

## **Traveler as Artist like a Lost Luggage in a Wrong Airport**

‘We are familiar with the notion that the reality of travel is not what we anticipate.’

“If we are inclined to forget how much there is in the world besides that which we anticipate, then works of art are perhaps little to blame, for in them we find the same process of simplification or selection at work as in the imagination. Artistic accounts involve severe abbreviations of what reality will force upon us...”

“Which explains the curious phenomenon whereby valuable elements may be easier to experience in art and in anticipation than in reality. The anticipatory and artistic imaginations omit and compress, they cut away the periods of boredom and direct our attention to critical moments and, without either lying or embellishing, thus lend to life a vividness and a coherence that it may lack in the distracting woolliness of the present.”

“A dominant impulse on encountering beauty is the desire to hold on to it: to possess it and give it weight in our lives. There is an urge to say, ‘I was here, I saw this and it mattered to me.’”

### **“The Art of Travel,” Alain de Botton**

I would like to reverse the title as a point of departure of my presentation. Instead of Artist as Traveler, Traveler as Artist. Why?

Traveling in contemporary global world becomes a stereotype of moving very much related to any kind of tourism, that might even be adventure holiday. Organized, even well organized, ready, already, already there. We have all knowledge where we are going and experimenting, only surprise would be the frustration of miss-corresponding our already knowledge and where we visit, and the style of travel or comfort of travel itself.

So traveling like artist is a challenging type travel then. Travel as artist as traveler.

So what kind of traveling artist does? Which kind of traveler artist is? What is the travel itself and which kind of deal functions between artist and travel? Lets avoid any sociology about that at the moment, at least now, from my point of view. I am writing this now (and I will be speaking up there, here in Cork, I mean) relatively in the middle of nowhere in Western Australian inland, outdoor of a cottage in a small village called Kellerberrin and there is an artist residency there. It has never been my atmosphere to write something in outdoor with various animal sounds. All looks nice now and visible at the moment, but soon later I will think about snakes, spiders and mice. Never mind. Until now I have been quite busy to settle down and adapt myself to the conditions and that things take time. I felt myself an immigrant of a new world, not because of I am in an exotic place (even not though), maybe because being far from the main continent by distance and time displacement, maybe even not that either. But maybe this environment as climate, texture of life and action it is not my field to work. I have started to think about myself as artist and also as artist in constant move, if I can yet call it in travel. Is that a travel my being here? I am not sure, it has a lot to do with mobility issue, artist and mobility: working here and there, showing here and there, so moving, in that sense traveling. Do all that changing countries, cities, cultural frames have anything to do with the travel? Did I travel as people do often? I have to stop all that reflections on and about travel now.

Am I an artist traveler? To facilitate my debate I have to say “yes” at the moment. Since awhile I had chance to travel quite often as other artist colleagues through various countries and different spaces. When I see now most of my work have been conceived and realized during that professional travels. Wherever I go for work it happened to me to collect ideas, materials and also mature up some ongoing projects. Travel is to me a permanent freedom, a specific chemistry and thoughts on move. Ideas shape up in move and motion, faster than being/belonging somewhere. In move (so travel is) mind and visual system work differently than in mundane, daily life, you are already departed from your past and you are

in move and thoughts and images hit you more intensively and free of any habitual associative relations. Between departure and destination, wandering as scanner and paradoxically blind. Visual artists are blind. I feel like I have to avoid also going into philosophy of travel, at least my personal one. But at least myself I produce much when I travel. In the end the work comes out of the processes of travels and new ones emerge on move.

Yes I do write now in the garden, peaceful, quite boring of beautiful bird chants and so, Instead of writing on move, in the plain or train. Where I am in the residency where there is gallery, gallery flat, garden court, office are in one complex. But I am not a studio artist neither office one, well I shouldn't deny that I am also online but not freaky way, only writing, receiving, responding, contacting and flirting. What I am doing here? Is that a travel or stopping for a moment? I don't work in the studio, I don't really a domestic life. Home has been a hotel to come back time to time to resemble the things, loading and unloading the trunk, changing the things in necessity, stuffing the collected objects somewhere in. but all happens on the road. Travel force you to explore different things and knowledge. Maybe I am in travel and in displaced home, studio in travel, travel studio. As an artist depends on and addicted to the city and signs, here is not my visuality and not my travel.

Meanwhile I needed to come here, although it was not my very choice but stories brought me here in the end. Is that a travel? Even in ten days we did thousand km driving, I still don't think that makes it travel. Did I really travel at all? Since quite long time I didn't make a decided vacation, holiday or tourism. I simply didn't have time, at all. All of the travels were for the shows, events and projects, invited and combined by some life obligations, in between. Artists are in constant mobility. That's great, that has been great, especially for some artists have some paper difficulties and financial frame shortages, and it is kind of freedom exit and liberty of moving. And that mobility of artist keeps going through out biennials, mega-shows, thematic exhibitions (Balkan, Chine, Contemporary Turkish or

Albanian, etc.) along with cultural policies, strategies and funds. Sometimes some artists condemned with same works are circulating along the ideological global policies and current trends. Artists in that circulation become just the medium and object of the consumption. Few goes in market ground meaning good conditions of working and producing. Quite often same system functions for the conditional residencies. Quite paradoxically that network pacifies the artists and their works and within that slavery artists responds what it has been dictated to receive from. Same system is for the curators, they move like stewards, They constantly fly through the events, that might prevent some visionary possibilities. I should also avoid any new debate on ideology of art now. Maybe just a naïve remark: This artists have never possibility to make a private travel. In the other hand some artists who are in commercial market and fame system can realize exhibitions, sell enough to have a good life and travel as they wish when they wish how they wish.

We have been driving sometime today through the national roads, just driving, monotonous landscape and straight driving hours and hours, stopped in a ghost town, hot and dry, and we came back to our village, totally space out and displaced. Was that a travel? Stopping for a moment doing another thing or just undoing to be back to the situation, back to that paper. There was absolutely no visual interest for me from that journey, but I have been constantly thinking on travel, me in travel, artist travels.

Travel opens an additive and complementary aspect to the art as knowledge. Artist deals with another kind of cognitive experience and action. What is happening when traveling, the change of mood, mode and motion, displacement, de-contextualizing things and self and referring again the situation. Travel urges artist to develop an act of positioning, a critical view to handle back the things and ideas. This instant construction of situation/s provide a criticality of knowledge, an other knowledge, a different knowledge, but also same knowledge captured and sensed other than we practice to deal with life and living.

Structure and chemistry of artist and travel:

Travel is an escape of habit and everyday life. Artist is constantly in escape. Travel is a

marginal experience, artist stays in margin to reach the real, center and universal. Travel is the position of awareness as artist is. Travel imposes different layers of perception and conception, artist oscillates between mind and body, spirit and physics. A traveler is an outsider, so is the artist and they catch the local/inner mythologies better than the locals.

They both deal with mental moments, these are the captures of ephemeral passages of reality, the fragments. They re-structure the details and de-construct the entity of the veçue. Travel forces to develop practical and creative solutions, artist works as scientist to detach and resemble the things. Travel makes you think the existence of life, artist is always after a different knowledge of causality. Artist re-invent the imaginary itineraries and re-construct the charts, cards and maps. In travel mind and body sometimes don't go together, in that gap and rupture artist reaches mental knowledge which is the essential of his/her work, and that work indicates, manifests to the audience a certain visibility of that inner knowledge. Artist and travel are the mediums of certain cognitive presentations. Speed, stopping, waiting, departing, arriving, being in-between, losing, finding, going, coming, driving, visiting, mapping, astonishing are the essentials for the traveler, for the artist.

I have left the village Kellerberrin behind me and driven to Perth to leave for Istanbul via Singapore, Dubai and a few days after Dublin via Amsterdam, from Dublin to Cork.

When I arrived Istanbul after almost a 24 hours long jet-journey I have been totally spaced out when I was back to retake "Artist as Traveler" I have realized that there is two layers of thinking and reflections going around. One is Mind, the other one is Body in a big gap due to the jet-lag.

When I sit and write on artist and traveler in the garden of Kellerberrin my thoughts was different than when I am in move through and during the travel.

That time I listen to my body, I obey its new conditions and try to adapt myself to my home-city and my home. As I don't find enough time for anything and everything but

constantly thinking on where I am going and the symposium, I started day-dreaming and thinking in my sleep, all that intervals became a kind of thinking and writing on the subject but quite differently. Of course the change of the climate (from summer to winter), the space (from rural to urban), the mode (from sedentary to nomadic) and a lot other environmental facts play a big role of that displacement.

All that shift and switch of temperament stimulates a different capture of reality and facts. That capture deals with similar cognitive and sensitive kind when an art work happens into a specific knowledge or a knowledge occurs within the work or in the process of work. Why?

The position of artist is in the margin, in out of everyday life and routine in research of a different knowledge or sensation deals with a different knowledge which is essential to the man.

In jet-lag, hang-over, being-under-drug, pain, paranoia, depression, schizophrenia, jogging, adrenaline push, and all that marginal states there is another way of dealing with reality and knowledge as in the process of art and in travel. Insider than local, outsider than marginal.

In my case I was scared, in pain and panic, in instant depression or euphoria, stranger to the objects and afraid of language. Sometimes sweating or trembling. Either I was sick or I was dealing with another kind of sensation so did my perception.

A lot of mental moments which are the visual or audio striking to my vision. Within that bizarrerie exactly work happens with knowledge. Travel opens up mind therefore artist is anyway a permanent traveler and in constant jet-lag.

“She knows, now, absolutely, hearing the white noise that is London, that Damien’s theory of jet-lag is correct: That her mortal soul is leagues behind her, being reeled in some ghostly umbilical down the vanished wake of a plane that brought her here, hundreds of thousands of feet above the Atlantic. Souls can’t move that quickly, and are left behind, and must be

awaited, upon arrival, like lost luggage.”

“But she feels herself tipping back down into a miles-long trough of jet lag, and knows that that is what she must surf now: her lack of serotonin, the delayed arrival of her soul.”

**“Pattern Recognition,” William Gibson**