



SIEBENQUELL

The Task of being totally here



QUELLENANGABE: MONNERJAHN 2019

Paul Cézanne spent the greatest part of his life in the city of his birth, Aix-en-Provence. He was considered idiosyncratic. Throughout his life he had the feeling he was different from all the rest and thus loneliness was always an issue for him and for those who wrote or told of him.

Over the course of many years, the mountain Sainte Victoire became an ever more important theme of his paintings. It fascinated him to such an extent, that he purchased a house above the city and set up his studio there. From here he often went up a little higher in order to garner a better view of the mountain east of the city so that he could paint it.

Dozens of times he climbed up into the limestone mountains. To him, painting meant precisely observing nature, openly examining it and winning ever deeper insights into reality. It meant finding, »constructions and harmonies parallel to nature« (from »Conversations with Cézanne«, 1998). This was more important to him than creating something purely aesthetic.

Thus, over 60 paintings in oil and watercolours are crafted with the motif of Mont Sainte Victoire. Indefatigably he dedicates himself to looking precisely and giving expression in painting to the point of landscapes that appear almost cubist.

Indeed, he never finished. The light was always different, his gaze went deeper, he noted something new: with great passion he was in the here of the ever new contemplation, gave himself over to it, drew from it and gave it expression with his art.

On the surface, the mountain is ever the same and the sky of the Provence is usually blue.

On the surface, we often stand before situations, encounters, things and days that appear so well known and clearly defined that we quickly skim over them. We are subjected to so many impressions that we become flighty and can no longer linger. We want to be done quickly with what is heard and seen, including in dealings with relationships, so that we no longer know how this is done: to delve into the here and now. Since we no longer practice it, we are from time to time shaken when we cannot succeed at it at special times and moments.

Cézanne wanted to penetrate to the core of what he saw. To see the mountain, paint it and then move on was never his thing. He could not only dedicate himself to the object for hours once, but he did this over and over again. He seldom found words for what he discovered, but sought to express it in his »language«.

That which surrounds and encounters us, what appears before our eyes or is simply part of the here and now of an ordinary day, can be accepted by us as gift, challenge and task - let us dedicate ourselves to it. Let us learn to know life in its depth and breadth, step by step, tirelessly, never finished.

Rosemarie Monnerjahn

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