

Josef Strau  
*Tears and New Tears*

## Introduction

Like before all the exhibitions one day I get to the kitchen desk that recently in fact turned into a black marble kitchen island and assumed I could explain with hard felt simple words why I would do what I do, why I did such and such and even what went through me while working on it. Usually it means getting lost pretty fast. I must have been deluded by a mean spirit very early in my artist life, that production should be self-reflective, that it should include documentation of some production related self-observing recording and even should put a critical eye on the artists biographical events or on the existential usually pretty bad conditions, coming along with the unavoidable self-sacrifices, the sufferings so to say, the idiosyncrasies of erratic confusions, that lead to the only good works. Not even the knowledge of such procedure's eternally repeated failure or the influence of well-meaning people can exorcise the miseries of such early implanted possessive acts.

So I certainly wished I could zoom away from myself as if looking from far away at that entity and would join others considering what they obviously make of it. That would not be too kind to myself in fact. Remembering the moments of origin of such artistic deviation catching the first times of intrusion, would mean to a healthy mind removing them. Wouldn't such procedure of self embetterment mean learning that even good influence such as having seen great movies and books read while the brain still developed years before artistic possessions of my own mounted uncontrolled, would maybe in my case have been of no good influence at all. So what is it that some like me as they look back on their own duration only look back on negative transformations of good influence events that after devoured into our all consuming subjectivity only turned through unproductive fragmentation into obscure misunderstandings and even complete deterioration?

Thinking of JJ Rousseau's second autobiography, or second confessions he wrote, a great confusing and violent book on himself. He wrote it with the intention to produce more evidence to who he believed were his prosecutors and accusers. He somehow ceased being autobiographical, stopped laying out his life like in his first confessions how he remembered it well meaning and rational but turned it into mapping it with all his knowledge to give a picture of his roots of evil and wrongdoings, turning in a somehow cinematographic shift his protagonist I into his own antagonist I. He felt the self-imposed prosecutors and judges of his 18th century Paris social environment would accuse him but never really tell what was the accusation, what his wrongdoings. So he sat down to help them and elaborated on an endless long and quite unreadable self-accusation. After being written he wanted to submit it like a prosecutor's supporting evidence and deposited the first final copy right at the place he believed was the center the origin place of all accusations the center of cultural power of his time. He believed it must be the altar and center of Notre Dame cathedral. And he achieved the difficult act and squeezed himself through the metal fence barriers before the Sunday mass and put the collected self-accusation next to the mass book to be read the very first time by the highest cardinal himself to the congregating audience of highest and most powerful influencers. I cannot verify it but I believe nothing happened and it was just entirely ignored.

I myself today would not even know what the altar of cultural power would be, it would be a bit frivolous to say it here at the kitchen island beginning this hopefully finally sincerely executed writing act, but at least in our fragmented situation with my own interior even much more fragmented intentionality, I for sure will do it very differently from the to me greatest

genius of great and adored 18th century France and probably end up not so completely ignored rather very frivolously received in the 8th floor gallery space, which I say not at all with humorous intention but with great gratitude and a feeling of unending unworthiness, feeling like a straying so foreign entity that found some compassionate context and grateful for a place to be fed and to sleep finally in the brightest peoples great and almost sacred city of refuge. Because you seem to always tolerate it when I am giving something away and deposit what can only appear most silly and almost ignorant in the intense struggles we are all facing in the contemporary condition, written in such tedious simple and always even mistaken language of ignorant un-contemporaneity. It is not the result as you will believe of a blasé-ish unproductive artist's attitude but of his unfiltered disabilities.

In the following texts I will give just another example of my unworthiness. The focus of the collection was one way to ask when and why once did it come to pass long ago so long ago that I would become an artist, and how did this original moment mingle with the original moment of developing other more serious personal bad misdemeanors, although in fact coming from an environment where such aesthetic values did not play any role, instead everything was perfect to develop a good person whose life duration is defined by good events. The necessary question for analyzing the simultaneous temporal appearance of the two trajectories might be to ask if something or someone "touched" me long ago and unknowingly to me a touch that produced later on such struggles that often come with being an artist and a not good guy. While meditating or self analyzing memories of young age, I became aware that such a "touch" could be called a touch that lead to a possession or to a kind of modern bedevilment even. It comes along with developing during adolescence already some evil personal traits that obviously cannot be corrected any more, that cannot get exorcised any more later on. I wanted to follow in the texts not so much the connection between artistic possession and evil or sleazy misdemeanors, or the ways on how to try to redeem them in older age, but just concentrate on the moments where such vices entered my subjectivity and found for sure a very good soil for it, possibly.

I apologize as well that such survey or evidences for the origin of my evils comes with expressing monotonously the very masculine sides of self and as well comes with my obvious use of traditional languages and traditions of male self description. They probably appear to anyone as obstinate or even pigheaded means of cultural practices that should not be reproduced any more. But I lost the time for working more on it. To make such perspective appear even worse, as an excuse I must say that my writing is starting with most everyday life subjects but sometimes develops in the process towards more general symptoms. I mean it just has no preconceived concepts but is more about giving evidence and exploring personal patterns in almost automatic style, fast and remote of intentionality except hoping for embetterment and otherwise the self improvements through writing and publishing to a small circle would not work probably. Only in such an old horse nosed mode of expression I can see and then "paint" the meaning and pattern of my personal acts, often a darkly negative and eerie torment mostly for me. Because if I would allow concepts of myself or my intentionality to take over the self reflections, more evil would be added, as I quickly would appear and would paint myself as a good person driven by a reasonable consensus. I would misuse these virtues by identifying them with my own acts. This a posteriori epistemological practice could be theoretically acceptable. You see already at that point how quickly the text escapes from the path of writing something to the place of writing about something, or like me to the good intentions of the writing in itself, how quick my plan for a collection of self accusation becomes "good" the moment I include the general plague of self identification instead, or of trust of the real consequences of the individual cultural practice. I was not able to write in such above described modes for at least two years. No idea why it was so and why it was

blocked so dramatically. When I moved back here I needed to readjust my life very quickly. First plan was writing again. It was hardest discipline that I needed. But maybe I needed healing. It would be to make a good book. The magic of an extremely intuitive protective hand in the size of the patient good acting universe. I should write about it not about me. The helping influence of whatever helped to share this voice that sometimes speaks, and then not. It drives the writing. It wanted to be me being the antagonist.

Then it wanted me to consider the self accusations as to be a contemporary love story, very sad, probably. During the first meditations of the origins of my becoming such an artist I quickly came to the memory of having seen very early on the then quite new movie named "Four Nights of a Dreamer" by Robert Bresson. It certainly shows issues of being an artist personally, not just the art. I would have never have become interested in art if it was not about the artist. Not with my upbringing. Who does so anyways? But I did not understand anything then. The influence of the touch I would say was like putting a script for bio time into my already disturbed interior space. It was the moment when a "script" starts evolving and quite badly so into biographical time and it works better even without any desire or interest from the biographical subject. That is the true explanation of the mechanism of the appearance of the devil. Anyhow I was in the age of such temptations of gravitating towards the dangers of the devil already when Bresson came out and therefore I became a (kind of) painter as consequence. It's just for another conceptual excuse that I mention Bresson, who was mentioned by so many other artists before. One only, the protagonist Jacques is doing a kind of diary practice while making paintings. Obviously very much like me, he is trying a production and artists life commentary. But as film watcher one does not much get information about its content. Which is good for the movie probably. As it is good for me not to do it, to put my written notes into the exhibition does not make it better. Worse so it usually alienates the watchers of my works. Does not help me getting them into the heaven of good art collections. I just realized the first time the moment I write this, that the opposite is true. As long as I was completely inhibited to do such writings I finally had pretty huge success in comparison to earlier years in getting into wonderful collections. It's so complicated. I have this very concept for my most unconceptual writing practice, that like the hero of "The Four Nights of a Dreamer" I speak into a recorder my thoughts and lonely meditations while working on my almost alchemist objects. I return to myself as the 14-year-old movie goer and exorcise the scripted spell of the protagonist/to me arch antagonist, the influencer antagonist. I will materialize the script of his unrevealed content of his tape recorder by turning it into my own life's ridiculous facts and revealing them as transcripts as a kind of conceptual excuse!