediately realize similarities shared by these two worlds, which are seemingly so far apart and so different from each other.

The dynamics of formal art isn't inspired by emotions, but by the vectors of science, technology or city life, that is to say, the vectors of progress, searches and constructions. In the opinion of the intelligentsia, an artist should "make discoveries", "blaze a trail", "find new solutions", "build a new reality", "experiment". In a nutshell, he should listen to slogans that apply to science and technology. Formal artists' ateliers and exhibition rooms with their works on displays are like chemical laboratories. They serve the purpose of "discovering new forms" or "building a new vision of reality". Everything is based not on beauty, but on an idea equipped with a bulky exegesis and theory.

So any theoretical reflection on formal art carried out by critics, any occasional articles and more thorough monographs devoted to it are dominated by three key words: "search", "discovery", "novelty". Three terms which are void of hatred, despair, death. Neither there is any joy, happiness or optimism, though. Just three neutral notions. From this point of view, the intelligentsia detests both "small" and "great" art, both decorative and expressive art.

There's then no hope that the intelligentsia, playing its role of an art purchaser on behalf of the state and public cultural institutions, will show interest in expressive art. That's why expressive works of art are so scarce in museums and places showing films, choreographic or poetic performances, which are financed by public funds.

The conclusion is simple: since buyers have particular tastes, sellers, that is to say, artists and distributors – adjust to them. For this reason they propose for sale only what they hope to sell. And that's why the pursuit of profit is the first reducer of the ostensible aesthetic diversity in the West, which boils down to only one simple alternative: either decorative art or formal art.

2. The second reducer is the withdrawal of the Western society, the features of which are commonly known: egoism (a), individualism (b) and fear (c).

a. The Western egoism has been already stripped naked by writers and intellectuals a hundred times. We know it well. Nobody wants to admit to it, though.

There are nearly five billion of us on the Earth. A billion people live quite comfortably in the West, while the remaining four billion are starving in the Third World. Sometimes they are shown to us on television. However, we don't know anything about their culture born of poverty, despair and death, the culture dominated by expressive art. If artists from the Third World don't come to Western Europe or to the USA to create decorative or formal works, nobody will agree to exhibit or publish them, because nobody is interested in it. The West is lavish with great humanitarian principles. Representatives of the local establishment try to outdo one another in preaching profound dictums on "the duty which rests on liberal democracies in relation to the rest of the world". But the same West turns its back on the culture of countries marked by tragic expression, resulting from the tragic life and tragic death taking its toll there. The West slams the door before cultural manifestations of the Third World, because they don't concern it and it doesn't care about them.

“I can’t publish a book by this writer”; “I can’t put this film on screens”; “I can’t exhibit plays written by this playwright”; “I can’t exhibit this painter’s works”; “Nobody’s going to buy, nobody will come, nobody will watch. Simply nobody cares about it here” – you will hear when asking why there’s so little art created by the four fifths of humanity. This is how the prevailing egoism passes over expressive art, because this is not its art and doesn’t tell about its existence.

b. Western individualism has many positive features, but it has also repulsive vices.

It’s another manifestation of the local man’s withdrawal in himself and his reluctance for expressive art. Just like he doesn’t want to see the suffering of the four fifths of humanity standing at his door, he doesn’t like watching his fellowmen whom he passes on the street every day. That’s why the degree of culture of a man in the West is measured by his capability of suffering in silence, without asking anybody for help. According to the local standards, a civilized man is the one who keeps his dramas for himself and doesn’t disturb other people’s order with noisy symptoms of his suffering. If he’s howling with pain, he’s soon labelled “shameless”. His duty is to talk about the weather. To the question: “how are you?” he’s obliged to answer: “great”, and, in particular, he must avoid “personal” topics. Even when he’s threatened with death, he should keep a poker face. “Please, don’t torture me with your problems. I’d be grateful”.

The task of the Western art is to reflect this “discretion”, this “bashfulness”, this “self-restraint”. It’s supposed to show nice landscapes and quiet geometrical compositions against a neutral background. At the same time, expressive art is deemed “exhibitionist”, “waffly” and “noisy”. It disturbs like a pimple. In a way, it’s considered to be a feature of a lower rank society, society from the old times, when hired mourners marched behind the hearse and wailed.

c. And finally, fear.

That’s the third reason why the West closes its eyes to expressive art. Although it makes a big show of its open, pluralist and susceptible to influences attitude, the West has hermetically bolted itself against the influence of the culture of its enemies from the East. It fears that this way it might become ideologically weakened in the fight against communism. Throughout the time of cold war the West literally barricaded itself against any influence of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Unless an artist has “fought for freedom” there. Such a dissident, protester gets money, rooms, projections, distributors, galleries, Noble prizes. For the others there’s nothing.

Well, the “others” are often great expressive artists. The communist authorities grant them support, because paradoxically in this art they find justification for their dominance. Exhibiting, buying, supporting the art that describes barbarity, heroic fight, poverty of the oppressed man, as it is done by expressive art of Eastern countries, ennobles communism, because its official task is to free the man from degradation. That’s why communists don’t spare resources for expressive art.

And that’s yet another reason why the West neither wishes to listen to these artists nor wants to let them express themselves here. For allowing them to speak would mean exposing oneself to the influence of the enemy’s culture and thus weakening oneself in the political fight with communism.

3. The West also has a short memory.

Not only does it see the suffering of other nations as if through a haze, but it's not even pestered by the memory of its own suffering.

“Did these artists go through Auschwitz? – ask the local interlocutors in an almost reproaching tone. – That's the past. One shouldn't come back to old resentments. Life goes on”.

Of course, England was not occupied. Neither was the USA, and in occupied France the biggest misery during the war was the shortage of butter. So there's no point in remembering bad things, is it? Only Jews, gypsies and Slavs inhabiting future Lebensraum, in a word, all those whose fate was to be “finally resolved” know what man is capable of. That's why forty years later their art is still soaked with expression.

Well, the same forty years lived in prosperity and in progress made the Western society forget about its transient suffering. And together with memory, it's lost any wish for art that would remind it of this suffering.

4. The fourth reason is the death of God.

Despite the atheistic façade imposed on it by communism, the whole culture of Eastern and Central Europe is soaked with the presence of the Creator. So is expressive art, which assumes there's something unknown, something that deserves constant searching: the human soul, the fate of man and the meaning of life. On the other hand, the West, especially European, has been secularized for a long time, and the interest in mysticism, suffering, despair inherent in life as well as the promise of redemption brought by death vanished with the disappearance of God. Suffering on earth ceased to be the way leading to paradise. Just the opposite, it's a discredit, fault, disability. Why should we then valorise suffering by giving it an artistic expression?

5. While God and religion have disappeared, the mythology and pietism continue to flourish here.

The rational and developed West worships its idols like ancient folks worshipped Olympus gods. All that is naïve and superficial in primitive religions has been taken over by the Western model of culture. That's why it's permeated with homage to idols (a), the myth of rebellious angels (b) and the triumph of martyrs (c).

a. Like in all societies based on pietism, the measure of sanctity is a blessing granted to the chosen ones by priests. For this reason the value of an artist in the Western world is not measured by his talent, but by his renown, and the class of a work of art is weighed by the name of its creator instead of its quality. In other words, the fame of an artist depends on the renown granted to him by museums, art critics and collectors, and not on his genius.

A great artist has no chance to be accepted by the Western society, if he hasn't been first sanctified by the canonizing bodies of the official art.

Like theologians about saints, critics must first write exegeses about artists. Like temples put calves on the altar, museums must hang artists' works on their walls. Like the faithful pay homage to gods, the collectors must make obeisance to artists by buying their works. And the task of ordinary art enthusiasts is to worship them and have no other sanctities before them.

What I'm saying is only partially ironic, as it's a common attitude here. Actually, it's a source of paradoxical situations: the three hundred fortieth book about X (for example Picasso) will be written here and a symphonic orchestra will play a thousandth concert by Y (for instance Mozart) just because they are both deeply rooted in Western art Olympus. At the same time, however, nobody will lift a finger to show and see what's going on near or in front of Olympus, even if great things are happening there.

In Western museums, Western theatres, Western concert halls you constantly meet the same hundred standard names belonging to cultural Walhalla of the official art. All the time the same people. Every museum, every concert hall, every opera erects monuments for them, even if there are more talented artists around. In every theatre and every concert hall you can hear the same stars so often that it makes you sick. On the posters you find the same names and you constantly hear raptures over the same masterpieces, even if they have worn out completely. There prevails a stifling atmosphere of a ritual, which is supposed to instil in the society the conviction that there are only a hundred and several talented artists in the West.

b. Every pietism needs a myth on a rebellion of angels. That's why in the cultural religion of the West you can always find a group (it's an absolute must!) headed by a saint prophet. The said prophet must write an iconoclastic manifesto (necessarily!) and all of them have to "rebel".

"Do these artists form a group? – ask cultural officials and local art critics when they see something new. – Have they published a manifesto?"

Since impressionists formed a group, since surrealists wrote a manifesto, since both of them "rebelled", the same stereotype must be repeated in the mind of an average cultural decision-maker in the West. Without it he won't put his stamp on an artist's passport and won't promote him to another circle of sanctity.

c. Every pietism and every mythology needs martyrs. For martyrs give us a guarantee that we deserve salvation. Since our ancestors sent a God-fearing hermit to death, they are of course condemned. But we already have one foot in paradise, as we have redeemed their faults by canonizing the victim.

This naïve and plaintive pattern, which was used for the benefit of van Gogh and impressionists after their death, is persistently suggested by official bodies of the Western culture: "You'll see, these artists will surely be recognized in the future".

Thank you for this assurance, but it's a cold comfort for me. I'd prefer to see rationality replace mythomania and the Western intelligentsia recognise talents for the sake of their greatness, and not because the artists suffered a lot and nobody valued them when they were still alive.

As for the humble, that is to say, ordinary art lovers, they should finally rebel against the myths of artists' redemption after death, which are propagated by the local establishment. I'd rather they appreciated really great artists when they are still alive instead of noticing only the ones posthumously canonized by official bodies.

6. The sixth reason for the monolithic nature of the Western culture, which holds expressive art in contempt, allowing only decorative or formal one, is the enormous progress of science in technology observed over several dozen years.

Why should we cry over the human soul and its wounds if, as I've already said in these notes, the invention of a washing powder liberated the woman far better than all revolutions and religions?

There isn't a single day that a discovery in medicine hasn't shifted the boundaries of human suffering and human death.

"Expressive art belongs to the past – say the local interlocutors. – It's a decadent art, which sends us back to the tragic past of man and his animal nature. The Western man, the man of the future will be soon cured of bestiality, fear and hatred. In five generations he will forget suffering and maybe even death? What do we need expressive art for?"

7. In the end, the reason for the impoverishment of the Western culture, which reduces art to a decoration or a play of cold forms, is the local cultural establishment made up of big decision-makers (a), culture branch clerks (b) and art critics (c). Seemingly diverse, it's actually as monolithic as a granite block (d). Especially that it teems with opportunists, who don't have their own opinion at all (e).

a. The cultural establishment is first of all made up of big decision-makers.

You might think that where so many cultural, technical and economic factors impose only these two kinds of art on the society, there's always hope for some outstanding individuals. The hope that a few big decision-makers on the top rung of the social or political ladder will oppose this levelling tendency; that they will introduce real pluralism or at least a timid attempt of pluralism.

In a nutshell, there's always hope that outstanding individuals also have something to say in History and may participate in the creation of culture, opposing the forces that mould the society.

Nothing of the kind.

Let me limit myself only to the French example from the last twenty years: three consecutive politicians, each of whom might at least have attempted to blast the monolithic block of the French culture, Malraux, Pompidou and Lang, instead of opposing the levelling, only escalated it. By undertaking certain material enterprises (the Museum of Picasso, Beaubourg Centre, renovation of Jeu de Paume etc.) by granting funds exclusively to the official art, they only deepened the tendency which reduces the same to a choice between decorative and formal art.

In other words, instead of enlivening pluralism, they did everything to eliminate and standardize differences, to impoverish and simplify the French culture over the last several dozen years. And yet their example will long be a lodestar for a whole army of medium and lower level decision-makers, and in consequence for artists themselves.

So the hope that outstanding individuals will resist the tendencies of masses and will introduce a grain of rebellion into the uniformity and levelling turned out vain.

The explanation of it is clear : big decision-makers in the West are politicians chosen in elections. This way they become hostages of the demos, that is, voters. And voters are the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia.

If the elected politicians demonstrate preferences for tragic art, in the eyes of the voters they'll come across as pessimists, badly prepared for a fight for the wealth of a modern society.

Can you imagine the bourgeoisie voting for a man who shows a penchant for tragedy? Can you imagine the intelligentsia voting for a leader who doesn't believe in art progress and gives himself over to pointless searches for the human soul? Democracy is an optimistic, fighting ideology and practice, dominated by hope. It doesn't accept leaders who won't lead it to victory. And since it has an effective weapon – elections – no wonder big cultural decision-makers in the West bow and scrape before its tastes or even anticipate its aesthetic preferences.

Finally, I'll add that the underlying cause of the simplification of culture to the "decorative art – formal art" alternative is the very assumption of a democratic society. That's because such a society is based on consensus, that is to say, on an agreement of all citizens on a few fundamental values. For this reason the task of every politician is to build and strengthen this consensus so as to ensure the society's coherence. The introduction of real pluralism might pose a threat to the nation's cohesion and general consensus. It's impossible to rule a really pluralist society. That's why in democracy the duty of leaders is to strengthen what is common for the members of the society, and not to fuel differences which divide it.

b. The cultural establishment is also made up of state officials and decentralized art centres.

Well, officials are subject to hierarchical obedience. They must observe the cultural policy defined by their superiors, defined by the management of the institution they work for, and on top of the cultural policy hierarchy - by the minister of culture and the government.

Irrespective of their aesthetic sensitivity and their interest in expressive art, they mustn't cross the line marked by their own authorities. All conversations in museums or cultural centres aimed at convincing the officials of the necessity to grant some place to expressive art always end with the same refrain: "We have a policy to follow. You must understand us ... This doesn't mean that expressive art is void of any values, but we've already defined the aesthetics that we will defend and we have to stick to it ...".

But if you assume sticking to a policy, you also assume support, money, publicity for some artists, and silence, oblivion and refusal for the others.

c. Finally, the cultural establishment is made up of art critics.

Having no support of big decision-makers and clerks, you might think that in this system of freedom at least those who don't have to fear elections or the duty of hierarchical obedience remain independent and will grant support to expressive art.

Well, first of all, journalists don't earn much. Apart from a few powerful figures who are really free, the whole rest are to a greater or lesser degree bound to newspapers, radios and television channels. They are also obliged to observe the profile of the media they work for. They may occasionally depart from the rule, but if they stick to their guns, they'll be soon taken to task. For a newspaper, a television channel or a magazine live off the sale of programs and articles as well as adverts. And if the critics deviate from the bourgeoisie preferences for decorative art or from the intelligentsia preferences for formal art, these media will also be taken to task by the readers or viewers, who will stop buying or watching them.

d. The cultural establishment in the West, all those decision-makers, officials and critics form a solid block of granite, without any scratches or cracks.

Despite their number, despite the appearances of individualism and diversity, it's a sectarian, monolithic caste, tightly bound by common views on art; the caste that doesn't know hesitation, the cast that shares similar or even identical interests, a whole system of acquaintances, recognition, recommendations and services. All these people leave the same schools and have heard the same lectures by the same professors, who instilled in them the same artistic preferences.

They've read the same books on art and have written the same doctoral theses on the same artists. All of them are cast from the same mould and share the same aversion to art other than the one they've been taught: decorative or formal.

They behave like a communist nomenclature of apparatchiks, whose fathers won "their" revolution, the revolution of impressionists and abstraction, and who are now cashing in on dividends due to them. They might lose everything if the trend changed its direction. They've also made their own intellectual and formal investments in the promotion of decorative and formal art, that is to say, the promotion of the official art. Their careers, their renown, their position within the ranks of the ruling elites find a guarantee and explanation in this art.

Therefore, the first imperative, which they don't even analyse as it's imposed by their instinct, is to forget, pass over, push on to the sidelines any tendency that would like to find its place in the Western culture.

Behind a screen of artistic tastes diversity hides a deep sense of community uniting the Western establishment, which is felt spontaneously, like friendship bonds, like brotherhood of arms, like the spoils won in a victorious aesthetic battle. Each of its members separately has an impression that he's free in his opinions, that his tastes and choices are independent. In a mass, however, they're dressed in the same uniform, like soldiers, enlivened by the same will, managed by the same leaders in the same battlefields. They don't need orders, circular letters or directives showing the way to be followed. It's not worth threatening to dismiss them or impose disciplinary penalties on them for departing from the established rules. There will be no departures whatsoever. Under a thin layer of feigned polemics they have with each other, under a veil of little squabbles that set them apart and personal preferences they demonstrate, underside they are like a solid block of granite: homogenous and with no flaws.

The social consensus in the area of fundamental values is a blessing for politicians. It allows them to manage the society without resorting to force. Thanks to it, they don't have to put a policeman behind every citizen, because all of them spontaneously, leg by leg, voluntarily and with full conviction head for the same goals.

The cultural consensus, however, is a curse that any great talent, any great individuality, any great objection will smash against.

e. Finally (and this time I no longer express general opinions about the whole cultural establishment in the West), let me share the last reflection with you, the most bitter one. It concerns the minority of decision-makers, critics and culture branch clerks. Apart from that, let me strongly stress it, there's nothing special about it, as it applies to every social group in every political system.

Some of these people are as changeable as a weathercock, having no aesthetic philosophy whatsoever. They will go wherever they're offered most profits, where

compensation in the form of popularity, respect or money awaits them. So a part of the cultural establishment in the West consists of opportunists, for whom the kind of art followed by a given artist doesn't matter if only it sells well and is "recognized". If an artist's work has been sanctified by important people, it's become "exceptional". They will go in raptures over it even if deep inside they don't feel anything or loathe it. There are so many art critics, culture branch clerks and big decision-makers who are ordinary lackeys, obsequious to the "recognized" art and arrogant towards the one that has not been "recognized". For example all those who hate expressive art, but still enthuse about Goya, Munch or Bacon, just because the latter have been sanctified by museums and auction houses, therefore are "great".

The difficulty in promoting expressive art in the West lies also in the fact that snobbism and mimetism, which are powerful driving forces behind the promotion of unknown artists, have very little effect in the case of expressive creators. Except a few celebrities practicing this art who've been able to reach the Olympus of the local culture, few artists have been canonized by the Western establishment. That's why not many can be used as a locomotive which will pull other, less known or beginning artists, thus adding dynamics to the whole mechanism of promotion. Since there are no great references, a part of the cultural establishment in the West – the part which accepts only the art awarded with medals, raptures and praises – despises unknown expressive artists, whom they would otherwise "adore" out of snobbism and mimetism.

What's the conclusion of all that?

If nobody wants to lend me a microphone so that I speak in defence of expressive art, the only thing I can do is to build my own rostrum for expressing my own opinions.

Anyway, this corresponds to the logic of the local system: "Do it yourself". In the freedom alphabet in the Western style this formula is written in golden letters on all facades of local buildings: "Do it yourself".

To do that, it's necessary to have resources, which I don't have for the time being. However, one day I will have them. And then I will be able to speak to crowds as much as I want.

So instead of counting on the interest of some people and the support of other, instead of listening raptly to the waffle about "Western pluralism" and "freedom in the West", I must write and publish my own monographs. Then I'll have to open my own gallery, to which I'll invite expressive artists from all over the world.

It seems to me that this way I've said things clearly.