

If we are to try to understand the situation of art today,  
we must try to understand the conditions that determined the evolution  
of our artistic intuition and our notion of the relationship between man and society.  
The artist actively participates in the struggle to deepen what knowledge  
we have of the vital undercurrent that makes artistic creation possible.  
The artist's zone of interest, however, does not allow itself to be limited to this area alone.  
She must seek the ultimate awakening in everything and in the details of everything.  
Nothing is sacred for him, for everything has become important to her.  
Around that time my daughter and I had this exchange:  
Anne, imagine if the world had nothing in it.  
Do you mean nothing at all—just darkness—or a world without objects?  
And in order to express everything, we must know everything.  
The esthetic principle must be abolished.  
We are not disillusioned, because we have no illusions. We never had any.  
I mean a world without things: no houses, chairs, or cars. A world with only people and trees and dirt.  
What do you think would happen?  
What we possess, and what represents our strength,  
is that life makes us rejoice, that life in all its amoral aspects arouses our interest. And that is also what  
represents the foundation of art today.  
We do not even know the laws of esthetics,  
and the old idea of choice according to the principle of beautiful and ugly,  
in keeping with what is ethically noble or blameworthy,  
is dead for us,  
us for whom beautiful is also ugly, for whom everything that is ugly also has beauty in it . . .  
There is no such thing as different styles, and there never was.  
We cannot isolate any kind of artistic expression on the basis of its form, for there are only different means  
put to use for a common artistic goal.  
Sandpaper and absorbent cotton are forms of expression that are every bit as noble and every bit as usable  
as oil painting and marble.  
People would make things.  
We would make things with trees and dirt.

*Nina Manobra, winter 2022*