

2nd Cannons  
Los Angeles, CA 90031

ACHING by Victor Boulet  
18 February – 18 March, 2025

ACHING

I whinge and complain  
Always the same / whinge and complain, literally with no gain  
I whinge and complain / no gain  
When should I complain?  
Complain with no gain

This is a part of a lyric I wrote in 2014 while walking up and down Ullet Road in Liverpool. Today the lyric feels a tad embarrassing.

I insist upon standing in what is embarrassing: I refuse to be interesting.

I'd like to apologise for several negative remarks that I made at the Dulwich Picture Gallery about the painter Berthe Morisot. A few weeks after seeing her show, I came to understand, that my comments may have come from my perspective as a male painter. I said things like, she's flimsy, unfocused, she's in a rush, that's badly painted and why paint that? It's rubbish.

Berthe Morisot was married to Manet's brother, Eugène, who was also a painter. They had one child and how I understand it, in the late 1800s women had to look after most things in any household. I am certain that it was even Berthe's job to ensure that Eugène had time to paint. My judgment was perhaps hasty; her paintings must have been like a sponge to her daily chores, becoming her swift strokes that we see today. In other words everything soaks into your work and absolutely everything matters and counts.

A few years ago I invited 2nd Cannons to make a set of fanzines for Frenetic Happiness, which was my Social Publishing House. A project which is dead today. At the time of this invitation, we were moving house and studio, and I was asked to send images of my empty studio in Liverpool. I was stupid enough to include several unflattering pictures of myself, which I badly regret, because 2nd Cannons used the images for an entire fanzine. Size A4.

There was never a moment that I thought that the fanzines should not be printed, but rather the opposite; as long as my vanity suffered I was happy.

This is my third show with 2nd Cannons and I am showing fourteen self-portraits, 30cm x 35cm, oil on canvas, with tacks and staples. Because 2nd Cannons is an artist-run publishing project, with an exhibition space, I'm printing a fanzine and had plan to recreate a missing cassette for this show. But sadly, because of licensing and copyright laws I wasn't allowed to have the cassette made in England. I have uploaded the rejected folder so you can download and make the cassette yourself. <http://www.boullet.com/ride/roger.zip>

The following text is the bridge that connects the printed matter to the paintings:

The spring of 1986 I recorded Ride the Lightning by Metallica from vinyl to tape. While recording this tape I had two friends there with me, Petter and Roger. From what I can remember, Petter arrived by car after work and Roger came by moped. Lol. While I recorded and discussed the album, Roger asked if he could borrow the tape until the next day, he wanted to make a copy. I gave him the tape, and I never saw it again.

Here is an email I just received from Roger.

On 21 Nov 2024, at 01:00, Roger Gxxxxxx <rogerxxxxxx@gmail.com> wrote:

"Hi Victor. Did you know that I am trained as cabin crew for the SAS? I never took the job, as I had to go to the US to get to know my onion. That's all I have to say, as I didn't see much.

Second vers. You had a blue Suzuki with red chocks and an effect exhaust system.

I had a ZR 50 SL SK with 76 cubic meters 11 horsepower cylinder with a Nikla effect exhaust system from SAS.

Your father arranged that. He was a baker in the SAS.

Mamma, my Mother has a permanent job as a secretary in Banana Mathisen from Bodø.

And as a ground hostess in SAS.

I don't know why I'm writing this. I just lost the thread.

I had a dream many years ago, back then and every time when.

I saw you walk in the park with a long, long beard. With God.

Well, fuck it. Here you have Metallica <https://youtu.be/ZZ9cyFnkb38?si=7Hg52UIDtwXR9s>

Vicki the Dicky.

I'm a bad mamma fuccer

Rog the Dog

Email is translated from Norwegian.

SAS / Scandinavian Airline System.

Onion is Norwegian slang for dick. Løken

Roger was a close friend. He would show up and stay for entire summer holidays. At the tail end of the 80's I severed all childhood friendships. Why? I felt stuck in the ethics of that working-class environment, and also the aesthetics felt suffocating to me. But Roger was upset, and other friends threatened me because I turned my back on them. There is no escape.

When I am in Oslo today I stay in the house where I was brought up. Therefore I occasionally bump into old faces; that is if I don't manage to hide before they spot me. One summer day I saw Roger walking down our street. I shouted out of the window and ran downstairs for a chat. He seemed happy to see me. We talked. He came across as different and anchored in the past. Halfway into our conversation, I looked at him and said: Roger, when will you return my tape? He looked at me with a stare and answered: I'll find it. It might be broken. To my surprise, two days later the doorbell rang and it was Roger. He said: Here's your tape. I fixed it. I got to go. See you.

Thirty-seven years later, he returned my tape. For those thirty-seven years, the tape was never a daily nagging thing in my head, but the bloody cassette was stored in my memory. When I say *I refuse to be interesting*, I want to bring that back into this text because I feel it is urgent. I would rather that this stupid cassette became a layer of content in my work than some correct academic or zeitgeist approach to the same matter. And let me be clear, this is not nostalgia. I try to activate the idea that *everything soaks into your work and absolutely everything matters and counts* without thinking about the consequence or situation or who I think I am.

I emailed Roger to ask if he would write something for the 2nd Cannon show.

On 25 Nov 2024, at 17:03, Roger Gxxxxxx <rogerxxxxxx@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Victor.

I'm a bit busy at the moment.

I am in the process of furnishing my new residence.

<https://no.pinterest.com/pin/425168021090094063/visual-search/?x=16&y=16&w=532&h=527&surfaceType=flashlight>

Last time I was home, I bumped into him in the supermarket, and he kindly dropped me home in his late father's BMW. Roger told me that he had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, something that actually made sense to me, and I had, of course, heard talk of it. To me, his memory is still so sharp about the time we were best friends, while my memory is cynically selective.

Victor Boulet

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