

Man versus Nature

If man is part of nature then anything he does is perfectly natural, and all his works - engineering projects, dams and the like - and his dumps and polutions and devastations are different only in degree from ant hills and guano deposits.

But traditionally man is not part of nature. He regards himself above nature. This point of view goes back to ancient times and is rooted in our Jueo-Christian culture where it finds expression in the Old Testament. God created the whole world with everything in it before He created man which was a special act, the climax of His creative powers. After the flood He gave all creatures to man for his use and pleasure.

Man as part of Nature
~~This classification~~ results in a long-term point of view. Nothing that man does matters. Natural change encompasses man's influence and destructions, including nuclear annialation. Only geographical change and evolution are significant and determining forces.

Emphasis has always been placed on man's ability to control nature, an attribute which distinguishes him from all other animals. This power, however, is greatly exaggerated. He is able to control only a very small environment. He does not control completely even the environments of his most highly developed cities which are still battered by storms, inundated by floods, and burried in snow. So much for external meteorological forces, but what about upsets to these environments caused by his own mismanagement? Consider the polutions he spreads around himself in the air he breaths and the

consequences of
autonomous
deliberate
pesticides

water he drinks and bathes in. At the same time that he seeks to control his environment he succeeds in deteriorating it. His true success is only on a small scale - on micro-environments in artificial shelters - and in this area he is rivalled by social insects.

Conflicted equilibrium
physio-chem system
psycho-physical " " " " " "
or a system distinct
from all other animals
by possession of soul " "

What do we mean by the nature of man? Do we mean what man is? Or do we mean those characteristics of man that are natural - that, in other words, are consistent with what we consider are the characteristics of all living things; the characters that define as well as man all other living things.

The Artist and Nature

Nature surrounds the artist; he is obsessed with it. All his inspiration is derived from nature. In the last analysis it is the source of all painting and photography. Even abstract expressionism, which comes from man's mind, has its source in nature if we accept the premise that man is part of nature. The connection is of course much closer in the schools of objective realism which include photography.

In his attempt to understand nature the artist is constantly portraying it in painting or slicing out bits (of it) in photographs. He believes that an understanding of nature is to be found in its complexity and beauty - (if you will) - not in its utility. Unfortunately, beauty per se has acquired a soft sentimental over-tones which are not at all what the artist finds so compelling in nature. What he sees - (I see) - is rather the extra-

abstract art:

- ① all photog. abstract -
- ② no photog. abstract
or no art abstract (Picasso)
how to start with something

ordinary complexity and infinite variability in the world around him. This is what entertains him. In this respect the artist and the scientist, specifically the ecologist, have much in common. One expresses it emotionally in his pictures and the other ^{with} the same preoccupation intellectually. The difference being that art cannot exist without emotion and good science with emotion. Attempts to produce pure intellectual art succeed only to the degree that they fail in sterilizing the emotional content.

The artist is particularly concerned with conservation because of his commitment to nature. He speaks for nature through his art. Nature being the subject in which he is totally involved he must believe in the conservation of nature otherwise he is self-destructive. If the nature ~~world~~ were destroyed his art would in proportion to the place it occupies ~~(in the /NATURAL world)~~ perish. Piecemeal destruction of wildness will amount to piecemeal destruction of ~~(the)~~ inspiration ~~(of his art.)~~

Man as part of nature

whole planet an ecosystem leads to acceptance of man and his works as part of this system without distinction between his engines and constructions on the one hand and ant hills and bird's nests on the other. This classification results in long term point of view. Nothing that man does ~~does not~~ matters. Natural change encompasses man's influence and destructions including nuclear annihilation. Only geological change and evolution are significant and determining forces.

Man as distinct from nature

The usual and more useful concept. Man on one side and Bible nature on the other. Precidents found in/archeology: artifacts versus natural objects. Positions can be taken for or against human activities that diminish or destroy the natural or manless environment. The moral question arises: the right of man to destroy nature. The practical question: the advisability to alter greatly nature. Human interest in nature and need for nature. Esthic importance to man of nature.

The artist in man and nature

Inspiration derived from nature. In last analysis, ~~source~~ing of all painting and photography is nature, even abstract expressionism comes from man's mind which is part of nature if we accept the first premise that man is part of nature. The connection, of course, ^{is} much closer in the objective schools of the graphic arts. My concern since I am a photographer will be essentially with this

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medium rather than with painting, but the general thesis remains the same.

Photography of nature is the recording of what the artist sees (literal element) and what he feels (emotional element). Usually not separate. The literal part requires selection and the emotional part interpretation. They are both, in the broad sense that they are removed from context, abstraction. The first is isolating a piece of nature that attracted the photographers attention; the second is recording the piece in such a way that his emotion is transmitted to his audience. Success is a measure of communication of feeling.

Effect of isolation elimination of extraneous material, hence intensification of image and feeling. Works on photographer as well as on viewer.

Process of selection automatic or conscious but subjective

Cause of enhancement total scene too complex; selection is simplification. Too much blocks imagination by being too explicit. Inference stirs interest. Most of scene becomes implicit which is stimulating.

Failure of selection to sustain feeling of whole. Don't photograph. Remember that quantity is no substitute for quality.

Purpose in respect to audience to elicit same response as in artist; not possible because subjective; feelings not same and not measurable. Hope for some reaction. Appreciation important to artist because communication stimulating.

Methods of working

Rules better called councils or precautions. Avoid rigidity which destroys art. Rules are to be broken. They are reminders and warnings.

No rule for composition - must be felt. Cant generalize
 can recognize bad composition. Picture must be free of
visually disturbing elements but not emotionally disturbing
 elements which can be stimulating. The former is a part
 which does not fit into the total picture.

Nature Photography

Total picture as important as any other kind of photography
 Unity, integration. Distractions like accidental dissonance.
 Convincing - free of doubt about genuineness.
 Avoid false pretenses. If unorthodox procedures make evident
 admit them. Especially important in conservation.

Special case of bird photography

History of my interest

Development of techniques for improvement of quality

Relation to and influence of general photography

standards same for each: detail composition lighting
 finding appropriate subjects

Color photography another dimension, fuller information,
 identification. convincingness of color; problem different
 for birds than general photography. With birds matching
 possible. In General no such thing as true color; must be
 plausible even if startling. Perception of color most
 subjective of all quality evaluations.