

What I would like to say is this: in any person who creates paintings there are Emotions that can't be made concrete to the public. At most, they are pale reflections of a mystery. In the visual arts, the intelligence of the author, however abstract it may be, is submitted for judgment, but not his Emotions! The inkbottle ... the emotions of the painter or sculptor, of the musician, are of an entirely different nature from those of the writer. They depend on sight, the ear, his entire instinctive nature and its struggle against matter.

He is a composer and a virtuoso.

And the painter from the East told his disciples:

*Do not work too much after you finish; you will cool the lava of boiling blood, you will make stone of it. Even if it is a ruby, throw it far away.*

Paul Gauguin

text excerpt, *Ramblings of a Wannabe Painter*, September 1902, Atuana

FS & TB: Having a Wonderful Time (1992) looks like a piece of Art Brut.

RF: I had to be on the phone and not think about it. It's a big doodle. I knew the grid would resume with the next phone call, and the next, when I'd start the painting again.

FS: What about Wonderful Country (1996)? It's kind of hard to look at.

RF: It came from boredom. I was in Pennsylvania, in the middle of nowhere. There was no internet. I had minimal contact with friends, community, except for the almost daily deliveries of local ads for supermarkets. I began thinking about the sources of the food and made a map of the country. There is Florida with a lot of beef. Idaho is somewhere with potatoes.

Rochelle Feinstein

fragment of a conversation with Fabrice Stroun and Tenzing Barshee



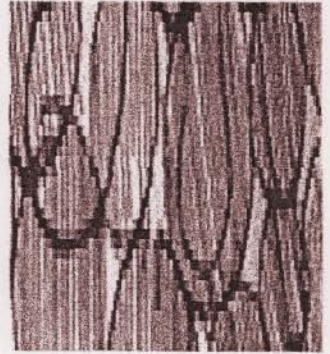
Why would an artist demur at the prospect of a finished work, court self-sabotaging strategies, sign his or her name to a painting that looks, from some perspectives, like an utter failure? It might have something to do with a foundational skepticism that runs through the history of modern art: we see it in Cézanne's infinite, agonized adjustments of Mont St. Victoire, in Dada's noisy denunciations (typified by Picabia's blasphemous *Portrait of Cézanne*), in Giacometti's endless obliterations and restartings of his painted portraits, in Sigmar Polke's gloriously dumb compositions of the 1960s. Something similar can be found in other art forms, in Paul Valéry's insistence that a poem is "never finished, only abandoned," in Artaud's call for "no more masterpieces," and in punk's knowing embrace of the amateurish and fucked-up. The history of modernism is full of strategies of refusal and acts of negation.

(...)

Provisional painting is not about making last paintings, nor is it about the deconstruction of painting. It's the finished product disguised as a preliminary stage, or a body double standing in for a star/masterpiece whose value would put a stop to artistic risk. To put it another way: provisional painting is major painting masquerading as minor painting. In their book *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1986), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari described how Kafka's linguistic and cultural condition (as a Jewish author writing in German in Prague where the type of German he spoke was "minor" in relation both to the locally dominant Czech language and to standard German) involved the "impossibility" of writing in German and the "impossibility of not writing." Kafka's solution was to fashion a mode of writing that seemed to erase all literary precedents, and to create an oeuvre that barely survived into the future. Faced with painting's imposing history and the diminishment of the medium by newer art forms, recent painters may have found themselves in similarly "minor" situations; the provisionality of their work is an index of the impossibility of painting and the equally persistent impossibility of not painting.

Raphael Rubinstein  
text excerpt, *Provisional Painting*, Art in America, 2009

Manchmal habe ich das Gefühl, das ich allein mit meinem Blick störe, nicht einen Menschen, sondern ein Ding. Ich schaue es an und störe es. Noch nicht mal meine Anwesenheit stört es, soweit bin ich noch gar nicht gekommen, ich sehe es nur aus sicherer Entfernung und habe schon das Gefühl ich störe es. Ich komme mir dann voyeuristisch vor, nicht weil es mich erregt, sondern weil es das beste Wort ist einen Zustand zwischen sehen und gesehen werden zu beschreiben.



Manuel Kirsch  
text excerpt: *Sehen und Stören*, 2018



Have you ever noticed how some people, when they attempt to talk in front of a painting, try to prove that they are smart or that they have at least considered some of the possible trajectories of a discussion about painting, and later let it slip that they would rather just paint, period. I admit this statement applies to me, although instead of *just paint*, I'd rather tell some jokes. The problem is, I don't know that many jokes. The problem with the other thing, the wanting to be smart part, is that it makes it hard for people to put anything on the table. So far we have on our table a brain sandwich garnished with eyes, a weird way of announcing, perhaps, that what we are dealing with here is a light lunch, a dialectic between language—written or spoken—and painting. It would be very different to say between music and painting, because when we see paintings we like to talk about them. It is less likely, although certainly not unheard of, that we sit down at the piano or pick up a guitar upon seeing or painting a painting. If you decided to break into song in front of a painting, say in a museum, a guard might have to tell you, *Quiet please*, because that is only allowed (aloud) under very special circumstances. We are accustomed to reading about paintings and so we like to read or hear what painters have to say about their painting and/or the act of painting their paintings. Anything the painter might possibly say is something we want to hear or read so we can say *yes*, *yes* or *no*, *no* or quote the painter later. In school someone makes a painting and another person, a teacher or a fellow student, comes along and demands that the painter speak. If they aren't demanding the painter to speak, chances are the painter is imagining being demanded to speak, so he or she starts speaking and leading that person in a certain direction, sometimes toward, sometimes away from, the painting that precipitated the speaking. If someone makes what appears to be an inane painting but interesting things come out of the artist's mouth, you think *yes*, *yes* and cross your fingers. If someone makes an interesting painting but he or she says something inane, you are obliged to ignore the inane and concentrate on the interesting, or you dismiss the promising, interesting thing, since it is negated by the inanity. And if you say, *Be more specific than inane and interesting*, I have to say *Sorry, no*. For at any given time it's going to be a different attribute that—to you—announces inanity, a different attribute that captures your interest. You don't have to be a historian to know, though you may *know better*, about the imaginary time line that serves as an index of things one can no longer do. One of those things, on again, off again, has been painting. The rules get trickier when there's "a painter," which to nonpainters suggests the person painting is some kind of alchemist, or the painter has done some unknown thing in order to earn a license to paint. As for not having a license, I don't even have a license to drive, but I drive anyway. Well, the truth of the situation is that I did have a driver's license, only foolishly I let it expire.

Frances Stark

text excerpt, *Scared to Death*, exhibition catalog *Painting at the Edge of the World*, 2001



*17 mai — Retour à Champrosay — La mouche et l'araignée.*

— (...) Grande promenade dans la forêt, par le côté de Draveil. Pris en contournant la forêt par l'allée qui en fait le tour.

J'ai vu là le combat d'une mouche d'une espèce particulière et d'une araignée. Je les vis arriver toutes deux, la mouche acharnée sur son dos et lui portant des coups furieux; après une courte résistance, l'araignée a expiré sous ses atteintes; la mouche, après l'avoir sucée, s'est mise en devoir de la traîner je ne sais où, et cela avec une vivacité, une furie incroyables. Elle la tirait en arrière, à travers les herbes, les obstacles, etc. J'ai assisté avec une espèce d'émotion à ce petit duel homérique. J'étais le Jupiter contemplant le combat de cet Achille et de cet Hector. Il y avait au reste, justice distributive dans la victoire de la mouche sur l'araignée; il y a si longtemps que l'on voit le contraire arriver. Cette mouche était noire, très longue, avec des marques rouges sur le corps.



Coma. Duffel sports bags. Plastic bags. Paper bags. Volume is something, emotionally. Weight is something very real to our bodies. But other. Aesthetic is similar to weight. We lose the connection to material in itself because of our affinity for its weight, as well as its aesthetic. Parva Aesthetica. Everything gets more and more weightless the more it gets real. We should try to affirm *the without-aesthetic*. Inhaling all attitudes surrounding us (I am not talking about our neighbors). Inhaling them and making them material again.

This side of paradise is the other side of \_\_\_\_?. Sculpture. One shall move to touch it. Objects have strategies. Objects do not appear. They seek to make our minds slow.

Nice objects trying to send out nice living. There is, on the other hand, nothing nice about the state of production. It is like material in itself. It is not connected to us as individuals. The agency developing strategies for 99cent objects is in the same building as the agency setting up new Nike campaigns. And we could know exactly where. But one shall not stop at this thought —to get political, or even sentimental. By taking this state of object-development as more than a news story, by taking it in all of its physical materiality, there is a possibility to affirm affirmation much more basically than with any compensatory attempt made up to that point. Para Strategy. A sculpture can use the attitude of its thinghood of which it exists. That is strategy. And it is probably boring like berry flavor espresso. Sculpture can and should start beyond being a synonym. A mass-produced object is in its singularity as special, precious, social, unsocial, unprecious and unspecial as a handmade pair of snakeskin leather shoes. Sure, it does trigger different illusions. It does trigger different shortcomings in our human existence: Strategies of insufficiency expressed in physical abundance.

Alfons Knogl  
text excerpt: *I am ordering marble to make cement*, 2018



The curator administers this exhibition space in the name of the public – as a representative of the public. Accordingly, the curator's role is to safeguard its public character, while bringing the individual artworks into this public space, making them accessible to the public, publicizing them. It is obvious that an individual artwork cannot assert its presence by itself, forcing the viewer to take a look at it. It lacks the vitality, energy, and health to do so. In its origin, it seems, the work of art is sick, helpless; in order to see it, viewers must be brought to it as visitors are brought to a bed-ridden patient by hospital staff. It is no coincidence that the word "curator" is etymologically related to "cure": to curate is to cure. Curating cures the powerlessness of the image, its inability to show itself by itself. Exhibition practice is thus the cure that heals the originally ailing image, that gives it presence, visibility; it brings it to the public view and turns it into the object of the public's judgment. However, one can say that curating functions as a supplement, like a *pharmakon* in the Derridean sense: it both cures the image and further contributes to its illness.

(...)

e-flux journal #2 — January 2009 Boris Groys  
Politics of Installation

This means that the artistic installation is a space in which the difference between the sovereign freedom of the artist and the institutional freedom of the curator becomes immediately visible. The regime under which art operates in our contemporary Western culture is generally understood to be one that grants freedom to art. But art's freedom means different things to a curator and to an artist. As I have mentioned, the curator – including the so-called independent curator – ultimately chooses in the name of the democratic public. Actually, in order to be responsible toward the public, a curator does not need to be part of any fixed institution: he or she is already an institution by definition. Accordingly, the curator has an obligation to publicly justify his or her choices – and it can happen that the curator fails to do so. Of course, the curator is supposed to have the freedom to present his or her argument to the public – but this freedom of the public discussion has nothing to do with the freedom of art, understood as the freedom to make private, individual, subjective, sovereign artistic decisions beyond any argumentation, explanation, or justification. Under the regime of artistic freedom, every artist has a sovereign right to make art exclusively according to private imagination. The sovereign decision to make art in this or that way is generally accepted by Western liberal society as a sufficient reason for assuming an artist's practice to be legitimate. Of course, an artwork can also be criticized and rejected – but it can only be rejected as a whole. It makes no sense to criticize any particular choices, inclusions, or exclusions made by an artist. In this sense, the total space of an artistic installation can also only be rejected as a whole.

(...)



One can say that in Western society the notion of freedom is deeply ambiguous – not only in the field of art, but also in the political field. Freedom in the West is understood as allowing private, sovereign decisions to be made in many domains of social practice, such as private consumption, investment of one's own capital, or choice of one's own religion. But in some other domains, especially in the political field, freedom is understood primarily as the freedom of public discussion guaranteed by law – as non-sovereign, conditional, institutional freedom.

(...)

The artist and the curator embody, in a very conspicuous manner, these two different kinds of freedom: the sovereign, unconditional, publicly irresponsible freedom of art-making, and the institutional, conditional, publicly responsible freedom of curatorship. Further, this means that the artistic installation – in which the act of art production coincides with the act of its presentation – becomes the perfect experimental terrain for revealing and exploring the ambiguity that lies at the core of the Western notion of freedom. Accordingly, in the last decades we have seen the emergence of innovative curatorial projects that seem to empower the curator to act in an authorial, sovereign way. And we have also seen the emergence of artistic practices seeking to be collaborative, democratic, decentralized, de-authorized.

(...)

And yet, the violent act of constituting a democratically organized community should not be interpreted as contradicting its democratic nature. Sovereign freedom is obviously non-democratic, so it also seems to be anti-democratic. However, even if it appears paradoxical at first glance, sovereign freedom is a necessary precondition for the emergence of any democratic order. Again, the practice of art installation is a good example of this rule. The standard art exhibition leaves an individual visitor alone, allowing him or her to individually confront and contemplate the exhibited art objects. Moving from one object to another, such an individual visitor necessarily overlooks the totality of the exhibition's space, including his or her own position within it. An artistic installation, on the contrary, builds a community of spectators precisely because of the holistic, unifying character of the installation space. The true visitor to the art installation is not an isolated individual, but a collective of visitors. The art space as such can only be perceived by a mass of visitors – a multitude, if you like – with this multitude becoming part of the exhibition for each individual visitor, and vice versa.

(...)



I mean that I am charting a position and saying (1) that there is a gap between [(X) *our approach to art: what we bring to it, what we reserve from it; what conditions and operations we anticipate, demand, and even come to need art to comport to*]<sup>i</sup> and [(Z) *the liveliness of our commonplace faculties: the way we hold ourselves in the context of the production of space; the bulky body charged by the awkward and anxious, but also charged with being a citizen in the world; the way I know I can chew gum and read at the same time*]<sup>iii</sup>] and (2) that this gap is bad. Bad because it is a grey frost pushing over more integrated, accretive ways of being. And bad because of the things that happen (or are prevented from happening) when we deny the conventions of the ordinary from moving with and into works. Possibly, this is a particularly acute bad-ness (or loss?) when it comes to sculptured works.

The sculptured works in *A Rregular Shaped Tool* are then each thawing devices. And they are thawing devices that should show the totally failed processes that my own brain (and maybe yours) makes when dealing with the frictioned, conflicting inputs of any given moment and the very formation of a subjectivity within and by that moment.

And the placement of my subjectivity here<sup>iv</sup> (running against the chilliness and distancing that the words in a press release can sometimes perform) is the most consistent thing that I thought I could do to line-us-up towards the work in the exhibit itself.

Finally, to keep things pitched open, here is the actual question that I worked against while making the pieces in the exhibit: *Can sculpture help us contemplate the formation of subjectivities within the visual-object regimes of late capitalism?*<sup>v</sup>

---

<sup>i</sup> Different from a *critique of art's transcendent meaning*, which even Duchamp may have been only secondarily interested in [Helen Molesworth]; also different from a *critique of the gallery, which has assimilated all attempts to get away from it* [Brian O'Doherty].

<sup>ii</sup> *Through style all cultures talk to you* [Andre Malraux] and the *collective conventions, beliefs, and "cognitive constraints" dictated by this culture's current systems are surely talking towards a crisis* [Christian Marazzi].

<sup>iii</sup> I can't read (think) without chewing gum (being inside a body), and *space is social morphology: it is to lived experience what form itself is to the living organism, and just as intimately bound up with function and structure* [Henri Lefebvre]; while, still, *matter flows into form, but form structures matter* [Deleuze/ Guattari]; and perhaps the goal is to pierce such space, particularly the *mediated, amorphous space of public opinion that isolates citizens as mere spectators of their own polis* [Lauren Berlant].

<sup>iv</sup> This is a strategy of sorts [Judith Butler; Catherine MacKinnon; 410 U.S. 113 (1973)].

<sup>v</sup> Who are we in the midst of the *incessant overproduction of objects and the vernacular violence created by their accelerated obsolescence?* [Benjamin H. D. Buchloh]

Ragen Moss

press release excerpt, *A RREGULAR SHAPED TOOL*,  
at Laxart, Los Angeles, February 20 - March 26, 2016



What defines transitive painting, of which Koether represents only one "mood," is its capacity to hold in suspension the passages internal to a canvas, and those external to it. In this regard, painting since the 1990s has folded into itself so-called "institutional critique" without falling into the modernist trap of negation, where works on canvas are repeatedly reduced to degree zero while remaining unique objects of contemplation and market speculation.

(...)

Transitive painting, on the other hand, invents forms and structures whose purpose is to demonstrate that once an object enters a network, it can never be fully stilled, but only subjected to different material states and speeds of circulation ranging from the geologically slow (cold storage) to the infinitely fast. A Poussin might land in the hands of Jutta Koether, or Stephen Prina might seize the entire oeuvre of Manet.

(...)

Transitivity is a form of translation: when it enters into networks, the body of painting is submitted to infinite dislocations, fragmentations, and degradations. As Kippenberger suggested nearly twenty years ago, these framing conditions cannot be quarantined. Painting is beside itself.



"Sometimes it surprises me when an influence comes to the forefront that I didn't know that I was thinking about. One example is my dad's side of the family. They're Cajun. He has 15 siblings. He was born in New Orleans. When I was young and throughout my life I would go to these giant parties down in Texas, in Galveston, that were just kind of whatever in terms of sleeping arrangements. Like pieces of foam on the floor and random sheets and people just sleeping wherever. Everything was sort of cobbled together. After I had been working on my art for a while, I went back to this beach house in Galveston, which my dad built with his siblings and my grandpa out of a lot of salvaged materials. There was this aesthetic of things that just did the job—that maybe was not the first or most obvious choice. Like a piece of cloth covering the card table with a corner that didn't quite make it that was fine because it worked well enough. These odd little edges to things. Everything functioned, but in this way that was precarious. I think my art is sometimes like this. It's like it's almost a painting and you're not sure if it's doing it or not, or where it came from, but it stays and it works."

Monique Mouton

fragment of a conversation with Linea West, 2016



(...)

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another.

(...)

But among all these sites, I am interested in certain ones that have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect. These spaces, as it were, which are linked with all the others, which however contradict all the other sites, are of two main types.

### HETEROTOPIAS

First there are the utopias. Utopias are sites with no real place. They are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. They present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces.

There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places - places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society - which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias. I believe that between utopias and these quite other sites, these heterotopias, there might be a sort of mixed, joint experience, which would be the mirror.

(...)

Its first principle is that there is probably not a single culture in the world that fails to constitute heterotopias. That is a constant of every human group. But the heterotopias obviously take quite varied forms, and perhaps no one absolutely universal form of heterotopia would be found.

(...)

L'espace dans lequel nous vivons, par lequel nous sommes attirés hors de nous-mêmes dans lequel, se déroule précisément l'érosion de notre vie, e notre temps et e notre histoire, cet espace qui nous ronge et nous ravine est en lui-même aussi un espace hétérogène. Autrement dit, nous ne vivons pas dans une sorte de vide, à l'intérieur duquel on pourrait situer des individus et des choses. Nous ne vivons pas à l'intérieur d'un vide qui se colorerait de différents chatoiements, nous vivons à l'intérieur d'un ensemble de relations qui définissent des emplacements irréductibles les uns aux autres et absolument non superposables.

(...)

Mais ce qui m'intéresse, ce sont, parmi tous ces emplacements, certains d'entre qui ont la curieuse propriété d'être en rapport avec tous les autres emplacements, mais sur un mode tel qu'ils suspendent, neutralisent ou inversent l'ensemble des rapports qui se trouvent, par eux, désignés, reflétés ou réfléchis. Ces espaces, en quelque sorte, qui sont en liaison avec tous les autres, qui contredisent pourtant tous les autres emplacements, sont de deux grands types.

### HETEROTOPIAS

Il y a d'abord les utopies. Les utopies, ce sont les emplacements sans lieu réel. Ce sont les emplacements qui entretiennent avec l'espace réel de la société un rapport général d'analogie directe ou inversée. C'est la société elle-même perfectionnée ou c'est l'envers de a société, mais, de toute façon, ces utopies sont des espaces qui sont fondamentalement essentiellement irréels.

Il y a également, et ceci probablement dans toute culture, dans toute civilisation, des lieux réels, des lieux effectifs, des lieux qui ont dessinés dans l'institution même de la société, et qui sont des sortes de contre-emplacements, sortes d'utopies effectivement réalisées dans lesquelles les emplacements réels, tous les autres emplacements réels que l'on peut trouver à l'intérieur de la culture sont à la fois représentés, contestés et inversés, des sortes de lieux qui sont hors de tous les lieux, bien que pourtant ils soient effectivement localisables. Ces lieux, parce qu'ils sont absolument autres que tous les emplacements qu'ils reflètent et dont ils parlent, je les appellerai, par opposition aux utopies, les hétérotopies ; et je crois qu'entre les utopies et ces emplacements absolument autres, ces hétérotopies, il y aurait sans doute une sorte d'expérience mixte, mitoyenne, qui serait le miroir.

(...)

Premier principe, c'est qu'il n'y a probablement pas une seule culture au monde qui ne constitue des hétérotopies. C'est là une constante de tout groupe humain. Mais les hétérotopies prennent évidemment des formes qui sont très variées, et peut-être ne trouverait-on pas une seule forme d'hétérotopie qui soit absolument universelle



(...)

The second principle of this description of heterotopias is that a society, as its history unfolds, can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion; for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within a society and the same heterotopia can, according to the synchrony of the culture in which it occurs, have one function or another.

(...)

Third principle. The heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible.

(...)

Fourth principle. Heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time - which is to say that they open onto what might be termed, for the sake of symmetry, heterochronies. The heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time. This situation shows us that the cemetery is indeed a highly heterotopic place since, for the individual, the cemetery begins with this strange heterochrony, the loss of life, and with this quasi-eternity in which her permanent lot is dissolution and disappearance.

(...)

Fifth principle. Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable.

(...)

Sixth principle. The last trait of heterotopias is that they have a function in relation to all the space that remains. This function unfolds between two extreme poles. Either their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory (perhaps that is the role that was played by those famous brothels of which we are now deprived). Or else, on the contrary, their role is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled.

(...)

(...)

Le deuxième principe de cette description des hétérotopies, c'est que, au cours de son histoire, une société peut faire fonctionner d'une façon très différente une hétérotopie qui existe et qui n'a pas cessé d'exister; en effet, chaque hétérotopie a un fonctionnement précis et déterminé à l'intérieur de la société, et la même hétérotopie peut, selon la synchronie de la culture dans laquelle elle se trouve, avoir un fonctionnement ou un autre.

(...)

Troisième principe. L'hétérotopie a le pouvoir de juxtaposer en un seul lieu réel plusieurs espaces, plusieurs emplacements qui sont en eux-mêmes incompatibles.

(...)

Quatrième principe. Les hétérotopies sont liées, le plus souvent, à des découpages du temps, c'est-à-dire qu'elles ouvrent sur ce qu'on pourrait appeler, par pure symétrie, des hétérochronies; l'hétérotopie se met à fonctionner à plein lorsque les hommes se trouvent dans une sorte de rupture absolue avec leur temps traditionnel; on voit par là que le cimetière est bien un lieu hautement hétérotopique, puisque le cimetière commence avec cette étrange hétérochronie qu'est, pour un individu, la perte de la vie, et cette quasi éternité où il ne cesse pas de se dissoudre et de s'effacer.

(...)

Cinquième principe. Les hétérotopies supposent toujours un système d'ouverture et de fermeture qui, à la fois, les isole et les rend pénétrables.

(...)

Sixième principe. Le dernier trait des hétérotopies, c'est qu'elles ont, par rapport à l'espace restant, une fonction. Celle-ci se déploie entre deux pôles extrêmes. Ou bien elles ont pour rôle de créer un espace d'illusion qui dénonce comme plus illusoire encore tout l'espace réel, tous les emplacements à l'intérieur desquels la vie humaine est cloisonnée. Peut-être est-ce ce rôle qu'ont joué pendant longtemps ces fameuses maisons closes dont on se trouve maintenant privé. Ou bien, au contraire, créant un autre espace, un autre espace réel, aussi parfait, aussi méticuleux, aussi bien arrangé que le nôtre est désordonné, mal agencé et brouillon.

(...)



13 avril — *Les « Retouches ».*

Il faut toujours gâter un peu un tableau pour le finir. Les dernières touches destinées à mettre de l'accord entre les parties ôtent de la fraîcheur. Il faut apparaître devant le public en retranchant toutes les heureuses négligences qui sont la passion de l'artiste. Je compare ces retouches assassines à ces ritournelles banales qui terminent tous les airs et à ces espaces insignifiants que le musicien est forcé de placer entre les parties intéressantes de son ouvrage, pour conduire d'un motif à l'autre ou les faire valoir. Les retouches pourtant ne sont pas aussi funestes au tableau qu'on pourrait croire, quand le tableau est bien pensé et a été fait avec un sentiment profond. Le temps redonne à l'ouvrage, en effaçant les touches, aussi bien les premières que les dernières, son ensemble définitif.