

Epilogue

I am an unknown artist. But nevertheless I have a story of art to tell which is so sensational that I hope even the most famous museums in the world will become interested in it.

The story begins in the year 2006 when I presented the artwork -Mercedes to various contemporary museums as well as to the *Haribo* company.

The company, the product of which gives the car its face, reacted immediately and wanted to buy the artwork. The company indicated that a purchase at a later time would be out of the question for them, so most likely they intended to use the car for special marketing purposes.

Regardless of this I decided not to sell the Mercedes. It was not easy to make that decision because I would have liked to give the revenues to the children's aid organization *terre des homes*. But in the end I did not want to end the search for a contemporary museum before it had really started.

In the following months I sent application folders to selected museums and incidentally began to take interest in historic travel literature.

One year passed by. I had not received any positive answer from the museums. The rejections I received were very kindly written: Explicitly praising and encouraging words – however, no positive answer for the purchase or an exhibition of my work of art.

Therefore I continued my research on other places of art that would allow me to exhibit my Mercedes.

Through historic literature I came across the significance of the Grand Tour for traveling and art in earlier centuries. The wish to travel a part of the historic route with my work of art then immediately crossed my mind.

I was thrilled by the idea of following the traces of former artists with a work of art, to exhibit this artwork at historic places of art and therefore to again experience traveling in the modern world as an art in itself. Furthermore, when I noticed that in 2007 the most famous art exhibitions in the world were going to take place along the historic route of the Grand Tour, the idea for the modern Grand Tour was born.

But would it even be possible to do an own Grand Tour with a gummy bear Mercedes? How would I be able to realize such an ambitious project without destroying the work of art? To me it seemed impossible to drive the car on public streets without damaging the bears_. There were tens of thousands of gummy bears sticking to the car, only protected by a varnish against wind and rain. The work of art was made for an exhibition hall of a museum but not for

road traffic. It would definitely bear a great risk of destruction. After all, it were real gummy bears, made of sugar and gelatin, that were sticking to the car. If the temperature got too high the gummy bears would just melt from the car as a mass of gelatine. Water contact would swell them up and they would rot after some time. This, I thought at that time, would be a mega disaster for my work of art. Other uncertain influences occurred, negligible tasks which I had to master.

Nevertheless, during the following weeks I came to the conclusion that the modern Grand Tour would fit so perfectly to this work of art and therefore I could not stop it anymore. After studying the historic travel literature intensively I realized that an alteration of my work of art would become part of my art story. After all, former travelers as well as their “bear leader” had put themselves at risk as well – and had developed during the Grand Tour. Why shouldn’t this apply to the artist and his work of art just as well?

My initial doubts were gone. In September 2007 I started the modern Grand Tour after a preparation period of half a year. A journey that started with one work of art and that was to end with a second one.

After returning from the modern Grand Tour, I started to write down the experiences I had made during the journey, just as it was often done by the historic travelers.

Years went by. In the summer of 2010 I had almost finished the records of my art journey, when it came to my mind that I could once again make the Grand Tour.

Driven by the idea of creating a third work of art by visiting almost every historic city on the route of the Grand Tour, another vision developed from an idea I had already followed before the modern Grand Tour: To find a place for the artwork- Mercedes in a contemporary museum. The revenues should be given to children who had never experienced any children’s rights before: A part of it should benefit for example the up to 350 000 children who, according to sources by the United Nations, are misused as soldiers worldwide.

“To force children who are poor, who have lost their parents or were separated from them through kidnappings to learn how to kill is probably the worst crime that can be inflicted on children.” From a German bishop I had learned that apart from humanitarian help and help in dealing with traumatic experiences the distribution of children’s bibles had showed to be successful for the rehabilitation of child soldiers. (...”The holistic approach makes use of an experience which could roughly go like this: Someone cares for me and my trauma... and I listen to stories which can help my soul to overcome the terrible distress. I will keep that in my heart forever”...)

As a liberal Christian I won something of this kind of assistance. Apart from my artistic aims I had discovered another passion: The vision that in the future each

of the 35 000 gummy bears would take care of one child that had been betrayed by life.

The Mercedes trilogy will come to an end with the visionary Grand Tour. More than a hundred thousand people have accompanied me on the modern Grand Tour. It won't be less on the visionary Grand Tour. Until now, I experienced a lot of incredibly positive reactions, quite phenomenal. The best thing that can happen to an artist, one might think. Actually, there is nothing to add to this. If there were not still my dream that a museum of art will be willing to buy the artwork-Mercedes and pay an appropriate price for it. A price that is astronomically high for a work of art from an unknown artist. But nevertheless, it is likely to be worth each Cent. Not because I think that my work of art is outstanding, but because of the Grand Tours in themselves and the story of art in itself. This will be judged by others.

The gummy bears Mercedes shall live on – not only well protected in a museum but also in places where there is war and destruction instead of peace and prosperity.

Maybe a museum is willing to follow my traces and will afford to buy a children's bible for each of the gummy bears.

In any case, this would be rewarded with 35 001 happy faces. And for some of the spectators the Mercedes would thus become a work of art for eternity.

People change, traveling changes, cars change, museums change and art changes. Nothing persists. Hopefully one day this will also be true for the lives of the majority of children.



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