

Interview with Carle Colline

SD: Hello Carle Colline, we are now in your place surrounded by the different pieces of your collection. Before entering into this specific collection, I would like you to introduce yourself and explain to us how you became a collector.

CC: who I am...

First I was a poet. A young poet used my name to sign his writings. After a short period he changed to another pseudonym. Fifty years later approximately I met a young artist trying to place his pieces in the public domain. During a discussion with the poet become older, he proposed using my name. Since then I changed activity. After being a poet I am composer and musician with the pseudonym of Charles Colline and the Popom Human Band. I am part of the 'Republique Sans Tout ça' (The Republic Without All Of This).

It is during this period that with some friends began my thinking about pieces and my desire to collect.

Afterwards, it was with this constant desire of having some works I liked, to possess them, share them with others and share my point of view on art, that I began to collect.

SD: Yes indeed, about this collection, could you explain its organization to us?

CC: I don't know if we can talk about an organization, but the common thread amongst the pieces are their reproducibility, and they can be remade at any time.

Then it's according to my preferences and the meetings I can do that I decide to collect a piece. Some are chosen for an organizational value, like marks, justifications for the coherence of my collection, but all of them are there because I was moved by them.

SD: You're saying that the pieces are reproducible, however there are some paintings, some sculptures... What do you mean by reproducible?

CC: This question has different answers. The piece itself, from the point of view of which it was realised and intellectually conceived, is thought to be reproducible. They don't have a definite copy number. For example some paintings by Philippe Clot have been reproduced because the artist authorized it.

And Lawrence Weiner statements authorize anyone to reproduce some of his pieces.

This is possible for lots of different works and not only for editions, which are usually copy-limited. You see, it is through researches and meetings that I discover if a piece is reproducible or not. Sometimes I think that a piece can't be reproduced and finally it is possible. The opposite happens too. But it is part of the pleasure of collecting.

SD: You say that your collection comes from your point of view on art. What is it and how could your collection diffuse it?

CC: My collection doesn't come from a point of view on art only. It is also a simple pleasure and a desire that I am fulfilling. I have thoughts about art more than points of view, and my collection gives me the opportunity to develop them.

I think it is sad that art works have such an important financial value. It occults their force.

At the same time this preciousness refers to their uniqueness. And we need to have more or less precise or singular marks to orient ourselves.

Despite this, some artists worked and are working on dispersing marks that confuses our conventional lines of judgment. Critique of the white cube, critique of the artist's identity and his/her singularity...

I would like to continue this approach with some new processes because the ones before have shown their failures and in a way their defeats. I'm sure that what I am doing has nothing revolutionary, but is only a continuity.

This collection allows me to establish a contact with the artists when they are accessible and still alive or with those who are near the pieces (curators, collectors...).

Furthermore, in its presence and its utilization my collection is a conversation space with my friends, those who come to my house or borrow my artworks.

My knowledge is limited and it is through different meetings that I can be enriched.

SD: You talk about the utilization of the collection and the possibility to borrow art works. Could you be more precise?

CC: Yes, sorry... I am not alone in working on this collection, there are in general people with whom I am in discussion but also a young artist who proposed to have my collection be publicly accessible.

I liked this principle of having some of the collection in people's houses.

And especially as the borrowing contract is for an unspecified time and asks the borrower to let the piece be visible to anyone who would like to see it.

It happens too that some curators or I present a part of my collection for an exhibition.

These are the main uses of my collection, but I am still curious and open to others propositions.

SD: To rouse our curiosity, could you tell us some of the pieces you have? On which you are working or the ones you would like to acquire?

CC: There are a lot that I would like to acquire, and it happens regularly when I visit a museum that I see one or two works that could enter in my collection.

At the moment I'm working on Condensation Cube by Hans Haacke and the Black Box by John Mc Cracken.

Otherwise my collection is still young, I could mention too some works by Pierre Antoine, or Sébastien Feugère and France Languérant.

SD: Thank you. I hope your collection won't stop growing and that it will be possible to cross paths with it regularly.

CC: Thank you too for your interest.

Interview done in Charles Colline's house in December 2008.

Translated from French in 2010.

Thanks to Sarah and Sydney.