



EDITORIAL

Even the true things can be proved

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Nine men, one of which is only a lifeless body, stand out in the scene. In a confident, superior and professorial tone, one of them receives the living attention of all the others, and with a surgical toll dissects the corpse's left arm, that once belonged to a man executed for robbery. "The anatomy lesson of Dr. Tulp", painted by Rembrandt, depicts a specific moment in dutch medicine and science in the early XVII century, and became part of the history of world painting due to its brilliancy.

The art of Rembrandt Harmezoon van Rijn, presented in this brief text that describes a portrait commissioned by Dr. Nicolaes Tulp himself, is one of many points of contact between art and science throughout history. And what links the painting and the moment it represents is the same search for truth and knowledge: the human body, a corpse being dissected – a common scene due to the developments in the anatomy studies between the XVII and XVIII centuries, and the aspiration to register the real situations.

In the so-called Western Modernity, for centuries, thinking about science and from science meant thinking about the will of truth and the certainty that it is possible to achieve it, the proof of a possible world that expresses itself through stable senses. In the case of paintings, in that time, there were expectations over art that were very close to science itself. Portraiture gained strength and one of the measures of the artist's work was firmly in his representational power. However, it does not seem unreasonable to claim that shortly after, art had established an inflection that drove it apart from science, becoming autonomous in regards to the real world and mere representation, and bravely assuming its possibilities to

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create its own impossible worlds. More than that, art embraced its “uselessness”, as described by Oscar Wilde in his brilliant preface on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. “The artist does not wish to prove anything. Even the true things may be proved”, says Wilde. Would the uselessness of art be the source of the essential counterpoint to science, from which the exact opposite is expected, that is, how much can be useful to man?

Anyway, if we are here to talk about other perspectives, namely the infinite possibilities of dialogue between art and science, maybe the essential question is, what brings art closer to science? Even though they are moved by distinct sensibilities – the aesthetics and scientific – the artist and the scientist may have more approximation and contact points than divergences. Processes that, in their radicality, regardless of the actuation areas and creative processes, can even be distinguished, but that are similar in terms of the drives - so dear to the human condition - that they exercise: intuition, thought, questioning, feeling and dream. For both, discovering and creating are critical points of arrival and departure. An eternal nietzschean return?

Art and science cross, clash, oppose and promote one another for centuries. It would be a simplistic thing to say that art narrates and lends textualities to what science dreams. On the other hand, it would not be totally wrong to mention it. There is between these dimensions of culture and life, manifestations of human intelligence and sensibility, some incomprehensible intersections. Any example will be counterproductive.