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In The Dust of This Planet

“In The Dust of This Planet” is the rock and roll of our generation, it is our rebellion. One that could either be a revolution of enlightenment and rebirth, or the tragic and quiet acceptance of a meaningless end. The letters of these words roll into the world as nothing, just rhythmical sounds, however, the context they have been put into, make them significant. “In The Dust of This Planet” is in essence a pessimistic phrase, it states that what used to be has dried up, that it is gone, but in a way, it leaves room for a strange sort of hope. By accepting that all that used to be is lost, there is room for growth, for a new beginning, for something completely new. The dust of the planet is an end, however, and end from which something new can come, similar to the phoenix and its ashes. It is easier to build, to create, to write, to design, to act when it comes from zero, from a new beginning. It is by far easier to cope with something that has no ties, no connections, no complex past or relations. Therefore, it is not surprising that this phrase is so relevant to something so complicated and of such immense magnitude as Climate Change.

It gives people a simpler understanding, a reminder that there is nothing left except for going forward, moving upwards from nothingness.

However, there is also the other possibility, the possibility that “In The Dust of This Planet” as a part of pop-culture simply means so give up. It could simply be part of the acceptance that the world is coming to an end and that it is “cool” not to care, to understand that it is, but not to care. If everything is already lost, then why do something about it?

This is an interesting thing to think about in the context of pop-culture due to that pop-culture is in fact, a way of escapism. It is what people generally chose to see and retreat to because it is the easiest thing to bear with. The mainstream is so widely accepted that it justifies the lack of questioning, the lack authenticity or substance. Or, it might be that the substance is lost in it, in the superficiality of it all. How then, does one reach audiences about pressing realities such as Climate Change? Is it better to introduce messages such as, “In The Dust of This Planet”, and risk letting them fall into oblivion or become meaningless trends (apart from the fashion statement)? Or might people actually look deeper into their significance and question their implications? But then again, does making meaningful art that people are not interested in any better? I am not entirely sure.

Moreover. By making informative art for a non-human audience the approach would indeed be radically different. Art for a rainforest would have a huge weight upon aesthetics and be direct above all. With trees there is no need to manipulate, no need to search for a million different ways to reach stubbornly blinded individuals who refuse to respond to plain truth. Art for them would be pure because there would be no need for games, visual statements or even words would be enough. For the rainforest I would recite a poem for the purpose of letting it know that I respect the materials that it has, that I do not take it for granted, and that I do not think my art and creations to be above it. I would simply want it do know that I respect it, and that I wish to live in harmony for it.

What I would want to say to the Rainforest is very similar to what “Uncivilization” is all about. It is like going back to basics, taking a step back in the midst of our terribly complicated lives and realizing that they are made up of stories that in the grand scheme of things are not important, and to an extent, are a distortion of reality or untrue. “Uncivilization” is an incredibly powerful term, because just as “In The Dust of This Planet” (although more effectively), it forces us out of the comfort of denial into a raw acceptance of things as they are. This manifesto breaks down all the masks and stories that we have been hiding behind, all those ideas, and objects, and products, and mere decoration that we make out to be so important in order to keep up our false dominance and self-righteousness over the world. Destroying the myth that is civilization is the job of the artist of the 21st century simply because humanity has come to a state in which escapism has become reality and has ceased being simply a distraction.

On the other hand “Design and Ideas for End of Times” of the Modern Primitive Exchange website is a much more playful approach to the same idea. The projects that are featured might be a smoother way to engage the general public to the reality of Climate Change than the others mentioned above. However, although I do consider this sort of wit and accessibility to be essential, I do not think it is radical enough to rely on playfulness and attraction in order to really make a change. I cannot deny it is a good start, but it can also be very easily disregarded as something decorative, mocking, or joke-like.