



Dear Paul,

The other day on the shores of the lake, the twilight lay like a cat curled up in the calm air over the poplars, I met a boy skipping stones, playing ducks and drakes, skimming, skiffing or whatever this deeply human activity is called, already described long ago by Seneca as a child's game in ancient Greece – you know: find small stones as flat as possible and throw them as flat as possible across the surface of the water, count one-two-three-four-five-six-seven or more hoppers and then follow the growing ripples on the water without blinking even once. 88 rebounders, the boy boasted, was the world record set recently by his paternal uncle, a certain Kurt "Mountain-Man" Steiner, with a stone from his collection of over 10,000. In his mind's eye, the boy continued, the sight of the amazing throw is hazy, like an apparition of 88 rings on a single chain, which in the finest spiritualization, pneumatization so to speak, shows the symbolized power of love. A falcon stroked past, the boy fell silent. In the snow at our feet three drops of blood formed a lovely face – it seemed as if the boy was sleeping. I carefully thanked him by nodding my head twice, and retreated to the local art gallery in view of the monstrous dirty clouds that were rising over the ridge of the mountains. The exhibition of work by a photographer I had never heard of was very refined, and there was a quiet, barely perceptible ringing. I heard it, but I saw it, too.

The eye, dear Paul, is a stone-skipping child or a gun-toting rebel. In order to harvest the ricochets of light, this artist made himself a net and stole a skin on which the thing-world writes things like ladder, window, rock, cave, tree. A haystack also crops up, but rarely. Knowing tends to know, the exhibition flyer said, and the known tends to be known. However, both are prevented from meeting in order to preclude a circular conclusion. Well, sometimes – to paraphrase Nietzsche – not only barons and images, but also words, pull themselves up out of the swamp of nothingness by their own bootstraps. "When the light of day surrounds the stream of vision," Plato writes, "then like falls upon like, and they coalesce, and one body is formed by natural affinity in the line of vision, wherever the light that falls from within meets with an external object. And the whole stream of vision, being similarly affected in virtue of similarity, diffuses the motions of what it touches or what touches it over the whole body, until they reach the soul, causing that perception which we call sight." It is therefore not a matter of how things appear to us, but when – and if – we pay them the attention they need in order to exist as appearance.

Yours,
Trmasan

With the friendly support of
Stadt Biel/Bienne
Swisslos Kultur Kanton Bern
Erna und Curt Burgauer Stiftung

ISBN 978-3-90712-23-6

Editor: Canton Bern – Werkbuch/œuvre d'artiste 2019
Project management: Vexer Verlag Büro Berlin
© 2020, Vexer Verlag St. Gallen/Berlin, Rudolf Steiner and Trmasan Bruialesi
Vexer Verlag is supported by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture with a subsidy for the years 2019–2020.
Translation: Catherine Schelbert
Proof-reading: Michael Turnbull
Lithography: Patrick Schranz
Cover illustration: Rudolf Steiner
Graphic design: superbüro Biel/Bienne
Print and binding: DZA Druckerei zu Altenburg

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