

otu: thanks for giving me another round asking you questions.

omi: sure, who else could ask me if not you?

otu: yes, well.. okay, so please lets come back to some answers of you which didn't satisfy me, okay?

omi: okay, i'm sure they were satisfying me even less.

otu: so you where explaining me why and how responsibility is important to you..

omi: ..the most important..

otu: yes. but i still can't see more than a word-trick. you bring the term back to its etymological meaning, but why does this make one more responsible knowing about that word-source?

omi: well, if you understand the deep meaning of a term then you use the term meaningful, no?

otu: yes, but you can say "red" and still do "blue".

omi: its more simple and concrete. in order to be able to answer i have to be able to listen. in order to be able to really listen i have to be completely silent in my mind, otherwise the sounds of my mind don't let me listen and mix up with what i hear. and thats the whole problem on responsibility. so that means that if i listen well, i can answer properly and if i do so i do it responsible. its not basically about a moral problem, its basically about listening well. and i'm trying to that all the time. to listen. did you ever realize how difficult that is? Krishnamurti, a philosopher which i appreciate very much, calls this listening "passive awareness". if i'd be actively aware i'd mix up my mind-sounds with what i'm listening to and then i'll have lost the point again.

otu: okay, i think i see a bit clearer now what you mean. you got a strong believe in that we can know whats right and wrong.

omi: why "believe"? don't you also see a lot of irresponsible people and actions? lets take politicians, they are maybe the best example of how irresponsibility works. they are functionaries, they function in function of an idea, an ideology. instead of listening to good questions they sell answers. if you are sure about your ideology of a so called free market and you believe in the permanent economic growth, the so called climate change will be just an invention of another than your own ideology. but if you have a walk and you listen to the world around and within you you can see and feel that this world is profoundly sick. made sick by this or that ideology. this mess wouldn't have happened if the "art of listening" would be a central skill of human beings.. if it were a mandatory subject in schools..

otu: ..passive listening..

omi: yes, a listening which doesn't judge or compare, but wants to understand the "said".. and not defend its own thinking.

otu: and you think that you're good in that? are you a good listener?

omi: you tell me.

otu: okay, maybe we can come back to that in a third round, first i have to listen more to other things you tell me. let me come back now to the issue of Love..

omi: ..i knew it..

otu: ..because you listened so well?

omi: no, but because i was hoping we'd come back to that point.

otu: why?

omi: because i felt kind of offended by your little provocation when you said that i sound "so light and lovely"..

otu: ..oh, you really did? i apologize..

omi: you don't have to, provocations are essential in the art of listening.. anyway i wondered after our talk why i felt offended.. and i suppose its because i wasn't satisfied with my words regarding the Love-question..

otu: ..was was the question again?

omi: does Love exist? independently from the existence of human beings? just as real as air or water? but wait, what was your Love-point you wanted to come back to?

otu: to me it seems so obvious that Love only exists because we are social animals. so we made this big-Love-thing up, like the ideal of all we like, for me its an invention, but a very central and important one. i didn't get the importance you give to the "open questions", and i didn't understand why you said that with the "Love question" you are "asking all questions".

omi: i see you don't care to much about truth, because you're sure that there is none. only the personal, subjective and relational one. and you might be right, i don't know that. but i don't want to believe it either. obviously, if Love exists independent from those who could have invented it, then there must be a kind of Love principle active in nature, in the universe. yes?

otu: yes, i can follow that, then the world would have been Love-created..

omi: ..then life would be Love-created from every moment to moment! the problem then would be that we are not in Love with this Love, but with our ideas of Love.

otu: ..aha.. whereas?

omi: ..whereas if Love is just a mental-emotional construct, an invention, our problems would

be based on the impossibility of declaring a kind of universal Love-definition and agreement.

otu: ..so only if Love really is something real as water or air we might can find a peace- and respectful coexistence?

omi: yes, only that Love can't be real or unreal, but only Love. you can't touch it, it only can touch you.

otu: can you maybe give me an example which makes it more real to me what you mean..

omi: sorry, i'm trying, i'm not a philosopher, i'm a partist.

otu: ..an example?

omi: when you look at a child and you feel love than there is just this love, right?

otu: .well, and me and the child..

omi: ..no, than only Love remains..

otu: ..aha, is that so..

omi: ..in the sense that you and the child are then irrelevant, as two entities you are. what it actually is, what makes you live right now, makes you live life, is love. if you can perceive that completely, there is no difference to what you perceive and then you are in the middle of love. just like this child.

otu: ..yes well, i feel what you mean, but i can't really understand it..

omi: ..well, that's enough, what more do you want?

otu: another example.. from your very own life..

omi: when i look at a flower, this beautiful creature that exists in infinite variations and seems to be so beautiful only to please us and attract the pollinators, when i really look at her and disappear into her, love can show itself in this self-absorption. after these moments i feel clearer, calmer and more joyous. in love.

otu: i have to smile because you sound like a hippie now.

omi: the hippies were right about a lot of things. when we were invited to MOMA in San Francisco with the project *communimage*, i think it was 2009, we lived for a month in Height Ashbury, one of the birthplaces of the movement, and there we stayed in a small hotel called the Psychedelic Hotel. The lady who ran it knew many of the birthmakers at the time, so we were virtually still delicately persisting flair of that time..

otu: we always hear that the murder of a young man by the Hells Angels at the Altamont concert of the Rollings Stones was the end of the hippies... or the cruel murders of the Mason gang...

omi: yes that's what they say and it's true, it suddenly changed everything, but even before that many people understood, also because of very smart critics like Frank Zappa, that it was

too easy, too naive. As Zappa once said, you are not a Zen Buddhist just because you paint ZEN on your T-shirt. that says a lot about the kind-of-mind that this movement had, but nothing about the many liberating impulses that came from it. in music, where i consider Zappa one of the most interesting and influential, or in art, especially graphic design, with Wes Wilson, the father of the psychedelic poster, or Victor Moscoso, Richard Griffin and all of them with their fantastic designs. What i also liked about it was how these playful, experimental colleagues blurred the line to art, erased it.

otu: yes, that's right, a whole avalanche of creativity and enthusiasm for experimentation really went up the mountain of time!

omi: an avalanche rolling up the mountain of time? wow! are you from Height Ashbury?

otu: if you talk openly about and inspired by hippies, you're about to become one..

omi: yeah, there's really a lot of timeless about it, a lot of fresh that makes present-day creating look limp and gray.. to me, at least. just think of the fantastic animated film Yellow Submarine from the Beatles by Heinz Edelman and his team, or what there was starting and happening in the underground scene of comic art, as with Robert Crumb... one could continue endlessly with examples, impulses that still flow everywhere today, in this respect the end of the hippie era is very relative.

otu: i see you also seem very influenced by that time.

omi: yes, but i'm actually only now slowly becoming aware of it, and who isn't? i was born in 1961, but in Hard on Lake Constance, not in Height Ashbury, more in grayland than in colorland.. but i was lucky enough that my parents, my older sister and her friends listened to this music.. of course starting with Elvis, the Beatles, the Mamas and the Papas.. my father was also a Zappa fan...

otu: Frank Zappa again, what does he mean to you?

omi: oh, a lot! his wild creativity, his wit, his simultaneous precession and skill, his disregarding of practically all rules to propose more interesting ones, made him for me one of the most influential artists of the 20th century.

otu: Frank Zappa

omi: Frank Zappa. yes. Neil Young too, but in a completely different way.

otu: Neil Young?? are you kidding? but that's like comparing a hurricane to a sprinkler..

omi: i don't compare anything, but both are extremely fresh and influential. i could say that Zappa lit my creative fire, because i saw with him that the important thing is also to keep on surprising yourself, and Neil Young lit my love fire. The good man has such a tender and honest voice! Zappa would now surely slap me for this statement. Too bad he can't do that anymore, he died way too early. Of testicular cancer, of all things!

At some point i gave my father, knowing that he liked his art, a thick Zappa book with all his song lyrics in English and on the opposite page German. He was deeply shocked. and amused.

otu: are your idols actually in the visual arts, i'm just asking myself the first time? it

sounds more and more like they are actually in music.

omi: yes that is indeed the case, and if you know that, my things begin to sound, i think, at least they suggest that influences and attitudes, such as that of not being forced by the market to a style - which is, by the way, i have not been represented by a gallery for years - or as i said before, to let the present and the collaboration with life, as i called it, flow into it, instead of producing a linear development structure, a so-called coherent whole work, which critics would surely be more willing to take seriously..

i have that too, but in this sense more freely and experimentally. i simply learn more that way. or, in other words, i can't help it.

otu: then i wonder why you didn't become a musician.

omi: yes, for true. i always liked the division of labor in a band much better - like in the kitchen - everyone contributes his part and together it becomes something delicious..soundy.. but that's how i became a partist. you know, with Partist i have elevated a new profession into the pantheon of work values: the collaborator. a collaborator doesn't necessarily have to collaborate with others, although of course he always does if you trace his actions through daily life, but he has to collaborate above all with the presence, with life in its only core. of course, it is nonsense to say that i have invented the collaborator, who has existed since Adam and Eve, but in the visual arts i mean - Partist, not Artist! there is much more to it than one would first like to think.

otu: come on, tell me spontaneously 5, 6 partists from the current music scene that you think are really good.

omi: Neil Young, David Byrne, Miles Davis, Brian Eno, Norman Quentin Cook, Moby

otu: again only men, we had that before..

omi: yes, i just noticed that too... but i just said that very spontaneously, i could also tell you a list of women, but for what, it should be clear that i am not a supporter of the alpha male, but a feminist.

otu: you are a feminist?

omi: yes of course! besides, it is nonsense to determine that only by the topography inside the underpants.

otu: yes, that also seems too short-sighted to me.

but now please also tell me some of your role models from the fine arts.

omi: the so-called fine arts. so if i think way back, to the beginning of my memory, there are two men in particular - again men, darn! - Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky. My father had a book about both of them, and because i often sat in bed because of my chronic bronchitis, i looked at them again and again. Wonderful. i think all children of this world would say the same, which says already once incredibly much good about the art of these two.

otu: why are you so sure about the kids?

omi: well, because I was one myself.

otu: and as a child you are all children?

omi: yes. as Buckminster Fuller - another role model - once said: he would always show a work or a design to children first, if it bored them, he knew there was something wrong with it. i experience it that way, too. In general, why is the art of drawing for children, or why are cartoonists, animators, excluded from the visual arts the way children's book authors are excluded from literature? i don't see any valid reasons, only presumptuous ones. separating reasons, I think connecting ones would make more sense for everyone.

otu: now please also tell me, perhaps in conclusion, because you make me in the meantime again a walk-wanting-impression, who your current colleagues are, to whom you gladly look over, are close to you.

omi: with pleasure, but before that, to conclude the question as a child, I have to look over to Laurel & Hardy, Karl Valentin, Charles M. Schulz, Chaplin of course, Buster Keaton, Tom and Huckelberry, Pippi Longstocking..

otu: ..oh wow, a girl! But wait, wait, let's stay on the ground of fine art....

omi: yes, i'm saying that my ground wants to be understood more broadly.. the first black and white tv we had my father brought home, when the first moon landing took place, 1969, after that i sat in front of it for 5 years. that was my first, real schooling in art history, and on the nightstands there were always the square booklets from Schulz, the fantastic peanuts.

otu: i see, but now back to the present - who are the role models or colleagues today? i.e. in fine arts..

omi: well, the very successful people i like that they are very successful, i find Olafur Eliasson, Otobong Nkanga, and then Thomas Hirschhorn.. but also Superflex, although from the first two I'd wish they would come out of the isolation of the white cube more often and do it more in Hirschhorn's ephemeral approach or Superflex' linking strategy..

otu: Thomas Hirschhorn? that surprises me the most, he's so far away from you aesthetically..

omi: no, that's not true, it only looks that way on the surface. each of these four people or teams, which are all collaborators as well in one or the other way, has something that is very close to me...

otu: and that would be?

omi: may i make it exciting?

otu: yes, go ahead.. just don't bring Steven King into this now....

omi: ..King? he has something too! no, but can we please postpone this to the third conversation? you were right with your walk-observation. my legs and feet are creeping, crawling and burning again, if i don't go along, they go without me...

otu: of course... let's call it a day. i look forward to next time.

omi: me too! Shalom.