

Amar Priganica on Christophe de Rohan Chabot

Christophe de Rohan Chabot is a guy that I've been following on Instagram for quite some time now. I forgot why really, but I think it had to do something with him being an artist who is associated to Exile Gallery in one way or another. Being a person who has an unprecedented and yet to be explored illness called obsessive compulsive following disorder, which has led me to follow 2328 accounts of whom I only find about half really interesting, I have a lot of trouble unfollowing all of those people who have accompanied me through the last decade of my life, and who I inevitably know everything about since they're literally there for me all day everyday in my life.

The people I got to know really well in the last decade and who have become my really close friends include genius musicians such as Macklemore and Ryan Lewis as well as my teenage loves Lena Gercke, Bonnie Strange, Miranda Kerr and of course the CEO, COO, CFO and CDO of that one fake bitcoin start up from Berlin with the cat logo whose name I don't remember and my friend Fabi worked at and which is bankrupt now. To cut it short, although I don't feel connected to all of these people in the same way I did a decade ago, I am just not able to unfollow them because I have the feeling that with every single unfollowing a little piece inside of my soul would just die and my life would be a little sadder than it is. Each one of them is a pillar of my strength, they just pick me up when I need them, let me think about the good ol' times when it was still ok to be a straight guy, you know.

Half of that decade though was defined through something else than „just“ following my friends. Starting to make art about 5 years ago had opened up a whole new world to me. I gradually got cooler, started listening to cosmic techno, got myself a pair of vintage golden glasses, swapped out the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Arctic Monkeys with the Velvet Underground and Lebanon Hanover, bought that one Walter Benjamin book about auras. Without being really aware of it at first, tens and hundreds of artist accounts, galleries, off-spaces, kids with half-shaved heads and green hair, beautiful people, Chloe Wise and Ottolinger suddenly popped up on my feed. As a logical conclusion, my disease had let said feed turn into a basically anonymous amount of art-related content that I have no real opinion on. How do I decide to follow someone? Like I said: I don't really know, I just have to when I feel like it. It's like collecting stamps, where it's not necessarily about every stamp being really special or suiting my taste but rather it's about creating the bigger picture and you kind of need the less interesting ones to make the more interesting ones look more interesting than the less interesting ones.

So anyways, Christophe de Rohan Chabot is officially one of my 2328 friends that's accompanying me on my long and winding road to becoming a successful artist, musician, performance curator, co-curator, writer, magazine founder, one half of Ganica Stauz, as well as forcing myself to suit up everyday trying to at least look as representative as my cousins living in Sweden working at Swedish banks buying Swedish apartments in Sweden. There is this unwritten Instagram rule of thumb, stating that you shouldn't follow more people than you are followed by, to not look desperate and needy, you know, to not look like a person who only follows 2328 people in the hope that some of them might follow you back to get more than 1336 followers of which you bought yourself 500 two years ago as a Christmas present to have over 1k (which is another and probably the most important unwritten Instagram rule of thumb there is). Anyhow, Christophe Rohan is one of them and thanks to him everyday I consume a few dozens of images showing a coked-up Britney Spears, skulls, fire (lit), Shrek, 420 and more skulls. What appeared to me as just a random French guy doing some sort of edgy art, laminating mostly-stock-photos expensively on Aludibond and who is

somehow related to Christian and Exile Gallery, turned into this weird mysterious figure where I started wanting to know who that guy really is or at least what he looks like since you cannot find a single picture of him on the gram. Probably some really dangerous looking guy, tattoos all over his body, bomber jacket, talks really fast and hysterically in French, probably raps as well idk

Fast forward to about half a year later, Julius Pristauz shares a story in Shore Gallery with a guy standing in front of a Mark Zuckerberg stock photo expensively laminated on aludibond, the guy in front of the work just looking like the Zuck himself. As Julius Pristauz always tags the people whose work he shows in his stories, I read @christophe_de_rohan_chabot and I'm like aha wow ok sure that's obviously a work from his because the image of that weird looking celebrity is as expensively laminated on aludibond as his images of other weird looking celebrities that I've seen on his instagram.

But what about the guy in front of the Zuck who looks just like the Zuck? Probably was a lol moment because that guy was just randomly coming into the gallery and coincidentally looked just like the Zuck, that's why Julius Pristauz took a photo of him in front of the Christophe de Rohan Chabot work to kind of adapt his otherwise no-bullshit attitude of seriously showing serious art in his stories and tagging the people who made this art to Christophe de Rohan Chabot's weird „humour“ or maybe just because he thought that Christophe Rohan de Chabot would think it would be funny, or because Julius Pristauz thought that it would be funny in general to see a photo of a random guy looking just like the Zuck in front of an image of the Zuck expensively laminated on aludibond which is actually a work by Christophe de Rohan de Chabot because he is tagged in said photo.

Anywho, thank god I stop thinking about this situation and that immensely irritating and somehow disturbing photo of the guy looking just like the Zuck in front of the expensively laminated aludibond Zuck and go to the holy mass at Stephansdom on this sacred and precious Friday night to listen to the sound of the sublime and newly inaugurated “Riesenorgel”, which is actually the biggest organ in Australia. Since the Riesenorgel's full potential isn't being fully extracted in the holy mass as it is at the organ concerts where they play Wagner overtures all the time just to fuck with you and your mind, I went to the back of the nave to sit down on one of those plastic chairs that were set up in case of too many people coming to the mass in these difficult times of the novel “Covid-19 Virus” and to not cough at each other because they're really old and suffering and have to cough because the incense is suffocating them though their masks, I went there to not only hear the sound of the Riesenorgel but to let it penetrate my body from the inside just in the right ways, you know.

Suddenly, a guy looking just like Mark Zuckerberg starts talking to me and speaks very calmly in a very French-accented English: héy àre you amár i think î know you from le instagamme you are friend of juliüsse? And I'm like, uhm, do we know each other? And he's like I'm christôphe I follow you and I have a show at Shore Gallery where I expensively laminated a stock photo of Mark Zuckerberg on aludibond and I'm like wait a minute YOU are the guy who looks just like Mark Zuckerberg from Julius Pristauzcs's story standing in front of the image of Mark Zuckerberg expensively laminated on this very expensive piece of aludibond at Shore Gallery in the second district of Vienna, Austria? I thought you look really dangerous and you probably rap in french very hysterically and fast and a have skull tattoos on your neck and now you look just like the Zuck man, damn wow that's so crazy and also that we randomly meet each other at Stephansdom on a Friday night and you recognize me because of my ace insta presence, that's so cool man what are you up to how long you gonna stay in vienna blipblupblap

I immediately start to realize that by Christophe Rohan de Chabot looking just like Mark Zuckerberg and expensively laminating an image of Mark Zuckerberg on aludibond, showing it at Shore Gallery and letting Julius Pristauz take a photo of him in order to put the photo of Christophe de Rohan de Chabot looking just like the Zuck standing in front of Christophe de Rohan Chabots work depicting the Zuck expensively laminated on aludibond in his story, he unintentionally made a joke or rather – as we art world intellectuals like to say – a „comment“ on all the instagram artists looking just like their art or rather, their art looking just like them in order to post selfies in front of their art to make a coherent appearance: the outfit, the tattoos, the textile work on the wall where the ripped tie-died fabrics look just like the tie-died ripped fabrics on their bodies, declaring the artworks as accessories that are just an extension of the outfit or whatever while putting the separate pieces consisting of said outfit, the “work”, a recreational drug habit or two and that one Yves Tumor album they listen to all the time into a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in the form of a coherently looking instagram account, with matching colours from time to time, those seemingly effortlessly curated carousel posts of them in their Stilalbtbauwohnungen um die Jahrhundertwede with their Fischgrätenparkettfriends and their little white wine glasses in their humana clothes. And all of these elements together culminating in a coherently looking instagram account seem to represent the artist’s “practice”, as far as I understand.

There is a certain tradition in how you’re supposed to look in relation to your work. For instance, a sculptor has to look kind of neat, all dressed up in fancy clothes antithesing his genius roughly crafted large bronze monuments to trick collectors into thinking they nevertheless still got their shit together. Or just think about Markus Lüpertz, Michael Krebber or the Dadaists, same same. Of course you can also dress in Dickies Pants and plain Fruit of the Loom T-shirts to highlight your working class background if you have one or if your work is about that kind of stuff. And although this seems to sound polemic and simplified, it seems that the way to go nowadays is to assimilate your outer appearance to the work you’re making or the other way round, either way.

Look like your art, post a lot about how your art looks like you and you will succeed in one way or another.

Let’s just use this little anecdote of me meeting Christophe de Rohan Chabot in the Stephansdom to imagine the scenario in which I would have to create the ideal artist. If I would really have the opportunity to create that artist, that artist would be dressed like an adolescent punk with a rusty safety pin in his suppurating left ear, talk like Adorno, think like Baselitz, paint like Raffael and write like Valerie Solanas, murdering all those aforementioned men in a very annoying and very long manifesto that no one would want to read because it’s not the 60s anymore. To put it bluntly: Dear 2328 people, artists and institutions that I follow on instagram: surprise a little, will you.

On this very sacred and precious Friday night, Christophe de Rohan Chabot showed me that you can do it the other way. Bless you French guy who is an artist and somehow related to Christian Siekmeier and the Exile Gallery in one way or another. Bless you for looking just like the Zuck.

The holy mass has come to an end, we’re now standing in front of the sacred and precious Stephansdom, having a nice little chat over a few nice little Marlboro Golds, what are your plans for the weekend, ah wow are you from paris, is Amar Priganica your real name, do you really think the harry potter painter is actually the guy from shore etc.

Suddenly my prejudices catch up with me, I’m starting to ask myself why Christophe Rohan de Chabot would go to the sacred and precious Stephansdom on a Friday Night when he could

as well be as coked up as Britney in those photos or work on his new album or whatever. I become slightly paranoid, is he chasing me at my sacred and precious Stephansdom, did he track me on my phone just to fuck with me, is he really the Christophe Rohan de Chabot who looks just like the Zuck standing in front of the work of Christophe Rohan de Chabot which is an image of the Zuck expensively laminated on plexiglass that he pretends to be? Or is in fact Julius Pristauz behind all of this?

I decide to ask him why he actually came to the sacred and precious Stephansdom on that sacred and precious Friday night and he just simply answers that he likes how the Riesenorgel vibrating in his body reminds him of listening to French hip hop in a car really loudly or whatever. I realize that we do in fact have more in common besides appearing in Julius Pristauz's instagram stories from time to time. After all we both clearly have a weird obsession with weird celebrities...