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Beyond the Artist's Voyage

The Aesthetic Necessity of Travel

Abstract

In the present study, I focus on the diverse manifestations and aesthetic consequences of travel in the work of some artists that may nevertheless represent a vast variety of where such artistic results, connected to the experience of travel, may point to. Therefore, I am interested in what artists can "do" with the various experiences collected in a journey and how they influence their pieces and their approach to art and its working.

Keywords

Artists Travelling, Experience of Travel, Caspar David Friedrich, Chen Shaoxiong, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, EdE Sinkovics

Introduction

Artists are often on the move. Shorter study trips in exciting cities, backpacking excursions in nature, long sojourns in distant locations, changing bases, oscillating between studios and workspaces situated in two or even more countries—there can be many forms and manifestations of artists travelling. Some of these trips may be pursued for clearly defined, actual purposes, like getting to know a specific location and visiting a particular place to create an artistic rendering. Other forms of artistic travel are more oriented toward mental or spiritual recreation or a collection of aesthetic and artistic experiences to be perhaps later "used" in the creative process. Again, initially, other trips may not be connected to art at all, e.g., escaping or (forced) migration from a place that nevertheless can easily have an artistic impact or tangible consequences on the aesthetic production of the creator.

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There are many forms and reasons for travelling; similarly, there are many aesthetics-related questions that we can pose about the relationship between art(ist)s, aesthetics, and travel. First, we can ask a simple-looking question about *why artists travel*, for which there are a few possible answers, as I listed above. However, other questions departing from this basic one may broaden the research. For example, if we asked *what do artists get from travelling*, we would arrive at other areas of investigation. Alternatively, even more complicated, if we ask *what do artists think they may get (or have gotten) from travelling, and have they reached that*, then our field opens even more. Especially the latter could bring us to an elaborate set of considerations since such posing of the question implies that there can easily be aspects and results, experiences, and consequences that the artist has gained and achieved that were not planned. It can often happen that, despite the conscious plan of the voyage, at the final evaluation of it, a trip seems to be a failure regarding its original aims and intentions; nevertheless, the artist has encountered something that will perhaps become more significant than what they had been planning and hoping for beforehand.

This complexity and even dichotomy that may grow between travel and experience, or between the hopes connected to the journey before departure and the experiences during the actual trip, may also lead to diverse evaluation forms, both during and after the journey. We can see a great variety in artists' documentation of their travels, for example, what they have found important and what has turned out to be significant for their later careers. For instance, we can remember Dürer's diaries from his trips, which are curious documents to study to understand what he thought was essential to record. On the other hand, agreeing with Werner Busch, we can also consider some of his artworks as travel diaries, in which his main aim was not merely to record his journey or the look of a particular location that he visited but, based on his experience and studies in Venice, he "attempts to put into practice his new experience of colour, and topography gives way to atmosphere, his free application of colour exploiting the opportunities that watercolour offered" (Busch 2001, 17).

Travel and experience

Here I am neither aiming at reconstructing the history of (artists) travelling nor at the exact scrutinising of the various forms of travel since both of these subjects would deserve separate studies. Simply keeping the complexities of the concept of "travel" in mind and keeping the broad meaning of travel that

includes various forms of journeys, in the present study, I would like to focus on the diverse manifestations and aesthetic consequences of travel in the work of some artists that may nevertheless represent the considerable variety of where such artistic results, connected to the experience of travel, may point to. In the end, experience, in its broadest sense, is what can be considered a common point in all forms and types of travel. It is common because a journey cannot move without novel experiences. Naturally, we do travel because we want to experience new things, and even if we "experience" that, we do not experience anything particular, i.e., we realise that there is nothing new, that certain things in distant locations can be very similar to our original context. In this latter situation, understanding this similarity or "nothing newness" will be the experience we bring with us from the voyage.

In this sense, then, all forms of travel, and the experiences they provide the traveller with, will be and can become fascinating forms of self-exploration. "Formally," we go to a place to see that city or region, but through our reactions to the experience of the place, we will make an interior voyage and understand ourselves more through our emotions, thoughts and memories triggered by the place after the journey. This double phenomenon of exterior and the interior voyage was also highlighted by Emily Thomas in her volume on the relationship between travelling and philosophy: "Travellers make an *exterior* voyage, perhaps through Egypt or Malaysia. Side by side with this they also make and *interior* voyage, perhaps of self-discovery of fulfilment" (Thomas 2020, 85—italics in the original). We can thus say that artists—just like less creative travellers and average tourists—(often) travel to understand themselves better, even if not necessarily with this explicit intention or not so "philosophically" thinking of their journey. These "auto-gnoseological" perspectives are present in all forms of travel. The difference is that in the case of artists (in a broad sense, naturally, including visual artists and authors, poets, composers, etc.), the inner reflection of self-exploration can manifest in their artworks or creative-cultural-intellectual products created during or after the trip. In other words, we can refer to the well-known phenomenon that travelling may "change" any traveller, being exposed to other cultures, locations, habits, and traditions—and, as we saw, it may happen even if the "gained" experience is that the new is not so new at all, and the distant and different is closer to the home conditions than we thought before—but artists may find this very experience a perfect source of inspiration for their work.

As in this paper, I am interested in what artists can "do" with the various experiences collected in a journey (whether short-term or significantly longer); based on the above, we can discuss two forms of experience.

The first is the intentional one, wanted, sought, something that the artist expected to have and was planning to achieve—for example, when going on a mountain hike to make landscape sketches for works created later in the studio, or a photographer travelling to exotic locations for completing a commission. In these typical cases, the artist may have preliminary ideas and expectations of what to find and can perhaps even guess what sort of experiences these may trigger. At the same time, however, this may include various grades of disillusion and disenchantment, either if the artist thinks they cannot complete the previously planned project, cannot find the material or inspiration, or when the disappointment seemingly comes from the place itself, e.g., when a famous place does not meet the (high) expectations of the visitor. This phenomenon is well-known—affecting not only artists but average tourists too—and is called the Paris syndrome, that is, as Marta Benenti and Lisa Giombini describe: "a condition characterized by psychiatric symptoms including delusional states, derealization, depersonalization and anxiety" (Benenti-Giombini 2020, 2). Hence, it is a mental state caused by experiencing the difference between expectations and reality. However, despite the name, it can be "experienced" in other places too. We can remember, for example, the long history of delusions with Venice.

The second type of experience is what we can define as involuntary, unsought, and unthought-of. It is something that the artist was not planning and was not looking for consciously, but that can nevertheless turn out to be necessary, sometimes even more important than the original aim or scope of the trip. As it can be imagined, these sorts of unexpected experiences can be among the most curious ones, opening up novel perspectives, leading to different inspirations, bringing in new ideas, and thus potentially resulting in works thematising the perceived phenomena.

In both cases of experiences, hence regarding the sought and the unexpected ones, the type of experience can be multi-sensorial. The artist (just like any non-art-professional traveller) can have visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory, etc., experiences triggering memories, associations, creative thoughts, ideas, and inspirations. While travelling, we can have a complete immersion in the novel location, which can be evidenced by the difference in what it is like to "see" a building, e.g., on a postcard or a computer screen, compared to when we can feel its volumes, walk around it, enter, touch the walls, smell its odours, hear the cracking wooden floor, the sound of the stones or the softness of the carpet, etc. We can thus say that we encounter the complete atmosphere of a place, like a city, and it will be a much more complex encounter than the perception of the mere (visual) forms of its elements or just the

theoretical knowledge of the history of the location. This experience is similar to what Adam Andrzejewski and Mateusz Salwa proposed in their experience-based landscape ontology, which is also adaptable to urban contexts (Andrzejewski-Salwa 2020a, see also Andrzejewski-Salwa 2020b). Perceiving the sizes of the buildings, the flow and rhythm of traffic, the smells of the city, or, in more natural contexts, sensing the wind blowing on our face or touching the moss on the rocks is what this multi-sensorial nature of experience means, above all, a lot also for the artists travelling.

Paradoxes of artists' experiences

In the previous sections of my paper, we could see the multiple forms and reasons for artists travelling and the particularities of the experiences gained during such trips. However, we need to pose a question that refers to a complicated situation: do we not feel some paradoxes in our fascination with artists' trips or with artists travelling? If travelling is either a pleasurable activity or, in dire situations of life, if it is less pleasurable, it may still have significant influences on artists' life. Why is it precisely that we, as recipients of their work, care about it? Travelling is highly personal, subjective, and especially significant for the traveller. So, why are we interested in others' travelling? Why do we enjoy the artistic result? What do we gain out of it? To put it even more clearly: What can we learn from the experience of artists travelling?

A personal experience of someone else can be(come) significant only if it grows beyond being personal, i.e., if it is potentially universal, or if it manages to provide insights into issues or solutions for the understanding of cases, phenomena, or situations that many of us are interested in or have to deal with. Adapting these considerations for the question above, we can claim that the experience of artists' travelling can become vital if we can learn something about art from it and through it. This "learning about art" can include many considerations; hence many artists' works inspired by their travel can be inspiring. It can include references to discussions on the nature of art and the modes of its production, revelations on the forms, and the elaboration of perception. It can also provide a further understanding of inspiration and its turning into creation, or we can learn about critical stances on the infrastructure of art. It is thus clear that when having a particular interest in artists' travelling, we are not merely curious about what experience the journey provided the artists with, much more like what they have managed to make out of it. Therefore, the relevant questions will be: What

are the aesthetic and artistic outcomes of the different forms of travel that result in such artworks that tell us more about certain aspects of art itself? What do we gain from an artist's journey, from them being exposed to novel experiences? How will this affect our interpretation of art in general and our perception of the artist's actual work in particular? As mentioned above, travelling can change the traveller—can we also, not having travelled with the artist, nevertheless change, for example, our understanding of the world through their works?

Artists taking a trip

The previous considerations and suggested answers have helped us find a solution for the paradox of the relevance of the artists' experience of their trip, i.e., why it matters to us. In the following section of my paper, I would like to illustrate how travelling can lead to many aesthetic investigations. Therefore, I will briefly present four examples, two classical and well-known artists from the 18th and 19th centuries and two contemporaries who are perhaps less known. Nevertheless, they can efficiently complement the analyses started with the classical ones. The pairing of the artists should not be seen as overly forced, and I do not want to hint as if there were direct connections between the older and the contemporary artists. At the same time, however, as we will see, there are parallel tendencies in their interest, i.e., in the aesthetic questions investigated. Hence, despite the differences in the period and geographical locations they had visited and are working in, we can find similarities and affinities between their aims, methods, and, in a way, even in their results. The selection of my examples also reflects the varieties in the forms of travel, hence mirroring the broad meaning of the concept discussed above.

Shorter trips for collecting and elaborating motifs—
Friedrich and Shaoxiong

We start with the survey of the works and working methods of two artists who at first do not seem to be "great travellers." Caspar David Friedrich, who is considered one of the greatest painters of German Romanticism, is not renowned for extensive international journeys, especially in his mature years. Though studying at the Art Academy of Copenhagen, he spent most of his active years in Germany. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Friedrich did not complete a "Grand Tour" in Italy. Despite his beautiful landscapes repre-

senting real or imaginary mountain scenery, he did not even go to the Alps. As Timothy Mitchell highlighted: „...he was one of the few landscapists of that time never to have visited the Alps. His reluctance to travel south was known in the art circles of Dresden" (Mitchell 1984, 452). In order to better understand the reasons for this "reluctance to travel south," we can also recall Friedrich's aesthetic preferences and his role in shedding light on the aesthetic qualities of Northern landscapes. As it is known, in the 18th century, due to the re-discovery and wide-ranging discussion of the category of the sublime, the Northern and Nordic landscapes started to be evaluated more often and more positively. Unlike the classical, harmonious, Mediterranean sceneries that had been represented the most often in landscape painting, now we start to see more and more of the non-classical and "wilder" Northern and Nordic natural scenes. Their difference may also be described with the help of the two aesthetic categories, in which the Mediterranean ones were regarded as the ones showing the beautiful scenes, while the Northern ones were interpreted as sublime.

The rapidly growing interest in and increasing appreciation of Northern scenery has a more "political" aspect too. The positive evaluation of the local landscape is in parallel with the pride of the Northern and Nordic artists. What is more, the emphasising of the qualities of these locations contributed to forming a national and cultural identity, the effect of which we can still trace even in contemporary art (Somhegyi 2016).

Coming back to Friedrich and his idea(l)s, we can also remember Werner Busch's insightful analyses of the "anti-classical" artists. Since the late Renaissance, we can observe that many artists who follow classical canons and are deeply influenced by classical taste can be matched with a contemporary who is somewhat "anti-classical" (Busch 2004). Busch's examples of these classical and anti-classical pairs include Carracci-Caravaggio, Bernini-Borromini, Rubens-Rembrandt, Reynolds-Hogarth, Reynolds-Gainsborough, Turner-Constable, and Koch-Friedrich. Equally interesting is that the second of these pairs (naturally except for the first two, i.e., Caravaggio and Borromini) has never visited Italy. This difference helps us understand how such an anti-classical stance influenced Friedrich, not wanting to venture on an Italian journey. These ambiguous feelings towards the Antique heritage and how it may have some relevance for Friedrich then further explain not only the fact that we see only one Antique-style ruin in his otherwise very rich corpus of ruin-images (all the others being Gothic ruins) but also helps us in understanding the otherwise quite enigmatic letter he sent to his friend, the painter Lund on 11 July 1816. He states that although he can conceive going to Rome

and living there, he cannot imagine turning back from there. In the original: "Ich kann mir es jetzt recht schön denken, nach Rom zu reisen und dort zu leben. Aber den Gedanken, von da wieder zurück nach Norden, könnte ich nicht ohne Schaudern denken; das hieße nach meiner Vorstellung soviel als sich selbst lebendig begraben. Stillzustehen lass ich mir gefallen, ohne Murren, wenn es das Schicksal so will; aber rückwärtsgehen ist meiner Natur zuwider, dagegen empört sich mein ganzes Wesen" (quoted in Hinz 1968, 30).

Instead of travelling to Italy or making longer international journeys, Friedrich pursued shorter study trips in Nature in his region and Norther Germany around his birthplace Greifswald. These trips provided him with great opportunities to collect visual elements of the landscape that he recorded in smaller sketches and drawings and later elaborated them in larger oil paintings. Some of these final works directly depicted a specific location, while in other cases, smaller fragments of the view were used for the composition of imaginary landscapes; hence the collected motifs from the natural, external world became constructive elements in the building up of his "mystical" landscape paintings.

There will be a similar oscillation between the real and the imaginary in the creation, i.e., an image built up by actual fragments—or fragments of actuality—that will in some way connect the Romantic painter with an artist of almost two centuries later of another continent, the Chinese Chen Shaoxiong. In his series from 1997–1998 titled "Street," the artist created works that we could define as being between photomontage and assemblage or even physical collage... Shaoxiong photographed average scenes in his hometown, pedestrians, vehicles, advertisements, traffic signs, etc. Then, he moved the images to cardboard and made small cut-outs. These tiny elements were then used as construction materials to make new arrangements, organising the pieces as if being on a small stage. When ready with these, he photographed a small scene, holding it in his hands, in front of him, with his arms stretched, appearing in front of the actual city. The city serves as a background for the small scene and as a reference to the source of the cardboard cut-out compositions. This relation is why we can claim—despite the many apparent differences between the works of Friedrich and Shaoxiong regarding technique, media, style, historical and cultural context, etc.—that some elements of the works do connect the two artists. Both look for the motifs in their surroundings, document them, and then use them for the location's particular (re)creation.

Adding to this, another parallel that brings them closer to our main topic of investigation, that of travel: Shaoxiong, just like Friedrich, did not necessarily need—or did not feel the need—to travel great distances to create

their work. In the case of the Chinese artist, he even emphasised this not moving far since one of the layers of meaning in his work refers to the fact that even our own home can become, or at least can look, unfamiliar. The emphasis is placed on his composed views' staged, ephemeral qualities (since he could photograph the cardboard stage with other backgrounds simply by changing his position). He also takes a critical stance against the rapid modernisation of many cities, including his own. He reminds us that we can have difficulties in recognising our environment. As the artist stated: "Although I am a resident of Guangzhou, I still have a tourist mentality towards this city. Not just because this city will outlive me, but faced with the daily changes, I often have the feeling of being elsewhere. [...] I feel that the speed at which I photograph the streets of Guangzhou will never catch up with the speed at which the streets of Guangzhou are changing" (Jiehong 2015, 46).

Thus, in a certain way, both artists remind us that discovering new aspects, collecting motifs for new creations, and arriving at new insights do not necessarily require tremendously long trips to distant places. However, the artistic elaboration of something seemingly well-known may, in the end, bring us elsewhere—in Friedrich's case to spiritual landscapes composed of fragments of actual ones, while in Shaoxiong's work to the realisation of unfamiliarity in the familiar.

Longer journeys and changes of perception— Goethe and Sinkovics

In the case of our following two artists, compared to the previously analysed two, we can observe a different form of travel and a difference in the experience, especially in the elaboration of this experience. In a certain sense, we can even claim that through their travel, they, with the help of the conscious analyses of their experience, were prompted to reflect on and reconsider modes of perception and ways of creation. Therefore, their new works, influenced by the visit and executed during or after that, contain critical reflections on the modes of creation and the working of art.

Goethe's long sojourn in Italy lasted from 1786 to 1788, of which travel documentary, however, appeared only in 1816–1817, and the last part in 1829 (Goethe 1885). His artistic activities (both in literature and in the visual arts, himself a draughtsman too) during his journey and his ideas born and artistic consideration developed on this trip have been regularly and thoroughly discussed subjects in the literature of Goethe. Nevertheless, there

are some less often surveyed aspects worth mentioning. One is the artist's changing image of Rome. The duality of the image and imagination of Rome includes the antique layers of the city as well as its modern appearance, i.e., how in its current aspect, one can trace the signs and remnants of the old. However, the duality or sometimes even dichotomy of image and imagination, perception and fantasy can be traced on another level, not only on how Goethe could imagine old Rome when seeing the new. It is also a dichotomy between his preliminary images of Rome and the actuality. As Victor Plahte Tschudi examined in a detailed analysis, Goethe's image of Rome was very much influenced by the prints of the city he saw during his childhood in his parents' house. However, this early and, in a way, preparatory imagery of Rome has become an obstacle to perceiving the actual one. As Tschudi formulated: "Travelling down through Italy, towards Rome, Goethe worked hard to cleanse his mind of images from books and prints so that he could take in art and architecture in their pure form. (...) The self-conscious German seemed at first to have examined more closely his own ability to look at things than the things themselves. His diary notes tell of a rigorous training of his eye to perceive buildings independently of the images of them that were impressed on his mind" (Tschudi 2015, 3). Understanding the difference between the preliminary image and the actual experience, Goethe developed his approach: "'What I want to see is the Everlasting Rome, not the Rome which is replaced by another every decade,' he exclaims on 29 December 1786. As he would soon learn, the 'complete' city would materialize only by a tough negotiation between looking and imagining, between what one senses and what one knows" (Tschudi 2015, 5). This difference, however, has not affected merely his appreciation and interpretation of the Antique heritage partly still present in Rome but also his working method and artistic position. This influence is why we can thus agree with Franz R. Kempf, who stated—while regarding Goethe's travel in Italy—that: "The experience affected him so profoundly as a person *and* a Renaissance man that he likened it to a 'Wiedergeburt,' or rebirth" (Kempf 2020, 90—italics in the original).

Besides the above, all this also included the realisation of the true nature of the Antique heritage too, that for him had not remained in the form of an unchangeable canon or a closed and dead material merely to be worshipped, more like a living source of inspiration, open to creative novel use, adaptation and re-elaboration (Somhegyi 2020, Chapter 3). We can agree with John F. Moffit's opinion: "Clearly, for Goethe and his contemporaries, classical literature and art were not idols to be blindly worshipped but instead were

appreciated as instructive models, like old laws, to be reworked and re-formed for wholly new and independent purposes, just as Goethe had so laboriously 're-formed' Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*" (Moffitt 1983, 449—italics in the original). Perhaps the best-known visual manifestation of this approach is the famous painting "Goethe in the Roman Campagna" (1786), in which Goethe consulted with the painter Wilhelm Tischbein to execute several of the details of how he would like it to be shown. This presentation included the adding of references to three primary Antique cultures (Egypt, Greece, Rome) around his figure to indicate his sources of inspiration and references to the material to be re-elaborated in his creative works afterward, including the story of Iphigenia, appearing on the relief sculpture behind him, right when the poet was working on his version of it.

Comparing the German poet's case of more than two centuries ago with a contemporary artist's trip is fascinating. EdE Sinkovics (sic!—in his artist name, he capitalises the second "e" in his name), an artist born in the Hungarian minority in Serbia, but since the 1990s living in Hungary, has spent long periods of a few months each in China at various times between, 2007 and 2008, working on various art projects and commissions. During these longer journeys, which are thus not brief "tourist trips" but more extended sojourns while he managed to focus on his work, he inevitably understood the country and many of its specificity and features of its culture and current state in a more profound way, thus revising his previous image of China. This revision has not stopped at this stage, in any case. EdE Sinkovics did not start to paint the newly discovered "more precise" image of China or did not attempt to make travel paintings of the "actual reality." Instead of merely documenting his experience, he came up with ways to integrate the experienced phenomena into the actual and individual artistic practice he has pursued so far. Since the early 2000s, he has been interested in making "remakes," i.e., re-working and re-interpreting other painters' work in his style. This work involved several separate series, including the re-elaborating, for example, the best (or at least best-known) French and Hungarian paintings. In each of these, he always focused on certain specific features of the original work, i.e., particularities in the technique, style, color schemes, composition, space handling, etc. This attention to detail is why he "re-made" some pieces several times, in different versions.

In his work, born partly while still in China, the artist added a further twist to this ongoing project of remakes. He took many photographs and then decided to have them painted, hence commissioned a local Chinese painter to do that, whose profession was precisely to make paintings, i.e.,

painted versions and reproductions of photographs. When the artist was already back in Europe, the works arrived a few months later, and EdE Sinkovics painted them over, though partially. Naturally, the Chinese colleague was informed beforehand of this planned action by the Hungarian artist. Understandably, Sinkovics called the series "Made in China"... The works raise several extremely fascinating questions on, for example, authorship, appropriation, originality, and authenticity. At the same time, they also lead to critical investigations of the current possibilities and infrastructure of arts—or not only of the arts—by referring to the massive share China plays in global production. With a witty and ironic gesture, EdE Sinkovics deconstructs the fetishism around the "work of art" when experimenting with shifting (part) of the production to another continent and delegating it to someone else.

On the other hand, he also puts the Western appreciation of art, especially of the highly esteemed Renaissance and Baroque art, in an uneasy situation. What he did was not very much different from the well-known studio practice of 16th–18th-century European artists, running a large studio, where apprentices and students often executed large parts of the works that the master was commissioned to do. Towards the end of the process, the famous artist may have only touched the work here and there, correcting some details and signing it. If we keep this in mind, then the action of EdE Sinkovics can be interpreted not only as making a remake of a work but as a modern-day remake of this classical studio practice.

In this way, he continued his investigations in remakes, re-interpreting works and intervening to highlight certain aspects, compositional modes, solutions etc., in the original. The only difference was that, in this case, he made remakes based on his own (photo) works that were converted into paintings by another artist. Then, as yet another twist in the project, he made a second series of "Made in China," where, as a starting point, he did not give simple photographs to the Chinese painter but first made photo-montages out of his photos, selecting and re-arranging the subjects, motifs, city-scenes, human figures etc. found in China. Then, just like he did with the first series, once having received the painted versions, he intervened and adapted the pieces to his style—*cum grano salis*, a bit like Goethe selecting from the elements, motifs, and subjects of his interest, and then finding ways of re-purposing them creatively.

Based on this, in this second set of examples, we can again see parallel features in the case of two artists who are otherwise quite distant from each other, both time-wise and regarding the geographical and cultural areas of

their creative activities. They both ventured on longer trips, "longer" in having spent a significant amount of time in the distant location (Italy and China) and pursuing a geographically long journey, i.e., not staying in their immediate surroundings or nearby regions. More important for our present study, both had preliminary knowledge, ideas, and imagination of what to expect in their destination. Goethe acquired these, as we learned from Tschudi's research, in his childhood, through prints, and naturally, also books, travel documentary writings, etc. Sinkovics used the same tools, and naturally, their modern-day equivalents, including films, blogs, (art) newspaper articles, etc. However, both of them had to realise the differences between what they previously knew and what they experienced as the present reality and that these differences were more significant than they had thought. They are "more significant" in both senses, i.e., more remarkable, and something that signifies more. Hence, the conceptualisation of the differences between the preliminary ideas and the actual perception would lead to the growing desire for new meaning and significance to them. For this, they had to find ways of detaching themselves from their preconceptions, to fully understand the actual features and how this newly discovered "reality," its vision and interpretation, can be put in the service of further strengthening their aesthetic position—how it may modify their style and working method and influence them to pursue new paths in creation. This case is why we can state that both artists had to first consciously deconstruct their preliminary concepts, then equally consciously re-construct the actual reality. This method helped them construct their new aesthetic approach and preferences. Furthermore, as we have seen, this process has also influenced their future works, the latter manifested in Tischbein's partly staged portrait of Goethe or Sinkovics's new series, including the commissioning of the Chinese painter.

Apart from all of the above, we can consider this last aspect a third parallel tendency that is a consequence of the previously mentioned two, i.e., of the circumstances of travel and the elaboration of the experience: both artists developed a novel form of creation and aesthetic approach, not merely regarding their work, but, on a higher level, also regarding art in general and its function(ing) in particular. Traveling and the new experiences have thus influenced and incentivised them to new ways of thinking about and practicing art and a novel understanding of how art works.

Conclusion

After investigating some general aspects of travel, artists' trips, and the role of experience and its elaboration, with its consequences on the actual art production and ideas of art, illustrated with four examples, we can turn back to our initial question of the importance of artists' travelling. We can also ask: could the artists have done it without travelling? Moreover, could we have done without it? More precisely: could the artists have arrived at all this without travelling? Furthermore, keeping in mind our paradox mentioned above: would we have gained (e.g., novel art experiences, novel insights about art through the work of the artists) without them travelling? Most likely not, since it is precisely the experience, the personal encounter, the being immersed in the location, whether relatively close or more distant, familiar or exotic, urban or natural, etc., that have led to these artistic investigations, considerations, aesthetic results. Theoretically, these would not have been possible, or only with minimal results, "theoretically."

This notion is also vital and has actual, tangible relevance for the working and support of artists, and is an aspect to be taken into consideration by any supporting bodies, private sponsors, decision-makers of the distribution of state funding, etc. Travelling can be essential for artists, a true game-changer, not only on a personal level, providing them with experiences, but with actual benefits for all of us who are eager to follow their results. This game-changing experience also changes our way of thinking about the specific artists and their oeuvre, often of art itself, its current working, infrastructure, and relevance for understanding our existence.

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