

GILLES DELEUZE

What is the Creative Act?

translation Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina

The end of the conference:

Let's say that is what information is, the controlled system of the order-words used in a given society. What does the work of art have to do with it? Let's not talk about works of art, but let's at least say that there is counter-information. In Hitler's time, the Jews arriving from Germany who were the first to tell us about the concentration camps were performing counter-information. We must realize that counter-information was never enough to do anything. No counter-information ever bothered Hitler. Except in one case. What case? This is what's important. Counter-information only becomes really effective when it is—and it is by nature—or becomes an act of resistance. An act of resistance is not information or counter-information. Counter-information is only effective when it becomes an act of resistance.

What relationship is there between the work of art and communication? None at all. A work of art is not an instrument of communication. A work of art has nothing to do with communication. A work of art does not contain the least bit of information. In contrast, there is a fundamental affinity between a work of art and an act of resistance. It has something to do with information and communication as an act of resistance. What is this mysterious relationship between a work of art and an act of resistance when the men and women who resist neither have the time nor sometimes the culture necessary to have the slightest connection with art? I do not know. Malraux developed an admirable philosophical concept. He said something very simple about art. He said it was the only thing that resists death. Let's go back to the beginning: What does someone who does philosophy do? They invent concepts. I think this is the start of an admirable philosophical concept. Think about it... what resists death? You only have to look at a statuette from three thousand years before the Common Era to see that Malraux's response is a pretty good one. We could then say, not as well, from the point of view that concerns us, that art resists, even if it is not the only thing that resists. Whence the close relationship between an act of resistance and a work of art. Every act of resistance is not a work of art, even though, in a certain way, it is. Every work of art is not an act of resistance, and yet, in a certain way, it is.

Take the case of the Straubs, for example, when they operate the disconnection of voice and visual image. They approach it in the following way: the voice rises, it rises, it rises and what it is talking about passes under the naked, deserted ground that the visual image was showing us, a visual image that had nothing to do with the sound image. What is this speech act rising in the air while its object passes underground? Resistance. Act of resistance. And in all of the Straubs' works, the speech act is an act of resistance. From *Moses* to the last Kafka including—I am not citing them in order—*Not Reconciled* or Bach. Bach's speech act is that his music is an act of resistance, an active struggle against the separation of the profane and the sacred. This act of resistance in the music ends with a cry. Just as there is a cry in *Wozzeck*, there is a cry in Bach: "Out ! Out ! Get out! I don't want to see you!" When the Straubs place an emphasis on this cry, on Bach's cry, or the cry of the old schizophrenic women in *Not Reconciled*, it has to account for a double aspect. The act of resistance has two faces. It is

human and it is also the act of art. Only the act of resistance resists death, either as a work of art or as human struggle.

What relationship is there between human struggle and a work of art? The closest and for me the most mysterious relationship of all. Exactly what Paul Klee meant when he said: "You know, the people are missing." The people are missing and at the same time, they are not missing. The people are missing means that the fundamental affinity between a work of art and a people that does not yet exist is not, will never be clear. There is no work of art that does not call on a people who does not yet exist.