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On Writing

In my view, provided writing is not understood as something isolated, enclosed, static, and a profession related only to words, then all types of writing are similar. It's especially so in terms of language, as all sorts of languages are intended to convey the thought of the author. To an author the question of how one should distinguish between thinking in pictures, in words, or in connection with the stage does not exist. Thought is thought; it cannot be divided up into segments, It cannot be defined as picture-related or word-related, sensual or sensible.

By nature, thought is a force that springs from inside; whatever motivates it springs forth all at once, and is always an expression of authorship. It is entirely personal for every author to choose his/her own system of expression, and this system is by definition open and free. There are a lot of source materials you could choose from, such as (if our discussions are confined to only arts) words, stories, characters, plots, structures, colors, light, brightness, depth of field, motion, composition, models, surface or three-dimension, objects, details, environment, speed, sound, dialogue, frequency, volume, timbre, musical form, tonality, melody, counterpoint, orchestration, performance, rhythm, act, expression, gesture, figure, etc. Given all these different choices you are eventually streamlined into different systems that have already been labeled; a person who is capable of expression obtains then the title "author," and then--almost randomly--in particular 'a novelist,' 'a poet,' 'a painter,' 'a musician,' 'a sculptor,' 'an actor,' 'a director' and so on. Yet his expressive actions are really nothing other than writing, the form of which is by necessity various, personal, open, mobile, natural, and free.

Let's do an experiment: you could choose from the expressions listed below as you prefer, and you will find out clearly, through comparison, that as soon as you change your way of expression, you change the thought you want to get across:

Text:

Natalia

As I open the *Tristia*, evening spreads its nets
And a woman I love runs from a parking lot.
"You will run away" she says. "I already
see it: a train station, a slippery floor, a seat."

I tell her leave me alone, inside my childhood
where men carry flags across the street,
And they tell her: leave us alone,
as if power were given to them, but it is not given.

She attacks with passion, lifts her hand
and put it in my hair. On my right side I hide a scar,
she passes over it with her tongue
and falls asleep with my nipple in her mouth.

But Natalia, beside me, turns the pages,
what happened and did not happen
must speak and sing by turns.
My chronicler, Natalia, I offer you two cups of air
in which you dip your little finger, lick it dry.

Here “Natalia” is poetry, a passage of abstract text, which you feel free to put in service of your imagination, as it is open; the relative simplicity of expression opens up to fantasies outside...

Picture: Natalia



Here Natalia is a still picture, you could possibly believe this girl is Natalia. We cannot tell how many readers believe she is reading poetry, and are even less sure if the poem is in the collection she holds. The message a picture gives is also relatively simple, but because the picture is concrete, to the extent that it destroys the abstractness of the text, this destruction results directly in the change of meaning: possibly the key message here is: Natalia is a girl, she is reading a book, she seems to be on board a vehicle, there seems to be sunlight outside, but we don't know how many people there are in the car, and if the car is moving...

Frames: Natalia



Here Natalia becomes a series of continual frames, whereby we get in touch with more information: we see there are other people in the car, and the atmosphere seems jovial, as there are people laughing; the car is probably moving, because the backdrop is shifting; we know approximately what the girl is reading, and judging from her expression, we are still likely to think that this is a series of photos about the girl Natalia and several of her friends riding on a car...

Scenes with sound: Natalia (2'45'')

In this sequence of scenes we read many more complicated messages, whose meaning becomes very complex and unstable. We see a lot of people in the car, we perceive the relationship between them (characterization and plots), we know this is probably on the morning of a Sunday, and to our surprise, toward the end, an accident happened... Finally, if a voice-over reading the original poem is (super)imposed, the context will be extremely complicated.

To an audio-visual author, all these messages should be considered and controlled strictly, as they constitute the language of visual art. Through this simple example, we can perhaps understand where the basic differences between writing and visual writing lie.