

What is Criticism 2.0

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"The fact that it got so much right is what put it on my map to criticize what it got wrong." — Neil deGrasse Tyson

On the eve of my exhibition reception, I take a flight to DFW, Texas to visit my youngest brother. He is in the intensive care unit, sedated due to seizures stemming from a high fever, the result of his body trying to fight an intensifying sepsis. His body is also dealing with the influenza virus, and a rare medical condition called rhabdomyolysis, which causes the breakdown of muscle tissue, releasing a damaging protein into the blood causing the kidneys to fail, and thus his health and body. His life is in crisis.

What should be done regarding all works of art is to engage in the act of criticism. True criticism does not seek to subvert or countermand artistic propositions, but to expose the latent fascist thrust of all poetry—to place the handcuffs of logic fashioned by the work of art on itself and activate the inherent toxins of proposition bringing about sepsis.

To attempt to place a work of art in crisis is to diagram the constellation proposed by the artwork in its attempt, *the proposition*. The stronger the constellation, the easier the artwork will succumb to the oppression of criticism and the quicker the body of the work of art succumbs to sepsis and rots. To “coax [the] cornered reason [of a work of art] into delirium”¹ is to cause the work to enter a crisis. This is accomplished through the interrogation of its internal logic and impulse. Its reason is its constellation, its segregation from, or inclusion amongst everything preceding it, from tradition, the set of immaterial critical decisions undertaken by the artist, materially present in the artwork as the proposition.

The state of crisis exposes the constellation and the truth of the failed attempt reified in the artwork. It allows the body to be separated into its components and presents the artist with a decision regarding how to proceed or reconstitute the work or constellation. The dissection of the body, ie: the plotting of the constellation of failure, illuminates its inherent truth—a record of failure retained and maintained as another body of empirical knowledge derived from its dissection.

What’s left after dissection rots. Swarmed by flies, maggots quickly take up residence in the festering corpse feeding on decaying flesh and spreading enzymes that turn the body into mung², digesting what remains of the flesh. Later, examination of the skeleton re-diagrams the constellation thereby granting access to the immaterial truth of failure. The search for the *proper* constellation or form for the work of art is the allowance of the work to enter crisis—to allow the work to be

touched. The more times a *concept*³ is put into crisis, the more perspectives and interpretative descriptions arise of its failure, its truth, its latent constellation. The truths of failure combined can then be used to find the essential truth of the work's failure.

Perception, limited/colored/ and veiled, is blind to the totality of a work of art hidden from it by the work's intersectional dimensions only able to be accessed by the senses attuned to particular dimensions of the aesthetic⁴ experience presented by the work of art. Everything existing outside of the limits of subjective perception remains hidden, wrecked⁵, waiting to be salvaged by another, attuned to its time, tone, timbre, dimension or hue.

¹ Adorno, Theodore, *Aesthetic Theory*, Continuum, The Tower Building, 11 NY Road, London SE1, 7NX, 1997

² <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=mung>, accessed March 13, 2019

³ Temporally reified as a work of art.

⁴ Late 18th century (in the sense 'relating to perception by the senses'): from Greek *aisthētikos*, from *aisthēta* 'perceptible things', from *aisthēsthai* 'perceive'. The sense 'concerned with beauty' was coined in German in the mid 18th century and adopted into English in the early 19th century, but its use was controversial until much later in the century. The aesthetic experience described has no concern with or for beauty. The corpse is beautiful to the fly, delicious to its larvae; they complete their growth into adulthood, where they will reproduce.

⁵ wreck | noun, Law, goods brought ashore by the sea from a wreck and not claimed by the owner within a specified period (usually a year): the profits of wreck.