

## Notre Dame des Fleurs

*That you, sugar bumps?  
[turns around to see a man]  
Who the hell are you?  
It's me, Sugar bumps.*

Gentlemen! Pourquoi cet air si sérieux ? Let's broaden our minds.

You fellas have said some pretty mean things. Some of which were true under that fiend, Sebastien. He was a thief, and a terrorist. On the other hand he had a tremendous singing voice. He's dead now, and he's left me in charge. Now, I can be theatrical, and maybe even a little rough - but one thing I am not, is a killer. I am an artist.

Et quand on a du talent, on se doit d'en tirer profit.

There is a portfolio strategy in place by investors and incubators that promotes a shotgun approach as opposed to the sniper rifle approach. What does this mean? It means that early stage funds, super angels, and micro VC's are primarily interested in investing \$50,000 a piece in hundreds of different startups instead of investing \$4,000,000 a piece in a select few. The shotgun portfolio strategy speculates that a few startups will be successful, and will pay for all of the losers. If you ask me, this is bullocks. In general angels and VC's are wimps. Yes, that's right: they have no cojones. If we want people like Sébastien, we have to get over our ideas about the way things must always be. But the burden of proof should not be on the entrepreneur to explain why he is breaking the dogma, it should be on the purveyors of the dogma to explain why he should use it. That's why I'd like to introduce a new, a different approach to things tonight -

I call it the Fire Extinguisher strategy.

How is the system that constitutes contemporary art - the relations between artists, viewers, institutions, biennales, art fairs, gallerists, critics, theorist - independent from localized cultural, social, political and economical circumstances? Is there a global art, one contemporary art now? Or how does the global art market parasite off of smaller, localized production as a source of inspiration and products to market a larger audience?

Every net has its holes, holes that can be made wider, which in theory can cause the entire net to rupture. But being constrained by market conditions does not imply that we cannot reject them. On the contrary, my strategy advocates questioning market values precisely in the light of one's own involvement. Instead of conceiving of "the market" as evil Other, I work from the premise that we are all, in different ways, bound up in specific  $\int$ FPDUNHWFQRQLWLRQV&RQVHTXHQWO\WK-HPDUNHWLVQRWXQGHUVWRRG as a reality detached from society. That much about the general concept. Now as an entrepreneur, I began to wonder, "Why hasn't anyone proposed this already?" It's a great idea, but... I can't be the first person to think of it. In doing some research online I found out that other American inventors have had similar designs and proposals for a decade. However, none of them were able to get taken seriously or obtain funding. Why did that happen?

I want to tell you my answer:

Certain people are without logic. You cannot buy them, daunt them or negotiate with them. Certains hommes veulent juste voir le monde brûler. But the painter is condemned to please. By no means can he transform a painting into an object of aversion. The purpose of a scarecrow is to frighten birds from the field where it is planted, but the most terrifying painting is there to attract visitors. Actual torture can also be interesting, but in general that can't be considered its purpose. Torture takes place for a variety of reasons. In principle its purpose differs little from that of the scarecrow: unlike art, it is offered to sight in order to repel us from the horror it puts on display. The painted torture, conversely, does not attempt to reform us. Art never takes on itself the work of the judge. It does not interest us in some horror for its own sake: that is not even imaginable. When horror is subject to the transfiguration of an authentic art, it becomes a pleasure, an intense pleasure, but a pleasure all the same. Therefore, it is one of the central assumptions of my theory that there is no strict separation between art and the market, but that they are mutually dependent while also retaining some degree of autonomy. Consequently, the balancing act performed by the artwork as commodity between price and pricelessness is considered as the matrix for the double game played by those who banish the market to an imaginary outside while at the same time constantly feeding it. This is what I call erotic art.

In essence, the domain of erotic art or eroticism is the domain of violence, of violation... The most violent thing of all for us is death which jerks us out of a tenacious obsession with the lastingness of our discontinuous being. We cannot imagine the transition from one state to another one basically unlike it without picturing the violence done to the being called into existence through discontinuity. Not only do we find in the uneasy transitions of organisms engaged in reproduction the same basic violence which in physical eroticism leaves us gasping, but we also catch the inner meaning of that violence. What does physical eroticism signify if not a violation of the very being of its practitioners? — a violation bordering on death, bordering on murder. That reminds me - I'm overrunning.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is only one question left to answer tonight.

*Do you want to become the fireman?*

Well, here's what you need to do:

Fill the churches with dirty thoughts! Introduce honesty to the White House! Write letters in dead languages to people you've never met! Paint filthy words on the foreheads of children! Rub other mans rhubarbs! Burn your credit cards and wear high heels! Asylum doors stand open! Fill the suburbs with murder and rape! Divine madness! Let there be ecstasy, ecstasy in the streets! Laugh and the world laughs with you!

And when the smoke clears, there's some cream on top, and that's your investment return.