

Side A

\_ (...)

**Klaus Winichner**\_ But with these people I don't speak so much about art making. Rather about all sorts of things.

**Sandra Bürgel**\_ *That's the reason why we do tape this now as a talk, isn't it?*

\_ Preoccupation with art to me is a key, or a path, into someone else's awareness. Art is like a path into a different consciousness.

\_ *but eventually into YOURS.*

\_ (laughs) then again into mine, no, honestly, I am really interested in foreign consciousness.

\_ *How much would you connect this to a definite time, as now, the taping is a precise moment? Does this moment shape consciousness?*

\_ Yes it does mould it for sure. I am fascinated by how somebody is built up in his inmost folds.

\_ *With all contradictions?*

\_ Yes with ... it's a total flash!

\_ *Psychological?*

\_ No. Biochemical.

\_ *Yes. But I wouldn't necessarily call you an analyst. Would you?*

\_ Eeh...

\_ *Well, because then one could think that it gives you pleasure to dissect people.*

\_ I'm not doing it that cold-hearted.

\_ *Would you say that in your works you allow the viewer share your consciousness? At best, works should do this?*

\_ Yes, certainly, because I lend my consciousness an outward form which has a three-dimensional extension, in the form of an exhibition or whatever.

\_ *Sounds like a very difficult process, because, for a start, one comprehends consciousness as something very vague.*

\_ It is a very agreeable process! I'm not connected to work in a conventional sense. I do not go into a factory for instance. I guess that would be displeasing.

\_ *... no afternoon nap.*

\_ Sure, consciousness is an extremely vague concept. I use it always, although I don't know at all what it is. I am using it because eeh first it's on the tip of my tongue, and I cannot name it better, second I use it to confine it against a completely different notion of art. This completely different notion of art starts off with representational issues.

\_ *... which you can name. Mostly you can clearly denominate that.*

\_ Yes

\_ *... wouldn't be representational otherwise.*

\_ Pop Art, Pop Art for example, is representational to a hundred per cent. It emanates from the system.

\_ *When Andy Warhol said, the final aim he had with his Factory was to bring people together, would you reckon he was thinking systemic or was it into the direction of consciousness?*

\_ The interesting thing about the Factory was to do an experiment with persons, really a human experiment. Which started with Andy Warhol himself. That's why Warhol is inspiring. Not ... not because he could delegate, but ...

\_ *But if one calls it an experiment in humans - it was only well working because he withdrew from it over and over again?*

- No. First and foremost he went in for the attempt with himself. Imagine: how far one needs to go, for being really empty! For being really able to say there's no secret in me any longer, nothing I need to cover. That is overtly celebrated psychoanalysis. He found a way to overcome the system by becoming the system to a

hundred per cent. He became his own surveillance state. That was the key: you can only abandon the system by becoming it yourself and that is an intriguing thought.

\_ *A thought that is contrary to yours?*

\_ No! That is inspiring to me! I spoke to friend recently, he is a journalist, he makes something completely different, like features on ultra left-wing Jesuits, stuff like that, and suddenly I noticed you can't leave alone the system, that's not functioning. - I could stop making art. Of course.

\_ *What is the purpose of matter that I am filtering right now?*

\_ To overcome our shyness.

\_ *Be even more confrontational than usually.*

\_ Exactly. To have a bit of a game. To draw a counterpart.

\_ *You say this quite often: a counterpart.*

\_ Maybe I do. I try to include persons into my life. It's not only a decision about production (invite people and draw them). I used to think of myself as somebody antisocial, or rather not capable of opening myself up, but I can do it via detours. By choosing certain detours, certain constellations that I can create myself, and that others accept, I can create a situation that is interesting for myself, a situation where I show interest for somebody else, and that is interesting for the other person alike. By portraying, for example.

\_ *Can you describe more detailed how does one come to portrait?*

\_ I started it with fifteen, maybe to escape isolation.

\_ *But at first it was very much rotating around yourself with self-portraits?*

\_ Well, I did always make self-portraits, but also drew other people, my family then, but I went to a home for disabled people, too.

\_ *Ah yes?*

\_ Yeah, there are still some drawings, I can show them to you, I was sixteen I think, I just asked them.

\_ *And then you gave the drawings away?*

\_ I still have them.

\_ (...)

\_ Would you like to hear about my new projects?

\_ *Yes, new projects!*

\_ My new plan is a group exhibition, just with women, around 40 female artists. It's meant to happen in an old ruin, in nature, at best on a meadow, something similar to a barn, a ruined barn maybe.

\_ *Really pastoral?*

\_ Why not a bit pastoral. The whole thing is a kind of shepherds' game, a shepherds' scene, Rococo paintings where the Ladies and Gentlemen of society mime country-life.

\_ *There's a strong leisure thought to it in Rococo.*

\_ Yes but enlightenment too, not only luxury but the newest body of thought of 1760. Idyll and paradise are often equated, in normal language use, but that's not true. Because - well, that now contradicts the pastoral scene - I have always been more interested in the notion of paradise than of idyll, as a violent image, if you handle paradise seriously, many people have to die.

\_ *Original sin you mean?*

\_ Well you'll always find reasons why this or that person is being killed. Paradise is always bound to massacre, Third Reiche, the history a whole battue. Idyll then is something more domesticated.

\_ *... it hurts nobody.*

\_ As a human possibility of imagination I find it tremendous. Enormously. As a social reality it is violent.

\_ *Everybody must pay. But now your pastoral hours are an Idyll?*

\_ Yeah, but this idyll isn't it for everybody, it's the idyll of a very few. The whole society around has gone unhinged. Next to the beautiful, painted bale is real bale, inhabited by half-starved illiterates. That is what makes it explosive. The performers of the idyll were beheaded in twenty, thirty years to follow.

\_ *Why?*

- \_ Aristocrats, cadgers.
- \_ *Why a women exhibition?*
- \_ Don't know why, it just popped into my mind.
- \_ ... *brings you into a very charming, hosting position.*
- \_ All right, into a very difficult situation, I presume, I worry that.
- \_ *So how does this work? You are asking women?*
- \_ I lock myself behind the telephone, I leaf through my telephone book.
- \_ *How long should this happen?*
- \_ One day. One day.
- \_ *The provisional arrangement is it alluring?*
- \_ That is an essential part in it. The concept isn't about a group exhibition. 'Group exhibition' is virtually a pretext for creating an artwork, namely mine.
- \_ *Hold on. Why do others accept becoming part of your art piece?*
- \_ Because ... because I just ... because it's a piece of art. Because I assume responsibility for it. Because I don't delegate responsibility and I don't announce it as a group exhibition with that or this subject-matter. I don't do that at all. I guess because I deal with it openly people accept it. A main thought is to place art into a scenic coherence. You don't have a neutral exhibition space but a whole where maybe similar to the classical drama a unity of plot and time, of space and time, happens. A kind of social sculpture. The artworks shown are in a certain way ideal portraits of the people participating, a meeting of real people. It requires certain circumstances and efforts to allow a meeting of real people taking place, a way round.
- \_ *The linking of social sculpture and portrait seems evident to me.*
- \_ It will only be lit by candles or petroleum lamps, very atmospheric, I did this once already.
- \_ *With the impression of another time?*
- \_ Another time, not in the sense of putting on a historical garment, but to do something that otherwise is difficult to carry out in the art world.
- \_ *A parallel world.*
- \_ Basically it is a desires engine. Because the wish is so big, I need other people with it.