

MY QUEST as an artist is to document my world and to comment on life. I began writing my essays in 1987; from the start I have worked on them every day and night; in fact, all but every minute of every day and every night. **T**he book is not finished - it never will be, *“an essay (a poem) is never finished, only abandoned”* (Paul Valéry); *“has anybody ever finished anything?”** (Leonardo da Vinci). Yet, I herewith hand my life’s work over to you, dear reader. **T**his is my response to the likely criticism of my writings: (other than photography) I have formally studied nothing; I am a follower of nothing and I know nothing - except the fact of my frivolity. My writings are frivolous by design: **I** prefer flippant succinctness over learned elaboration, controversy over predictability, the wicked over the banal. I copy and acquire with abandon, see ECLECTICISM, hence my book is ‘open source’ (conditions apply, see below**). **I** quote selectively - often out of context; I may give a quote or a phrase a new meaning - to create a new reality; I may challenge, contradict or distort truths - to make a point ... while always bearing in mind the principle of uncertainty. **O**ne of Bertrand Russell’s commandments (page 110) is most pertinent in the context of my writings, *“do not fear to be eccentric with your opinions.”* I cherish that idea of *“no fear”*; this saying epitomises the spirit of my work. **M**ission statement: I like to think things through thoroughly (see p. 48); I wish to inspire readers to think about things as they never thought about them before. I trust my writings are thought provoking and my book is a conversation starter. **A** reader said, *“I find myself learning something new every time I read a page.”* That is the best compliment anyone can give me. May many more people have that same experience; to test if you could be one of them, go to page 76. **Y**es, do contact me - cb@carstenburmeister.com - with corrections of errors, they will be evaluated for the next edition; but please: Factual errors - yes, opinions - no. (Go ahead - write your own book). **Carsten Burmeister**

**This is the reason why you are reading the 40th edition (a new edition every month or two). If you are keen you can trace the revisions on my website, go to ABOUT, then to BOOK REVISIONS.*

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