

## Indirect painting

A dialogue between the production of images and its formal qualities.

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Like everyone when encountering something in the world that interests me, I reach in my pocket for the soft blue glowing mediator of first resort and take a photograph. These images form the raw material for paintings.

Taking the place of a commercial printer I apply a ready-made approach and paint them using the CMYK four-colour scheme, each colour its own layer. A technique in dialogue with the efficient standardisation of the environment and its architectures of loneliness. Oscillating between romantic notions of painting and technological processes. The paintings cannot be reduced to a set of instructions and the pre-eminence of the digital cannot be refuted by handicraft. The paintings are of the screen in their merging of intimacy and estrangement.

These paintings dream of rules-based order, regulatory guide rails, sequential technical development towards an accurate image. The process has its own imperatives and injunctions that lead to an image of heightened fidelity.

The most efficient image would do away with our hands and labour, irrationality and inconsistency if it could. Minimising failure through managing the 'human element' is a key focus of systems approaches. Till then fidelity brings rewards of respite and the tranquillity of repetitive acts of manual devotion.

But things never go as planned.

Within these alienating mediations, constraints and prohibitions subjectivity asserts itself.

The scope of action is limited, but there is still room for manoeuvre.

In actuality there are passive and active parts in the painting process, selection, stopping, repeating, switching. Conscious planning turns into a reactive response to the evolving image which can be pushed in certain directions that vacillate between deviation and compliance.

Deviations; errors or violations, lead to an increasingly confused image that blurs the lines between banal technical object and dignified painting. These accrue and cascade through each layer of the painting and cannot be resolved later. The paintings, if they work, achieve a fragile coherence, a generous illusion that like reality itself remains incomplete and requires time to be what they are.

These are personal responses to situations; I believe they reflect common sentiments but everyone has their own misunderstandings.

OR

*Only now did Pierre realize the full strength of life in man and the saving power he has of transferring his attention from one thing to another, which is like the safety valve of a boiler that allows superfluous steam to blow off when the pressure exceeds a certain limit.*

*Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace Book fourteen: 1812 12. Chapter XII*

### Revelation, concealment, symptoms.

To grasp the background of destruction is hard to do. Tragedy happens off stage, a profound sense of loss beyond the presented images. We can't imagine what we're actually doing, the scale of it. There is so much untold human suffering in pictures, in our pockets, on demand and by surprise.

The conduits that educate about atrocity incite and diffuse political energies attenuating the sociality upon which genuine organization rests. Individual agency shudders in the face systemic disincentives.

We should be aware but not oversaturated. Luckily, they toggle much of it off for our wellbeing, don't allow too many negative sentiments. Exposure and awareness doesn't generate change because they know what they are doing and we don't know what to do. And don't you know that bringing horror into view is worse than the act of horror it records?

If we can't use these feelings, crushing responsibility mixed with impotent failure pulls in the other direction to sublimate fear into art. Failures that lead to disorientation, defensive withdrawal, downscaling of ambition and boundary policing. The rationalisations of failure. As we turn our attention back to the proximal world, these tragedies are like an after-image of a screen memory that will not fade.

Don't be too loud, practice good manners and etiquette. Chin up, it's not so bad. Present a happy front, an affable exterior. The individual is responsible for all their wellbeing and misery.

A person must change, or at the very least reproduce themselves.  
Be resilient, block off the negative and flourish.  
Mediate all the conflicts of feelings and impulses.  
Try to avoid giving up flowers for bread and butter.  
Don't dream too long of beautiful vast horizons  
and forget to look after one's own patch

There is much cause for despair but I'll always be happy to see you.

OR