



LOCKDOWN: ROBERT EINBECK'S APPROACH TO STRESS

Interview by Margaux Rolland — May 1, 2020

Contemporary artist Robert Einbeck places his work at the service of others through works centered on serenity. His videos grew out of research conducted some thirty years earlier at Ambroise-Paré Hospital into the effects of color on heart rhythms.

Paris Match — You have been studying the impact of color on well-being and health for more than thirty years. How do you explain the fact that simple colors can play such an important role in our emotions?

Robert Einbeck — Studies have shown that the heart is the first organ to react to a visual emotion. It then transmits the information to the brain. We live in a colored environment that influences our metabolism and its rhythms.

There are two aspects to consider. First, there is the cultural phenomenon. Colors are also codes shaped by traditions. In India, for example, orange is associated with purity and spirituality. It represents the color of fire and is often associated with the warrior caste, whereas in the West spirituality is often represented by violet.

The relationship between our colored environment and our metabolism remains largely beyond our awareness. Certain places are more conducive to relaxation. We feel better in green spaces, for example, than in some more aggressively colored environments.

In short, we live within a phenomenon of wavelengths. Each color corresponds to a particular wavelength.

What are the benefits, and how can they be measured?

It can help reduce stress and, in certain specific cases, may also reduce the amount of pain medication required. I am currently working with Professor Leprince, Head of Cardiac Surgery at Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris. We are studying the creation of a Serenity Space for cardiac

patients, healthcare staff and families. The effects can be observed through measurements of heart rhythm.

Is there a difference between your YouTube videos and those intended for the future Serenity Space?

At Pitié-Salpêtrière, people will be immersed for twenty-five minutes in an octagonal room with five screens — a kind of ballet of meditation and serenity. The music will incorporate sounds from space recorded by NASA as well as Tibetan singing bowls. The underlying principle, however, remains the same.

How do you create these videos?

We work with a multiplicity of colors and details. I paint a succession of acrylic works on sheets of paper measuring 1.05 metres by 65 centimetres. Each painting is then photographed.

As with an animated film, I create a storyboard. This allows us to evaluate the readability and progression of the future film, which is constructed from photographs of the different works.

For these three-minute simulation videos, I work closely with Eglé Vismante, video designer, and composer Jeanne Serero. It may appear simple, but it involves an enormous amount of work. The Opus works placed online on YouTube each required almost two months to create.

What does the disc that appears throughout your videos represent? Why not change the form along with the variations in color?

The principle was to create a hypnotic phenomenon over three minutes. In such a short period, changing the form would cause us to lose the rhythm.

I also drew upon the principle of the **Bi discs**, which appeared in China during the Neolithic period. They represented the universe and were intended as forms of protection. The circular phenomenon is the most perfect form for leading toward meditation and well-being.

What would you advise your readers who are feeling particularly anxious?

I am always very careful about giving advice, particularly at a time when everyone seems to have their own analysis. Every situation is different.

It is difficult to tell someone who has never meditated: “Go ahead, close your eyes... and meditate.” It doesn't work that way.

These videos, however, can provide a way of entering a form of relaxation and, through that, reaching a state of well-being. I receive messages from Japan, the United States, Russia... It is very moving.

And ultimately, that is truly the purpose of art. We live in such a destabilizing society that art should be placed at the service of others and help us to feel better.

This interview was originally published in French by Paris Match on May 1, 2020. The Serenity immersive program has continued to evolve since its publication.