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The gossamer lightness of a gesture

Can two souls live in the same body? Can a being possess two completely disparate desires?

Can an artist speak with two tongues? Can the same hand and spirit paint two dissimilar words?

These questions beg answers. I will make some comments.

Richard Solstjärna fascinates me with his suite of paintings. In some of his art I see the gesture – the rapidly sketched sign, a fleeting feeling flashing past – captured, ethereal and beautiful, on paper. My thoughts turn towards to ZEN Buddhism. I think of Japanese Calligraphy, that lives a world apart from Western art. I see images that want nothing else but to capture the gesture as a movement, as a beautiful impression of the heart's song, or purity.

A painter of that kind discards a thousand pictures and saves but one.

He must forever seek that picture – and only the one – that feels authentic, that exudes vibrancy, vitality, and possesses SPIRIT.

A Swedish master in this genre is Rune Hagberg.

And now Richard Solstjärna comes along and shows these sometimes nervy but for the most part clean and stylish sketched images, taken directly from the depth of his heart. It is an “Eastern” art form. Art that is bold enough to believe in the caress of a brush, a light stroke on the paper or canvas. In the best cases, as at times with Richard Solstjärna, the result becomes very instinctively beautiful (think of Jazz, think of flowing Jazz prose).

And then the other side of his art. Of his soul.

It catches me off guard. It is almost heavy forms, maybe beings.

Red, heavy shapes with a will, a fury, bent in their struggle towards liberation. Art that is as WESTERN as art can possibly be. Here it is not so much the lightness and charm and gesture that are important. Here it is the ambition to create paintings that counts.

Here there is an up and a down, a front and a back. “Law and order”(Almost).

And the soul yearns for this light stroke of the hand. Imagine if this expressiveness and this resolve for physical painting could discover the sensibility and grace of the east. Talent exists.

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