

—Your videos about ontocubism are fairly redundant. Why not stick with one summary video ?

—You might want to think of me as Ad Reinhardt or something. Or as Coltrane attacking the same musical idea from different directions.

—You seem to be comparing yourself to the great Coltrane. Just how arrogant are you ?

—Oh I have a sense of humor about all of this. But I do believe that my work is basically good, with enough novelty (if not so much) to be worth considering by others who take the kind of philosophy I do seriously. I'm no Coltrane. Heidegger was a Coltrane.

—Can you say what it is, exactly, that you offer ?

—I see myself as having fused my influences. Then I present this fusion in what I hope is a relatively honest vocabulary. I like to think that few serious people out there will find it easier to read my influences with some help from my “demystifying” approach.

—Who are these serious people ?

—I mean those who are serious about *explicative* philosophy. As opposed to speculative philosophy, which is a kind of entertaining sophistry and/or some blend of scientism and New Age religion.

—Hoffman, Kastrup, etc. ?

—Yes. I'd say that *of course* they will interest most people far more than the kind of thing that I'd do, which is surprisingly close to logical positivism.

—Except your “branding” is “artsy.”

—Yes. Of course this “branding” came later. The name “ontocubism” was an accident. I did have “ontological cubism” pretty early on. I knew it was cute, but it was one name among others that I’d use to try to share the idea.

—Share with who ?

—Others on a philosophy forum.

—Did anyone appreciate it ?

—Not really. Self-proclaimed “spiritual” types like the *sound* of the *word* “nonduality.” They tended to insist that one had some vague mystical Experience of nonduality. But they were also reluctant to claim that they’d had this experience. Instead it was some distant object to fetishize and celebrate.

—And nonspiritual types ?

—Well anyone who takes indirect dualism for granted won’t see what I’m trying to say. So it looks like idealism to them. Even though I reject the postulation of consciousness.

—To me your view is a modification of panexperientialism.

—Yes. But this “experience” is really just *world*. My modification is a vital clarification.

—Wittgenstein, right ? “All experience is world.”

—Yes.

—And you argue that Heidegger’s Dasein was a mod-

ification of the monad in Leibniz.

—Yes. An easy argument to make. I read the passage in question on my channel.

—So your view, as you see it, really is just a paraphrase of their views.

—Yes. So if ontocubism is idealism, then so is the work of Wittgenstein and Heidegger. But “idealism” misses the communal basis of existence. The “atomic” subject is demolished. Signs, as Derrida emphasizes, are between us rather than inside us. “Thought” is “contaminated” by and entangled in world.

—Do you ever get frustrated ?

—Not so much. Of course I’m *sometimes* annoyed or dismayed by the people who parrot the famous names without understanding the associated work. But I’ve done it myself. Indeed, I still have to invoke the famous names to call attention to my “footnotes” to that work.

—To what degree is this project of yours just art ?

—“Just art” is a fun phrase. It’s basically all art. Explicative philosophy is an art. Now art can help people get along in the world, but I don’t see my art, this ontocubism stuff, as likely to save souls.

—You may be downplaying the “spiritual” relevance.

—OK. In the background, there’s the theme of personal mortality. There’s also the idea that idea itself is the kind of relative immortality that is actually available.

—The “spirituality” of Mach.

—Exactly. And the nonduality stuff connects to Advaita Vedanta. And the communal self supports all of this. So my explicative ontology is not unconnected to what “saves souls.” Still, thinkers who put this spiritual subtext first also tend to neglect “the labor of the concept.” The idea “consumer” of “ontocubism” is probably an “ironic rationalist.” A skeptical-critical type who doesn’t want to take a short cut.

—I take it that the explicative ontology should stand on its own two feet.

—Yes. I even thought of doing two channels, keeping anything with “spiritual” resonance separate. I still might.

—You’ve been very active on your channel lately. Arguably too productive.

—That’s just an artistic obsessiveness which I tend to enjoy. The “delights of genius” may look like “the torments of insanity” to those unfamiliar with bouts of inspiration.

—William Blake.

—Correct.

—You also have another more literary project, influenced by Joyce.

—Yes. That I *have* kept separate so far. It’s even more difficult (stranger) than ontocubism.

—How so ?

—Well I write in a kind of hyper-suggestive “dream language.” If you look at Mary Ellen Bute’s *Finnegans Wake* movie, you can get a sense of what it’s about.

—Why keep it separate ?

—It’s a “muted post horn.” I think of it as a kind of graffiti “for mad men only.”

—*The Crying of Lot 49* and *Steppenwolf*.

—Yes. You’ve probably noticed that I get rude comments on my videos from passing internet strangers. Which is to be expected. If you’ve read some stuff, don’t pretend otherwise, you have a complicated effect on people.

—Indeed. But ?

—Well, what people miss or don’t want to see is that I’m well aware that my creations are for the few. Or maybe they don’t miss it, and they resent the “elitism.”

—That sounds right.

—Of course I understand the “just us folks here” populism that wants everything transformed into fast food. But I don’t want to manufacture fast food, and there’s already plenty of fast food out there.

—What I’m getting is this: You basically really are a Platonist of some kind. You differentiate between philosophy and sophistry.

—Yes. And sophistry runs and will continue to run the world. So the “elitism” of “real” philosophy is a

kind of worldly foolishness. What confuses people is that one can be foolishly serious about real philosophy. Serious like an artist, like a child at play.

—Nietzsche.

—Yes. I really like Nietzsche's portrait of Christ in *The Antichrist*. His Jesus is "behind language." He is beyond every formulation of his "faith."

—Do you feel the same way ?

—Basically, yes. But this "cosmic irony" is found in many thinkers. I'm a fan of Beckett, for instance. I love his "Watt." And of course Joyce is a huge influence.

—And you include this in your self-interview. Why ?

—A little peep behind the curtain for the few who check. Ontocubism is piece of art among many others. I obsess over this or that one for a while, then I move on, possibly returning later. I relate especially to other artists, but in real life I don't have artists as friends who primarily "work in concept." I mean that philosophy is not often seen as or practiced as a form of art.

—I know you are a fan of Gadamer.

—A huge fan. *Truth and Method* is great.

—Well we might as well finish up with a discussion of ontocubism proper. Can you summarize ?

—Lately I've found its connection to Plato's so-called "unwritten" doctrine. In short, reality is the collision

of discrete categories and the qualitative continuum.

—Which, on its own, is too abstract.

—I agree. So let's talk about the fundamental thesis of ontocubism. Objects (including concepts) are ideal manifolds. They are systems of faces. Basically the “idea” of the thing unifies “appearances” of that thing which are *not* contrasted with the “real thing” outside of a fictional consciousness stuff.

—So the “idea” is the real thing, the thing in itself.

—Yes. So this is a demystification of Platonic forms. I think that indirect realism has confused people. “Phenomenal consciousness” is just a “torrent of naked reality.” It is “world-from-perspective.”

—Is there a real world in this system ?

—Yes and no. Each “torrent” *is* a *piece* of the one real world. But there is no “official version” of the world. No “aperspectival” world.

—So the real world is broken up like an object in a cubist painting.

—Exactly.

—And things too, as unities of their appearances in various *neutral* phenomenal streams or “torrents” are also broken.

—Exactly. Objects and the world itself are “disassembled,” available only through “perspectival pieces.”

—So what are subject exactly, in this scenario ?

—In one sense, subjects are turned inside-out like old socks. Or subjects are emptied. The subject is just the “from-a-point-of-view-character” of objects and the world.

—Fair enough.

—But subjects are also “components” of “The Forum.” As sketched by Robert Brandom. Centers of freedom-as-responsibility. Also “processes” that can be thought of as systems of beliefs that keep themselves coherent, consistent, etc. This “belief process” strives toward the goal of coherence.

—That’s the Hegel influence.

—Yes. So we might talk about “self-explicating torrents.” And even a “self-explicating reality,” given that thinking is essentially social. The “tribal software” is a “parasite” on its “mortal hosts.”

—“I am a thin client.”

—Yes. Feuerbach already understood this. Feuerbach is “proto-Heidegger.” That is apparently more or less my “discovery.” Not much talked about, if at all. But it’s clear if one looks.

—You like to read forgotten books.

—I do.