

PAMPHLET OF HEURISTICS: CRUCIAL INFORMATION

Monsieur Herr is pop music with a point of view and Ulterior Motives. Knowing where he comes from may lead to greater appreciation of his work (YMMV). They are outlined in full here:

1. If the music is substandard, then nothing beyond this point matters. Quality music, as subjective as it is, is the prerequisite for everything else. To quote Ron Mael: "It's a disservice to pop music to come out with stuff that isn't cool." Monsieur Herr has, at times, come out with stuff that isn't cool, and has lived to regret it.
2. The Monsieur Herr project is, at its core, exceedingly pretentious and therefore strictly Not For Everyone. It is, first and foremost, a medium for personal artistic ambition, but that does not mean he doesn't want you to like his work. Monsieur Herr is always there; it's your job to come to it, and accept it for what it is. He is not a caterer.
3. The pop music form and Art are not mutually exclusive. Pop music does not inherently have to be disposable—but if it is, so what? Who told you pop music was supposed to be anathema, anyway? Was it the Prog Fucks? Was it those weirdos who know what "djent" is? Monsieur Herr enjoys the pop music form as a baseline; a framework to fuck around with. He also just plain enjoys a good pop song.
4. Pop music is not necessarily What Is Currently Popular. Monsieur Herr sees it, again, as a framework, similar to the three-act structure in movies. Seeing as music is by nature ephemeral, though, its structure is far more malleable—to the point of unrecognizability, if it calls for it. It's a song if it's declared to be a song; on that note, if you want to be uptight about the difference between a "song" and a "piece" or "composition," then please do so elsewhere, as Monsieur Herr has no time or patience for elitist semantics.
5. Okay, listen: Monsieur Herr may be a snob, but he is *not* an elitist. We're all part of The Masses, so stop pretending you aren't.
6. Abstraction is Monsieur Herr's stock and trade. He has dealt in irony, indirectness, metaphor, and obfuscation, but *never* insincerity. This is not to say Monsieur Herr has never written lyrics meant to be taken literally; in fact, many of them are.
7. Interesting is often preferable to Good. Things that are Good can sometimes be boring, but things that are Interesting are never boring. (This is different from Quality.)
8. Things don't necessarily have to make sense. Everything is basically made-up anyway.
9. Humor ≠ Lack of Substance.
10. Monsieur Herr's greatest hope is that those who enjoy his work really, *really* enjoy it. Mediocrity is not an option. Monsieur Herr has inadvertently dabbled in mediocrity at times, and has lived to regret it. Similarly, Monsieur Herr hopes those who dislike his work have the decency to think of it as detestable.
11. If Monsieur Herr didn't release songs like "Shapes" or "Our Wexler" or "Death Ray," among others, it would give the false impression that he wasn't in the habit of doing that sort of thing, and we can't have that.

12. It's Fun to Steal.
13. Eclecticism is natural and should be encouraged.
14. Nostalgia = Refuge in the Safe = Conservatism = The Status Quo = Clawing Towards the Middle = The Destruction of Art = Stagnation = Death. Nostalgia Culture is the aforementioned on a macrocosmic level. Nostalgia ≠ Fond Memory, Sentimentality, or Drawing from the Past in itself, so long as it doesn't distort reality or interfere with/supersede the present. Someone, somewhere, is always trying to sell you something, and especially nowadays, they often use Nostalgia to do it. Be careful.
15. Monsieur Herr is fascinated by Optics, Image, and the difference between Self-Perception and Perception by the Other, which can be and often is starkly different. Take the band They Might Be Giants as a prime example: to themselves, They might be "The Beatles with weird lyrics." To outside observers, They might be the epitome of "nerd rock," whatever the hell that's supposed to be, with all the social consequences that come with it. You're seeing exactly how Monsieur Herr thinks of himself here, and his own idea of himself might not be aligned with yours.
16. Monsieur Herr avoids labels whenever possible. More specifically, he avoids anything that may be used to pigeonhole. Monsieur Herr *does* enjoy descriptors that have vague or indiscernible meanings (i.e. "post-punk," "zolo," etc.) or otherwise may be considered perennially uncool (i.e. "power pop"). Definitions get in the way. Contrived "aesthetics" are evil—the tool of charlatans and carpetbaggers.
17. As an extension of the previous statement, Monsieur Herr is more than happy to throw in his lot with postmodernism and Dada, as well as antifascism and anticapitalism; the nature of the work should speak for itself in this regard. He is ultimately interested in the root of the problem.
18. Please do your best to use adjectives aside from "quirky."
19. Monsieur Herr doesn't know what he's talking about.
20. Monsieur Herr knows exactly what he's talking about.