

The Most Beautiful Painting in the World: the process as a narrative in Tàpies

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Abstract. The work of the artist Antoni Tàpies (1923-2012) has been widely studied from different disciplines, including his analytical and syncretic vision. This article tries to analyze one of its aesthetic keys: in particular, the conceptualization of its idea *process*, using the synthesis that appears in the graphic story *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World* published by Ralph Herrmanns in 1970, in which Tàpies is represented as a character-artist. The friendship that emerges between Tàpies and Herrmanns allows the creative freedom of the latter, who, as an exceptional interpreter, is capable of capturing Tàpies' thought in the tale. The study of this graphic story also allows us to advance in the study of some educational variables that can intervene in the teaching-learning processes of the arts, such as the artist's relationship with the educational intention that appears as a moral in the story-tale. In this moral of a fable, as a conclusion or educational synthesis, Tàpies tries to express his aesthetic thinking about the creative process, represented in his artistic work.

Keywords: Aesthetic education; Tàpies; narratives; learn to look; process.

[es] El cuadro más bonito del mundo: el proceso como narrativa en Tàpies

Resumen. La obra del artista Antoni Tàpies (1923-2012) ha sido ampliamente estudiada desde diferentes disciplinas, incluida su visión analítica y sincrética. Este artículo trata de analizar una de sus claves estéticas: en concreto, la conceptualización de su idea de *proceso*, utilizando la síntesis que aparece en el cuento gráfico *El cuadro más bonito del mundo* publicado por Ralph Herrmanns en 1970, en el que el propio Tàpies aparece representado como personaje-artista. La amistad que surge entre Tàpies y Herrmanns permite la libertad creativa de este último, quien, con carácter de intérprete excepcional, es capaz de plasmar el pensamiento de Tàpies en el cuento. El estudio de este relato gráfico permite además avanzar en el conocimiento de algunas variables educativas que pueden intervenir en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje de las artes, como la relación del artista con la intención educativa que aparece a modo de moraleja en dicho relato-cuento. En esta moraleja, a modo de conclusión o síntesis educativa, Tàpies trata de expresar su pensamiento estético acerca del proceso creativo, representado en su obra artística.

Palabras clave: Educación estética; Tàpies; narrativas; educación de la mirada; proceso.

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1. Introduction

In 1971 a book that can be considered extraordinary in the bibliography about Antoni Tàpies (1923-2012) was published: *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World* by Ralph Herrmanns (1933-) (Herrmanns, 1970) (Figure 1), a journalist, photographer and writer specialized in novels and art books, of German origin and settled in Sweden since 1939. At the beginning of the seventies, Antoni Tàpies lives a culminating moment of his artistic career: he is represented by galleries in Paris and New York, he has exhibited in many countries of Europe and the United States. In 1962, he has made a retrospective exhibition at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, which presents him as “the first of a new generation of Spanish artists to achieve an international impact” (Alloway, 1962, pp.250-256).

In 1970, Tàpies published *La pràctica de l'art*, his first book as a theoretician of art, there are numerous catalogues of his work and monographs that highlight the magnitude of his influence (Tapié, 1959; Cirlot, 1960; Cirici, 1964).

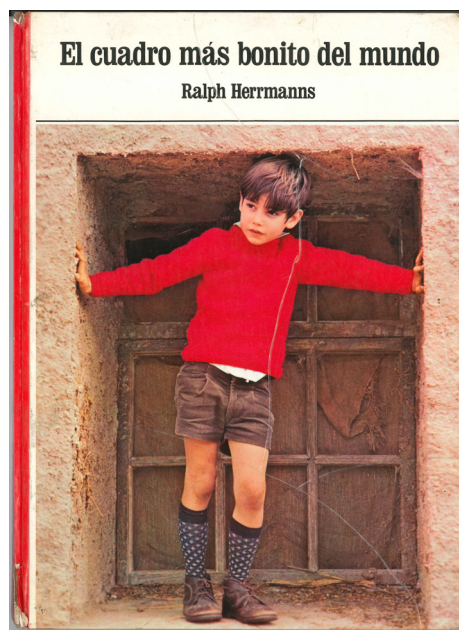


Figure 1. Ralph Herrmanns, *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World* [*El cuadro más bonito del mundo*], 1972, cover page. (Ralph Herrmanns).

The most beautiful painting in the world, however, it is not a conventional catalogue about Tàpies' work, but a narrative in the form of a “graphic story” made with photographs. Herrmanns had been working in children's publications since

the early sixties, with a peculiar style: illustrated books with photographs, which develop a story with a sequence of images of different sizes and a text located in the blanks. A type of publication that could be framed in the history of what has been called “children’s photobooks” (Parr and Badger, 2004, p.102) a genre recently claimed by some scholars and that has a long history.³ The first book that Herrmanns with this model is *Li Lan, Hing and the dragon kite* (Herrmanns, 1961), followed by a series of adventure stories *The children of the North Pole* (Herrmanns, 1963), *A car called Julia* (Herrmanns, 1964), *The boy and the river: an adventure in the Amazon* (Herrmanns, 1965), or *The Abominable Snowman* (Herrmanns, 1969), to which another artistic theme entitled must be added: *Night and the dream. Paint with Miró* (Herrmanns, 1972). All of them appear in the Bonnier editorial in Stockholm, and the are translated into other languages such as English, Danish, Norwegian or Spanish. This is not, however, the only activity of Herrmanns, who lived some time in Barcelona in the late sixties, and also made reports and films, such as the documentary about the work of Antoni Gaudí, who films for Swedish television in 1970.⁴ From these stays in Spain arises his friendship with Tàpies and the idea of making a graphic book about his work.

The story of Herrmanns proposes an approach to the work of Tàpies from a peculiar perspective: not from an academic or scholarly position, but through a narrative in the form of a story whose protagonist is the artist’s little son, Miguel Tàpies (1960-2013), who is then seven years old. Seen in this way, from a child perspective and strong emotional bond with the work of his father, the book poses an open and personal perspective to the work of the artist, which is also interesting to have been made with the collaboration of the artist and can help to unravel some of its aesthetic cues, such as the meaning of the concept of *process*.

2. Methodology and sources

The research presented here aims to combine the study of artistic-aesthetic content for its application as possible content for artistic education. For this, he uses an inductive-deductive methodology applied to the analysis of the narrative of the book *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World* (Herrmanns, 1970). This approach is of interest because it is a photo-book about contemporary art for children with an educational pretension. It is a little studied genre, of which there are more examples, such as those mentioned that Herrmanns cultivated for several years.

This bibliographical study has been complemented with the methodology called “expert interview” (Dávila, 2006) that requires the assistance of an expert in the field, someone very familiar with the object of study. In this case it was possible to have a direct source such as the author of the book, Ralph Herrmanns, which allowed applying the methodology proposed by Pujadas (1992) about the biographical method. That is why a personal interview was conducted (Stockholm, 4 July 2018) that was recorded and transcribed in a way that allowed the study to be completed rigorously, with a direct biographical testimony.

³ A large cast focusing on the pre-1945 period can be found in White, 1999, 1-237.

⁴ Herrmanns, letter to Antoni Tàpies, 2 de abril de 1970. 2 April 1970. Archive of the Tàpies Foundation, Barcelona, S4T1/165, Caixa 49.

Finally, an investigation on the epistolary relationship between Tàpies and Herrmanns has been carried out by searching the funds of the Tàpies Foundation of Barcelona. To this is added the consultation of the specific bibliography on Tàpies and his catalogues that was made in the Foundation's own library.

3. A book about the process of a painting.

By correspondence preserved we know that Tàpies and Herrmanns are related during the stay of Herrmanns in Barcelona in the second half of the sixties,⁵ although perhaps they could met earlier, on the occasion of the painter's exhibition at the Galerie Blanche in Stockholm in 1960 (Tàpies, 1960). Herrmanns moved to Barcelona in about December of 1966⁶ and in January he telephoned the artist to interview him for the newspaper he was working for. Because of that encounter, the artist and his wife invite Herrmanns to their house in Campins and they established a lasting friendship that will link them until the end of Tàpies' life. The result of this relationship is the idea of making the book.

There is not data kept about the production process of the book, which had to be done around the spring of 1967, as can be seen on the calendar page that opens the story, which indicates March 23 of that year. By a letter of 1970, we know that in the same month the printing tests would be reviewed so that the book is in the Swedish bookstores in August. The North American and English, the Danish and Norwegian editions are scheduled for the following spring, and the Spanish and Catalan editions for an indeterminate date, which will finally be 1972.⁷ There are also other possible ways of media distribution, such as advertising in magazines, his presence at the Frankfurt Book Fair and an exhibition of the work of Herrmanns, held in November 1970 at the Galerie Bleue in Stockholm. The booklet published on the occasion of this exhibition highlights the publication for its "beautiful and instructive" images, which make up "a wonderful and wonderfully useful book for those who want to make children know art" (Tàpies, 1970, np).

The book opens with a statement by Tàpies, which raises the possibility of "watch closely," until being able to "see art everywhere": it can be "the dust that is whirled up by a breeze," "a black thunder- cloud," or "footprints in the sand".⁸ This proposal is the one that is developed in the story, which, starting from the domestic and family context of Tàpies, tells the attempt of his little son Miguel to paint *The most beautiful painting in the world*. The story describes that "Miguel knew exactly what a picture ought to look like, but whenever he took his crayons and tried, it just did not seem to work. Everything turned *ugly*". Then the first change in the look occurs: he begins to notice the room and realizes that "There were many things to be seen, and until now, I had never really studied them".

⁵ The first letter from Herrmanns that is preserved is dated 7 August 1968, Archive of the Tàpies Foundation, S317C6/61, Caixa 26.

⁶ The writer was unable to remember the exact date. Conversation with Ralph Herrmanns, Stockholm, July 4, 2018.

⁷ Herrmanns, letter to Antoni Tàpies, 2 april 1970. Archive of the Tàpies Foundation, Barcelona.

⁸ The text comes from Tàpies, "El joc de saber mirar", first published in 1967 in the children's magazine *Cavall Fort*. This and the following quotations are made according to Herrmanns, *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World*.

With this approach, the child decides to go out and look for something to paint his picture, and then ask his father for help. There are then different attempts: to do it with an Easter palm, an attempt that fails because a donkey begins to follow him and eat his palm; after several more adventures, including a visit to Gaudí's architecture in Güell Park, he finally gets a pigeon that takes his father, and tells him enthusiastically his various attempts to get a reason to make the painting.

After listening to the story of his son's adventures, Tàpies decides to help his son and makes a picture that synthesizes everything: he sprinkles marble dust on a wooden board, prepares it and plants Miguel's shoe, to generate two tracks that summarize the walk and the adventures of the boy during that day. "This is an Easter painting which tells about you and all the things you have experienced," he says. "You have been rushing about all over the place. Look, here are your footprints. And inside the painting you can also see all the adventures you have had". The story ends with the image of father and son contemplating the painting "for a very long time".

As he recognised in his father's painting each thing he had done in the last two days, Miguel felt more and more that this was a very special picture, for he saw that he had indeed helped his father to paint the most beautiful painting in the world (Herrmanns, 1970, np).

The resulting painting is a simple and small-format work, which is, however, a good example of the type of painting that Tàpies makes in those years. It is a material painting, made with a paste of marble powders full of marks and scratches. In the lower part, something similar to a road can be recognized; in the upper one, there are stripes that show the surface of the board, and some reddish strokes give the note of color. In the middle, a large strip contains the prints made with the child's shoe: it is a kind of synthetic path, which evokes the walk made during the two days of the story.

In its apparent simplicity, this painting contains some essential elements of the aesthetics of Tàpies: its rejection of "photographic realism", which would mean the literal representation of the search for his son, to focus on gestures or strokes that can evoke the reality of a more open mode and not restricted to the visible. "I'm not remotely interested in anything that can be photographed. My aim is to invoke man indirectly through impressions of parts of the human body" (Catoir, 1991, p.77). Indeed, there are many contemporary paintings by Tàpies that contain this type of footprint, which evoke a presence or an experience rather than proposing a representation of external appearances. He explains it this way:

When I draw a head, for example, I immediately feel an urge to destroy it, to erase it, because the drawing only captures an outward appearance, and for me the vital issue is what lies behind the visible form of the head (Catoir, 1991, p.79).

Some of them evoke the walls of the streets, with their signs of the life of the city, as he wrote in his 1969 essay "Report on the Wall":

How many suggestions may be gotten from the image of the wall and all its possible derivations! Separations, enclosure, wailing wall, prison, testimonial of the passage of time; smooth, serene, white surfaces; tortured, old, decrepit surfaces; marks of human activity, of objects, of the elements; sensation of fight, of effort, of destruction, of cataclysm, of construction, of resurgence, of equilibrium; remnants of

love, of pain, of disgust, of disorder; the romantic prestige of ruins... (Tàpies, 2011, p.109).

Others are more personal autobiographical and can be related to the one that appears in the story. For example, the *Sardana* painting (1972), which “evokes the presence of their own, nine in total, by the footprint of each one forming a circle while dancing the traditional Catalan dance” (Penrose, 1977, p.94).

This approach, focused on the suggestion rather than the description, has consequently a deliberately ambiguous work, which requires active participation on the part of the viewer, to whom a “co-creative” role is attributed. An attitude that Tàpies compares with the oriental concept of fragmentation, that “leads to paint an incomplete vegetable so that the viewers may complete it with their imagination and thus grow aware of the germinative force of the plant. Without an active spectator there is no art, as there is no light without eyes.” (Tàpies, 2011, p.238).

4. Life's integration in Tàpies' art

The photo-story of Herrmanns responds to a final intention to illustrate the importance of the experience during a process and the embodiment of that process in a work of art. According to Herrmanns, the Catalan artist gave him absolute freedom to present his story, both in terms of the text and the photographs, and only at the end, Tàpies himself proposed adding as final the realization of a new painting that summarize all the previous experiences. In this final part, the meaning of everything lived by the child and how it can be represented in a work of art is explained and clarified. It could be said that this is the main theme of the story, which actually includes two different elements: the boy's experiences and his artistic representation.

A first element is the story of the experiences of young Miguel, who seeks in different places a source of inspiration to make his picture. At first, he goes out in search of a motive, convinced in advance of what he should look like: “Miguel knew exactly what a picture ought to look like,” says the narrator. When not finding anything satisfactory, nevertheless, its glance finishes becoming more attentive:

Miguel looked about the room. There were many things to be seen, and until now, I had never really studied them. There was the clock with figures on it, the girl's head, the pictures made from old postcards and book-marks, the lamp with the hanging fringe, but somehow there were not enough enough. Yet, though Michael, they were too ordinary, these things, to make an Easter painting of them (Herrmanns, 1970, np).

The everyday realities that you can find in your own home become little by little more interesting. And nevertheless, it will go out in search of inspiration in the street, until finding itself in a building of Antoni Gaudí, and in particular the decoration in “trencadís” of the Park Güell, made precisely on the basis of recycling previous tiles to generate a new composition. Finally, he gets to see his father with some pigeons, but then it will become clear that none of the individual issues that had interested him during the day is the solution: his father will paint a picture with none of them in particular, and that, however, somehow represents them all. What will become clear then is that the true material of the work of art is not about the objects, but the very experience that occurs in relation to them. This is what Tàpies had explained,

talking about the most everyday objects. Before an “old chair”, for example, the artist proposes a meditation similar to the one Martin Heidegger had made from the pair of shoes in Van Gogh’s painting. A seemingly inconsequential object, says Tàpies, actually includes an entire universe:

The sweaty hands cutting the wood that used to be a robust tree, full of energy, in the middle of a luxuriant forest by some high mountains. The loving work that built it, the joyful anticipation of the one who bought it, the tired bodies it has helped, the pains and the joys it must have endured, whether in fancy halls or in a humble dining room in your neighborhood. Everything, everything shares life and has its importance! (Tàpies, 2011, p.81).

In this text, Tàpies takes up Martin Heidegger’s famous reflection on the pair of shoes in Van Gogh’s painting. The shoes are only what they really are when they are being used in the field, without anyone thinking about them. “They are so much more genuinely, the less the peasant woman thinks about shoes while at work, or looks at them, or even realizes them (Heidegger, 1993, p.159),” writes the philosopher. In painting, in change, the utilitarian character of shoes is lost to enter a more contemplative perspective:

Nevertheless, perhaps it is only in the picture that we notice all this about the shoes. The peasant woman, on the other hand, simply wears them. If only this simple wearing were so simple. When she takes off her shoes late in the evening, in deep but healthy fatigue, and reaches out for them again in the still dim dawn, or passes them by on the day of rest, she knows all this without noticing or reflecting (Heidegger, 1993, p. 160).

Seen this way, the interesting thing is not the objectual character of the shoes, nor the picture that represents them, but their ability to evoke “an entire universe”. Tàpies is not interested in objects in their practical or purely aesthetic character, but for their life in relation to the people who have related to them. What it does are “anthropomorphized” objects (Wye, 2014, p.39)

5. The artistic process according to the “photo-story” of Herrmanns

When proposing the relationship with the work in this way, Tàpies asks for the active participation of the spectator, who must “know how to see” behind what is apparently banal. To explain it, it alludes to the image of the magician or the illusionist, who performs his activity, like the artist, on the border between the real and the unreal. Tàpies explains it with the image of the “spectator who walks into the theater for a magic show with the sole intention of uncovering the trick”, for whom “the show is nothing: pure deception that pleases only the innocent who fails for it” (Tàpies, 2011, p.132). Art, for Tàpies, is a kind of game, and only those who accept the game and enter its rules can perceive its benefits:

The whole spectacle is nothing, unless we want or are able to see in it more than is there. But the artist feels no frustration at this, the prestidigitator feels failed, or the magician ridiculed. Why -we ask- is this positivistic spectator the one who sees clearly? What right does this person have not to allow other to ‘imagine’ freely? (Tàpies, 2011, p.135).

The rituals that surround the realization and the contemplation of the work would be, here, a fundamental part of the work, as it happens in Japanese aesthetics. Tàpies would pretend to conform, thus, an “open work” in the sense in which Umberto Eco defined this term: that whose “signs combine like constellations whose structural relationships are not determined univocally” (Eco, 1989, p.86). The “informal art” would be a good example of this type of undetermined structure.

In relation to this process of participation of the viewer is the process of creating the work itself. This is what, in *The most beautiful painting of the world*, we can see through the images of Herrmanns. Tàpies understands that the artist’s work has nothing to do with programs or rules, but with field research. “The artist is a laboratory person,” that “only by working in his solitary investigative task will the artist get positive results; such task is parallel, though not equal to the way the scientist works” (Tàpies, 2011, p.49). The artist thus situates himself in continuity with the romantic idea of the study of the artist as a solitary place in which creation takes place (Jones, 1996, pp.60-113). A place that will begin to be part of the image of artists from paradigmatic cases such as Jackson Pollock, photographed and filmed by Hans Namuth, a German photographer who will become a personal friend of Tàpies (Catoir, 1991, 112).

In this sense, a certain evolution can be perceived in the portraits of Tàpies that are published in their catalogues. At the beginning of their career, they tend to focus more focused on the face of the artist and his own work, or on a series of paradigmatic elements that serve as background, such as the walls of the streets. Over time, however, Tàpies opens the studio space to photographers, and the images of his work process are becoming more frequent. The Catalan painter would appear, thus, as an artist in this “performative” aspect, “reconsidering his work not as an object, but as a process,” as recent historiography has proposed when speaking about some of his contemporaries as Pablo Palazuelo (Borja-Villel y Grandas, 2006, p.16).

In this sense, the images of Herrmanns de Tàpies scattering the dust on the painting, included in the brochure published on the occasion of its exhibition at the Galerie Bleue in Stockholm, could be considered parallel to those of *dripping* from Pollock carried out by Namuth some years before. For some artists of the period, a fundamental change of attitude was taking place here (Orton and Pollock, 1983, pp.114-122): according to Allan Kaprow, Pollock would have “destroyed the painting” to develop another approach, “more actively involved in ritual, magic and life.” And so, by abandoning the traditional support of art, “he left us at the point where we must become preoccupied with and even dazzled by the space and objects of our everyday life, either our bodies, clothes, rooms (Kaprow, 1958, p.7).” Tàpies would never completely abandon the painting, but he would work more and more with objects of ordinary life, included in his canvases or converted directly into sculptures.

The narration of *The most beautiful painting in the world* shows how his paintings can also be placed in this tendency that connects art with life: to evoke the process of life on the silent and static surface of a painting. The elements that are used to do it are, precisely, the same ones that are used in everyday life: Miguel’s shoes leave their mark on the canvas. And so, as in Heidegger’s commentary, they reveal what has not been perceived during the process of life.

6. The process seen by Herrmanns and loved by Tàpies: Tàpies as a character in a story

In this work Herrmanns dares to incorporate the aesthetics of Tàpies and Tàpies dares to incorporate his aesthetic thought into a Herrmanns tale. Trust is mutual. They are friends. Tacitly aware of their importance, both embark on the adventure. What better than to be able to count on Miguel, the small son of Tàpies that will remain immortalized through the narrative. The experience begins. The photos are followed, the text explains them, and the process is collected (Figures 2, 3, 4, 5) in the form of a “footprint”. The ephemeral nature of this process is recorded forever in the publication. The eternity sought is also shaped in the form of a photo-story. The narrative of a seemingly simple story has explained and always valued the importance of the process in art.



Figure 2. The process lived by Miguel begins to be represented aesthetically by Tàpies in the story of Herrmanns. (Ralph Herrmanns).

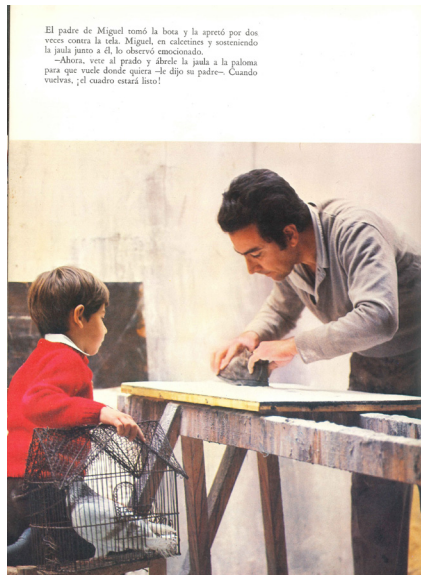


Figure 3. The process lived by Miguel continues to be represented aesthetically by Tàpies in the Herrmanns story. (Ralph Herrmanns).

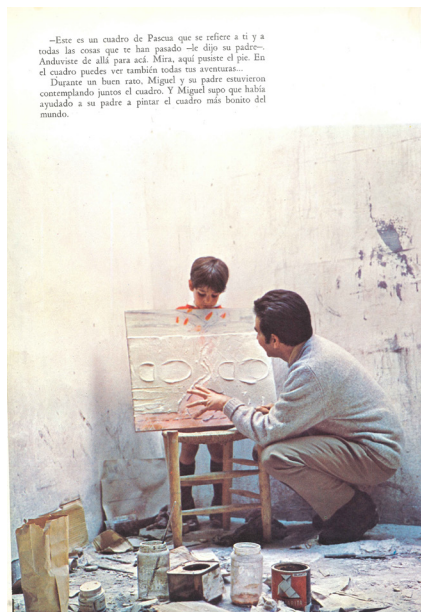


Figure 4. The process lived by Miguel is reflected in the finished work *The most beautiful painting in the world*, made by Tàpies in the story of Herrmanns. (Ralph Herrmanns).



Figure 5. Tàpies explains his concept of “process” in the Herrmanns story. It includes the education of the look towards the processual through the contemplation of the work “during a good time”. (Ralph Herrmanns).



Figure 6. The gratitude of Tàpies towards Herrmanns is concretized with the gift of his work *The most beautiful painting in the world*, which will remain as a symbol for the writer of his narrative process lived with Tàpies. (Fernando Echarri).

7. The process as a concept and method of artistic education

At present, despite the few existing scientific articles, there is a tendency that focuses artistic education more on the creative process itself than on its result, thinking that “the process is always more important than the product” (Hardy w/d) and that “the process as a paradigm it suggests that the new artistic creation based on the process is the art of the 21st century” (Jaschko & Evers, 2010). Among the possible methods of

education in the artistic process, the narrative is configured as one of the possibilities with already contrasted results (Meretoja & Davis, 2018). In turn, authors like Pérez and Castro highlight the convenience of using the process for artistic education “to get individuals to be more and more creators” (Pérez & Castro, 2015), and allude to the significance that this concept and its experiential application can provide. In particular, some method proposed by these authors for artistic education can be carried out “through their own artistic practice” or “the interaction with an artistic object or representation, with an artist and with their teacher”.

In the case of interaction with the artist, the process may include free exploration (such as the one performed in his adventures by Miguel, the son of Tàpies), the reflection on the practice or the context, which includes the natural and social environment (Tarr, 1996), which can facilitate learning. It could be said that the method of collaboration with the artist is the one that Tàpies used to educate his son, becoming himself a father-artist-educator. Tàpies proves to be a great educator, using the mentioned strategies proposed by Tarr and Pérez and Castro for the artistic education of their own son, including the environment (pine forest, donkey), social environment (traditions), the creation of a painting, the adventures of Miguel in his free exploration, the contact with the artist, as well as a paternal-filial emotional bond that will help the significant learning of his son (Ausubel, 1976; Novak, 1977).

In the educational perspective of Herrmanns story-story, the concept of “in-process critique” (Costantino, 2015), used in artistic education, is also present. It could be said that Miguel is doing, building and learning a *self-in process critique* in his different attempts to create *The Most Beautiful Panting in the World* as reflected throughout the photo-story.

8. The beginning of the process: the aesthetic education of the look and sensitivity

From this idea described is inferred the importance and meaning of the process for Tàpies. The link established with the work of art is not complete if it does not reflect the process of life, experiential, which is transferred to the creative process represented in the work as experiential “creature”. The dimension of the sensible, unfolded through the aesthetic gaze, is thus taken care of. “You have to teach to see,” César Manrique used to insist, appealing to the transforming burden of the eye, educator of the gaze (Gómez Aguilera, 1994). In the same direction, Tàpies will say “Look, look at the bottom!” (Figure 2) and you could even say “You have to teach how to live”, or better: “Live, live to the bottom!” Appealing to the transforming burden of the experiential, educator of the process. It is precisely through art that life appears and expresses itself in all its power and through life as art offers itself in all its possibilities.

The conformation and education through the process in Tàpies wants to go beyond the mere physical plane. Like Whitman (1981, p.289), Tàpies proposes to capture in his work his “experiential self,” his “processual self” and tries to mediate through his work in communication and communion with the world, specifically with the possible viewer of the work. In this way, the viewer must learn what is looked at. He must unravel the work, unravel it and transfer it to its possible reality. The mind opens itself to the conscience, the own feeling and to the own being, that is naked before the reality of the work of Tàpies. In this way, the viewer remembers and

reconstructs their process, through the observation of what is seen and what is not seen. That is why educational instruction that focuses on the process can be applied to any person in any community (Filippoupoliti & Sylaiou, 2015; Kim, 2018). It is with the education of the gaze and its transfer to the processual with which we can reach the possible messages that the aesthetic matter of Tàpies encloses in all its dimensions and universalize it to all people.

9. Conclusions

The narratives provided by photo-stories, such as the one made by Herrmanns, are configured as a method of educational instruction applicable to artistic education. The children's language used makes the work more accessible to different audiences and facilitates education in its contents. The use of photography as a visual narrative resource allows to educate the view from reality, facilitating understanding and complementing the contents described in the text.

The synergy established in the friendship meeting Tàpies-Herrmanns, materialized in the photo-story *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World*, adds value to the work of Herrmanns that is configured as a unique document that testifies and universalizes part of the life of Tàpies, in the form of characters from a story, conforming as a trace that helps to perpetuate the transient; and at the same time it provides Tàpies with a kind and different medium that encourages him to explain artistic and aesthetic concepts of his work such as footprint and process.

Through Ralph Herrmanns' *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World*, and the artistic education it suggests, we can unravel the importance and conceptual meaning that the *process*, associated with creation, acquires for Tàpies. In its end, as a parable, a paradox, in a language of universal comprehension, Tàpies can reveal in a simple, but univocal and emphatic way, its concept of process and its translation in the work of art.

In the work *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World* made by Tàpies and in the book *The Most Beautiful Painting in the World* made by Herrmanns reality and fiction are mixed creating a real artistic object that apparently shows only two tracks, but that picks up the route of the experiences described in the book, thus shaping the experiential process.

The educational intention of Tàpies is evident in the photo-story of Herrmanns through the help, indications and explanations given to his son-character Miguel, through his participation as a character in it and as the artist's relationship with the educational intention that appears as a moral in said story-tale.

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