

Søren Kierkegaard's "Here and Now" - Reinhard Stammer "Different Ways of Being 2023-2025"
....PART 4

Reinhard Stammer - art brut neo expressionist

There is a compelling and insightful connection between Reinhard Stammer's spontaneous, existential artwork and Søren Kierkegaard's philosophy of becoming a self in the "Here and Now".

Regarding REINHARD Stammer's methods and philosophy we can draw clear parallels between Kierkegaard's "Here and Now" and "Presence in the Moment".

Kierkegaard's concept of the "Here and Now" emphasizes the moment of choice and the radical presence required to move beyond a life defined by the past or passively accepted categories. Stammer's art directly embodies this by Spontaneous and Intuitive Action. Critics describe Stammer's process as "fast, spontaneous, intuitive and very concentrated," beginning a picture "without a concept" and letting "the brush painted." This is the artistic equivalent of Kierkegaardian immediacy. The act of painting is the moment of being; the artist is entirely present, reacting to what is "moving him."

His process is not about executing a plan but about creative problem-solving in the moment, reacting to the paint on the substrate. This mirrors the existential leap of faith, where one makes an ungrounded, responsible choice to create a new solution (or a new self) in the face of reality.

Painting "In a Chaotic System" 2024 by Reinhard Stammer

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The Project of Becoming a Self - Reinhard Stammer "Different Ways of Being 2023-2025"
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For Kierkegaard, "becoming a self" is an ongoing, passionate project rooted in personal choices. Stammer's story "of a life that refuses to fall silent" aligns perfectly with this*.

Embracing Art Making as a Passionate Choice:

Stammer's statement that he "lived my life passionately and sometimes excessively" and that the "joy of painting" has been with him "since I was in the cradle" highlights the personal, non-conventional path of his art. By pursuing this passion he rejects the external validation of the crowd (the aesthetic or ethical spheres in Kierkegaard) in favor of his authentic compulsion.

Stammer attributes his ability to compensate for severe calamities to the act of painting, stating, "She saved my life." This elevates his art-making from a hobby to an existential necessity and a responsible choice, a self-chosen vocation that provides meaning and preserves the self against the forces of despair and turmoil.

Painting "Timeless" 2020 by Reinhard Stammer

Confronting Reality - Reinhard Stammer Part 6

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Kierkegaard viewed reality as something to be confronted with passion, not theorized about abstractly. Stammer's aesthetic choices reflect this confrontation:

Confronting Reality: The works are described as expressing "turbulent agony and sweet recollections" and a "direct stream from his subconscious mind." This visceral output shows an artist who is not escaping reality but internalizing and then aggressively processing it on the canvas. The subject matter is the reality of his own lived life ("life with all its ups and downs, with its light – and dark sides").

Immediacy Over Reproduction: Stammer's later loss of interest in "merely reproducing the visible world" to focus on "color on a substrate" is a Kierkegaardian move toward immediacy. He is focused on the raw, non-dualistic consciousness of the present moment ("consciousness is all there is") rather than the detached, intellectual task of imitation. The immediacy of the paint, rather than the mediated image of the world, becomes the focal point.

Ultimately, Stammer's recent work operates as an existential artifact—a testament to a self forged through spontaneous, passionate, and non-conforming acts of creation, entirely consistent with Kierkegaard's philosophy of the art of subjectivity.

You might find this video relevant as it is associated with an exhibition featuring Reinhard Stammer on the topic of human rights: Reinhard Stammer - Human Rights? The Future's Shape.