

## **Benjamin Richter**

Let me begin with a general remark. We normally perceive pictures by relying on what we have already seen and experienced before, and on what we have heard and remembered.

In other words: we are guided by those things which we already know. It is the memory which is active. And we are eager to collect notice and knowledge in order to have something in mind.

But: is this the right way? When looking at pictures not the memory, but the eye should be active. There are pleasures which can only be reached by using the eyes.

And now perhaps you ask why I do not give you the opportunity to use your eyes, showing you here some images. Why? –

Because I would like you to enjoy my pictures as what they are. A reproduction on the monitor of a computer is a fundamentally different thing. It's only the original itself which says what it says, and this can only be received by contemplating the original itself. Because it's the original which has been realized by the artist, and what he expresses enters solely into the work under his hands. There are technical reasons why a reproduction never can transmit this expression.

We have always deceived ourselves when we thought that we see the object when looking at an image which reproduces it. (This explains too, that what counts in a figurative piece of art is not included in what it represents; it is the picture itself which is the object.)

A reproduction has its sense when using it as a means for remembering an image which has been studied thoroughly at an earlier date. It may evoke what has been experienced when standing in front of the original.

In any other situation reproduction simply means: wrong format, untrue colours, alienated appearance. If it is the image of a work of art which we have never seen before, a reproduction can only produce a wrong idea of it. If I don't know the work, I will not be able to learn what it is just by watching a reproduction.