

My dear Wundelin.

I thank you for your letter of the 12th inst. Your criticism is not harsh enough either to be educative or inspiring. What follows is difficult for me to write since the criticism that you had written was on my drawing. This puts me on the defensive, and since the drawing was done at one of those inspiring moments when I am creative and was not in the know of form, proportion, line and space; the values ~~one~~ searches before and after one has drawn or painted.

You say the face that I have drawn is "unauthentic" and that "one can look through it — it dissolves and becomes a symbol of eyes, nose, and ears"; when at the same time you say that it has "expression". This is contradictory, for if the face that I have drawn had a quality of being a symbol it would have dissolved and become an example of "mannerism" unacceptable and easily conceivable. Does my face has a similar expression that a symbol is supposed to have? All the marks of art in one way or another has an "irrational element" interwoven in it. The "Venus of Willendorf" suggest fertility but it

is impossible for a man of such a magnitude and size to exist. A stony face or a mysterious expression would be a preferable attribution to a ~~mask~~ sculpture or drama. But in painting it loses its significance.

Besides the face and the body are the ingredients of the same frame and thus in relationship with each other. You have got criterions for judging them separately which I think is wrong. You judge figure through form, proportion and line but you refuse to judge the face by the same values. Why? Is it because that you can recognize eye as an eye and nose as a nose and that when looking at a drawing you are not aware of Pectoral, and collar bone hidden by "Dandooka" ~~and the no. of~~ ~~number of hairs on the chest?~~ Thus as all this do not matter so also the fact that in proportion to the head, (which in turn is in proportion to the figure) eye is not an eye and nose is just two perpendicular lines.

~~Now we come to "irrelevances".~~ It is irrelevant whether 'Dandooka' is foreign to a recognizable man or not. But when it completes the drawing so you say it is not foreign to a drawing. ~~and this is irrelevant point.~~

This diagonal line helps to assert ~~that~~ a particular characteristic of the figure without being in any way irrelevant to the composition as a whole. If not a Dandee this man could have been holding a flower, a serpent or a bottle or anything without being irrelevant. One of the most important and relevant aspects of the drawing that I presume you have missed, was the use of texture employed to heighten the feeling that possessed me while I drew it.

Finally, I do not believe that painting is the cessation of all conveying, ^{for} it communicates that which could not be conveyed by any other medium. And in this conveying we salvage what the world otherwise would have lost — the discoveries of different "styles" which numerous artists have created on the strength of their personalities, enough to engage in turn another. The weakness of my drawing is that it lacks strength in the sense that it is a solitary work of its creator.

Yours
Nels!