

DETRITUS & ART / A personal point of view on Environment and Art

by Rainer Stegmann

It is often more important what someone sees, what something might be, than to know what it is. In my view, this is an important statement worth considering in life; life might become more intense, varied, and creative. I will explain this statement using the presented photo. If you look at the Alternative Text of this photo, it says: a picture that contains grey, concrete, cement, and limestone. This view on the photo gives me hope that artificial intelligence AI is still a long way away from showing human emotions.

Now, let me present my interpretation. Having visited many art museums in China and Singapore, I see a landscape painted in a style that some Chinese artists use. I see the clouds above a mountain, with a small fir tree forest on the middle right side in a mountain landscape. If you look at this photo for longer, you may get a similar impression or see something different, but it is not just grey, concrete, cement, or limestone. I hope to make it clear what I want to share with you.

Where did I take this photo? I made this photo from a section of the wall of the house I live in. It is a plastered wall covered with a variety of these blackspots and lines. The black patterns on the wall may consist of black algae, as well as mosses and lichens; additionally, they may be deposits of air pollutants.

To take a photo of the wall with some content, one has to select the "right" section of the wall. Examining the entire wall, one may agree with the description of AI.

What does this have to do with waste? I have already pointed out earlier the health risks that may arise from micro- and nanoparticles. Such particles may originate from rust, abrasions from brakes and tires, as well as from paints and plastered walls. We must consider that parti-

cles, per se, are dangerous when they enter the lungs; the particle material itself does not need to be toxic. Examining the wall, it may require a paint job because material from the wall surface has eroded, producing microparticles. To get an idea about the dimension of the number of paints used, we can expect that approximately 30 liters of paint are needed to paint 100 m² of a facade. Of course, from one paint job to another, not all the paint may be eroded. We must always consider that these eroded paint particles do not disappear and will remain in the environment.

To reduce/avoid such small particle emissions, further research is needed, as well as the avoidance of using nanoparticles in products. The use of longer-lasting or different materials, along with improved preservation, must be enforced.

Let me close my brief remarks with my initial statement: *it is often more important what someone sees what something might be than to know what it is.*



In the next issue of DETRITUS I will present Waste and Artificial Art.

