

Sorbo Veneziano

by

Dogtime ID/IM

Based on Mondo Veneziano  
By Antoine Prum

EXT. OUTSIDE THE FILMSET - DAY

Preparation sequence: we see three participants dressing themselves, ironing the suits, inspecting the gas masks and the helmets, testing the equipment. One of the participants is reading a book on toxic disease control. The participants work in silence.

After a while a fourth participant joins them, greeting the others quietly.

EXT. FILMSET - DAY

The four actors come walking into view, from a distance, closing in on the camera. They are looking around, enlightened. Somewhere a clock strikes twelve.

CONVIVIAL ARTIST

Venice was a great historic  
adventure.

PAINTER

She could also have been an  
individual passion.

CURATOR

Venice was not a museum, but a  
constant recreation.

THEORIST

Venice - that was its secret -  
was an amplifier. If you were  
happy, you could have been ten  
times more so; unhappy, a hundred  
times unhappier.

A dog barks in the distance.

EXT. TERRACE - DAY

The four participants are gathered on a terrace, relaxing, drinking coffee, which is served by a waiter. They read their text partly from the film script, as if rehearsing.

THEORIST

We should have asked ourselves a  
few questions, first of all: Why  
were we doing this and why were  
we doing so in this form and  
constellation? We knew that we  
ourselves had also been deeply  
poisoned by the contemporary  
exhibition system.

(MORE)

## THEORIST (CONT'D)

To escape from its power in taking advantage of our position, we did decide to set the rules of the game so that the course of action would transcend even the realm of imagination.

## CONVIVIAL ARTIST

Once the situation had lost its control, our encounter changed its nature as well.

## CURATOR

Ritual never served merely as mystification, but also as a means to bind the otherwise private experience of the individual to the experience of community.

## CONVIVIAL ARTIST

Part of the emotional letdown which came with viewing any comprehensive exhibition of contemporary art occurred through a serial reiteration of the lack which resulted from the loss of art's ritualistic basis in religion.

## PAINTER

But this did not entail the disappearance of ritualized behavior; rather, such behavior was reorganized around absence. The complaints became chronic, everyone expected them.

## EXT. FILMSET - DAY

Dialogs in this scene are taken from Mondo Veneziano analyses from Eva, Arjan and Sieto.

## CURATOR

I think one important point in this discussion is, for example, the idea of a lack of (religion based) ritual sense in contemporary art.

## THEORIST

Een duidelijk geval van "You can run, but you can't hide"...  
Waarom heeft de curator ineens een flitsend pakje aan?

CURATOR

A plagiarism, then, or a postmodern pastiche? I think it is a little of all this.

THEORIST

Ze geeft geen teken van leven ondanks dat haar ogen open zijn, misschien is ze al dood.

CURATOR

The artist manages this subject both in a theoretical and practical way. Ritual as an artistic practice and also as a context and condition for communication between the sender and the receptor.

THEORIST

Het is een manier van denken die me aan en tegen spreekt. Hoe meer ik er over nadenk des meer het me tegenstaat, ondanks dat ik het begrijp.

CURATOR

Related to all this is the discussion about the goal of art, and the question if the process of making art can be already consider as art itself.

THEORIST

Is de painter bewust van zijn positie in de hedendaagse kunst maar wil hij het niet zien en gaat daarom kuntsmatig boven de rest staan?

CURATOR

The curator affirms that ritual "binds the otherwise private experience of the individual to the experience of the community". So this lack of ritual in making and presenting a piece of art will make communication between art and (a certain) public more difficult or even impossible, and also it could provoke a letdown in public (other than artists).

EXT. FILMSET - NIGHT

Action sequence. A single participant enters with a piece of equipment, and destroys something which reminds him of mondo veneziano. After the destruction, he sits on the ground, exhausted, while other participants join him. They take notes in a note book, and gather evidence in little plastic bags.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Two participants walk onto a bridge, and have a discussion about the intentions art was supposed to have. One of them (the painter) has a camera, and takes pictures of the surrounding film set while talking.

CONVIVIAL ARTIST

To avoid any misunderstanding: I myself liked to work with people who did not consider themselves artists and whose primary activity was in other areas. The main features of such projects were in that the human aspect dominated the professional one. It is because friendship was not a creative cooperation, but the "ethical form of Eros".

PAINTER

The process itself was enough for you?

CONVIVIAL ARTIST

The discourse was crystallized in the process of its formation. Such a project was valuable as a lived-through duration.

PAINTER

These projects were nothing but the acts of voluntary group therapy!

CONVIVIAL ARTIST

The viewer's inner, distanced attitude dissolved because this immersion into life-atmospheres enveloped the senses as a totality, with painting, sculpture, architecture, sounds and smells.

## CONVIVIAL ARTIST (CONT'D)

In the total image, everything  
was image.

## PAINTER

Whenever I saw a photo with some  
DJ-guy in a gallery who had  
played at an opening, I wanted to  
kill the curator who had allowed  
this or had had the stupid idea  
to invite him.

## CONVIVIAL ARTIST

Like Baroque Masters of Ceremony,  
these artists knew how to direct  
their audience within their  
Gesamtkunstwerk productions.

## PAINTER

It was in the museum or the so-  
called alternative hotspots that  
transsubstantiation took place  
under the very noses of the high  
priests of avant-gardism, rudely  
awoken from their dreams.

## CONVIVIAL ARTIST

The artists loved life-  
experiments, and he circumscribed  
existentialist, energy-charged  
and atmospheric spaces that  
provided fresh nourishment to the  
amazement that had been lost  
between performance and  
perception.

## PAINTER

Where did the kitchen stop and  
where did the art begin?

## EXT. FILMSET - NIGHT

Action sequence. Same as before, but with variations,  
depending on what we will find. Different participant to  
perform the destructing, and different piece of equipment.

## EXT. TERRACE - DAY

The actors are gathered at the terrace again.

## PAINTER

May be this is the point to tell  
us what you've done?

## THEORIST

The shift from theoretical reality towards applied reality.

## THEORIST (CONT'D)

I was not a classical Karl Kausky pupil. I was not saying that the process was everything and the result or goal was nothing. But my personal position on this was that I was somebody who was intimately very touched by the lack of goals. This was my frustration and I believed that I have shared this frustration with many other intellectuals. Actually, I romantically believed that in the course of the process we would reach some goal.

## PAINTER

That sounds somewhat uncertain.

## THEORIST

Thus ritual, in this case, helped to maintain a given set of power relations. Yet to remain silent was no solution; this simply abandoned the possibility of formulating a critical perspective for the sake of some ill-conceived notion of autonomy.

## CURATOR

Trough their close ties with contemporary sociopolitical developments and trough their collaborative working model, universal statements were relativized in favor of discursive process.

## PAINTER

The medium was waiting for this to happen. Those days were an exciting time to be interested in art. No one was thinking that art and technology was already part of the past. Painting had been declared dead many times, but it kept coming back!

## CONVIVIAL ARTIST

You should have put yourself in the role of the unprepared viewer.

PAINTER

The picture we were painting  
there, then, was not black - it  
was empty.

EXT. FILMSET - NIGHT

Action sequence. The fully equipped participants enter the stage and destruct everything that reminds them of the original movie.

EXT. FILMSET - DAY

Cleaning. Use high-pressure cleaner, if possible.