

PICTURES

Pictures? No, they've never really interested me. Even when well-meaning people offered to describe them for me. Forget it. To try and describe a painting to a blind person is the same as trying to introduce a deaf person to classical music.

I have my own pictures in my head. Pictures which have nothing to do with colours or optical stimulation because those things are foreign to me. I don't miss them and never will. I can hear my pictures, I can think my pictures or I can feel my pictures with the tips of my fingers. Feel them or even read them. My writing is Braille. A six point system as on a dice. These point in various combinations give me A or B as well as all their colleagues. Every sentence is an expressed picture, sometimes better, sometimes less so. The content derives from the words. What follows are thoughts and associations. Yes, that's how it is when one reads. But what happens when this process is made more difficult because there is suddenly a picture round about to be felt? The multifarious materials invite the fingers of the 'viewer to take part in their game of recognition. I am slightly confused, search for a content, and then I find it, my Braille writing. It wasn't easy in any of the pictures. It wasn't easy either to find the letters nor to decipher them. The points are not their normal size, and they feel quite different. Very often the materials play with the Braille writing with the result that for the blind a picture content emerges. Of course, there is not only him to think about. For me, the completion of the picture can only then take place in a dialogue with a sighted person, because only I know what is written in the picture, however s/he can tell me what the picture means for their eyes. Whether the dots make 'sense' for him/her as well. The two worlds need each other in their complementarity. And in this way a picture description *does* make sense.

Then suddenly there was an 'Invisible Message'. I could read it, which means that the message could only be felt, while the sighted cannot make it out. And in yet another my fingers felt numerous nails - bent, straight, simply many and various. It took a distinctly long time before I could decipher the nails, before I could 'Hit the Nail on the Head' with regard to the words.

'Heavy Snow'. The word was suddenly there between lots of soft cushions. Before I found the word I thought I was feeling a couch. Because of the 'snow picture' it stayed soft but was instantly very cold, and I'm sure that had I left my hand there for much longer the cushions would have melted.

In the exhibition what the blind touch the sighted look at and the key lies in an amplifying dialogue.

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Vienna, October 1998