

The Neo-Sensualism Apprentice Manifesto

From a Fine Art Photography perspective

Text by Phil Barrington and core content from J.A. Bautista's English translation of his 'Apprentist Manifesto', 2011.

Creative Photography, and Art in general terms, isn't firstly about technique, it's about feeling. Let your emotions guide you through your catharsis on a shoot, on canvas, in print, or in the darkroom, and your own personal technique shall develop - it has to. No amount of monthly photography magazines from WHSmith can show you YOUR emotions. Only you can show yourself. This is the Neo-Sensual Apprentice way. This is the core of the manifesto that I abide by.

An apprenti* of art, one hundred apprentis* of the fake things. The poet of the mistake. Art is nothing, is not a lifestyle or philosophy. It's not a God, it's not a religion. Art is just a means for the exploration of 'man', a way to an emotional release for those who can't often express themselves in a common, ordinary or *usual* way.

* Apprenti: (French) "apprentice" in English. Apprentis is the plural form. "aprendiz" en Español.

01. Take a photograph as an all-feeling human being. Shoot with emotion in mind, and many can appreciate or even love it. Shoot with technique in mind, and few will cherish or ever remember it.

02. Recognise that mistakes are a vital and inevitable part in your growth of understanding of your own style and methods.

03. Recognise mistakes, and other unplanned results, as the most important quality within your art. Why deny them?

04. Distrust all art schools and similar institutionalised judgement of your art. Art degrees are valid for Art History only, not for robbing you of the opportunity to shape and explore your own methods of creation for yourself, nor for stealing the opportunity away from you in finding your inspirations and cherishing your mistakes (and not being 'marked down' for them).

Self-taught is the natural, and only, way for a Creative to be taught. A Creative is not born an invalid, and therefore does not need to be taught or shown to walk along any desired path - all direction comes from within. It is then just a case of refining your expression as you see fit; you don't 'use' a technique, you create it yourself.

05. Recognise that your passion to create (even when in drought) is your natural key driver to produce art, not commerce, kudos, or obligation. Once you recognise that your innate passion can be unstoppable - if regularly fed - anything is possible for any Creative.

06. Being a Creative is not a status symbol or social role, it's not a class or archetype, it is a condition; second nature.

Creatives ARE born creative; Art isn't a thing than can be learned. It's a tool, not a subject. And most people are creative; there is no hierarchy here.

07. Experimentation is all. We don't propose anything. We don't impose anything. Some may (correctly) say that there's nothing new under the sun, so why believe that we can give something new to the Art World? We're not leaders, we're not the Hope. All of this is true, but it doesn't mean that we're aiming to create new paths or that we've set the road to innovation. No! There's only one road and we're looking for its limits and different areas of it. We want a constant stream, one that will never get stagnant. We don't want to merely go to set paths where everybody went before us. That's the goal.

08. Art has no political ideology; Art is an antithesis of such a construct; Ideologies are used to spread, persuade, convince, oppress, and restrict. Shout. Can you hear the id's song? Everything is an act of the Will. Just act by conscience, release the id and fade the superego. Everything is ego - we're conscious of it - but we're neither slaves of the instincts nor of the strict rationalism impressed on us.

09. We're apprentis of the expression, coherence and harmony that exist between the artist and his opus. Our only compromise is with our work. We're apprentis of the freedom, the change and the spectrum; of the mistake, the search and the experience.

We believe in what we do, regardless of criticism. Shouts, cries, exhortations; we have no concern of these things.

Delusions, laughter, teasing, anger; nothing really matters. We defend the integrity of our individuality above everything else.

10. Art does not know about limits, frontiers, language or countries. This is not a movement, the manifesto is a feeling. This is not a phase, this is a spirit of renovation. An anxious spirit of expression, and its hunger for change. We remove any intermediaries between art and the artist's soul: we discard the norms, lines, points and institutions that regulate the creation. We don't follow the rules or tags. We even mock the need for this manifesto to exist. Why should we write one?

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