

## PAINTINGS ARE TO LOOK AT, NOT TO TALK ABOUT

---

*Though you agree with this famous quotation by E. Degas, you might wonder why someone consciously has chosen that painting instead of something else. Once I overheard a conversation between an old man and his wife. He said "I cannot understand people who deliberately choose to have a lot of portraits of unknown people on their walls" I agree. Some portraits are of course of a special quality as they express something beyond the graphical reproduction of reality and instead stress the artist's interpretation of the object's feelings. The emphasis on feelings is to lift the art to a dimension where the art is no longer a boring surface detained in a frame.*

*When art no longer communicates, it has lost its meaning as art and is just the object of decoration or provocation and the like. Art is always subjective. When we stroll around in our homes, probably filled with commodities which are part of our culture which have been around for quite a while, these commodities are nowadays a part of the movables and no longer art. As years have passed our seeing has become routine which is close to being blind. Being in this dreadful condition, it is time to strip the walls and remount the so-called environment.*

*You who love to confront yourself with a cultural bath on this advanced level will spiritually be transformed to the path of renaissance.*

*Months or years of cultural distance and contemplation create the desired spiritual and roomy emptiness and pureness needed to develop and recall the interrupted dialogue with art on the agenda. This dialogue will now be held with a depth it previously lacked.*

*The pieces of art and pieces of music we earlier absorbed had become as thought-provoking as the test-picture in television or the vignette to the news.*

*The touch of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is strong and simple to imitate. When you yourself render it, thoughtfulness and totally different feelings are awakened compared with standardized and mass-produced pieces of music. The conditions for pictorial art are likewise, which in a most surprising way enables one to touch and penetrate the unexplored domain inside the human being.*

*Scientists cannot explain if there is something physical inside my ear which makes me enjoy Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* but not enjoy Madonna's *American Pie*. The first captures you and the latter makes you yawn while sweeping away some breadcrumbs from the breakfast table.*

*Different reasons make it extraordinarily strenuous to create a piece of art. Most of the time it is a long straight road filled with assiduous work, where the effort is not in parity with one's expectations. The artist is alone with frustration and lack of *raison d'être* when suddenly or without notice the painting starts to paint itself. This might happen during the process of drying or just a short moment when the artist turned the face away for a while. The painting becomes art when the artist was not even there. These phenomena are beyond the domain of exact sciences and perhaps not an object of their interest.*

*Jris Cederborg-Lindgren  
Stockholm, Sweden*

